

Sermon #29 — Habakkuk Series

Title:            **USELESS RELIGION**

Text:            Habakkuk 2:18-19

Subject:        *True and False Religion*

Date:            Tuesday Evening — May 17, 2011

Tape #          *Habakkuk #29*

Readings:      *Darin Duff and Larry Brown*

Introduction:

Many years ago **J. C. Ryle** wrote, “There are two ways a man may lose his own soul. [1] He may lose his soul by living and dying without any religion at all. He may live and die like a beast, prayerless, godless, graceless, and faithless. This is a sure way to hell. [2] He may lose his soul by taking up some useless kind of religion. He may live and die contenting himself with a false Christianity, resting on a baseless hope. This is the most common way to hell that there is.”

I want to talk to you about **USELESS RELIGION**. You may ask, “Pastor, What is useless religion. Surely, any religion is better than no religion.” Not so! — **Useless religion is far worse than no religion, because useless religion convinces unregenerate men and women that all is well with**

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**their souls when nothing is well.** In the practice of useless religion, men, women, and children **eat and drink damnation to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body,** not knowing who Christ is, what He came into this world in human flesh to do, what He actually accomplished by His obedience unto death as the sinners' Substitute (Most people do not know what He did or why He did it.), where He is now, or how He saves sinners by His grace and righteousness, through His blood.

- All false religion is useless religion.
- All useless religion is idolatry.

Open your Bible to **Habakkuk 2:18-19**, and you will see that God's prophet Habakkuk, writing by Divine inspiration, denounced the useless religion of Babylon as soul-damning idolatry.

**(Habakkuk 2:18-19)** “What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? 19 Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall

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teach! Behold, it [is] laid over with gold and silver, and [there is] no breath at all in the midst of it.”

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Let me be crystal clear. I want no one to mistake me, misunderstand me, or fail to hear clearly what I have to say.

- Useless religion is any religion in which the Lord Jesus Christ is not the sole object of faith.
- Useless religion is any religion that denies the merit and efficacy of Christ's precious, sin-atoning blood.
- Useless religion is any religion that teaches sinners to produce righteousness. — The Gospel of Christ proclaims righteousness accomplished. — The Ready to Wear Garment of Salvation is the Righteousness of Christ.
- Useless religion is any religion that offers salvation by robbing God of His perfect holiness and forgiveness by the compromise of His inflexible justice. — The advocates of useless religion have no clue as to the necessity of the

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incarnation, obedience, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. — **They have no idea of how God can be just and justify the ungodly.** — Their religion is filled with sentimentality and void of truth. — As Paul put it, they eat and drink damnation to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body, not knowing Christ!

- Useless religion speaks much of **the love of God**, but makes the love of God universal and thereby useless and meaningless.
- Useless religion talks much about **the blood of Christ**, but makes the blood of Christ a universal sacrifice for all men and thereby useless and meaningless.
- Useless religion says much about **the work of God the Holy Spirit**, but makes the work of the Holy Spirit a work, an influence upon all men alike and thereby useless and meaningless.
- Useless religion **makes the Triune God a failure** and thereby no God at all!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Noel Smith's blasphemous declaration**: — “What is hell? It is an infinite negation. And it is more than that. I tell you, and I say it with profound reverence, hell is a ghastly monument to the failure of the triune God to save the multitudes who are there. I say it reverently, I say it with every nerve in

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- Useless religion **rests on the footing of man's works**, not upon the grace and power of the God.
- Useless religion is any religion which suggests or implies that the Lord our **God is unable** to fulfill His will toward men unless they give Him permission.
- Useless religion **puts the creature in the place of the Creator**, — making the will of the Creator subject to the will of the creature, — making the power of God subject to the power of man, — making the purpose of God subject to the permission of man!
- Useless religion is any religion that **makes salvation dependent upon man's will**, not God's will.
- Useless religion is any religion that **makes a sinner feel good about himself**, look to himself, or trust in himself.
- Useless religion is any religion **established upon the traditions of men, the creeds of men, and the inventions of men**. — God's Church is built upon the Foundation of Jesus Christ crucified, the

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my body tense; sinners go to hell because God almighty Himself couldn't save them! He did all he could, he failed!"

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Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, — the Word of the living God!

