
True Salvation and the True Gospel

How do I get saved? What do I need to do in order to get saved? Where will I go when I die? How do I know if I've been saved? Can a saved person die and go to hell? Do all lost people go to hell?

These are all important questions. In fact, they are the most important questions we could ask. Why? Because the answers will affect us for all eternity. Eternity is "endless or everlasting duration in the future, dating from the present time" (Webster's Dictionary, 1828).

Where will *you* spend eternity?

The Bible is God's revelation of Himself to man. Using only the Bible as our guide, this paper will explain how to get saved.

In order to get saved, a person must hear the *true* Gospel. The Bible says that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one who *believes* it (Romans 1:16). The Bible also says that there are many false gospels out there: "*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto **another** gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ*" (**Galatians 1:6-7**).

If you have heard and believed **another** gospel, a gospel that is different from the one that the Bible teaches, it has no power to save you from your sins. You are still in danger of eternal condemnation. Don't be deceived. Don't be tempted to think you can believe what you want about salvation. God has told us in His Word (the Bible) that there is only ONE faith, true Gospel faith, that saves sinners: "*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, **one** faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all...*" (**Ephesians 4:4-6**).

There is only one true Gospel. Believe God, not your feelings. He never lies: "*God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*" (**Numbers 23:19**).

Now let us examine what God tells us about salvation.

I You cannot get saved unless you know and believe that you are a sinner. The Bible tells us that man is a sinner:

The Bible says that we are all (each and every one of us) born in sin and under condemnation. *"For as by one man's [Adam's] disobedience many were made sinners..." (Roman 5:19).*

The Bible says that there is NO natural or inherent goodness in any of us. *"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3:12).* It says that though you might try to do right, you are destined to fail. This means that it is IMPOSSIBLE for you to save yourself or to do anything in any way to earn your salvation: *"For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Romans 7:18).* It says that your "good" deeds and your "good" works are worthless in the sight of God: *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses [righteous deeds] are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isaiah 64:6).*

The Bible says that if you attempt to earn salvation through your good deeds (this would mean your deeds or the deeds of other, fallen, human beings), **you remain under condemnation:** *"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:2-5).*

The Bible says that fallen man is an enemy towards God and has earned God's wrath: *"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled" (Colossians 1:21).* *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18).*

The Bible says that the human heart is wicked, and deceitful: *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).* The Bible says that unsaved man is spiritually DEAD in sins. *"And you hath he quickened [given life], who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1); "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened [given life] together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Colossians 2:13).*

The Bible says you are a sinner who has earned God's wrath and are already condemned. *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8); "...we...were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Ephesians 2:3); "Therefore as by the offence of one [Adam's sin] judgment came upon all men to condemnation" (Romans 5:18).*

II In order to get saved, you need to hear about the Saviour. The Bible says that because we stand condemned before God for our sins, we (all of mankind) NEED a Saviour. The Bible says that there is only ONE Saviour for man – Jesus Christ:

"For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee" (Isaiah 43:3).

"I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour" (Isaiah 43:11).

"And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke 1:46-47).

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord " (Luke 2:11).

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

"And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

III In order to get saved, you must understand that Jesus, who saved you from your sins, is GOD in the flesh. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is God:

"For in him [Jesus Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

"...I and my Father are one" (John 10:30).

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" [which means 'God with us'] (Isaiah 7:14).

"For unto us is a child born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old; from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

"For by him [Jesus] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell" (Colossians 1:16-19).

IV If you want to know how to get saved, you MUST hear the truth about what God did to save you! The Bible says that Jesus (God the Son) was crucified, and that He bore the sins of the world upon the cross:

"And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots" (Matthew 27:35).

"For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

V After three days Jesus rose again and ascended into heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of God the Father.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time" (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).

"Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God" (Luke 22:69). "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19).

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8:34).

VI Now that you know that you are a sinner, condemned before God for your sins, you are ready to ask, How do I get saved? What must I do in order to be saved? The Bible tells us that although Christ has already paid for the sins of all mankind, the only way to receive His gift of forgiveness is to be born again. Therefore, in order to be saved, you must be born again!

