

# Saving Faith

by Oswald J. Smith

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*Dr. Oswald J. Smith emphasizes that true saving faith requires not just belief, but a personal trust in Jesus Christ as Savior.*

**Duration:** 56:12

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 15:4-5, Acts 16:31

**Topics:** "Saving Faith"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the fleeting nature of human life and emphasizes the importance of recognizing the limited time we have on Earth. The speaker expresses gratitude for the opportunity to spread their message through published books. The sermon then focuses on the question of salvation, referencing Acts 16:31 which states that believing in the Lord Jesus Christ leads to salvation. The speaker emphasizes the need for action and trust in Jesus in order to experience true salvation.

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## Transcript

As we come to worship the Lord this morning, I'd like to direct your attention to the Gospel of John, the fifteenth chapter, and two verses, verses four and five. Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches.

He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same, bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing. As we come into thy presence, we invoke thy special blessing on this service. May it be an unusual service.

Bless the one who sings, may she sing in the power of the Holy Spirit, even beyond her own capabilities, and reach our hearts as she ministers the word of God in this way. Bless all who participate, bless particularly thy servant, Dr. Oswald J. Smith, as he brings the message in just a few minutes. May this be an unusual service from every standpoint, for we ask it in the name of Jesus, and for his sake, amen.

Would you take your hymn books, please, and turn to hymn number two hundred and two. Hymn number two hundred and two, Like a River, Glorious, as we face the new year. State upon Jehovah, what a firm, sure foundation that is.

We welcome you to the People's Church this morning, and those of you who have joined us by way of television, a very warm welcome to you as well. We have some good music for you. Dr. Oswald J. Smith is going to come and minister, and that is a rare treat, believe you me, at the age of ninety-two.

We thank God for this. Right now I'm going to introduce to you Diane Hull. She comes from near Detroit, she has three lovely children, and she has a very wonderful husband who lets her travel around, and he's home looking after the children, and even a dog besides.

And she's with us today, she comes originally from England, she is not only a great vocalist, but an excellent pianist as well. And Diane, we welcome you warmly to the People's Church. Diane Hull, God bless you, you sing for us this morning.

Good to have you here. Viewers, if you will please, we'd like to share together in reading number sixty-one, a New Year's reading, number sixty-one. We'll read responsibly this beautiful passage of the Word of God.

I bless the holy name of God with all my heart. He has removed our sins as far away from us as the east is from the west. He knows we are but dust, and that our days are few and brief like grass, like flowers blown by the wind and gone forever.

And his faithfulness goes on and on to each succeeding generation. We glide along the tides of time as swiftly as a racing river, and vanish as quickly as a dream, and some may even live to eighty. But even the best of these years are often emptiness and pain, soon they disappear and we're gone.

Teach us to number our days, few they are. Norma Cooper will come and lead us. For the Lord shall we.

Our loving heavenly Father, as we've read thy word this morning, we've been reminded of the fact that thou hast been so good to us in giving us another year. And as we look back on this last Sunday of nineteen eighty-one, we look back with deep gratitude in our hearts. We want to thank thee for the way thou hast kept us, preserved our lives, provided for our every need, guided us through every storm, sustained us in every trial, been sufficient for every circumstance.

Oh, we thank thee this morning, and we bless thee because we know that as thou hast been with us in this year, thou will be just the same in nineteen eighty-two. And we can go forward with confidence not in ourselves, but in complete trust in thee, knowing that thou dost go before us. And we can commit an unknown future to a known God, and be assured that thou wilt lead us, and thou wilt bless and thou wilt help us.

Father, this morning we want to commit our lives afresh to thee. We pray for everyone who does not know Jesus Christ, that they will not dare to venture into the darkness of nineteen eighty-two without the light of life, that they will not be so courageous as to face the unknown without placing their hand in the hand of God, trusting Christ as their Savior. Oh, we pray that thou wilt help us who do know thee, that we will not take for granted thy mercy and grace, but help us, help us, everyone, to truly commit our lives afresh to thee, and give to thee our heart, our strength, our all, and determine that this new year we will live wholly for God, lives that are well-pleasing to thee, youthful lives, fruitful lives.