- Useless religion may look good in the eyes of men, and it may feel good to those who practice it, but religion without Christ will do the deceived one no good in the day of death and judgment.
- Useless religion will never result in the salvation of the soul.
- Useless religion can never meet the approval of the thrice holy God who demands “*it must be perfect to be accepted.*”
- Any religion without Christ is damning! — Any religion that adds anything to Christ is damning! — Any religion that takes anything away from Christ is damning!

## IF EVER

If ever the God of Glory is pleased to reveal His Son in you, if the Lord God is pleased to save you, if He gives you life and faith in Christ, if God the Holy Spirit comes to you in mercy and sprinkles your heart with the blood of Christ, if King Jesus ever comes to take possession of your heart, if ever He casts Satan

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out and sets up His throne in your heart, your useless religion, your refuge of lies will be destroyed (Isaiah 28:14-20).

**(Habakkuk 2:19)** “Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it [is] laid over with gold and silver, and [there is] no breath at all in the midst of it.”

**(Isaiah 28:14-20)** “Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which [is] in Jerusalem. 15 Because ye have said, **We have made a covenant with death,** and **with hell are we at agreement;** when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: 16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, **Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone], a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.**”

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“17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and **the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies**, and **the waters shall overflow the hiding place**. 18 And **your covenant with death shall be disannulled**, and **your agreement with hell shall not stand**; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. 19 From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only [to] understand the report. 20 **For the bed is shorter than that [a man] can stretch himself [on it]**: and **the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself [in it]**.”

(Habakkuk 2:19) “Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it [is] laid over with gold and silver, and [there is] no breath at all in the midst of it.”

**ISAIAH 45**

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Turn to Isaiah 45. Hear the God of Heaven speak. In Isaiah 45 the Lord **God is, throughout the chapter, describing Himself, distinguishing Himself from all the imaginary gods of men, distinguishing Himself from all the gods men make.** Let's look at Isaiah 45:20-22 for just a few minutes.

(Isaiah 45:20-22 ) “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and **pray unto a god that cannot save.** (21) Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and **there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour;** *there is* none beside me. (22) **Look unto me, and be ye saved,** all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.”

In these verses of Scripture, the Lord our God, the great, almighty, sovereign, eternal God, calls before Him the people of the nations of the earth. He calls

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you who hear the Gospel, by the voice of this preacher and the message you now hear, to assemble before Him. Then He speaks. **God Himself condescends to speak to men**, fallen, sinful, hell-bent, hell-deserving men and women. **What mercy!** God against whom we have sinned, God whose name we have cursed and blasphemed, God whose wrath we deserve, speaks us by the Gospel. He speaks not in angry words of wrath, but in tender words of mercy and grace.

**Proposition:** In these three verses the Lord God graciously reasons with us, calling sinners to salvation, life, and faith in His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. — **“Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart.”**

**Divisions:** Hold your Bibles open on your laps. I want you to see for yourselves the things that are here spoken by the God of Glory. **These are not my words, the words of another man, or the words of a religious creed. These are the words of God Himself.** In these three verses, God Almighty speaks

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from heaven to sinners upon the earth about three things.

1. Lost, Unregenerate, Religious People (v. 20).
2. His Own Glorious, Saving Character (v. 21).
3. The Salvation He Performs. (v. 22).

## LOST RELIGIONISTS

*First*, in verse twenty, He speaks to and describes lost, unregenerate, religious people.

**(Isaiah 45:20)** “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that cannot save.*”

**These are the very same people Habakkuk describes in our text, doing the very same thing** (Habakkuk 2:19).

(Habakkuk 2:19) “Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it [is] laid over with gold and

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silver, and [there is] no breath at all in the midst of it.”

**All men and women are religious.** Everyone has some kind of religion, some kind of god, and some kind of refuge. Everyone has some concept of God, and some form of religious faith and hope. The fact is **most people are very religious.** I do not suggest for a moment that they are spiritual, or that they are saved; but most people are quite religious. The vast majority of the people we meet and do business with, most of our friends, and most of our relatives are described by our Lord as people who have **entered the wide gate and walk in the broad way** that leads to destruction. They have entered into and walk in **“a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”** (Proverbs 16:25). In this twentieth verse, God tells us **THREE THINGS** about all lost, unregenerate, religious people.

