

Without a Cause

It is obvious that in order to be saved by the good news of the offer of the water of life, which is the Holy Spirit, or to be sealed with the Holy Spirit, one must not remain an unbeliever by being a coward. Instead, one must have the courage to forsake all that the gospel says one must forsake in order to drink freely, without a cause to turn the gift down for fear of losing his life, possessions, job, or for fear of the rejection of family members. This entails all that our Master commanded in Mk 10:17-30, an incident which is recorded in three accounts of the Good News, showing what one must do to be saved from this perverted generation he now lives in. Acts 2:36-45 tells the story that illustrates what their Master told them to do just before He was taken up (Mt 28:18-20).

Rev 21:6-8 and 22:17 — It is plainly seen here that one must overcome and not shrink back as the rich young ruler did when eternal life was offered to him, which he could have freely received after obeying the One who could give it to him. But he shrank back as a coward, and the wrath of God remained upon him (Jn 3:36, NAS, RSV, ESV), since through fear he turned down the water of life, which he could have received along with the Master's disciples (Mk 10:26-30) whom He had commanded to do the same thing in order to be able to receive the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19-20).

In Rev 21:6-8, speaking of the free gift, it does *not* say that one does not have to do anything to have eternal life. It was not so with the rich young ruler, and it is not so with the one in Rev 21:7 who must “overcome all things” that the gospels say one must overcome, give up, forsake, or hate in order to be a follower of Messiah on this earth — a disciple (Lk 14:26,33).

So the free gift is not without cost, is it? It costs you everything, even your own life, not just all your possessions. Jn 12:25 is the prerequisite of following the Giver of eternal life, where He is (verse 26), and serving Him there. If one will not obey Him and His gospel, then he really doesn't believe in Him at all, since he does not trust Him.

If we read Jn 3:36 right,¹ as Acts 5:32 also says, then all who do not obey Him (His word, His gospel) will find themselves among those of 2 Ths 1:8-9. 1 Pet 4:17 asks the question that 2 Ths 1:8-9 answers. All who do drink the water of life and follow Him must continue to obey Him (Jn 8:51) in order to not have happen to them what Rev 2:11 and 3:5 says can happen to believers in Him who do not obey Him — His word and His commandments (Jn 14:15,21). 1 Jn 2:3-6 could be true of us, if we are pretending — “only make believe” you love Him or know Him.

All who, in hearing the gospel as Jn 7:17-18 and Mt 10:40-41 and Lk 10:16 and Jn 13:20, shrink back after hearing the “many other words” (Mt 28:20; Acts 2:40; 5:32), are judged already as worthy of the second death (Jn 3:18,36) for refusing to believe (Acts 13:45-48). There are many reasons why people refuse and reject the water of life, all due to cowardice, “loving the praise of men more than of God” (Mt 10:37; Mk 3:31-35; Jn 12:25-26; Lk 14:26-33; Mk 10:17-22,28-30).

So does the gospel require obedience in order to be saved from the wicked and perverse generation of today, as also in Acts 2:36-45? What does it mean to believe? What kind of belief did those in Jn 2:23-25 have? To *believe* in Jn 3:16 is Jn 3:36, and to believe can be no less today than it meant when the Apostles by the power of the Holy Spirit established the first church (Acts 2:44-45). If believing is not this, then it’s not believing unto eternal life. Believing is trusting, not being too cowardly to trust, as was the rich young ruler in Mk 10:22 (Mt 19:29; Mk 10:29; Lk 18:29). The gospel records what one must do to have eternal life (Mt 19:16; Mk 10:17; Lk 18:18), and when the “good Master” told him what he had to do, what did he do? What did the 3000 do after they were cut to the heart for crucifying their “good Master”? (Acts 2:36-37)

¹ In the NAS, RSV, and ESV, it says “does not obey,” which agrees with the translation of the same word (#544, *apeitheo*) in 1 Pet 4:17 in almost all versions of the New Testament.

Do you think that Acts 2:44-45 would have been possible otherwise, for example, as a result of Billy Graham's gospel (2 Cor 11:4,15)? So what did the rich young ruler do after he heard what he had to do? What did the 3000 do in order to live such a life? Acts 5:20 — What if later, after they joined a "Bible-believing church," an angel appeared before all who asked Jesus into their hearts at the New York City Billy Graham Crusade and told them to do the same thing? What would they say?

So in Rev 21:6 and 22:17, what would the Bride say, speaking the good news by the power of the Spirit in her, knowing what she herself had to do to drink the same water of life? Would she not also speak the many other words that were spoken before the 3000 were baptized (Acts 2:40-41)? Baptism is the only way they can have this water, and before the 3000 were baptized they had to hear the comprehensive gospel of what one has to do in order to drink.

As for Billy Graham's water (Jn 4:13), most who came down were already Christians, but were still thirsty, and they drank again, but never was their thirst quenched (Jn 7:37-39; Acts 2:37-45). They drank another spirit than the True One (2 Cor 11:4; 1 Jn 5:20).

So is this earning one's salvation? Tit 3:5-7 — Not by "works done by us in righteousness" (verse 5), but by giving up our life in this world — all that prevents us from following Him. But Billy Graham's gospel says that there is *nothing* one has to do to follow Him, since Christianity is the way it is, not the way "the Way" was (and is).

Rev 21:6 — The word *freely* (or whatever your translation says) means given unearned and without recompense (as Tit 3:5-6 also means), as if to buy it, but as costing nothing (except for your life in exchange for His life), free of charge (as if there were any amount of service one *could* do to earn it). But it is free only after one hears the many other words and repents, giving up his rotten, stinking life, which is all anyone has to do in order to obey what the Master says one must do in order to drink the water of life. One must be without a cause to make him unable to receive the Holy Spirit, such

as not giving up or hating his own life in this world, which hatred is expressed in giving up all his possessions and family, etc. This is what the gospel requires one to do in order to be able to drink freely — free from all causes that would prohibit one from receiving the water of life (Jn 7:37-39; Acts 2:36-45).

Not until one is able to *confess* Rom 10:9-10 (as the sincere conviction of his heart) can he drink the water of life or receive the Holy Spirit and be sealed with Him (Eph 1:13).