May this new year be the best year, not necessarily materially, but oh, may it be the best year spiritually. Dear God, help us to glorify thee, for thou art worthy. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. So many, many people, but first we're going to call on Diane Hull to come and sing a great truth in our hearts, the fact that because he lives, I can face tomorrow. Great song for the new year, Diane, God bless you.

For the sake of our own people this morning, I think I should say I have a suspicion that many of you are doing precisely what I have been doing relative to the banquet on Tuesday night. You all expect to come, but you haven't bought a ticket yet, and I'm in that same club. Now, I intend after the service this morning to buy two tickets, and I'm going to be there.

And may I suggest to you, of course, all of our elders who are not busy elsewhere are going to be there with their wives, and all of our Sunday school teachers, if they're not busy elsewhere, will be there with their wives. Of course, all of our musical ministry, if they're not busy elsewhere, will be there with their wives or their husbands or in their own single blessedness. But may I suggest to you that you get your ticket along with me after the service this morning.

I became a little frightened when I heard Pastor Joe say there's only a little over 150 tickets left, so I'm going to have to buy it fast. Now, we've arranged for tickets to be available at just about any door that you go out downstairs. They'll be over on these doors.

They'll be in the lobby, so that you will not have a long lineup in order to purchase your ticket. But I wonder if you would do that together with me immediately after the service this morning. In one way, this service today and all day is a bit sad for us here in the People's Church because we're losing one of our very valued pastors in the person of Reverend John Rush.

Mr. Rush is going to preach for the last time on this occasion, at least here in the People's Church in our service tonight. But I thought our morning crowd, which includes his adult Bible class that meets over here on my left every Sunday morning, which he has taught for a long, long time now, our morning service may not have the kind of opportunity that you and I would like to have to say God bless you to Reverend and Mrs. John Rush and their family as they move to become the pastor of the Waverly Road Baptist Church. Incidentally, if you live in the Waverly Road Baptist Church area and you cannot possibly get to the People's Church, or if you have both legs broken, stumble into Waverly Road Baptist because you will be hearing one of the best preachers in Canada.

I wonder if our morning audience would like to say goodbye to John. Let's do that. I am very, very happy to introduce the speaker of the morning because I've known him for a long time.

And I'm delighted that God has enabled my father, Dr. Oswald J. Smith, to recover so that he was able to be in the service last Sunday. And he's able to preach this Sunday. Just before Dr. Smith rises to bring the message of the morning, the sales manager, one of the executives of the Welch Publishing Company here in Toronto that has already published a great many of our books and has just produced a beautiful treasury of five of Dr. Smith's best-known books, Mr. David Cole would like to come and make a presentation to Dr. Smith.

And when he has done that, Dr. Smith will respond and then continue with the message of the morning. Mr. David Cole of G.R. Welch Publishing Company. Thank you, Dr. Cole.

It is indeed a real privilege to be at the People's Church this morning and to be sharing this moment with you. I've looked forward to this for a long time because of our association with Dr. Oswald and Dr. Paul.

And it is a real privilege to be here.

It is unique in a way to be able to stand here and to make a presentation to such a tremendous, tremendous servant of God as Dr. Oswald J. Smith. It is also unique in the history of a country, in the history of a church, and in the history of a publishing company to have the opportunity of honoring such a statesman as we will do this morning. There is much one could say about the life of Dr. Oswald J. Smith, but we will reserve that for the fall of 1982 when we will be coming out with the life story of Dr. Oswald J. Smith.

But this morning we want to look at the five books which the G.R. Welch Company have put together in the Oswald J. Smith Treasury. Dr. Paul Smith alluded to the fact that it was a beautiful edition, and we think it is. It is rare in the publishing industry to find the works of a man that have endured the test of time.

These five books have done that. You will find books in here that go back 30, 40, even 50 years when they were originally published, and were still in print when we came out with this edition. This gives this treasury a unique background.

And so on behalf of the G.R. Welch Company, Dr. Oswald Smith, I would like to present this treasury to you as the man most certainly whom God has used. Let me say that I am delighted beyond words to receive these five books published once again and done by a company right here in Toronto. God has enabled me to write about 35 different books altogether.

And these 35 books have been scattered all over the world, many in foreign languages as well as English. Altogether the English books number one and a half million copies, and they are in circulation at the present time throughout the world. At least one and a quarter million are in active circulation.

