

# Which of the Following Passages Is True?

*by Bryan Gibson*

## **John 3:16 or Hebrews 5:9?**

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

“And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:9).

One promises eternal salvation to “whoever believes”; the other promises eternal salvation to “all who obey.” Which one is right?

## **John 6:47 or John 8:51?**

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life” (John 6:47).

“Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death” (John 8:51).

So who is it that receives everlasting life—the one who believes in Jesus, or the one who keeps His word? Did Jesus contradict Himself?

## **Acts 15:8-9 or 1 Peter 1:22?**

“So God...made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:8-9).

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth...” (1 Peter 1:22).

Purification, or cleansing—is it by faith, or by obedience? Which one of these passages should I believe?

## **Acts 10:43 or Acts 2:38?**

“To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43).

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

I want to receive the remission, or forgiveness of my sins. Do I need to just simply believe, or do I need to take further action—repent and be baptized? Again, which one of these passages contains the truth?

The truth is...they all contain the truth. There is no contradiction. The above passages, especially when paired together, clearly illustrate what is plainly taught in James 2:14-16. Read the entire passage, and especially take note of the following verses:

“Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (v. 17).

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (v. 26).

“Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?” (v. 22).

“You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (v. 24)