

SALVATION

What does it mean?



“Most assuredly, I say to you,
He who hears My word
And believes in Him who sent Me
Has everlasting life,
And shall not come into judgment,
But has passed from death into life.”

JESUS (John 5:24)

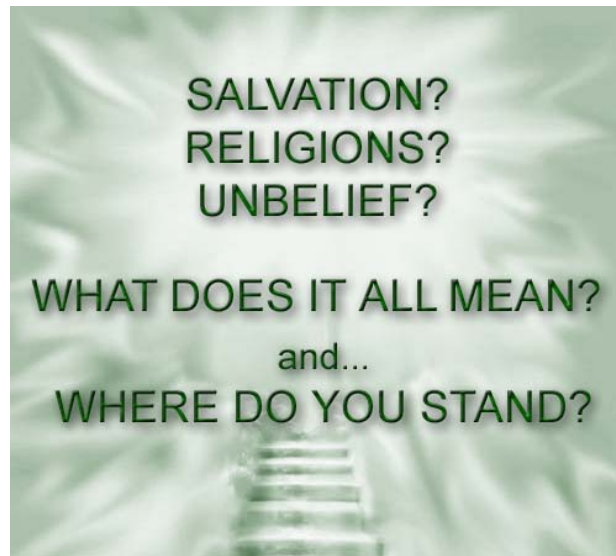
“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.” John 3:16-21.

While these 6 verses of scripture testify to our need for salvation, many questions linger in the minds of those who have never sought to find the truth, such as:

“Why do I need to be saved if it is God who created us in the first place”? “How does one gets saved”? “What guarantee will I have if I follow God’s plan”? “What’s the difference between religions and salvation through Christ”?

WHAT ABOUT YOU, ANY OTHER QUESTION?

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Throughout the world, there are three basic beliefs or attitudes concerning God.

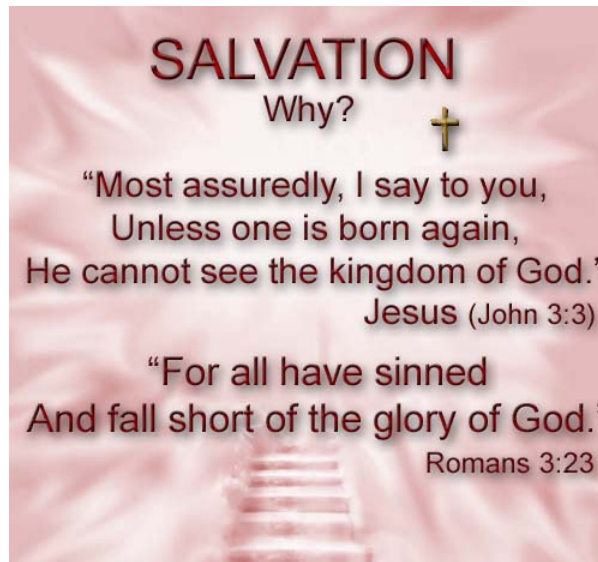
(1) Accepting God's definition of who He is, and how we can relate to Him. That is found in His Word, the Bible, and clearly defines the only way to Him is through Salvation in Christ. It involves the realization that we're all sinners, must repent and completely surrender our lives to God so we can have a personal relationship with Him through His Son.

(2) Adopting Man's definitions of who God is. World religions choose their own definition of God rather than what God's Word says. Irregardless if they claim Christianity or not, they all deny Christ as God's only way to Salvation. They ensnare people into idol worship and materialistic pursuits, with the goal of controlling their minds, and/or fill their pocketbooks.

(3) Choosing to either not believe in God or don't care to find out. There are those who base their existence solely on themselves, choosing to live to get as much from life as they can, without regard to God or eternity.

In essence, we can say that there is the true belief in God in a relationship through Christ; belief in religions through men's twisted definitions of God, and finally no beliefs at all. Based on this, where do you stand?

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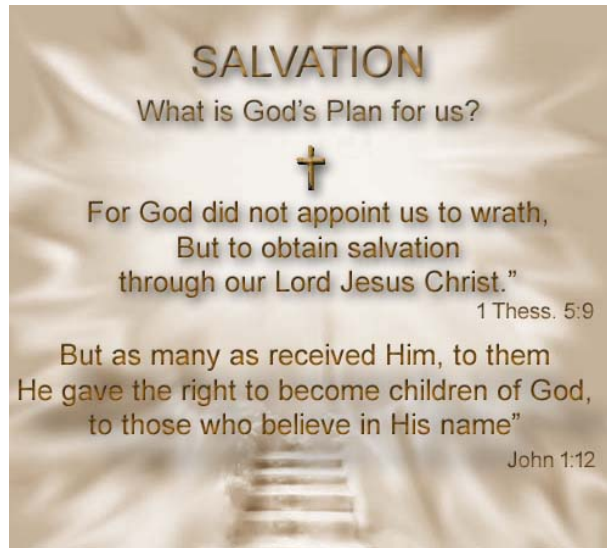