*"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, **Ye must be born again**. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:3-8).*

*"**Being born again**, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:23).*

*"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

*"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a **new creature**" (Galatians 6:15).*

VII The truth is, salvation is not by works; it is not about something you must do. Salvation is by grace. The Bible teaches that through the work of the Holy Spirit and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance and faith work together to produce the new birth. The power of God to produce the new birth is present when the Gospel is preached. Be not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes. According to the Bible, repentance and faith are equally necessary for Salvation.

Repentance and faith are not works – the Bible tells us that salvation is by grace alone – yet they are essential for salvation. The power of God is needed for salvation. It is only through the power of His Spirit – which is present when the true Gospel is preached – that genuine repentance and saving faith are found:

"...Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5)

Jesus required that repentance be preached in His name: *"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47).*

The apostle Paul was obedient to Jesus Christ. When he preached the Gospel he testified "...both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (**Acts 20:21**). Here we see the need for repentance and faith in response to the preaching of the Gospel.

Once we repent, it is through our faith in Jesus' sacrifice that we are justified: "*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (**Romans 5:1**)

The Bible clearly tells us that neither repentance nor faith are in any sense a work: "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast*" (**Ephesians 2:8-9**).

VIII What exactly is repentance?

"Repentance is a turning from a life of self and sin to a life of submission and obedience to God's will... Repentance means sins perceived, sins abhorred and sins abandoned. This change is wrought by the power of God through the Holy Spirit, the word of truth [the Bible] being used as a means to convict the sinner of sin and lead him to forsake it and to resolve henceforth to walk before God in all truth and uprightness."

- **W.D. Nowlin, *Fundamentals of the Faith*, 1922**

The Bible tells us that the Pharisees did not get saved because they "rejected the counsel of God against them." What does that mean? It means that they did not believe what God said about them in His Word. They did not believe that they were lost sinners, and they did not believe what God said about lost sinners. You can read more about this in **Lost or Saved: How do these states differ? (Appendix A)**. It is very important to understand the difference between the two.

"...Dost not thou [thief on the cross, addressed by the other thief] fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss" (**Luke 23: 40-41**).

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" (**Luke 18:13**).

Those who repent are like the thief on the cross, who knew that he had been justly condemned for his sins; they are also like the publican who knew he could only be saved by God's mercy and made no claim to personal righteousness before God.

Their allegiance switched from Satan to God – they knew that they were turning away from Satan and accepting God through Jesus Christ. The Bible says that those who are unsaved are children of the devil: "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do...*" (**John 8:44**).

Before salvation, they knew that they were lost: *"That at that time ye were without Christ...having no hope, and without God in the world"* (**Ephesians 2:12**).

They knew that they had no goodness, no righteousness, and no personal worthiness before God: *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not "* (**Romans 7:18**).

They knew that their works, the good that they felt that they had done, were as filthy rags in God's sight. Our works before salvation are dead works, and the Bible says that we should repent of these: *"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God"* (**Hebrews 6:1**).

They knew that they were utterly incapable of saving themselves, that salvation, as a free gift, must come through God alone, through His grace, imparting the good that we do not deserve, rather than the punishment that we justly deserve.

The Bible tells us that Salvation is a free gift and when we come to repentance we need to receive it as such: *"And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification"* (**Romans 5:16**).

IX The Bible says that we are saved by faith. What does it mean to have faith? There are many people who have faith and believe that they are saved, but there is only ONE faith that saves.

The Bible says that we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ. This does not mean simply believing that Jesus exists, or even believing that He is God. It means that you believe, fully and completely, that Jesus Christ paid for your sins when He died on the cross. It means believing that He took your place and endured the wrath of God for you. It means believing that Jesus' payment for your sins is entirely sufficient to cleanse you from your sins and to make you fit for heaven. Someone had to pay the penalty for your sins. This is the only way for man to be forgiven. Jesus paid that penalty on the cross – not merely through His physical sufferings, but in the fact that He bore your sins in His own body. It is faith in this sacrifice for sin that saves the soul from eternal condemnation. The Bible has much to say about this.