### 1. **“They have no knowledge.”**

We are not told that they have a little knowledge or misguided knowledge; but that **“they have no**

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**knowledge.**” Lost, unregenerate, religious people have absolutely no spiritual knowledge. Their ignorance is blatantly manifest almost every time they open their mouths. In order for a person to know anything spiritual, he must be born again (John 3:3-7). He must be taught of God. He must have the mind of Christ imparted to him in regeneration (1 Corinthians 2:14-16).

**(1 Corinthians 2:14-16)** “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. (15) But he that is spiritual judgeth **(discerns)** all things, yet he himself is judged **(discerned)** of no man. (16) For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

It does not matter how religious people are. It does not matter how long they have studied the Bible and what men say about the Bible. It does not matter how much experience they have, or how phenomenal their

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experience is. Natural, unregenerate people have no knowledge of...

- Themselves.
- God.
- Sin.
- Righteousness.
- Salvation.

### 2. They “set up the wood of their graven image.”

They all worship a god that they have whittled out of the dark forests of their own depraved minds (Romans 1:21-23).

**(Romans 1:21-23)** “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (23) And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.”

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I realize that the refined, civilized, educated people I preach to around the country do not worship images carved from tree stumps, chiseled from granite, or molded even from gold and silver. Yet, most of the people in Baptist churches (as well as all other churches, without exception) in America **worship a little god which they have whittled from their own little minds, a god that no more resembles the God of the Bible than an ant resembles an angel.** He is described in the next line of our text.

3. **They worship, serve, and “pray unto a god that cannot save.”**

Turn to **2 Timothy 3**. Here the Apostle Paul tells us that in these last days “**perilous times shall come.**” Now notice in verse five how he describes the men and women of this age. Remember, he is describing religious people.

**(2 Timothy 3:5)** “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”

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Our Lord Jesus said to the Jews and religious leaders of His day, — “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God” (Matthew 22:29). That is exactly what is wrong with the religious world in which we live. The Apostle Paul describes all legalistic, Arminian free-will, works religion as “*another gospel,*” preaching another god, another Jesus, another spirit, and another salvation. He here calls it a religion that is a mere “form of godliness;” and he declares that it is a mere form of godliness because it denies the power of God.

Bro. Henry Mahan had an article in his bulletin many years ago with this very issue. He listed five areas in which the religion of our day is but a mere form of godliness.

1. A FORM of godliness says, “God wills to save all men;” denying His POWER adds, “but He cannot save unless men open their hearts to Him.”
2. A FORM of godliness says, “God has a wonderful plan for men and women;” denying

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**His POWER** adds, “but you must allow Him to have His will and way.”

3. **A FORM of godliness** says, “Christ died on the cross for all the sins of all the sons of Adam that all might be saved;” **denying the POWER of His blood** adds, “but His blood has no power or efficacy to save anyone until man releases it to work.”
4. **A FORM of godliness** says, “The Holy Spirit knocks at everyone’s heart with a desire to enter and work repentance and faith;” **denying the POWER adds**, “but you must open the door.”
5. **A FORM of godliness** says, “Salvation is of the Lord;” **denying the POWER adds**, “but those whom He saves may fall away and perish.”

**How are we to treat such religion?** How are we to deal with those who preach it and promote it to the everlasting ruin of men’s souls? Paul tells us plainly, — **“from such turn away!”**

## GOD’S CHARACTER

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Now look at Isaiah 45:21. Here the Lord God contrasts himself with the gods of men who cannot save. He tells us that He is a God who can save; and in this verse He asserts **His own glorious, saving character.**

**(Isaiah 45:21)** “Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me.”

Look at his verse closely. Too often we read a familiar text too quickly and miss the full scope of its teaching. In this verse of Scripture the Lord God declares **five things about Himself**, five things which identify Him as God. Listen to what the text says. If the god you worship, if the god to which you pray, if your idea and concept of God lacks any of these five characteristics, then your god is but a graven image, a useless, imaginary god. **This is God’s description of God.**

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1. He who is God has an absolute, unalterable, sure purpose, by which all things are governed.