Some might say, I lead a good life, I don't hurt anyone, steal or cheat, I am a good person overall; so why do I need salvation? A parallel of this is found in the self-righteousness of the Jews in Jesus' time. They knew the 10 commandments, they even added a whole bunch of laws and liturgies, and yet Jesus told them they looked good on the outside, but inside they were rotten.

We are born sinners, not the responsibility of God, but rather because of who we are descendants of, Adam and Eve. They were created sinless and we would be as well should they not have chosen to disobey God. Therefore, just as we have the same basic human DNA as the first created beings, we also inherited their spiritual nature of being dead spiritually. That's why in Romans 3:20, Paul said, "Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin."

In simple words, God gave us the law, the 10 commandments, to simply show us that there's no way we could keep them all to the letter and perfectly, and on account of our sinful nature, we are dead spiritually. That's why Jesus is quoted in John 3:3, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

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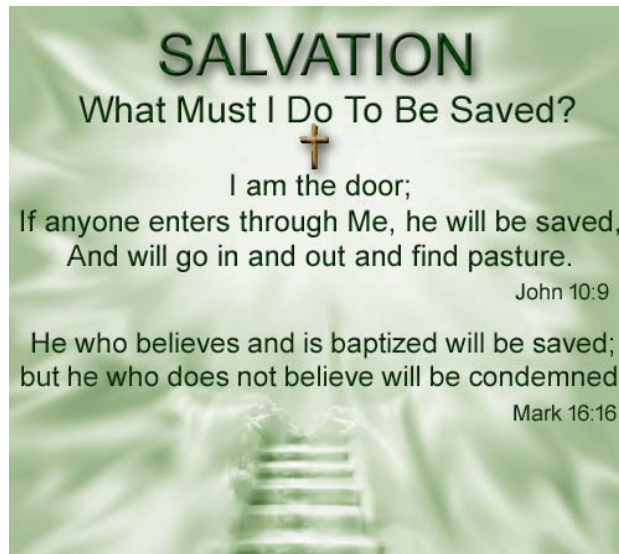


The Book of Genesis tells us that God created man and women in His image, and that God desired to have fellowship with us with the condition we honor Him through obedience. Disobedience, or sin broke that fellowship, and God imposed strict laws to deserve His blessings, laws that were actually impossible to follow on account of our sinful nature.

But, did God give us another plan to be reconciled to Him? Paul in 2 Timothy 1:9 put it this way; "God who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began". In essence, God knew before creation this would happen and had already prepared a plan so we could be reconciled to Him, not through works but from the heart through realizing our inability to save ourselves.

God's plan for humanity has always been for good, but we know that God cannot tolerate sin, the reason there had to be a penalty paid, which He performed Himself through Christ Jesus. Are we going to accept this gracious offer from God and receive eternal life in His presence, or will we throw it away with disastrous consequences? What will it be?

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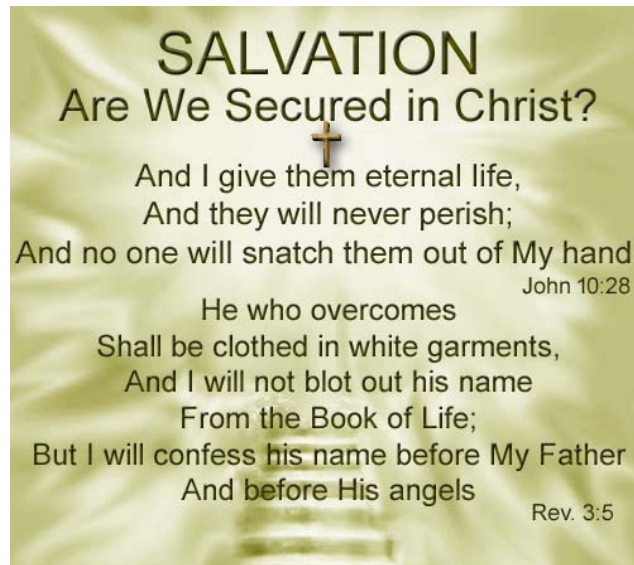
After considering the fall of man and God's plan for salvation, what in essence one must do to be saved? Is life with God designed to simply be good people? The reality is that God looks at our hearts rather than at outward appearances.