Please consider each of the Bible verses given below, and pay careful attention to what they teach regarding salvation because they all point to Jesus' work on the cross as the only means of salvation. They clearly teach that we are saved through faith in His sacrifice on the cross.

Most Christian churches teach you to "receive" Jesus or to "invite Jesus into your heart" in order to get saved. However, this is **not** what the Bible teaches. This false belief turns the repentant sinner away from faith in Christ's work on the cross and toward a separate act of some kind. This is very dangerous.

In order to gain salvation, our faith must be in Jesus' work on the cross. This was accomplished for us some 2,000 years ago and is the only means of salvation that God has provided.

To understand more about the difference between **salvation-through-believing** and **salvation-through-receiving**, see [Appendix B](#).

Also, it is strongly recommended that you read the definitions of key Gospel terms given in [Appendix C](#). Become very familiar with them since you will encounter them again and again in numerous Bible verses dealing with salvation. If you do not understand them properly, you will not be able to interpret important verses correctly. And if you can't do that, you will not have a proper understanding of the Gospel.

As you read through the following verses you will see that faith in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross is the only means of salvation:

*"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and **to give his life a ransom for many**" (Matthew 20:28).*

*"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be **a propitiation through faith in his blood**, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus"
(Romans 3:24-26).*

*"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us**. Much more then, being now **justified by his blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Romans 5:8-11).*

*"For the **preaching of the cross** is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18).*

*For he hath **made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin**; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, **being made a curse for us**: for it is written, Cursed is every one that **hangeth on a tree**" (Galatians 3:13).

"In whom we have **redemption through his blood**, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh **by the blood of Christ**. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God **in one body by the cross**, having slain the enmity thereby" (Ephesians 2:12-16).

"And walk in love, as **Christ** also hath loved us, and **hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God** for a sweetsmelling savour" (Ephesians 5:2).

"In whom we have **redemption through his blood**, even the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14).

"And, having made peace **through the blood of his cross**, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled **in the body of his flesh through death**, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight" (Colossians 1:20-22).

"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when **he offered up himself**" (Hebrews 7:27).

"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin **by the sacrifice of himself**" (Hebrews 9:26).

"By the which will we are sanctified through **the offering of the body of Jesus Christ** once for all" (Hebrews 10:10).

"But this man, after he had offered one **sacrifice for sins** for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12).

*"For **by one offering** he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"
(Hebrews 10:14).*

*"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people **with his own blood**,
suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12).*

*"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification
of the Spirit, unto obedience and **sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ**:
Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied" (1 Peter 1:2).*

*"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as
silver and gold, from your vain conversation [behaviour] received by tradition
from your fathers; But **with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb
without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19).*

*"Who his own self **bare our sins in his own body on the tree**, that we, being
dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed"
(1 Peter 2:24).*

*"For **Christ** also hath once **suffered for sins**, the just for the unjust, that he
might bring us to God, **being put to death in the flesh**, but quickened by the
Spirit" (1 Peter 3:18).*

*"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man
sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And **he is
the propitiation for our sins**: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the
whole world" (1 John 2:1-2).**

*"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only
begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not
that we loved God, but that he loved us, and **sent his Son to be the
propitiation for our sins**" (1 John 4:9-10).**

*"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the
dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and
washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Revelation 1:5).*

*"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to
open the seals thereof: **for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God
by thy blood** out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation"
(Revelation 5:9).*

* As already noted, Romans 3:24 tells us that Jesus is the
propitiation for our sins through faith in his blood.

