



Dear Precious Friend,

August, 2012

Fruits Worthy of Repentance

Act 16:31

*And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, **and your house.***

Many of us have declared this word numerous times regarding the salvation of our loved ones, believing that if WE are saved, that GOD has obliged Himself through this verse to bring in our whole family. We have taken this promise *by faith* and have entrusted our families to the Lord. Some of us have seen quick results with family members coming at once to the Lord, some of us have had to wait and some of us are still waiting.

Recently I had a recurrent dream about a family member that shook me to the core and changed my understanding of household salvation. In the dream, I saw my loved one come before the Lord on the day of their demise. I could see the face of Jesus as this loved one stood before Him. The Lord was weeping rivers of tears. Then His arm shot out to the side in a gesture that banished this person from His presence forever! The Lord is gracious and compassionate (*His tears*), but He is also just (*His gesture of banishment*). I woke up shocked and trembling! I entered into a prayer of anguish for this family member's salvation.

My loved one had prayed a prayer of salvation, but I never saw the complete life change that always accompanies true conversion. There was no desire to go to church, to read the scriptures or to fellowship with other believers. Somehow, even I had believed that this member of my family was saved simply because a prayer of salvation was uttered and a declaration of faith in Jesus was made. Beloved, I was as deceived as they were.

Jas 2:19

You believe that there is one God; You do well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

This was a wake-up call for me, but I believe that it goes way beyond my personal family experience and extends to the body of Christ. The enemy has led numbers of us into a passive slumber regarding this promise of household salvation. Others in the body have been fooled into welcoming false or incomplete conversions into our midst, overlooking wrong, misguided and untransformed behavior, and in so doing, we ourselves have become weak and negligent in our prayers and intercessions for the souls of men and debilitated in our proclamation of the truth. Our fervency and urgency has been robbed from us.

What does it mean when the Lord promises to save us AND OUR HOUSE? How does this promise come to pass? Is God obliged to save every member of our family because WE have come into the Kingdom?

In Joshua Chapter 2 we gain a greater understanding of how an entire household is brought into the Kingdom by reading the story of the Hebrew spies and the harlot Rahab whose whole household was marvellously saved. How did it happen?

Jos 2:9-13 And she (*Rahab*) said unto the men (*the Hebrew spies*), I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For **we have heard** how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when you came out of Egypt; and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side of Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And **as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts melted**, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: **for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath**. Now therefore, I pray, swear to me by the LORD, since I have showed you kindness, that you will also show kindness to my father's house, and **give me a true token: And that you will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death**.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Rahab declares that they have heard about the Lord and His mighty works. She confesses that their hearts had melted (*repentance*). She completes her faith by confessing that the God of the Hebrews, He is God. Furthermore, she demonstrates her faith through works by risking her own life to save the spies.

Jas 2:25

Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

She asks for a demonstration of kindness from the Hebrew spies to save her whole family and deliver them ALL from death.

The Hebrew spies, (*like the Lord*), don't merely say, "sure, you believe in our God and have hid us and we are grateful. We'll do what you ask for your whole family." They respond to her by revealing the conditions for household salvation in accordance with God's everlasting blood covenant:

Jos 2:18-21 Behold, when we come into the land, you shall bind this line of scarlet thread (*a picture of the Passover blood of the Lamb that delivers from death*) in the window which you let us down by: and you shall bring your father, and your mother, and your brethren, and all your father's household, home to you. And it shall be, **that whosoever shall go out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him**. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

Household salvation (*like any other salvation*) is not automatic and does not override the free will of our loved ones or anyone else.

It also does not release us from the awesome responsibility of agonizing in prayer over their souls and of speaking the truth to their consciences in love until they are brought into the house of the Lord and covered in the blood. Rahab had to bring her family into her home.

After waking up from the first dream and praying in anguish for my loved one bound for hell, I fell asleep again. Immediately, I saw the SAME DREAM! Jesus was weeping and banishing my family member from heaven. I was undone! Immediately I was awakened to the reality that I had not taken full responsibility to pray fervently and proclaim the full gospel, with the consequences of refusal, and I had given that family member a false sense of security. I called my loved one that day and very firmly said that if they didn't completely surrender their life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, that they would not make it and that they were on a very slippery path. I pleaded with them to turn from their wicked ways and to show fruits worthy of repentance.

What are these fruits/works worthy of repentance?

Rahab risked her life by hiding the spies and identifying with the God of Israel rather than with His enemies. She completely came out from her own people, the enemies of God. Rahab brought her whole family into her house that was kept by the scarlet thread (*the blood of the covenant*). She did this according to the word of the spies.

Jos 6:23-25

And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. And they burned the city with fire, and all that *was* therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. **And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwells in Israel even to this day;** because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

Through the ministry of John the Baptist, we can see further what the fruits worthy of repentance are:

Luk 3:8-14

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say to you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. And now also the axe is laid to the root of the trees: every tree therefore which doesn't bring forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, **what shall we do then?** He answered and said to them, He that has two coats, let him impart to him that has none; and he that has meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said to him, Master, **what shall we do?** And he said to them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, **And what shall we do?** And he said to them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

John the Baptist preached a message of repentance UNTO remission of sins that had the power to touch the conscience of the multitudes. They were now eager to demonstrate their repentance and faith through works worthy of that repentance. Those who truly repent will also ask the same question: What shall we **do?**

Through John the Baptist, God is declaring that if someone has TRULY repented and believed in the true and living God, there must be signs (*fruits; works*) of repentance that will demonstrate that the believer has fully turned away from sin. The iniquity that was

once practiced will no longer be a part of that converted man. If one was a thief, he will no longer steal. If one was a liar, he will no longer lie.

We see another demonstration of the fruits/works worthy of repentance in the Jailer of Macedonia.

Act 16:26-34

And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison **awaking out of his sleep**, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do yourself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, **Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your house. And they spoke to him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.** And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

We see a true conversion here of both the Jailer and his household. He heard, he repented and in faith said, "Sirs what must I do to be saved?" Then we see his works worthy of repentance. The danger at hand of being killed by his superiors did not deter the Jailer from risking his own life to take Paul and Silas into his own home. The one who had kept the Apostles bound in jail, was now washing the wounds inflicted upon them and feeding them. There was a complete transformation in the heart and behavior of the Jailer. Please note also that Paul spoke the word of the Lord to ALL that were in the Jailer's house and they were ALL baptized immediately. They didn't automatically get saved because of the faith of the Jailer. Neither did Paul have to coerce them to be baptized for they were immediately prepared to demonstrate their repentance and faith. Beloved, we have preached a false and watered-down gospel for too long, one that has not only given the lost sinner a false sense of comfort and security, but we, the body of Christ, have fallen asleep on the job. We have not agonized in prayer nor preached to the conscience of Israel, nor to the nations, nor to our families and we are reaping the consequences of that falsity: spurious "believers" in our families, weak "believers" in the body who are yet in their sins, others needing years of "inner healing" and "deliverance", and those who ought to be teachers by now, but are still needing the milk of the word, and much more.

The Lord was gracious to wake me up! When I pray now for the lost, including the unsaved members of my family, I feel a restored agony in my heart that had diminished for a number of years. Perhaps it's time for you to wake up also. Do you agonize over the souls of men and over your loved ones or have you become passive and oblivious to their true condition before the Lord? Do you preach the true gospel, warning the sinner of the present state of his soul and the slippery slope before him or do you leave him to his own devices? Perhaps it's time for you to wake up O sleeper.

*Awakened For His Purposes,
Greta Mavro
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