And now this company has chosen five of them, five of the 35, and they've published them so that after I'm gone they'll still be getting out the message for the Lord Jesus Christ. And I trust that if you haven't had them that you'll get them this morning and that they'll be a real blessing to you in the days that lie ahead. I wonder if you realize the fact that there are very, very few pulpits throughout the entire world where a man in his nineties is standing in the pulpit.

God has permitted me to live to be 92 years of age and to stand in the pulpit of the people's church this morning. I'm sure that not one percent of the pulpits throughout the world have men standing in them this morning who are over 90 years of age. And so I praise God for the opportunity that is mine today, and I pray that he'll bless and bless abundantly.

So I thank this organization for publishing five of my books so that my message will be carried on long after I'm gone. I praise God for it. Now this morning I want to turn to Acts the 16th chapter and the 31st verse where it reads very definitely in answering the question, what must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

I want to emphasize saving faith and just be as brief as I possibly can, and yet I want to be simple enough so that everyone in this audience will be able to understand. What is the meaning of saving faith? Let me answer by saying there are three steps that must be taken. First of all, hear, h-e-a-r, hear.

There must be a knowledge of salvation before anyone can be saved. That's why we send missionaries to the foreign field. They cannot possibly be saved until they have a knowledge of God's salvation.

They must hear first of all. Then in the second place, they must believe. You hear the message first, and then you believe the message.

I turned to the dictionary one time a number of years ago to find out the meaning of the word believe, and the dictionary read like this, to consent with the mind, to consent with the mind, no word about the heart, no word about saving faith, no word about getting saved or anything like that. It just simply said that the meaning of the word believe is to consent with the mind. Well, you know as well as I do that it will not save anyone to consent with the mind.

That has nothing whatever to do with salvation except that it proves that you have a knowledge of salvation. To consent with the mind will not save. I traveled all over France, all over Spain, all over Italy, all over many of the countries of Europe.

In fact, I've been in every country in Europe except three, again and again and again. And I found tens of thousands of people who consent with the mind. They believed that Jesus died.

They believed that God promised salvation and provided it, yet they were not saved. And I found them everywhere I went, unsaved people in thousands upon thousands throughout Europe and for that matter in the United States of America and even in the Dominion of Canada who had consented with the mind but had never passed out of death and into life. I went to another dictionary and I found this in that dictionary, giving intellectually assent to a truth.

In other words, this dictionary said that if you give intellectually, if you assent intellectually to a truth, then you have believed. Now, of course, you know as well as I do that you can believe intellectually as much as you want to and never pass out of death and into life. And yet that's what thousands upon thousands have done and they're still unsaved.

They're living the same life that they always lived. They're indulging in the same sins in which they have always indulged, and they have consented with the mind, and yet they are not saved. You find them everywhere you go.

Now, in the Old Testament scriptures, you have the word trust used 152 times, 152 times. The word trust is used in the Old Testament. When you come to the New Testament, you'll find that the translators discarded the word trust and they used the word believe, and therefore you have the word believe occurring scores of times in the New Testament scriptures.

Why did it not stay with the Old Testament translation? Trust, I'll never know. If they had, this message this morning would not be necessary. It is not sufficient to believe the truths of the New Testament, the truths of the gospel.

You and I must trust the Lord Jesus Christ as our own personal Savior before we can be saved. All my life, when I was a boy, I believed the Bible. I believed everything in the Bible.

I had no doubts of any kind, but it was not until I was 16 years of age that one day in Massey Hall, I knelt down with other seekers and I trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as my own personal Savior, and I've trusted him from that day to this day because the only way anyone can ever be saved is not by believing, but by trusting the Lord Jesus Christ. One day, I came across the New English Bible and I turned to Acts the 16th chapter and the 31st verse to see what it would say about believing. In the authorized version, it says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

In the New English Bible, to my utter amazement and astonishment, it read like this, put your trust in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. Changed it completely, left out the word believe. You don't find it there, but as it is not in the original, you find in the original the word trust, not believe.

And it should have read as the New English Bible has translated it, it should have read, put your trust in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. And no one has ever been saved by believing. The only ones who have ever been saved are those who have actually put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for time and eternity, and they have passed out of death and into life.