All of the above verses are from the New Testament, but the Old Testament gives exactly the same message. In the following verses Isaiah describes the sacrifice that will be made by the Messiah, and that through this sacrifice alone will man receive atonement for his sins:

*"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath **borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows**: yet we did esteem him **stricken, smitten** of God, and **afflicted**. But he was **wounded for our transgressions**, he was **bruised for our iniquities**: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and **with his stripes we are healed**. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; **and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all**. He was **oppressed**, and he was **afflicted**, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as **a lamb to the slaughter**, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? **for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken**. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it **pleased the LORD to bruise him**; he hath put him to **grief**: when thou shalt make his soul **an offering for sin**, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of **the travail of his soul**, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; **for he shall bear their iniquities**. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because **he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors**" (Isaiah 53).*

Please be aware that the people who tell you that you are saved by "receiving" Jesus or by "inviting Jesus into your heart" use only a small handful of verses, usually Romans 10:9-13, to support their erroneous teaching.

However, the above verses from Scripture clearly teach that we receive salvation only through faith in Jesus' sacrificial work on the cross. Other scriptural verses, not cited above, give further confirmation of this.

X Following salvation you will no longer be a slave to sin because Jesus has freed you from its power.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:6).

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Romans 6:22).

This does not mean that a Christian will never sin. It simply means that he will strive against sin and will be able to overcome temptation through Christ because, as a born-again Christian washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, he is no longer in bondage to sin.

XI Now we can answer the question: Where will I go when I die? There are only two possibilities: The Bible says that once you are saved, you also receive the gift of eternal life. This means that you will go to heaven when you die. You might have asked, can a saved person die and go to hell? The Bible says the answer to that question is NO, he cannot.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47).

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:11-13).

XII What happens if you do not get saved? Do all lost / unsaved people go to hell? Where will unsaved people go when they die? The Bible tells us what happens to those who refuse to repent and put their faith in Christ to save them. No one is excluded, not even you.

The Bible says that you will be sentenced to an eternity in hell:

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:46)

"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

God does *not* want to send people to hell. Jesus came here to **save us** from sin and from condemnation before God. But, if you refuse His free gift, the offer of salvation, then you must make payment in full for your sin as the Bible has stated.

[END]

Appendix A: Lost or Saved: How do these states differ?

Appendix B: Salvation through believing v Salvation through receiving

Appendix C: Definition of Key Gospel Terms

Appendix D: Bible verses linking salvation to belief in the Gospel

Appendix E: Salvation verses containing the word 'receive'

Lost or Saved: How do these states differ?

A lot of churches today urge us to get "close" to God, to attend church, to become part of a small group Bible study, to listen to Christian music, to read the Bible more, to become more loving towards others, and to try and change our bad habits.

Some will even tell us to "receive Jesus" or "invite Jesus into our hearts."

These are very nice-sounding and seemingly helpful suggestions, but something is missing. Without salvation, it is impossible to "get close to God" no matter how hard you try, no matter how many times you read the Bible, no matter how many Bible study groups you attend or how much you change your life or how much you try to "receive Jesus" or how many times you ask Him to come into your heart.

WHY? Because without salvation, you are *lost* – separated from God by your *sin*.

Many people believe that they are getting closer to God by doing the things listed above, but they have never been *saved*. Many believe they are saved even though they never recognised at any time that they were lost. Many have never even heard or considered what the Bible says about lost sinners.

According to the Bible, there is a dramatic difference between the saved and the lost. The Bible verses below will illustrate this difference. Once you see what it means to *be* lost, you will understand why you cannot, as a lost person, through any human effort whatever, get closer to God. There is only one way to get close to God and that is through salvation – through Biblical repentance before God and faith in Jesus Christ. It is the *BLOOD* of Jesus Christ that brings the lost sinner to God and makes him or her a new creature. This study will describe the position of a lost person (before salvation) and the position of a saved person (after salvation).

