

Let us stand aside for just a moment and consider in these terms the means of our salvation. There are too many people who object to the idea of doing spiritual 'works' because they are afraid that others will think that it is the motive power, or the driving force behind salvation. Some are scared to do anything which even resembles a 'work' for fear of becoming legalistic; untrue to the wonderful grace of God. It needs to be made perfectly clear the difference between what is necessary from our standpoint for our salvation and what it is that actually saves us. The point that I would like to make very strongly is that it is God that actually saves us, for he is the motive power behind our salvation, not our faith or our works.

Let us illustrate a little further what is meant by 'motive power'. I have a lamp at home that I must plug into the wall socket for it to work. That act is entirely necessary, but it is not the motive power which causes the bulb to light up: electricity is. Remember Samson (Jud. 13:16)? Long hair was necessary for his strength, but it was not the motive power behind it. People with long hair today are not necessarily strong. Samson was strong because of the power of God. And finally, Naaman the Syrian leper (2 Kings 5) was cleansed by dipping into the river Jordan seven times. The Jordan was necessary, but it did not cleanse Naaman: God did by his power and because of Naaman's obedience.

Certainly Paul says that it is by faith and not by works that we are justified in God's sight. But it is so easy to just take this and relax with our 'belief'. Faith covers all of what man has to do to be justified in God's sight! God demands obedience, too, and we should never forget that. It is not the motive power for our salvation, but one of the end results of that power. It is not the source, but the load: that which is produced. God is the ultimate source and power that saves.