In the opening part of verse twenty-one, the Lord God challenges men to bring all their peanut gods and let them all take counsel together. I challenge you to do the same. Gather up all the gods of men, the Baptist gods, the Mormon gods, the Catholic gods, the Anglican gods, the Russellite gods, Hindu gods, Islam gods, Jewish gods, and all the other gods of men. Let them all take counsel together. Find me one in the whole bunch who has declared absolutely, from ancient times, from eternity, all things that are, have been, and shall hereafter be. Our God has!

(Isaiah 46:9-11) “Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; *I am* God, and *there is* none like me, (10) Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: (11) Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it

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to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it.”

He who is God has an absolute, unalterable purpose; and He “worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.”

2. He who is truly God truly is God, He declares Himself to be “I the LORD.”

Do you see that? He is not a lord. Our God is “the LORD.” He is the only LORD. He is LORD everywhere, at all times, over everything. He controls the universe absolutely. He has His way in the whirlwind. The clouds are the dust of His feet. The thoughts of men’s hearts, the roll of the dice, and the paths of the fish in the sea are all under His total rule. I am talking to you about God, not some peanut, imaginary god, but God!

(Isaiah 45:7) “I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things.*”

(Psalms 115:3) “Our God *is* in the heavens: he

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hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.”

**(Psalms 135:6)** “Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”

### **3. He who is God is God alone.**

He declares there is none with Him, none like Him, and none but Him. **Most people are really pantheists<sup>2</sup> and polytheists.** They believe God is in everything and everybody. They believe that just about every man’s notion of God really is God: Buddhists, Mohammedans, Jews, Papists, Mormons, Barbarians, and Baptists; but most people are wrong. There is but one God.

### **4. He who is God is a just God.**

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<sup>2</sup> There is not an ounce of difference between the educated environmentalists of our society who worship “mother earth” and the pagan Hindu of India who worships cattle, and rats, and bugs.

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Much could and should be said about God's justice; but I will say just three things regarding it here. These three things simply must be understood.

- A just God must and shall punish all sin.
- A just God cannot save sinners apart from the satisfaction of His justice. — “**By mercy and truth iniquity is purged**” (Proverbs 16:6), but not by any other means.
- A just God cannot punish any for sin for whom Christ died. — A just God cannot punish the same offense twice.

Blessed be His name, the justice of God has been satisfied for sinners by the obedience and death of the Lord Jesus Christ His dear Son! In Him mercy and truth have met together. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Therefore, upon the grounds of Christ's obedience and death as the sinner's Substitute, the Lord God declares this fifth thing about himself.

5. **He who is God indeed is both “a just God and a Savior.”**

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That is exactly what the Lord God told Moses about Himself back in Exodus when He showed him His glory; and that is exactly what Paul tells us in the third chapter of Romans (Exodus 33:19; 34:5-7; Romans 3:24-26).

## GOD'S SALVATION

In the last place, I want you to look at Isaiah 45:22 and hear this great and glorious Lord God, who is both a just God and a Savior, declare **the salvation He performs**. If you would be saved, hear and obey this word from God our Savior.

**(Isaiah 45:22)** “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is none else.*”

- Look to Christ.
- Look only to Christ.
- Look to Christ for everything (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).
- Look to Christ always.

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**As the children of Israel looked to that brazen serpent in the wilderness and lived, so every sinner who looks away to Christ shall be saved by the grace and power of this great God, who is our Savior** (Colossians 2:9-15).

## **GRACE**

“Naught have I gotten, but what I received;  
Grace hath bestowed it since I have believed!  
Boasting excluded, pride I abase -  
I’m only a sinner, saved by grace!

Suffer a sinner whose heart overflows,  
Loving his Savior to tell what he knows,  
Once more to tell it would I embrace, —  
I’m only a sinner, saved by grace!”

**Salvation is the work of God’s grace alone.** And the grace of God by which we have been saved is...

- Sovereign Grace!
- Eternal Grace!
- Unconditional Grace!
- Immutable Grace!

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- Effectual Grace!
- In Christ, by Christ, from Christ, and for the praise of the glory of the Triune God in Christ.

**(Colossians 2:9-15)** “In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (10) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: (11) In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: (12) Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. (13) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; (14) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (15) *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

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**Any mixture of works with grace is a total denial of grace** (Galatians 5:1-4; Romans 11:6).