CURSED

Every lost person is under the curse of God and is cursed in his soul because of his sin:

*Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand [unsaved people], Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.
(Matthew 25:41)*

TARES

Every lost person is a tare (weed) – a child of the wicked one. As Jesus said:

*The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom [saved people]; but the tares are the children of the wicked one"
(Matthew 13:38)*

CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE

Every lost person is a "child of disobedience" – a rebel against God. The following verse is speaking to people who are saved, telling them about their state prior to salvation:

*Among whom also we all had our conversation [behavior] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others
(Ephesians 2:3).*

BLESSED OF GOD

Every saved person is blessed of God through Jesus Christ:

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand [saved people], Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Matthew 25:34)

THE GOOD SEED

Jesus is the One who sows the "good seed." Therefore, the "good seed" are Christians who have been saved through Jesus Christ:

*He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom [saved] but the tares [lost] are the children of the wicked one.
(Matthew 13:37-38).*

CHILDREN OF PROMISE

*Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.
(Galatians 4:28-29)*

DEAD IN SIN

We are dead in sin. Every lost person is spiritually dead because of sin. Adam and Eve died spiritually the day they sinned against God. We too are spiritually dead at birth because we are born in sin; we inherited the sin of Adam and Eve.

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)

For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. (2 Corinthians 5:14)

ARE (in) DARKNESS

All lost people are (in) darkness and all saved people were (in) darkness before they were saved:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers [lost people]: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness [the unsaved]? (2 Corinthians 6:14)

For ye were sometimes [at one time] darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:8)

A GENERATION OF VIPERS

John the Baptist told "the multitude" (meaning everyone) that they were a generation of vipers – Satan's brood, lost in sin.

Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (Luke 3:7)

ALIVE IN CHRIST

The souls of lost sinners are "made alive" by salvation through Jesus Christ:

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:11)

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22)

ARE LIGHT IN THE LORD

Lost sinners are brought from darkness to light through Jesus Christ. A Christian is light in the Lord, in and through Jesus Christ. The change from darkness to light comes through salvation:

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. (Ephesians 5:8)

Ye [saved people] are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

A CHOSEN GENERATION

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Which in time past [when lost] were not a people, but are now the people of God (1 Peter 2:9-10).

SERPENTS

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matthew 23:33)

Jesus said these words to the unbelieving [lost] Pharisees and scribes – but the same applies to all lost people. There is no special class of lost sinners. All are equally sinful. All have the same Adamic, fallen, nature – the same lost nature. This fallen, serpent-like nature is shared equally by all lost sinners.

CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL

There are several verses that very clearly teach that all lost people are children of the devil and that they belong to him, have his nature, and are in service to him – whether they are aware of this or not. Most lost sinners are deceived – they do not realize that Satan rules them and that they are his children. However some lost sinners are aware of this and worship Satan openly. As lost sinners, we can try to ward off Satan and cast his burden from us but we can never succeed, since we are powerless against him without Christ.

It is clear from the following verse that there are only two categories of people in the world: Either one is a child of God (via salvation through Christ Jesus) or one is a child of the devil (through natural birth via the sin inherited from Adam and Eve):

*In this the children of God [saved] are manifest, and the children of the devil [lost]: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother
(1 John 3:10)*

SAINTS

The Bible declares that all saved people are saints. Here are just two of several verses which confirm this:

*Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...
(1 Corinthians 1:2)*

God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints (1 Corinthians 14:33)

CHILDREN OF GOD

According to the Bible, all Christians are children of God through their saving faith in Jesus Christ:

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God (Romans 8:16)

And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them [lost Gentiles], ye are not my people; there shall they [saved Gentiles] be called the children of the living God (Romans 9:26)

For ye [saved people] are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26)

Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children (Ephesians 5:1)

ALIENATED FROM GOD

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them [lost people] because of the blindness of their heart (Ephesians 4:18).

This verse tells us that all lost people: (i) have their understanding darkened, (ii) are separated from the life of God, and (iii) have blindness of heart – they cannot even see what they are.

