

Faith only?

1. Q: **What about this passage?: Ephesians 2:8** (LSB) For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;⁹ not of works, so that no one may boast.
Answer: **No single verse is the sum total** of man's part in his salvation. It doesn't mention repentance or even confession of faith, which are essential (Romans chapters 6 and 10).

2. If you affirm that a person must **repent and confess** his or her faith in order to be saved, then you don't *truly believe* in "faith alone." Repentance and confession are **actions** – belief-based actions (which is a good working definition - pardon the pun - of Biblical "faith").

See passages such as **Mark 2:5** where **faith is a visible** thing. (Jesus *saw* their faith.)

Compare **Genesis 22:12**, where God said, "Now I know that you fear God" (LSB) upon Abraham **acting** to obey God; and **James 2:18b** LSB "I will show you my faith by my works."

3. "Faith alone" is **not the way Abraham was justified**. **James 2:21** LSB Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected.

"Faith alone" is **not the way anyone in the Bible was *ever* helped by God**.

And "faith alone" is **not the way anyone in the book of Acts was *saved***. See **Acts 16:34**, for example, where the jailer "rejoiced greatly with his whole household, because **he had believed** in God" (LSB). The previous two verses tell what that entailed: He heard the word, showed his repentance, and was immediately baptized. THEN he rejoiced.

4. **"Faith alone" is not how a Christian will be saved**, either, because we are expected to *act on* our faith. We cannot be forgiven initially by an *inactive* faith and then be expected to start doing good works.

Ephesians 2:10 LSB "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them";

Titus 2:14 LSB "a people for His own possession, zealous for good works";

Philippians 2:12 LSB "Just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work...."

5. **Martin Luther corrupted** his German translation of the Bible by **adding to Romans 3:28** the word "**alone**" (<allein>) to promote the false teaching that "a man is justified by faith *alone*". But Romans 3:28 is not contrasting faith and any *action*, it is contrasting faith with "works of the Law."

The word for "alone" is not in *any* of the New Testament manuscripts, and **that concept is not found in** the book of **Romans** itself (which starts and ends with "obedience to the faith", 1:5; 16:26, and has much to say about repentance and baptism, chapter 6, and confession, chapter 10), **or anywhere else in Scripture**.

6. **There is no Scripture** that says "faith only" saves anyone on this side of the cross (that is, after Jesus actually died, etc., which gave the template we follow when we are baptized). In fact, Scripture reads, "a man is justified by works, and **not by faith only**" (**James 2:24**).

7. If you reject **Mark 16:16** (LSB He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved) because of manuscript differences, you have **two problems**:

First, you must decide how the book *does end*. Verse 8 has the disciples trembling, afraid, and not speaking to anyone. "The End. Roll Credits."???!! No way!!! That doesn't fit with the purpose of the book stated in chapter 1, namely, to tell the good news of Jesus!! So **how does the book end?!**

Secondly, even if Mark 16:16 is set aside, you still have to face the consistent teaching of the New Testament that **baptism plays a crucial part** in a person's salvation: See **Acts 2:38** ("for the forgiveness of your sins"), **1 Peter 3:21** ("now saves you"), **Acts 22:16** ("be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name"), **Colossians 2:11-13** ("the circumcision of Christ", that is, the cutting away of our sins, done by God, when we are baptized), and **Romans 6:3-4** ("baptized into Christ", "newness of life"), for starters.

In summary, a person believing in salvation by "faith alone" has no Scripture to support that belief and must leave unexplained, or disregard, or even *reject* Scriptures we *do have*.