

Salvation & Eternal Life Are Certainly Future for Those Who Believe in Christ; the Human Side of Salvation: What Must Be Believed to Be Saved & Have Eternal Life

2. What these individuals are about to do that is certainly future is believe, the present active infinitive of the verb:

πιστεύω, *pisteuō* - “to believe”

present: Futuristic: denotes an event which has not yet occurred, but which is regarded as so certain that in thought it may be contemplated as already coming to pass.

active: Church Age unbelievers will express positive volition at Gospel hearing by believing that Jesus is the Christ and that by believing they will have eternal life.

infinitive: Purpose: The infinitive may be used to express the aim or the action denoted by the finite verb, in this case “demonstrate” His perfect patience. The purpose was so that the sinful of the Church Age would look to Paul as a demonstration of divine grace in salvation to any who would believe.
3. Next we get the final prepositional phrase which shows purpose as well as result:

εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, *eis zōē aiōnios* - “for eternal life”

 1. The proposition *eis* indicates intention, purpose, aim, end, and may be translated “for the purpose of” and therefore joins with the infinitive of *pisteuō* to indicate the purpose “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15): so that those who believe in Him and His work on the cross might be saved and have eternal life.
 2. In context the word *aiōnios* is an adjective and describes the kind of life the person possesses who believes in Christ: *zōē*: thus one of the purposes of salvation is eternal life.
 3. From the human side of salvation then the purpose of believing in the Person and work of Christ is that it results in the imputation of eternal life.
 4. Principles of the Human Side of Salvation:
 - 1) In 1 Timothy 1:16, the human side of salvation is said to be faith in Jesus Christ expressed through the verb *pisteuō*.
 - 2) Faith is a nonmeritorious system of perception in contrast to rationalism and empiricism.
 - 3) The present active infinitive of *pisteuō* is transitive meaning that it has a subject and an object stated or implied.
 - 4) The objective of *pisteuō* is salvation and it is available to any member of the human race. Its object is always the same: the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 5) A person’s faith is misdirected if he believes in Christ but does not understand Who He is. If he believes that Jesus is God and not also truly human then he fails to understand the uniqueness of His Person.

This view is called Apollinarianism after 4th century AD Syrian theologian Apollinarius \a-päl-a-nar’-ē-us\ who taught that Jesus Christ was God but not man.

- 6) It is to His true humanity that our sins were imputed and judged. Failure to recognize this implies that His deity was imputed our sins and judgment which is unthinkable and blasphemous.
- 7) To view Jesus as human but not divine ignores the principle of Messiahship and thus characterizes Him as no more than a martyr at best or a great Guy at worst.

This view is called Arianism after 4th century AD Alexandrian theologian Arius \ar'-ē-us\ who taught that Jesus Christ was man but not God. Most Gnostics held this view and there are several present-day proponents of it, e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons.
- 8) The human side of salvation must recognize that the work of Christ on the cross has both purpose and result. If the work of Christ has no lasting result then it is diminished in its importance since it has no lasting benefit.
- 9) If one does not perceive a meaningful result then he must conclude there is more to be done and this inevitably involves works, penance, ascetic adjustments of one's personality, efforts to become worthy, misunderstanding of personal suffering, and worst of all chronic doubt regarding one's eternal future.
- 10) From the human side of salvation then the purpose of *believing* in the person and work of Christ is that it *results* in the imputation of eternal life.
- 11) A summary of John 20:31 ties the concept of purpose and result together into a neat package which clearly expresses what one must believe to be saved:

Yeager, Randolph O. *The Renaissance New Testament*. (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Co., 1982), 9:34:

John 20:31. Where the action of God is involved the only difference between purpose and result is the passage of time. God's purpose is always God's result. Thus both the divine purpose and the inevitable result for the writing of John's gospel was that some would believe. The result of John's having written his book is that the believers will have life, by means of His name.

God's purpose is that we believe when we read the Gospel of John. Believe what? That is an important question since Satan has propagated the nonsense that the fact of believing is what saves not the content of what is believed. John leaves no doubt about **what** we are to believe **if** we are to **have eternal life**. We are to believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of God. This proposition is the sole ground for saving faith. Whatever else we may believe or disbelieve, the *sine qua non* of Christianity is acceptance of the proposition that the historic Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah of Israel, the ever living fulfillment of God's promise to David, and He is also the Son of God.

Once we are told by John in his gospel who Jesus is, what is the ground for our possession of eternal life? Obviously it is believing what we have been told.

- 12) Here then is the crux of the matter. If a person contends that he believes Jesus Christ died on the cross for his sins but at the same time does not believe that he has eternal life then he doesn't know if he will go to heaven when he dies. Such a person is not saved.
- 13) Why? The purpose of the work of Christ on the cross was to save sinful mankind. In order to do this He must be the Christ the Son of the living God.
- 14) This means that an unbeliever must understand that (1) Jesus of Nazareth is both God and Man, (2) in His humanity He is without sin and thus a qualified Substitute for the human race, (3) those who believe in His Person, His work, and His resurrection are saved, (4) the purpose of salvation is deliverance from the lake of fire, (5) the result of salvation is being set free into eternal life; and (6) with these things in mind he may be confident that when he dies he will go to heaven.

- 15) The intended result Christ's sacrifice was, according to Him, so that those who believe in Him might have eternal life. The many passages in Scripture that discuss the Gospel make this clear. For example:

Romans 6:23 - The wages of sin is spiritual death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 2:25 - This is the promise which Jesus Himself made to us [in **John 3:14-16**]: eternal life.

- 16) Here is that direct quote by Jesus to Nicodemus in:

John 3:14 - "As Moses lifted up the Elapid [a cobra whose venom was a picture of sin] in the *Jornada*, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up [emphasizes the cross, the resurrection, & the ascension];

v. 15 - for the purpose that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.

v. 16 - "God so loved the world, that He gave His uniquely-born Son, for the purpose that [ἵνα, *hina*: introduces purpose and result] whoever believes in Him shall not perish [purpose] but have and hold [ἔχω, *echō*] eternal life [result]."