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SALVATION BY FAITH

THE relation between the question “what think ye of Christ,” and the question of when one is saved by faith, has been previously set forth. It has been shown that it is the believer who is to be saved. But between the believer and salvation is the power of God. And it is when the believer makes use of the “power” (the gospel) that he is saved, and not before. (1) Faith (2) power used (3) salvation. Thus Rom. 1:16 is fatal to the instantaneous faith alone doctrine.

Another passage frequently quoted by the faith alone advocates is Jno. 1:12. It reads: “But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” Great stress is laid on the last words, “even to them that believe on, his name.” But John 1:12 is like Romans 1:16--the same order is in it. First, is the believer;
second, between the believer and the sonship is the “power” to become; third, when the believer uses the power he becomes the son of God. Strange, indeed, that men will quote this passage to prove that a believer is saved the moment he believes, when the passage itself says that the believer must “become” a son of God. The use must be made of the power that lies between; that believer and sonship.

Another effort for faith only is made on Rom. 5:1-2. They attempt to drag it into service. It reads: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Of course, the emphasis is on faith, and the assumption is that Rom. 5:1-2 teaches that the sinner is saved the moment he believes—assumption, and nothing else. First, Paul bases salvation on faith. Second, he states that faith gives the believer access into “this grace.”

The word “access” is defined to mean “admittance or approach to a person or place; means of approach or admission.” Inasmuch as faith gives “access” into the grace, then the believer,
is not in the "grace" the moment he believes. He gains access by faith, that is, after he is a believer.

The use of the word "access" may be further observed in a comparison with Eph. 2:18: "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." In verse 16 the apostle had shown that "by the cross" the pathway to reconciliation unto God had been opened up to both the Jew and the Gentile. Then, in verse 18, he declares that both have "access" by the one Spirit unto the Father. In chapter 3:12, the apostle says that in boldness we have "access" and confidence "by the faith of him." Now, the faith of Christ is the gospel. So by the gospel we have access-into what? Verse 12 to 21 gives a list of the blessings of the gospel, and it was by faith that the Ephesians had obtained the access into all of these blessings. Though believers, they still had to use their faith in order to enter these blessings. So it is in Rom. 5:1-2, faith gave the believer access into the grace, and he was saved out of the grace but in it, therefore the believer is not saved at the moment of faith-he is saved when he uses it as the access, the means
of his admittance into the grace of God. Anybody ought to be able to see that Rom. 5:1-2 is fatal to the faith only theory, which would have a believer saved outside the grace, saved without grace. That is a new thing, indeed!

Other passages in the Roman letter settle the faith alone issue. In Rom. 3:22 we read of “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” And again, in Rom. 3:26, “that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” He is the justifier of whom? The one who has already believed in Jesus-If God justifies one after he is already a believer in Jesus, then how can salvation be coincident with faith? If salvation is instantaneous with believing, how can God justify the one who has already believed in Jesus? But Paul says he does that--therefore salvation is not instantaneous with faith; it is not co-incident with believing. At this point Rom. 4:16 comes in to settle it: “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace.” Here Paul puts “might be” right between faith and salvation by grace! How could he say that
a believer might be saved by grace if he was already saved the moment he believed. Thus in the Roman letter Paul uses four chapters to lay his premise that the law of Moses could not save, and in the fifth chapter he gives his conclusion that we are justified by faith because it gives us access into the grace of God. But to gain this access, faith must be used. How is faith used? This question is extended into the sixth chapter where he describes how the believer is “baptized into Jesus Christ,” and is therefore “buried with him by baptism into death,” that as Christ was raised “even so we also should walk in newness of life.” The doctrine of the Roman letter is not the doctrine of faith alone salvation.

