

# Salvation

## by Grace through Faith of Water and the Spirit

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While it is true that we are saved "by grace through faith" (Ephesians 2:8), Martin Luther added the word "alone" to this verse in his translation of the Bible. I do not believe that this or any other interpolation in the Bible was divinely inspired. We are saved by God's grace alone, and that is through faith; it is the gift of God. According to the biblical text, submission to God through repentance and baptism are necessary (Luke 24:46-47; John 3:5 & 20:23; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:11-12; Hebrews 10:17-22; 1 Peter 3:21).

Evangelicals mistakenly teach the necessity of submission to God and the acceptance of salvation through confession and prayer (see Romans 10:9-10). They try and prove their position by isolating Bible verses and taking them out of context, accusing us of doing the same while we merely quote or read large passages of Scripture to them. The Bible could not be any clearer or plainer. God's terms are repentance from sin and the obedience of His instructions. This has always been true and will always be true.

His instructions for washing away our filthy sins are to call upon the name of Jesus Christ in full-immersion water baptism. Jesus said that to enter the Kingdom of God, everyone must be born of water and the Spirit. Throughout the book of Acts we see repeatedly that those who come to God are baptized in water by a follower of Jesus, and they receive the baptism in the holy Spirit from Jesus Christ Himself.

If we read John 3:3-17, the four accounts of the Great Commission at the end of each of the four gospels (Matthew 28:29-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-23), and then the entire Book of Acts, we see that there is a consistent, clear theme of salvation by water and Spirit throughout the whole New Testament. Then, in Romans 6:3-6 we read about how we are buried with Christ in water baptism, and we are subsequently risen with Him into a new life. Next, we read in Colossians 2:11-12 that baptism is the New Testament equivalent to Old Testament circumcision, made without hands, cutting off one's sins from his or her body, as God thereby forgives us and makes us alive together with Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 10:15-23, we read that the "new and living way" of the New Covenant, which God made for us by becoming a man, is that we can draw near to God and enter the Holiest Place by having our hearts sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, cleansing our conscience, while our bodies are washed with pure water. This is in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophesy that the New Covenant, unlike the old, would be all about knowing both God and his law intimately, in our hearts, and also the remission of sins (Jeremiah 31:33-34; Hebrews 8:10-12; 10:16-18).

So, forget all of the other contradictory things which many false teachers and false churches are saying. Evangelicals, for example, have broadly varying views among themselves on this very issue. Catholics think that what their men say, especially the Pope, trumps what the Bible says and teaches. Do not follow mere human beings or any man-made organization, but look into the Word of God for yourself. As you do, ask God to lead you to the truth, and commit yourself wholly to believing what the Bible actually says, not what other people want to tell you that it “really” means. Then, and only then, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free (see John 8:31-32).