

Assurance of Salvation
Part 39

Faith
(#2)

"FAITH"
PROOF of salvation

(But only when it's *genuine*.)

 Last week, we saw...

1 The relationship between **FAITH** and **FACTS** **1**

According to the WORLD, faith involves:

- Wishful thinking (sometimes even accepting what is *false*).
- The opposite of facts and reason.
- An irrational leap *away* from facts.

According to the BIBLE, faith involves:

- Accepting the facts as true (even if we don't like them).
- Responding to those facts in an appropriate way.

2 ALL PEOPLE **2**

base their lives on FAITH.

★ **Even ATHEISTS!** ★

We prove it every time we sit on a chair!

It all comes down to the question:

- Is our life "faith based"...

 ... or "faith based on facts"?

Strong wood, well-built... I TRUST in this chair!

All we need is faith... I TRUST in this chair!

3 We have a *firm* foundation for our **FAITH**: **3**

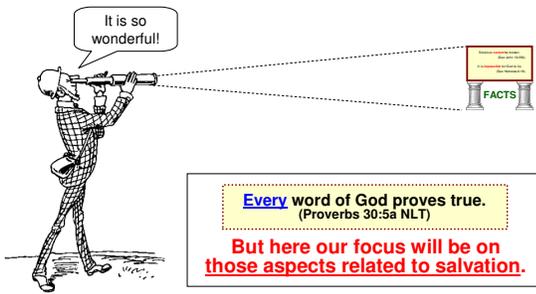
a **FACTUAL FOUNDATION** that is certain, guaranteed and unchanging!

Scripture **cannot** be broken.
(See John 10:35b)

It is **impossible** for God to lie.
(See Hebrews 6:18)

FACTS

Today, we plan to look at this foundation.



It is so wonderful!

FACTS

Every word of God proves true.
(Proverbs 30:5a NLT)

But here our focus will be on those aspects related to salvation.

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The saving FAITH of the **Bible** is based on a sure foundation of FACTS:

Jesus' death, burial and resurrection
(and their significance)

RECORDED AS:

- **PROPHECY:**
 - Facts described **BEFORE** they occur.
- **HISTORY:**
 - Facts described **AFTER** they occur.

PROPHECY

DEFINITION?

- **The WORLD's view:**
 - Subjective speculation and "good guesses."
 - Ambiguous statements that can be "interpreted" dozens of ways.

PROPHECY

DEFINITION?

- **The BIBLE's view:**
 - History that hasn't happened yet; but it will.
 - God is simply explaining what will happen BEFORE it happens!

PROPHECY

ACCURACY?

- **The WORLD's type of "prophecy":**
 - A "good guesser" may have some success, especially with ambiguous "prophecies."
 - A person who yields himself to the devil may do better, since the devil does know things we don't. (But in the end, that person becomes an *eternal* loser.)

PROPHECY

ACCURACY?

- **The BIBLE's type of prophecy:**
 - Always 100% accurate; impossible for it to be any other way.
 - God exists outside of "time" (which he created for us humans). Past, present and future are all visible to him.

EXAMPLES:

WORLD: "There will be an earthquake this year; a world leader will die; and war will break out."

(If there is ANY earthquake, the death of ANY leader, and the beginning of ANY war, they will claim it's "fulfilled.")

BIBLE: "I will raise up a leader named Cyrus, who will tell the Israelites to return to their land and rebuild the temple."

(As **prophecy**: Isaiah 44:28-45:6; other passages describe what he will do, without mentioning his name. As **history**: 2 Chronicles 36; Ezra; etc.)

FOR THIS BIBLE PROPHECY TO BE FULFILLED:

- The Babylonians would first have to conquer Israel.
- Then the Medes and Persians would have to unite and conquer the Babylonians.
- Cyrus would have to be born and become king. (He would also have to be named "Cyrus.")
- Cyrus would have to want Israel's temple to be rebuilt, *even though he had no interest in following the God of the Bible.*

*This would take place
~150 years after God told Isaiah
to write it down!*

It would be like
Abraham Lincoln
giving us details about
terrorist attacks that
would occur in **2001**...



