

Teach something false and it can hang around for a long time, and consequently, lead many people astray from the truth.

Example: Salvation by Faith Alone

Martin Luther

- Way back in the 16th century, during the Protestant Reformation, he taught this doctrine vigorously.
 - “Faith **alone** justifies us and fulfills the law”
(*Preface to Romans*).
 - “The epistle of St. James is an epistle full of straw, because it contains nothing evangelical”
(*Preface to the New Testament*).
- Today, in 2017, this doctrine is still taught and believed in most Protestant denominations.

Other statements

- “Wherefore, that we are **justified by faith only** is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort” (*Methodist Discipline*, paragraph 69).

Other statements

- John R. Rice, a Baptist preacher: “What must I do to be saved?” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (quotes from Acts 16:31, from the Philippian jailer’s conversion).
- Later in the same tract, “You are not just to believe the truth about Jesus; you are to believe on Him, that is, depend upon Him, risk Him, trust Him; and when you do, you are saved.”

What about baptism?

- More from Mr. Rice: “Baptism **does not save**...it is only an act of duty for those who have already found Christ as their Savior.”
- Southern Baptist *Church Member's Handbook*: Baptism is “not essential for salvation”; it is a “figure or symbol of salvation.” “Every Christian should be baptized, not in order to be saved but because he is saved.”

Faith



Obedience

John 3:16

“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.”

Hebrews 5:9

“And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who *obey* Him.”

Faith



Obedience

John 6:47

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.”

John 8:51

“Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.”

Faith



Obedience

Acts 15:8–9

“So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as *He did* to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by *faith*.”

1 Peter 1:22

“Since you have purified your souls in *obeying the truth* through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart...”

Faith



Obedience

Acts 10:43

“To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever *believes* in Him will receive remission of sins.”

Acts 2:38

“*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.”

Back to the Philippian jailer

“And he brought them out and said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ So they said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.’ Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, **having believed in God** with all his household” (Acts 16:30–34).

Fits perfectly with James 2:14–26

- “Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (17).
- “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (26).
- “Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?” (22).
- “You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (24).

And with Hebrews 11

- “By faith Abel *offered*... (v. 4).
- By faith Noah...*prepared*... (v. 7).
- By faith Abraham *obeyed*... (v. 8).
- By faith he (Moses) *forsook* Egypt... (v. 27).
- They did these things, because they believed that “He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (v. 6).

Baptism

Mr. Rice

“Baptism does not save...it is only an act of duty for those who have already found Christ as their Savior.”

God

“Corresponding to that, **baptism now saves you**—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an **appeal to God** for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:21, NAS).

But NOT saved by baptism alone

- Jesus: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mark 16:16).
- Peter, speaking for Jesus: “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).
- When you obey the gospel, faith is working together with your works, and the result is justification, or salvation from your sins.