

Filthy Rags

TEXT: Isaiah 64:1-7

For we are all become as one that is unclean, and **all our righteousnesses** are as a **polluted garment (filthy rags –KJV)**: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. **ASV**

INTRODUCTION:

A. WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

1. Some say there is nothing to be done, God does it all.
2. They say that to impose conditions makes salvation dependent on us, not God.

B. IT IS ARGUED BY THE SAME THAT WE ARE SAVED BY FAITH ONLY.

1. Isn't faith a condition?
2. They say that faith is not what we do, but what God does (**Eph. 2:8-9; John 6:29**).

C. WE NEED TO ADDRESS THIS DOCTRINE.

I. IS ALL MAN'S RIGHTEOUSNESS A FILTHY RAG?

A. THE ARGUMENT IS MADE THAT EVEN OUR BEST EFFORT IS NOT REGARDED BY THE LORD.

1. In the context, Judah's righteousness was like a filthy rag **because they had no righteousness (vs. 5-7; 46:12; 48:1; 59:1-8)**.
2. Likewise, all of us our shut up under sin (**Rom. 3:9ff., 23**).

B. DOES GOD REGARD OUR RIGHTEOUS BEHAVIOR?

1. Peter's testimony (**Acts 10:34-35**).
2. Good is expected of us (**3 John 11; 1 John 2:29; 3:7**).

C. WHAT IS GOING TO BE JUDGED IN THE LAST DAY?

1. The Calvinist says that God will see only Christ's righteous life.
2. But ... (**2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12**).

II. SALVATION IS CONDITIONAL.

A. THE DOCTRINE OF "IF."

1. Calvinism ignores one of the most important words in the Bible. That word is "if."
 - a. The purpose of "IF" is to **define conditions** for something to come about.
 - b. It is throughout the Old and New Testaments, indicating that the spiritual blessings of God are conditional.
2. **Matt. 16:24; John 8:31; John 15:14; Rom. 6:4-5; Rom. 10:9; Gal. 6:9; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; 1 John 1:7.**
3. No question that these passages **place conditions on salvation**.
4. But the Calvinist will not deny that these things are necessary, he simply denies that man does these things **as a result of his own volition**.
5. **Therefore, he is not fulfilling conditions, but someone else is fulfilling those conditions in him.**

B. **FAITH** AS A CONDITION (**Heb. 11:6; Rom. 5:1-2**).

1. But faith, in Calvinist dogma, is not an act of the one who has it. It is an act of the Holy Spirit in the believer.
2. **Eph. 2:8-9**. In the Calvinist doctrine, faith is the gift of **verse 8**. So even though a man has faith, he has not fulfilled a condition because his faith is not of his own doing.

- a. First of all, salvation is the gift of **Eph. 2:8**. Paul speaks here of the fact that salvation is a gift, not a wage. It cannot be earned or deserved (**Rom. 6:23**).
- b. Second, though we can't deny that faith is a gift, how God gives faith is significant (**Rom. 10:17; John 20:30-31**).
- c. Faith comes as a result of considering the evidence and deciding whether or not the assertions made from it are believable.

Faith is an ordinary intellectual process.

- d. It is not imparted by some mysterious operation of the Holy Spirit.
- e. It is a work of man (**John 6:28-29**). **Faith is a work**.
- f. So are all those other conditions that we read in the other passages cited. And they are **done by the man at his volition**, not as an impulse of the Spirit.

III. GOD WOULD HAVE ALL TO BE SAVED (**1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9**).

- A. CHRIST DIED FOR ALL (**2 Cor. 5:14-15; Heb. 2:9**).
- B. HIS GRACE IS EXTENDED TO ALL (**Titus 2:11**).
- C. YET MANY ARE NOT SAVED (**Matt. 7:13-14; 2 Cor. 6:1**).
- D. THEY HAVEN'T DONE WHAT GOD HAS COMMANDED (**Matt. 7:21**).
- E. IF SALVATION IS UNCONDITIONAL, THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO, THEN GOD MUST DO IT ALL. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE WHEN ONE IS LOST?

III. QUESTIONS FOR THE CALVINIST TO ANSWER:

- A. WHY DOES GOD INVITE ALL TO BE SAVED? (**Rev. 3:20; 22:17; Matt. 11:28**).
- B. WHAT IS THE SENSE OF THE GREAT COMMISSION?
(**Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:19-20**).
- C. HOW CAN MAN BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR SOMETHING GOD MUST DO FOR HIM? (**2 Cor 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12**).

CONCLUSION:

- A. IT ISN'T ENOUGH TO JUST WANT SALVATION.
- B. WE MUST DO THE WILL OF THE FATHER.