

Are you saved by faith alone?

In Romans 10:8-3, Paul states "... if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with his heart and is so justified, and one who confesses with the mouth and so is saved". To properly interpret what Paul was saying, you need to look into the context of Romans Chapter 10. In this chapter, Paul is contrasting the *language of the law* and the *language of faith* (Rom 10:5-13) at a time (1st century) when confessing Jesus as Lord was hazardous to a Jew's secular standing and even economic status. Paul is not making the distinction that *faith alone* is needed for justification.

Jn 3:13-17: "so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life... For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him", is again misinterpreted by some as "belief (faith) alone", where in reality, the word "alone" is nowhere in the passage. Jn 3:19-20 continues: "And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but the people preferred darkness to light, because their works (*ergon*) were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his *ergon* might not be exposed." The people didn't prefer darkness to light because they lacked faith, but rather because of their evil *ergon*.

There is only one location in the entire Bible where the words "faith" and "alone" are used in the context of justification. "See how a person is justified by works and **not** by faith alone. And in the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by a different route? For just as a body without a spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead" (Jas 2:24-26).

For a more detailed analysis on this subject, see the Point Paper entitled *Sola Fide*.