...and doing so with 100% accuracy.



When the Bible's prophecies
are fulfilled...

"**Future history**" ... becomes ... "**past history.**"



Often there are many eyewitnesses to confirm it.

– They might even participate in the fulfillment
and not realize it until later!

EXAMPLE: about events that occurred
on **PALM SUNDAY:**

At first **his disciples did not understand all this.**
Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize
that **these things had been written about him**
and that **they had done these things** to him.

John 12:16 (NIV)

← PROPHECY
← HISTORY

HISTORY

- Dealing with *real world events* **after** they occur, and explaining their significance.
- THE DIFFERENCE:
 - **The BIBLE:** always 100% accurate.
 - **THE WORLD:** often "rewrites" history (depending on what views are popular at the moment).

MORE COMMENTS ABOUT BIBLE HISTORY:

- Different accounts may focus on different facts from a historic event.
- These different accounts will *complement* each other, not *contradict* each other!
- **EXAMPLE: Judas' death**
 - He hanged himself (Matthew 27:5).
 - His body burst open when he fell (Acts 1:18). This would have happened a few days later, probably after people discovered the decomposed body and cut the rope.

CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Many people want us to believe that the Bible's "history" is some type of "fuzzy" un-provable "salvation history," that has nothing to do with "real world history"!



JESUS' RESURRECTION WAS PROVABLE "REAL WORLD" HISTORY:

NOT THIS:

- Some sort of "religious talk," to be understood symbolically or "spiritually" (in some "invisible" sense).

YES, THIS:

- A corpse – a blood-soaked cadaver – that once belonged to a human (who was also deity) **came back to life**.
- That body was changed into one that **cannot** die.
- **OVER 500** eyewitnesses saw him physically alive.
- This human (also deity) is now physically living in a place we call "heaven."
- He has promised to physically return to live on the earth.

The Bible's focus on **FACTS** (whether *prophecy* or *history*)

Some EXAMPLES from PAUL:

- #1 Paul explains the FACTS to the Corinthians.
- #2 Paul tells Governor Felix and King Agrippa about the FACTS.

1

EXAMPLE #1 (Paul, to the Corinthians)

1

- Christ died to take away our sins as the Scriptures predicted. ← **FACT** = Prophecy fulfilled, now history.
 - He was placed in a tomb. ← **FACT** = History
 - He was brought back to life on the third day as the Scriptures predicted. ← **FACT** = Prophecy fulfilled, now history.
- (1 Cor. 15:3b-4 GW)

1 (continued) **1**

He appeared to Cephas. → **FACTS** = History; eyewitness accounts.

Next he appeared to the twelve apostles. →

Then he appeared to more than 500 believers at one time. (Most of these people are still living, but some have died.) →

Next he appeared to James. →

Then he appeared to all the apostles. →

Last of all, he also appeared to me. →

When Paul wrote this, you could have cross-examined the eyewitnesses for truthfulness (as you would in a court of law).

1 Cor. 15:5-8a (GW)

2 **EXAMPLE #2** **2**

(Paul, to King Agrippa and Governor Festus)

"I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen—

Paul restricts his testimony to **"ONLY THE FACTS"**

that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles."

FACTS = Prophecy fulfilled, now history.

Acts 26:22b-23 (NIV)

2 (continued) **2**

At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted. "Your great learning is driving you insane."

The governor accuses Paul of preaching "insanity," rather than "facts."

(He is basically separating **FAITH** from **FACTS**)

Acts 26:24 (NIV)

2 (continued) **2**

"I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied. "What I am saying is true and reasonable."

Paul affirms that his words are **FACT-BASED**.

The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner.

Paul appeals to the king's own awareness of the **FACTS!**

FACTS = History, this was public knowledge.

Acts 26:25-26 (NIV)

Next week...

- We plan to begin looking at **how** this fact-based faith is PROOF of salvation.
 - This includes recognizing the difference between "counterfeit" and "genuine" faith.
- UNTIL THEN...

YOUR MISSION:

Continue to examine the nature of your faith...

– Especially the foundation upon which your faith is built.

Credits (1)

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