

Difficult Scriptures

10/15/88
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I. Scripture: Ephesians 2:8-9

II. How This Verse Is Misused By Some

People sometimes use this verse to say we don't need works, because we are saved by grace through faith and not by works. By "works" a person might mean the law in general; or just the Sabbath, tithing and the Holy Days; or good works of charity in general.

III. True Explanation

- A. Preliminary thoughts: Remember that although people say you don't have to keep the law, they really don't mean this literally. Do they mean you can kill or steal or murder with impunity? No, of course not. What they do mean is that you can break the Sabbath, not tithe and not keep the Holy Days, etc. Remember this when you explain such verses so, if need be, you can point out this inconsistent and hypocritical stance toward the law.
- B. This scripture shows that we are saved by faith -- not works -- but it does not in any way show that works are not needed. In fact, the very next verse -- verse 10 -- shows that we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus "unto good works." That is the purpose for which we are alive.
- C. Salvation comes as a gift from God. We could never earn salvation in a million lifetimes of perfect obedience, but many scriptures prove that obedience is a condition we must meet before God will give us, as a free gift, salvation. "If thou wilt enter into life," said Christ, "keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). God gives His holy spirit only to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32). If any man says he knows God and doesn't keep His commandments, he is a liar (I John 2:4).
- D. Faith and works go together. Faith without works is dead, and faith is perfected by our works (James 2:20-22).