In John 3:5-6, Jesus told Nicodemus, the Pharisee who came to see Him at night, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In other words, our relationship with God can only be reestablished through Christ, rather than through any efforts of our own.

When people asked Peter in Acts 2:38 what they must do, he confirmed what Jesus had said, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins." John the Baptist is quoted in John 3:36 saying, "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." In Romans 10:10 Paul said, "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Isn't this the most important and consequential decision one must make?

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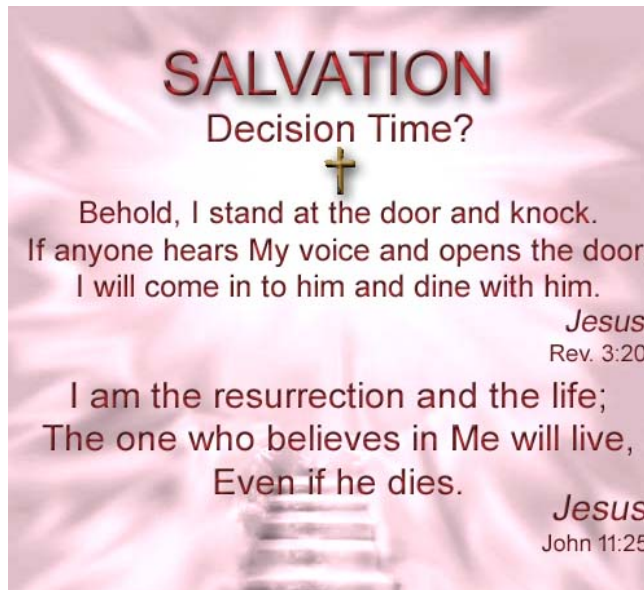
What security do we have in believing and following Christ? Jesus clearly stated that He will give us eternal life, and confess us as His to the Father and His angels. He added that no one will be able to snatch us away from Him. That is His promise and the reason He paid the price for us on the cross, the price God required for reconciliation.

Paul to the Romans put it in a most clear manner; "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If that will not shake us to the core, nothing else will.

This is the extent to which God loved us, and most clearly is the fact that mankind did witness the sacrifice of Christ, the result which is provided to us in the most blessed history Book inspired by God, the Bible. Paul added in Ephesians 1:13, "In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

In having the Seal of Christ upon us, we have a guaranteed eternal salvation. Can we say "Praise God?"

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So, what will it be? Will we believe God and Christ for salvation or will we be rejecting the only offer from God to be reconciled to Him? Worse perhaps is to stand on the fence with God's salvation, thinking that maybe it's true, maybe not. We all have the ability to find the truth in God's Word, and it's only a matter to make the decision to act on it rather than put it off indefinitely.

Life is a series of choices, and whatever choices we make always entail a corresponding outcome. With God, this is perhaps the decision we will ever make that carries the most serious consequences. We are all captains of our ship. Do we wish to reach the destination of the promise land, or are we going to be lost at sea and destroyed forever. Shouldn't we avail ourselves of God's compass to reach our destination, eternal life?

In this life, as it is also with God, ignorance of the law is never an excuse because we all have the ability to seek the truth. It is always a matter of decision and responsibility on our part. Jesus clearly stated that He alone is the door to salvation. He not only said it but proved it through His resurrection. He is always at the door if we will simply invite Him in.

Have we made the decision for or against God?

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SALVATION

Warning! Where is your heart?



Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,'
shall enter the kingdom of heaven,
but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.
Many will say to Me in that day,
'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name,
cast out demons in Your name,
and done many wonders in Your name?'
And then I will declare to them,
'I never knew you; depart from Me,
you who practice lawlessness!'

Matthew 7:21-23

Throughout His time on this earth, Jesus not only taught us on the way to God and eternal life, but also warned us on the pitfalls to avoid. Pitfalls are defined as hidden or camouflaged traps to ensnare and deceive us into thinking we're headed towards our goal, but in reality they drive us straight to destruction. Throughout His ministry, Jesus clearly gave us warning after warning on avoiding those traps.

In Matthew 7:21-23 He clearly indicated that we can't follow God and live like the world. If our faith is in God and Christ, then the world's sinful attractions and pleasures cannot be a part of our lives. Either we love God or the world as there is never any in-betweens with God. In Matthew 7:13 Jesus added; "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it."

To say we believe in God and live like the world is pure hypocrisy and will lead to eternal rejection by God. It is not to say we are perfect, because we are not. However, where our heart is, is what God sees straight through us. In Matthew 6:24 Jesus added, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other." Are we who we say we are in Christ?

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