

1. Universalism and Saving Faith.

Universalism has a tendency to teach a “loose” doctrine relating to that faith which results in a person being born again. The faith that results in actual soul salvation is many times referred to as “saving faith”. Saving faith is different to what is sometimes called “historical faith”. Historical faith is what a person exercises when he believes the truth regarding what cannot be seen with the natural eyes. For instance, when a person simply believes that God is real, he exercises historical faith. Likewise, when a person believes Christ was born of a virgin, or that He died for the sins of mankind, or that He was resurrected from the dead, he is exercising historical faith. Soul salvation is never the result of historical faith alone. It is true that a person must believe all that historical faith implies in order to be saved but historical faith is significantly different from saving faith.

With historical faith, an individual exercises their mind to accept information. Saving faith, on the other hand, is an exercise of the heart where a person trusts those things his mind accepted. Often a person hears of and believes something to be true yet neglects to go on and act with trust on those things. In the same way, a person can hear and believe many of the truths taught regarding the plan of salvation; however, that same person must go on and cast his trust on the Lord with his whole heart if he is to be born again. Many Universalist fail to make this distinction and allow lost souls to think they are born again when they've only exercised historical faith.

Historical faith is a faith which is centered in the mind while saving faith comes from the heart. When a person believes with his mind he is accepting something; however, when he believes with his heart he is going beyond accepting facts with his mind and actually exercising trust. An example may help to clarify the difference between faith which is centered in the mind and faith which comes from the heart.

Stories have been told of a tight-rope walker who stretched a rope between two high-rise buildings in a city. This walker then walked this tight-rope a number of times to demonstrate his skill and talent to maintain his balance while walking from one building to the other across this rope. He walked the rope carrying a balancing pole. Then he walked by holding out his arms for balance. Lastly he crossed the rope pushing a wheel barrow. As he crossed from one building to the next, it wasn't long until a crowd

of people gathered to get a closer look at what was going on and to admire this man's ability.

After the walker had crossed the rope a couple times pushing the wheel barrow, the crowd applauded and cheered the walker's ability to defy gravity while walking this rope. So, the walker asked the crowd if anyone believed he could put a person from the crowd into the wheel barrow and take that person to the other building across the tight-rope. He asked those in the crowd who believed he could do this to raise their hand. Several people in the crowd raised their hand. He then said he was going give one final demonstration of his ability by actually taking one of these people along the tight-rope to the other building using the wheel barrow. So, he asked for one of those who raised their hand to come forward and get into the wheel barrow. Now it was time for these spectators to actually trust this walker. They would literally be putting their life into his hands if they climbed into the wheel barrow. As the wheel barrow was being pushed along the rope high in the air, the only thing standing between them and death would be this walker. Needless to say, but NOT one single person came forward to be carried to the other building across this tight-rope.

The walker had demonstrated his ability a number of times to this crowd and caused a number of them to believe in his ability to get someone safely from one building to another. Yet, when these same people were asked to come forward and actually let him carry them across, no one offered. They were willing to accept with their mind but they were unwilling to trust with their heart.

This example illustrates the difference between believing something with the mind yet rejecting this same thing with the heart. Man frequently is willing to use his mind and accept something to be a certain way. However, when he must go on and actually place his trust in what he has accepted, this is where he draws back.

The Lord Jesus Christ sees into the heart of every man, woman, boy and girl. No one can deceive Him. Many people are willing to accept facts regarding the plan of salvation as they are presented in the gospel. However, this acceptance fails to reach the faith that God requires in order to save a soul until a person actually puts all of his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to deliver them from eternal death. People will remain lost in sin headed for that awful eternity in the lake of fire described in the Bible if they only accept

the facts. In other words, a person cannot simply raise their hand in a crowd and to show that they believe the Lord Jesus Christ has the ability to save a soul from the lake of fire. They must be willing to climb into the wheel barrow and let Him actually save them.

There can be no limit to the amount of caution that should be exercised when instructing a lost person regarding what it takes on their part to become a child of God. No sincere person would ever want to be found guilty of deceiving a lost person into thinking that he was born again when all along that person remained separated from God traveling the broad road headed for eternal destruction. It is certain that God is not confused about the condition of a person's soul. If a person thinks he is born of the Holy Spirit when in truth he has only been deceived, God knows the truth of the condition of their soul and is required to send him to the lake of fire to uphold justice.

Many Universalist misrepresent the doctrine of the new birth by telling the lost that soul salvation comes by simply accepting the Lord Jesus Christ. They teach that a lost person can simply believe the historical facts of the plan of salvation to become a child of God. It is suggested that soul salvation is a gift promised of God and all they must do is be willing to accept this promise.

This teaching fails to point out that true salvation is always accompanied by real evidence. A lost person experiences real evidence of being lost as the Holy Spirit convicts them for their unbelief. Their soul feels heavy and they experience real trouble down within. When they are truly born-again, they experience the real evidence of the new birth as the same Holy Spirit brings sweet peace into their once troubled soul. No one can definitely know that this evidence resides within another person. The person who has been born-again is the only one who experiences his regeneration so he alone is able to declare its presence. So then, those who are unable to relate to real evidence accompanying soul salvation must be considered in need of the new birth. Many Universalist fall short in teaching this truth.

The scriptures teach that a person has real evidence within his own person when he has truly believed on the Lord Jesus Christ with all of his heart. Notice a few verses that present this fact:

Jhn 4:13-14, Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never

thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. **Note:** The Lord Jesus Christ gives a born-again person something as real as actual water in soul salvation. This water will remain in this person and bubble up into everlasting life. Notice how real this must be. Anyone who experiences this can tell about it.

Rom 8:16, The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: **Note:** It is the Holy Spirit of God who directly testifies with the spirit of a child of God giving him assurance that he is born-again. A child of God really experiences this as the Holy Spirit bears witness with his own spirit.

Gal 4:6, And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. **Note:** God sends the Spirit of His Son into the hearts of the sons of God. This is something that actually occurs resulting in assurance for all who experience it.

1Jo 3:24, ... And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us. **Note:** The children of God have received an actual possession from God when they receive the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes into them and abides inside them. They “Know” that they have this possession and are able to tell others about it.

1Jo 5:11-13, And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. **Note:** God wants His children to know where they stand with Him. God does Not want one of His to live in doubt. However, neither does God want a lost person to live deceived and end up spending eternity in the lake of fire. God will help us to be born-again and know about it but we must be willing to receive the whole truth on this most important matter.

These are just a few of the verses that abundantly prove that there is real personal evidence of soul salvation within a child of God. With these things being true, no one but God has the right to tell a person that they are a child of God. If anyone practices telling people that they are children of God, “Woe unto them”. Let every Bible believer yield to

the teaching of God's Word and let the redeemed of the Lord "say so" for their own selves, Ps. 107:2.