ENEMIES OF GOD

And you that were sometime alienated [from God] and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled (Colossians 1:21)

For if, when we were enemies [when we were lost], we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled [through salvation] we shall be saved by His life (Romans 5:10)

AT ENMITY AGAINST GOD

Because the carnal [unsaved] mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be (Romans 8:7)

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both [Jews and Gentiles] unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. (Ephesians 2:15-17)

MADE NIGH UNTO GOD

Lost people are brought near to God through faith in the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which He accomplished once and for all on the cross.

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off [lost] are made nigh by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 2:13)

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: (I Peter 3:18)

FRIENDS OF GOD

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you (John 15:15)

THE MIND OF CHRIST

Lost people do not have the mind of Christ. Instead their minds are set against God, in rebellion – even if it does not feel that way. Saved people, however, DO have the mind of Christ and can walk in agreement with God, in obedience to Him.

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we [the saved] have the mind of Christ. (I Corinthians 2:16)

Let this mind be in you [the saved], which was also in Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:5)

THE WICKED

So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked [the lost] from the just [the saved] (Matthew 13:49)

Jesus is clearly telling us that all lost people are wicked.

CHILD of HELL

Woe unto you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves (Matthew 23:15)

If the scribes and Pharisees (being Jews, God's chosen people) were described by Jesus as children of hell, then so too are all lost sinners. We all share the same fallen human nature, which we inherited from Adam. What fallen nature did the scribes and Pharisees have? The same one that we inherited from Adam. There is no difference.

THE JUST

So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked [the lost] from the just [the saved] (Matthew 13:49)

It is the saved who go to heaven. They are made just through Jesus Christ.

SERVANT of RIGHTEOUSNESS

Being then made free from sin [through salvation], ye became the servants of righteousness (Romans 6:18)

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Romans 10:4)

In salvation, we are made the servants of righteousness through Jesus Christ. No fallen human being can perform righteous works without salvation. God has said that our human righteousnesses are as "filthy rags" in His sight (Isaiah 64:6).

A Christian works righteousness through Jesus Christ alone, whereby God alone is glorified. Therefore, no man can work righteousness, either through the law or through good works, but only through salvation in Christ Jesus.

EVIL

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?

(Matthew 7:11)

Jesus called us evil. He wants us to know that we are evil so that we will repent and come to Him for salvation.

DECLARED RIGHTEOUS

A saved person is declared righteous because he has trusted in the sacrifice of Christ Jesus on the cross:

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained unto the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law [good deeds]...and whosoever believeth on him [Christ Jesus] shall not be ashamed

(Romans 9:30-33)

Salvation through **Believing** *versus* Salvation through **Receiving**

Purpose: This article will compare two different plans of salvation, only one of which is Biblical. The first is 'salvation through believing,' which is supported by Scripture, and the second is 'salvation through receiving Jesus into your heart,' which is not supported by Scripture. Unfortunately, the false plan, the second plan, is the one that most people are familiar with and the one that most 'Christians' believe in.

The goal of this article is to expose the false plan so that those who trust in it can turn to the Gospel – the plan provided by the Lord – before it is too late.

Salvation through Believing: This is the Biblical plan of salvation. It is offered to the repenting sinner on the basis of his faith alone. In this plan, the repenting sinner places his faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ (His death on the cross) for salvation (forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life). Nothing is added to this plan. Nothing else is necessary. You do not need to pray a special prayer to bring about salvation. You do not need to *do* anything other than believe. Once you turn to God in repentance and believe in the finished work of Christ on Calvary, you are saved.

Salvation through Receiving: This is the false plan of salvation. In this plan, sinners know of course that Jesus died for them on the cross, but this is never seen as the focal point of salvation. The cross of Calvary is rarely mentioned. Instead, sinners who wish to repent are told that they must *do* something to make salvation possible – invite Jesus into their hearts, receive Jesus, call on God, etc.

This plan of salvation is so familiar that you might not understand initially what the problem is all about. In fact, at the present time, it is the only plan of salvation offered in many gospel tracts and local churches.

Unfortunately, this is not God's plan of salvation at all! Why? Because it has no Biblical foundation.