In the first place, trust implies committal, and the best illustration is a marriage ceremony where the young woman, for the first time in her life, hands herself over, puts herself into the hands of the young man by her side and trusts him to take care of her, to look after her for the rest of her life. And the young man from that moment provides a home in which they live, provides food for their table, provides the clothes that she needs and all the rest of her life he takes care of her because she has for the first time put her trust in the young man of her choice. And my friends, you can believe as much as you want to believe, but not until you put your trust in the Lord Jesus will you know what it means to be saved.

When you do that, then you pass out of death and into life and you're saved. In the second place, trust demands action. There must come a moment in your life when you put your trust in Jesus Christ.

Here is a chair, for instance. I can believe a lot of things about the chair, but I'm tired and I'm weary and I want to sit down and rest, but I'll never sit down, I'll never rest until I put myself in charge of the chair by sitting down in it and resting. My friend, you may believe Jesus Christ as much as you want to, but until you take the step, trust, and hand your life over to Jesus Christ for time and eternity, will you be saved.

When you do that, you will pass out of death and into life and you'll be saved for all time to come. Put your trust in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. Shall we bow together in prayer? While every head is bowed and every eye is closed, I wonder how many people are out here who can say, Dr. Smith, I can remember the time, I can remember the place, I know the situation, I have done what you have been talking about, I have in fact trusted, I have committed, I have given myself over to, I've taken that action and I know I am saved.

I wonder if you're here this morning and you can say that wherever you are, whoever you are, right now, while every head's bowed and every eye is closed, would you put your hand up together with me in testimony all over the building? Hold up there, now would you put them down again? It looked like almost everybody raised a hand, but I wonder if there are those here this morning who are saying, Dr. Smith, I could not raise my hand on that question because I don't know. I was honest enough not to raise my hand. I'm not sure I ever have trusted Jesus Christ as my Savior as you have talked about this morning, and if you have found that this has worked for you for nearly 80 years since you first trusted Christ, and at 92 you're still talking about it, the best I know how I'd like to trust Christ this morning.

I'm not sure I understand it all, but I want to do it, and I wish you'd ask God to help me to do it. I could not raise my hand before, but I will raise it now because I would like you to remember me in prayer and ask that God will meet my particular need. Here's my hand.

As I raise my hand, I mean it with all my heart. As our heads are bowed and our eyes are closed, if you're saying that right now, wherever you are, whoever you are, would you put your hand up? Hold it there until I see it and then put it down again. Yes, I see you.

Down in here. God bless you. Down in here.

Over here. God bless you. I see you.

We'll pray for you. Are there others? Yes, down in here. The Lord bless you.

We'll pray for you. Are there others? Upstairs or downstairs. Over here.

God bless you. Up in the gallery. Yes, I see you up in the gallery.

There's some all over the building. Are there others? As we wait just a moment longer before I pray. Yes, down over here.

Down over here. Yes, I see you. I see you.

Yes, up in the balcony. God bless you. I see you.

Yes, God bless you. God bless you. I see you.

We're going to change the order of the service. There are hands still going up. And I'm going to do something that I did not expect to do, but I believe we can.

I would like to ask the man who preached the sermon, the founder of our church, Dr. Smith, to pray for those who have raised their hands and for anybody else who has a spiritual need. And in order that he can do that in just a moment, I'm going to ask you to come forward, stand in a group around the communion table here at the front of the church facing him. He'll pray and ask God to meet your particular need.

But it will mean more to you, and I think it will help you more, if you come closer and stand here so that he can see you, and then he can pray for you. Our Heavenly Father, here are the people standing in thy presence, trusting the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of them have never trusted before.

They have only believed. But this morning, they are trusting thee as their Savior for time and for eternity. They are turning away from the things of this life, the things of this world.

They are relying not upon their works or upon anything that they're doing, but they are relying upon the Lord Jesus Christ and trusting him, not only to save them, but to keep them through all the ages of eternity. We commit them to thee. We pray now that thou wilt gloriously save each and every one of them.

And as they trust thee, may they rejoice in thee and live for thee the rest of their lives. Hear us, our Father, and answer prayer, for we ask it in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.

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