

There are spiritual principles that anyone can follow, which produce real and visible results. However, these results do not necessarily lead to salvation or eternal life. Understanding this distinction is vital.

Legitimacy vs. Result

Consider pregnancy as an example: a woman can conceive under various circumstances—whether through forced relations, out of wedlock, or within marriage. In every case, a child is born. But which is legitimate before God and society? Clearly, only the child conceived within a lawful marriage is considered legitimate.

This distinction mirrors spiritual truths: producing visible spiritual results is not the same as possessing legitimate salvation before God.

Biblical Example: Abraham's Children

Abraham had many children—his firstborn Ishmael from Hagar, six more from Keturah, and Isaac from Sarah (Genesis 16, 21, 25). All were human beings blessed by God (Genesis 17:20, 21:13). Yet, when it came to inheritance—the promise of God—only Isaac was the legitimate heir **(Genesis 25:5-6)**

“Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac to the land of the east.”

This illustrates the difference between natural blessings and the divine promise—between **results** and **legitimacy**.

Spiritual Principles Accessible to All

Many spiritual laws apply universally. For example, **faith** activates God's power:

- **Miracles in Jesus' Name:** Even those outside true faith can experience miracles by invoking Jesus' name. This is because miracles respond to faith as a principle, not to one's righteousness.

“Everything is possible for one who believes.”
—Mark 9:23

During Jesus' ministry, Gentiles sometimes received greater miracles

than Israelites because of their greater faith (John 4:48).

- **Answered Prayer:** Anyone who prays can receive answers. This is a spiritual principle of God's general grace and response to human action.

"For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened."
—Matthew 7:8

Even **Satan** operates within this principle, as seen in Job 1:6-12, where Satan requests permission to test Job and receives it from God.

The Danger of False Assurance

However, receiving miracles or answered prayers does not guarantee salvation. Jesus warned about many who will do works in His name yet be rejected:

"Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"
—Matthew 7:22-23

Belief without a transformed life is like the demons' belief—they acknowledge God but do not obey Him.

"You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder."
—James 2:19

Faith Must Be Accompanied by Works

True biblical faith is **living faith**—demonstrated through actions. James makes this clear:

"You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone."

—James 2:24

Paul also emphasizes the discipline and self-control required to avoid disqualification:

"I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified."

—1 Corinthians 9:27

God's Ultimate Standard: Salvation Proven by Righteousness

God's true standard for recognizing someone as His child is salvation **completed and evidenced by righteous living.**

Jesus' words in Matthew 7:23 show the ultimate measure:

"Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness."

—Matthew 7:23

Therefore, mere faith without obedience and holy conduct is insufficient. Genuine salvation transforms behavior and character.

The Final Judgment and Rewards

At the final judgment, what will accompany the believer are their works:

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."

"Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

—Revelation 14:13

Application and Encouragement

In these last days, many are tempted to focus on miracles, healings, and prophecy, neglecting the call to holy living. But on the day of judgment, **your works will follow you.**

Examine your life honestly and ensure it reflects your profession of faith. Pursue a life pleasing to God, marked by obedience and righteousness, so you may be recognized as a true heir of eternal life.

God bless you as you seek to live out His truth in spirit and in truth.

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