(Romans 11:6) “And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

Galatians 5:1-4 “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (2) Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. (3) For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. (4) Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

**Salvation is “Christ in you”** (Colossians 1:27). **It is being “made partakers of the Divine nature”** (2 Peter 1:4). **Christ must be formed in you** (Galatians 4:19). **You must be created anew in Christ** (2 Corinthians 5:17). **That takes the power and grace**

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of God. Salvation by grace is a miraculous work which only God can perform. The new birth is a resurrection from the dead; and a resurrection is a miraculous thing!

“It took a miracle to put the stars in place,  
It took a miracle to hang the world in space,  
But when God saved my soul,  
Cleansed and made me whole,  
It took a miracle of love and grace!”

## FAITH

You’ve got that don’t you? Salvation is by grace alone, in Christ alone, the work of God alone. You’ve got that don’t you? — Now, be sure you get this too: — Isaiah 45:22 calls for sinners to do something. He says, “Look unto me!” Looking is trusting. Looking is an act of faith. Our Lord Jesus tells us that we are saved by faith.

- Faith is not the cause of salvation.
- That is the grace of God.
- Faith is not the basis of salvation. That is the obedience of Christ.

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- Faith is not the power by which salvation is performed. That is the call of the Spirit.

**Faith is not our Savior. Christ is our Savior; but faith is the means by which salvation is received and enjoyed; and personal faith in Christ is vital. Without it, you will never be saved.**

**Look at Luke 7:50** — “*And he said to the woman, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.*” — You know the story of this woman. It is one of the most touching and instructive stories in the Bible. The object of her faith was Christ. Her tears washed His feet. Her hair was the towel with which she dried His feet. Her lips tenderly kissed His feet. What does this story teach us about faith?

- Saving faith looks to Christ. She came to Him.
- Saving faith grieves over sin. She wept.
- Saving faith is humble. It takes its place “*at His feet.*”
- Saving faith loves Christ. She kissed His feet.
- Saving faith is submissive, self-denying and sacrificial. — “*Costly ointment!*” (Mark 14:4-5).

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- Saving faith serves Christ. — “*She hath done what she could*” (Mark 14).

**Now look at Luke 18:42.** Our Lord spoke these same words to blind Bartemaeus. — “*Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee.*” The experiences of Bartemaeus and the woman in Luke 7 were not at all alike. Their faith was the same. It had the same object — Christ; and it had the same characteristics — humility and repentance, love and submission; but they experienced different things.

- **The woman’s faith acted like a woman.** She showed tenderness and affection. **The man’s faith acted like a man.** He showed determination and strength, crying, “*Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!*”
- **The woman did not speak.** As a woman should be in public, she was silent. **The man continued to cry aloud.** He could not be silenced.
- **The woman wept much. The man pleaded for mercy.**
- **The woman’s faith gave quiet service to the honor of Christ. The man’s faith gave public praise to the honor of Christ.**

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The important thing to note is the fact that though their experiences differed greatly; their faith was the same. They both believed Christ. **That simply means this:** — There is no need for you to try to match your experience of grace with mine. Do not look to your own experience or to mine. Look to Christ alone. — *“Look unto Me!”*

“My faith looks up to Thee,  
Thou Lamb of Calvary,  
Savior divine!  
Now hear me while I pray,  
Take all my sin away,  
Oh let me from this day  
Be wholly Thine!”

God save us from useless religion; and save us from its influence! May God the Holy Spirit give you faith in Christ! Oh, may it please our God graciously to enable you to obey the call He has given. — *“Look unto Me!”*

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It is a useless thing to call upon a useless god. But looking to Christ is Salvation, free, everlasting salvation! — He alone is God who is God “*mighty to save!*”

(Habakkuk 2:18-19) “What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? 19 Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it [is] laid over with gold and silver, and [there is] no breath at all in the midst of it.”

(Isaiah 45:20-22) “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye [that are] escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god [that] cannot save. 21 Tell ye, and bring [them] near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? [who] hath told it from that time? [have] not I the LORD? And [there is] no God else beside me; a

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just God and a Saviour; [there is] none beside me. 22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I [am] God, and [there is] none else.”

Amen.