A sectarian sugar stick is claimed for Gal. 2:16. It reads: “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the, faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” We are told this passage teaches,
first, that “not by works of the law” excludes baptism; and that “justified by the faith of Christ” means salvation the moment one believes. To this we reply: (1) Baptism is not a work of the law. To class baptism as a “work of the law” is to deny believer’s baptism, for “the law is not of faith” (Gal. 3:12), and the one baptized, furthermore would be under a “curse” (Gal. 3:13), and would come under the “wrath of God” (Rom. 4:15). That is consequence number one of such reasoning. (2) Paul contrasts the law of Moses and the gospel of Christ. The first is “the law” and the second is “the faith.” The law is the Jewish system. The faith is the gospel of Christ, for all the world. (3) In the passage there are two names—“faith” and “the faith of Jesus Christ.” They are not the same. The word, “faith” refers to the state of mind in the person, when one says that he believes. The phrase “the faith of Jesus Christ” refers to the gospel of Christ. Certain ones had believed in Christ, they had “faith’‘-but was that enough? No. Faith alone left them short of justification. Why ? There stands the “might be” of this passage be-
tween the believer and justification. Paul puts down into this record this order: First, we have believed in Christ; second, that we might be; third, justified by the faith of Christ. If salvation was coincidental with believing, if salvation comes the moment one believes, there could be no room for the “might be” between belief and salvation. But Paul puts this “might be” in Gal. 2:16. Between the believer and salvation there are conditions. That is why the “might be” is there. If the believer obeys Christ, he is baptized into Christ and comes into “the faith of Christ.” Here the “might be” disappears, but as long as he has “faith alone” the might be stares him in the face.

Faith alone teachers can never harmonize their doctrine and the scriptures. While it is true that the apostles taught the doctrine of justification by faith, do not overlook the fact that Gal. 2:16 says that the believer is justified by “the faith of Christ.” Why is this? Because the personal faith, the faith of the individual, prompts him to obey the gospel, to be baptized. Thus he “by faith” accepts “the faith”—the entire teaching of Christ—and is baptized “into
Christ.” Can anyone be foolish enough to say that the sinner is saved “by faith” the moment he believes, and is saved again “by the faith” when he accepts the faith in baptism? To such an absurd position all who teach the doctrine of salvation by faith only are driven by Paul's Galatian argument.

Many times I have travelled from Oklahoma City to Los Angeles on the railroad. The energy in steam moved the train. “How did you travel?” some one asks. “I came by steam,” I would reply. Who could misunderstand that? Steam was in the boiler of the locomotive before we left, Oklahoma City. But the train did not move until the energy in the steam was released in the engine of the locomotive; then energy was converted into motion, and away we went. The question was not whether there was energy in steam, but when does the energy get us to the destination. Now, on the human side of salvation, the energy that saves is in faith, but the question is: When are we saved by faith? Paul settles that question for us. He says: “We believed in Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ.” The faith that saves is the faith that obeys the gospel.
WHAT HARM IS THERE IN DANCING?

THE article on the delicate subject of dancing which appeared in Number 11 issue of TORCH is worthy of more than one reading and of serious meditation. It deals with a practice once under the ban of all denominations and outlawed by all decent people, but now sanctioned by many religious people and sponsored by some Christians, so-called, who are members of the church. Their excuse is in the age-old question -“What harm is there in it ?”--which has been answered a thousand times.

What harm is there in it ?

First of all, it induces adultery. Any knowing person who claims there is no harm in a practice that mingles sexes breast to breast and limb to limb, embraced and entwined, is lying. The proof is not only in the dance, but after it. It is a well known fact that hotel rooms are reserved for the patrons of the ball, and there is constant commerce between the dance floor and the hotel hall. The dances that are privately sponsored are not different in effects, for the automobile, which has been described as “the
bedroom on wheels,” takes the place of the hotel. It is a sensual, devilish institution which no Christian can patronize.

Secondly, dancing is the revelling which the Bible condemns. Oftentimes we are bantered for “chapter and verse” that condemns dancing. Suppose there should be no chapter and verse that “specifically prohibits dancing—would it therefore be right? If so, what about gambling? Where is the chapter and verse that condemns it? The word “gambling” is not in the Bible—but it is a bad thing, and it is wrong to do it. The Bible does not mention card-playing by name, but any game that requires the spot cards to play is wrong on general principles. So is dancing.

You want chapter and verse? Very well. Dancing is the revelling that is mentioned and condemned by name three times in our New Testament. In Rom. 3:13 rioting is the word for revelling and is classed with some bad things and is condemned along with them. In Gal. 5:21 revelling is listed among the “works of the flesh” and is condemned. In 1 Pet. 4:3 revelling is linked with banqueting and is condemned. Gal.
5:21 adds, “and such like”—anything like that—and warns that they who practice such “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Still you ask: "Is dancing the revelling mentioned in these verses?" Let us see. The authorities speak on this point. “The New Testament word “revelling” is the word Komos or Comus. Robinson’s Greek Lexicon says it means a revel, carousel; a merry-making after a supper, the guests sallying with torches, music and frolic. The modern version of that would be dimmed lights and the dance band.

