

# THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS MESSENGER

April 19, 2009

## Adam's Response To A Baptist Pastor--6

**Question-** *“If salvation is not by works of righteousness which we have done, and baptism is a work of righteousness, then how can water baptism be a part of salvation (Titus 3:5; Matthew 3:16)? In the Bible, we are SAVED BY GRACE, and grace does not involve human effort or merit--grace is grace and work is work! (Just read Ephesians 2:8, 9 and Romans 11:6).”*

Let's talk about Titus 3:5, the verse upon which Mr. Martin is basing his argument in this place. The verse reads as follows: **“He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.”** The apostle Paul was concerned that some would minimize the love and mercy by which we are saved so he hastened to point out that our salvation is not by meritorious works. If everyone would just stop there things would be fine. Unfortunately, some have misunderstood Paul to say that our salvation is without *any* conditions or works at all. This idea completely missed the very point that Paul is attempting to make, and at the same time identifies one of the worst problems in religion today concerning how a person is saved.

Paul's point is not that salvation is without any works or conditions placed upon man at all, but rather that it is without works of merit. If that were not the case then grace would be invalid. One cannot be saved by meritorious works and grace at the very same time. In Romans 4:4 Paul said, **“Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due.”** Paul's use of the word “due” here identifies the works that are under consideration--those by which one earns what he gets (works of merit). In this case a man receives nothing more than what he is owed, his due or debt. Yet Scripture makes it quite clear that none of us *merits* or *earns* our salvation. It is a gift of grace as Ephesians 2:8-9, two verses that Mr. Martin himself referenced, make abundantly clear.

Yet interestingly enough, Titus 3:5 *itself* makes it clear that our salvation is conditional. The verse concludes with **“by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.”** The washing of regeneration refers to none other than water baptism on our part (John 3:3-5; Ephesians 5:26; Hebrews 10:22)! Mr. Martin claims that our baptism is a work of merit, when in truth it is a work of *faith*. It is just here that we are confronted with one of the greatest problems in the field of religion today--the failure to distinguish between works of merit and works of faith.

It is vital that we get this point: works of faith *do not* keep a gift from being a gift or grace from being grace! Would Mr. Martin deny that the falling of the walls of Jericho was clearly a gift of grace from God to Israel? Surely not. Yet Mr. Martin said “grace is grace and work is work.” Obviously, he sees no way that the two can coexist. However, the children of Israel were not permitted to just stand around waiting for God to knock those walls down, were they? No! They were commanded to

march around the city (Joshua 6:2-5). No works of merit were involved, only faith (Hebrews 11:30). They were confident that if they did what God commanded them to do, He would fulfill His part. It must be remembered that the verses that teach salvation by works (i.e., James 2:21-24; Acts 10:35) have reference to works of faith, while those verses that teach salvation without works (i.e., Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:28; 4:4; Titus 3:5) have reference to works of merit.

Thus, Mr. Martin's statement that "grace does not involve human effort or merit" is seen to be only partially correct. No, our salvation does not involve meritorious works, but the Bible clearly shows that it *does* require effort on our part (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philippians 2:12). After all, belief itself is said to be a work (John 6:29). It would be very interesting to hear someone try to explain that away.

**Passage to Remember**

**“For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, ‘Violence and destruction!’ For the word of the Lord has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say, ‘I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,’ there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.”** Jeremiah 20:8-9

In Need of Prayers	General Information
<p>Edwin Brown, a member of the Evendale congregation up in Cincinnati, is doing quite well as he recovers from his heart attack.</p> <p>Adam Daniels' friend, Will Markem, continues to recover from his motorcycle accident. There have been some very encouraging signs of improvement, but the process of coming out of a coma is a very slow one.</p> <p>The doctors feel as though they may have found a solution in helping Jackie. A pump has been inserted into her abdomen (can also go in the leg) to send medicine in liquid form directly into the bloodstream.</p>	<p>The member information sheets are still in the back. If you have yet to fill one out, please do so and return it to Garry Banks. Please remember that husbands and wives (and children, as the case may be) should fill out individual sheets to help avoid confusion. When all the sheets are received, we can begin updating the directory. Thanks!</p> <p>Brother Sid Latham from Indiana will be speaking at UK on Thursday, April 23. His subject is "The Problem of Evil: A Just God in an Unjust World." The talk will be held in room 102 of the Whitehall Classroom Building at 7:00 PM. Knowing Sid, his presentation will be very biblical and very well prepared. If you're able, why not attend?</p> <p>My new cell number is 859-492-9406</p>

