

Call to Obedience #469
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
www.schultze.org

**Unfortunately, a deadly virus has infiltrated
the evangelical community. It is called:**

All You Have to Do IS...

Reimar A. C. Schultze

All you have to do is believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved: True or false? False! There is no place in the Bible where this is written. To say: “*All you have to do* to be saved...” is like saying: “All you have to do to be a US Marine is carry a rifle.” Christianity is not that simple. It is simple but not that simple. It is not an *all you have to do* religion. Jesus is not looking for people who want to do as little as possible to get into His company and to commune with Him. He is not looking for cheapskates. He gave His all and He is looking for people who are willing to give their all. Yet, thousands of preachers have preached this message of *all you have to do* from their pulpits, on the radio and over television. Surely it is true that if you believe in the Lord Jesus, you shall be saved, but it is not a true statement that is *all you have to do*. Again, the words: *all you have to do* are NOT to be found anywhere in Scriptures. They are the words of man, not of God. Let us not confer divine inspiration upon them.

All you have to do is an exclusionary phrase. It means that if you do this, there is nothing else that you have to do. If you believe that, you might as well throw out most of the Gospels because they are full of the other things that Jesus said you have to do to be His disciple. Following are some of all the other things that come with believing in Him. Yet again, none of them are prefaced with *all you have to do* is this. Here are some of the other things you must also do to enjoy eternity with Him:

You must repent (Luke 13:3).

You must be born again (John 3:3).

You must forgive others or you will not be forgiven (Matt. 6:14-15).

You must love your enemies (Matt. 5:44-46).

You must give generously to the cause of Christ (Luke 6:38).

You must be willing to forsake your family to do the will of God (Matt. 19:29).

You must say “No” to sin and keep the Ten Commandments (Matt. 19:17).

You must confess Jesus publicly (Luke 12:8-9).

You must make an effort to win other souls to Christ (Matt. 28:19).

You must surrender your will to always do His will (Matt. 7:21).

You must take up your cross daily and follow Him (Luke 9:23).

Next, look at the Sermon on the Mount. It is full of instructions on how Jesus expects us to live. Do you really think that if you believe in the Lord Jesus, you are exempt from following the instructions of the Sermon on the Mount? These words were spoken and written to be followed. Then there are the three judgment parables which Jesus gave just before His crucifixion (Matthew 25). First, the Parable of the Ten Virgins tells you that if you do not have the fire of God burning in your heart, heaven’s door will be shut to you. The second Parable of the Talents tells you that if you do not do anything significant with the new life you have in Christ and the gifts that He has given you, then you will be cast into outer darkness and you will be gnashing your teeth forever. And the third Parable of the Sheep and the Goats tells you that unless you are willing to take care of the thirsty, hungry, sick, imprisoned and naked, you will go to everlasting punishment. If your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ does not bear all these fruits mentioned above, then you have a fake faith.

While we are talking about fake things, here are three stories: 1) I heard of a place in New York City where you can buy a doctoral degree. *All you had to do* was send in \$100 with your name and address and you would get a certificate with your name on it. You could hang it on your wall, but what college would hire you as a teacher? It is fake. 2) You can get a pilot’s license at a fraudulent flight school. *All you have to do* is go through 10 hours of flight instructions. Would you trust that pilot to take you across the Atlantic Ocean? It is a fake pilot’s license. 3) You might be offered a really good deal to buy a nice house for just a few thousand dollars. *All you had to do* is pay up and sign papers, only to find out that every piece of wood in that building is full of termites. Beware of the *all you have to do* preachers and prophets. When you hear someone say: *all you have to do*, that should raise a red flag in your mind because that person is selling you something worthless, which is too good to be true.

Do not be fooled by false prophets who tell you that in the Old Testament, you had to do so many things and keep so many laws to be saved, but when it comes to the New Testament, *all you have to do* is believe and heaven will be yours. Indeed, this kind of gospel is easy to sell. In the United States, it has created millions of “converts” who have not been converted. They continue to live like sinners. They most often do not go to church, but if they do, it is only to get affirmation of the heresy they believe in. They do not get right with their fellowmen and they do not change their lifestyle for Jesus’ sake. They keep their gods of entertainment, sexual immorality and self-aggrandizement. They were told that *all they had to do* was believe and that would get them to heaven. This gospel has also been exported. In India, thousands of Hindus are drawn to meetings where Christ is presented. Too often, they are told *all they have to do* is believe. They come to the altar, say a little prayer, then go home and put a picture of Jesus next to all of their other gods, with no changes in their lives. Jesus started His ministry with *repent and believe* (Mark 1:15). The ministry of the church began with repent (Acts 2:37-38). What are we doing when we leave out repentance and all that goes with it?

Let us examine the statement ...*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved...* (Acts 16:31). After all, it is in the Bible. Shall we stop preaching it? Of course not. But we should not attach a man-made exclusionary clause to it such as *this is all you have to do*, and we should take note that believing in the Lord Jesus Christ back then does not mean the same thing today except to the earnest Bible student.

Now we come to the etymology of the word, *faith*, which is the origin and historical use of the word. How did the Greeks and Hebrews and the Christians use and understand the word, *faith*? There were two uses of the word. For example, there was faith that was understood as an accessory for a man’s journey through life, to be used whenever necessary, like something we put in a box with the other things we need from time to time. This was the faith of Cain: he believed in God, he believed in sacrificing to God and he believed, no doubt, that only God could save him. Then we have the faith of Abel. This faith is a divine inner force enabling the will of man to bring the whole body of humanity under subjection to the sovereign Lordship of Jesus Christ. And this faith always contains three parts: 1) A willingness to be all Jesus wants us to be, 2) A willingness to do all Jesus wants us to do, and 3) A willingness to suffer all Jesus wants us to suffer.

So, from Genesis on, we see these two different types of faith—that of Cain and that of Abel—running parallel to each other throughout the entire Bible. In the Bible, atheism is not an issue, it is considered foolishness (Ps. 14:1). So the division here is not so much between unbelievers and believers but between believers and believers, the sons of Cain and the sons of Abel. Look at the story of the rich man and Lazarus that Jesus told in Luke 16. Both believed, both prayed, both knew God alone can save, but one went to heaven and the other went to hell. Your faith can take you to hell just as easily as it can take you to heaven. To the sons of Cain, faith is an outer thing; to the sons of Abel it is an inner thing. To the former, it is a crutch at best, a tool; to the latter, it is everything and it transforms his life. *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved* is part of the faith of Abel, of Noah, of Abraham, of Joseph, of the prophets and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Obviously, Jesus could have come up with a new word for the faith to be delivered to the saints. But no, instead He refreshed it. He redefined it by the way He lived and by what He taught. The Apostle Paul picked up on this and hence his words to the Philippian jailer: ...*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house* (Acts 16:31). In those days and in that context, the jailer knew exactly what that meant. He knew he was not getting a Christianity that was nothing but a piece of paper hanging on the wall, that would not fly or that was full of termites, but he was getting into a life where all was of God, in God and about God. In short, he would begin to live like Jesus.

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