But again, the Liddell & Scott Greek Lexicon is more specific. This lexicon says that revellings were jovial festivities with music and dancing, entertainments which ended in party parading and dancing in honor of victors at games.

Both of these lexicons give all three of the Bible passages mentioned-Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:21; 1 Pet. 4:3—as examples of the New Testament meaning of the word revelling. It was dancing then, and dancing is revelling now; and revelling is condemned in the New Testament.
In addition to the lexicons, which give definitions of New Testament words, the translators and commentators also speak. The author of Vincent’s Word Studies, was M. R. Vincent, and he was one of the translators of our English New Testament. He says that the revelling referred to was festival entertainment that was accompanied by carousings and dancing. Philip Schaff was president of the committee of American translators, and editor of the commentary on the New Testament compiled by the various translators. The commentary states that the word “revelling” in 1 Pet. 4:3 meant an entertainment celebrated in honor of the victors at national games, with dances.

The lexical definitions describe, what is now called the “square” dance, being revived nowadays with claims of innocence and public sanction. These references are given to prove that either form of the modern dance is the revelling condemned in the Bible, and to answer the worn-out claim that there is no verse in the Bible that condemns the modern dance. If it is still insisted that these verses do not use the word “dance,” we simply reply that the word used embraced
a group of evil things, some less evil than the dance, and must include the greater evil. The *dance* is in the word revelling, is a part of it, and is condemned by it.

Members of the church who persist in this licentious practice are subject to discipline. No member of the church who dances should be allowed to teach the classes, lead in young people’s activities, be used in the public services of the church or assigned to any place of influence in the congregation. To do so is to flirt with worldliness and invite evil. It is a blot on the spiritual rating of the church.

The public “square dance,” sponsored by some towns and communities invites street girls and lewd women from various places. What decent husband or father could allow a wife or daughter to be mixed up in such a thing?

There are some parents who give their daughters dancing lessons to keep them from being “clumsy,” and to make them “graceful,” but who say they never intend for them to attend dances. That is about like giving them the itch, but telling them not to scratch!
These sponsored dances are a dark blot on the moral standing of any community, far below the culture and dignity of civilized society to say nothing of the ethics of Christianity. With pleasure I have read lately of some instances where members of the church as good citizens have exerted enough influence to ban dancing from the public schools where they live. The public schools have no right to degrade our children and corrupt their morals. School authorities have no right to divert gymnasiums from the original purpose of physical education into dens of debauchery for boys and sources of seduction for girls. Some innocent young girls may not have been aroused to this moral evil, but mature people with the passions of normal men and women who profess to see no harm in such a thing do not have enough moral character to have charge of either the physical or spiritual direction of our children. Citizens of high moral concepts out of the church should oppose the sponsoring of the dance by public officials or by the public schools, in the name of morality and common decency; and members of the church should oppose all such in the name of Jesus Christ.
WILSON WALLACE DANCE ARTICLES
COMMENDED: From B. C. McCarley, San Angelo, Texas: “Would it be possible to obtain 200 copies?” Allen Killom, Springfield, Tenn: “Wilson’s article on Dancing is a power. Have’ you extra copies on hand?” H. E. Taylor, Winter Haven, Fla.: “Would it be possible to secure 100 extra copies?” Frank L. Smith, Shawnee, Okla., suggests a reprint of several thousand copies for general distribution. These are a few of many expressions of praise for the Wilson Wallace article against the dance evil.

ANENT THE JORGENSON SONGBOOK: The Taylor Boulevard Church, through Grover Stevens, their preacher, has ordered a reprint of 3,000 copies of the Number 10 TORCH dealing with the Jorgenson Songbook and the Janes Will, for distribution in the Louisville area. Word comes also that the bad songbook is being discarded and destroyed in several places, Vernon, Texas, among this number. So may it be everywhere. Many orders have been received for from fifty to two hundred copies of that issue of TORCH.
WANTED: The addresses of: W. F. Lee, formerly San Bernardino, Calif.; Otis L. Deshazo, formerly Clearwater, Fla., or Calif.; W. P. Haney, formerly Key West, Fla.; Elbert Schory, formerly New Philadelphia, Ohio; Melvin V. Page, formerly Fort Worth, Texas; Herman Black Jr., formerly Jefferson City, Mo. These names are on a paid-in-advance list for Bulwarks Of Faith. Notices have been returned, and we wish correct addresses in order to deliver the books.

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