



What is Salvation?

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." —1 John 5:1

Salvation is not a feeling, a vision, a dream or some creed. Salvation is not fulfilling some list of religious works that a well-meaning pastor asks you to accomplish. Salvation is a free gift from God alone. You can't earn it. You don't have to receive it, you get to! It's your choice. It's not a hope-so-thing like a question mark. No, it's an I-know-so-thing, more like a gallant exclamation point! Too many people live under a question mark these days. They lack Christ's peace and joy. They lead an *I-hope-so* kind of life—hoping that their good deeds will in the end, outweigh all their bad deeds so that they can go to heaven. But we don't get in that way. You must first be forgiven and born again spiritually in Christ.¹ He does this, not you. It's because of the cross—He paid the full penalty for all your wrong-doing's there. Hey, we've all blown it—admit it and quit it! The cross is why you don't have to live with guilt another day. People weren't designed to live with that! Many real Christians even lack an assurance of salvation and God wants to change all that.

*Lord, I thank You for
salvation, for Your mercy,
full and free; take my all in
consecration, glorify
Yourself in me! —Codner*

Some people in the south where I live say, "*Hey, I fully believe the plan of salvation—sure, there's a God out there!*" But did you know that a person can believe the "*plan of salvation*" and go straight to hell? The Bible says, "***You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!***" (Jam. 2:19, nkjv).

*Who's knocking at your
heart's door? It's
Jesus! How wonderful
is that! —Joe Stowell*

No one is saved by a church, by a mere holy man, by a denomination, by personal good intentions, by meditation, by a pilgrimage, by serving in a temple, by marching up stairs on bloody knees working some beads, or by knowing the true plan of salvation ...yes, even if it is accurately spelled out on paper.

Listen up! A person is saved by grace alone, through faith alone, by Christ alone. Jesus is the ultimate Answer, so what is the question? He's the ultimate Solution, so what is the problem?

Personally, I was raised in a traditional church that told me how I would need to be saved "by grace" plus "lots of good works"—noble deeds that are meritorious like keeping the sacraments. If they knew better, they'd do better—I don't fault them. But that was false information according to God's authoritative word (the Bible). You and I can't add any works to our salvation to make it happen. We can decide, repent and believe in Jesus' finished work on the cross—that's what we can do!

You see, it's not by the plan of salvation; it's by the Man of salvation. Salvation is not a dogma or a formula. It's not a code. Perhaps you say, "*Hey man, I believe that if a person lives right, they will go straight to heaven when they die.*" No, they will go straight to the eternal Judge, to stand before this holy God, just like everyone else will. The Bible says, "***It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment***" (Heb. 9:27, kjv). There is no reincarnation, no purgatory and no salvation for a person after they die physically. That's why we must choose Christ today!

Neither Elvis, the Loch Ness Monster, Michael Jackson, Big Foot, Jim Morrison, Miss Cleo the palm reader, nor a host of skinny aliens from Roswell New Mexico will appear to plead your case. No Wigi Board or video game wizard will be there to help you, regardless of the level you've attained. Most people are never afforded the luxury of a death-bed conversion or even a death-bed, for that matter. Sure, right now you feel like you're indeed going to live through today and tomorrow—many won't! Check out the stats, most people die in their street clothes with their shoes on and they never even see it coming.

Listen, if you could be saved by living right then Calvary was a total blunder. Why would Jesus have needed to be nailed to that red stained wood if we could do it without Him? Salvation is not "a cause" like signing up for the Peace Corps. Maybe you would say, "*I'm a member of a good, Bible-believing church. I signed a three part altar card and shook a preacher's hand!*"

It's not any of these things like that. It's Jesus Christ! Salvation is not merely believing something (giving your mental assent to a message); it is receiving Someone. The true Gospel is one that centers in the Person of [Jesus Christ](#), for "***as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God***" (Jn. 1:12-13). The Apostle Paul said, "***Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved***" (Rom. 10:13).

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. —Jesus, Rev. 3:20

[Salvation can happen right now!](#) Salvation can happen in a moment of time—God saves, Christians don't. We Christians witness as best we can, trusting God to convict our irreligious friends and to save our loved ones. We pray you'll "get it" in time. We tell them the truth and tell what has happened to us without exaggeration. We don't want to be pushy, haughty or obnoxious—we want to leave the results in God's hands. We're no better than the next guy—just better off. It's ultimately God's deal, we don't want to *play Holy Spirit*.

Christian, ask God to give you a divine opportunity to boldly share Jesus with someone today! Maybe it's a co-worker; maybe it's your son or your daughter. Maybe it's a stranger that sits next to you in a café or on the bus. Be strong and of good courage; God will go before you—He'll give you the words to prepare the way.

Mr. LuCifer hates your guts and has a really ugly plan for your life, but the Lord is there for you, to turn it all around—***“Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy”*** (Ps. 107:2). Go for it!

In the Fisher's mighty hand,
kurt



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¹ See John 3:3.