It was introduced into mainstream Christian churches by impostors (false teachers) whose doctrine was seriously flawed in a variety of ways. It was then extensively popularized by a group of misguided Evangelicals. Sadly, today, it is everywhere. It is virtually impossible to find a gospel tract that does not employ this plan of salvation or to hear a sermon for salvation that does not rely on it.

These are very sobering facts, especially in light of Jesus' own words: "*...Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*" (Luke 18:8)

Everywhere we turn we find that a corrupt faith has been substituted for the true faith taught by Our Lord Jesus Christ. We will now demonstrate this, point by point.

While different churches express the '**Receiving Jesus**' plan in their own way, they all have the same broad pattern, as follows:

1. We all have sin in our hearts. We were born in sin and are controlled by sin. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Understand that sin results in death. Sin leads to the worst death possible, alienation from God for all eternity. Recognise that you deserve death for your sin.
3. Salvation is a free gift from God. You can't earn this gift, but you must reach out and receive it. Ask God to forgive you and save you.
4. Know that Jesus loves you. When He died on the cross He paid your sin debt. He did this because He loves you. His love saved you. Give yourself to Jesus. Call out to God in the name of Jesus.
5. God is knocking on the door of your heart. Ask Him to come into your heart. Believe in Him. Ask Him to reveal Himself to you. God will help you. He loves you.

What is the problem with the 'Receiving Jesus' plan?

You are probably thinking, What exactly is the problem here? While it may not be obvious at first, the fundamental problem is that this is NOT salvation based on faith alone.

Under the 'Receiving Jesus' plan of salvation, in all cases the repentant sinner is required to *do* something to get saved or to ask that something be *done* for him or her.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that you must try to receive Jesus, that you must pray and ask Him to save you, or that you must accept Him into your heart in order to get saved. Salvation in the Bible does not centre on some kind of interchange between the lost sinner and Jesus Christ at the moment of salvation. Salvation in the Bible focuses only on the cross of Calvary, where Jesus has *already done* the work of saving lost sinners.

The Bible directs the lost sinner to look to Calvary as the point of salvation, to understand that the work has already been done. The Bible clearly states that all that is necessary for salvation is to recognise this, to accept that Jesus died for our sins and made full atonement for them once and for all on Calvary. In doing this, He bore the full weight of the wrath of God for our sins and drank the cup to the very last drop. Nothing else is owing. Nothing else remains to be done. The debt has been paid.

As you can see, salvation in the Bible is NOT about something that Jesus is doing for us now, today. He has already completed the work of salvation.

Before He died on the cross, the last words, Jesus spoke were, *It is finished*. This meant that His work was done.

He does not save sinners by coming into their hearts. He does not decide to save them today when, in true contrition, they ask Him to do so. Why? Because He has already offered the gift of salvation to all mankind. The only thing necessary, at the moment of salvation, is simple *faith* in the fact that Jesus' work on the cross of Calvary is sufficient.

If the repenting sinner is directed to anything other than the work that Jesus did on the cross of Calvary, then his faith will be located elsewhere, on a counterfeit or a substitute. It will not be based on the Gospel of salvation as set out in the Bible.

But doesn't the 'Receiving Jesus' plan mention the cross?

Yes, it does, but you will notice that it does not make the cross the cornerstone of salvation. Instead, at the point where the sinner is led to salvation, the cross mysteriously disappears and another method of salvation is offered in its place. Sometimes the cross is mentioned alongside several other methods of salvation, but this too eliminates the cornerstone. Remember, there is only one cornerstone.

The only means of salvation in the Bible is faith in the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. It's that simple.

If you believe your salvation rests on something additional to this, then you have failed to accept the gift. In fact, you have refused to accept the gift. You have in effect told the Lord that His sacrifice on the cross was not quite enough.

Roman Catholics do this. While they are taught that Jesus died on the cross to save them, they believe that salvation itself comes only through the sacraments and good works. Other denominations teach that Jesus died on the cross, but that salvation itself requires a life of obedience. The 'Receiving Jesus' plan is doing exactly the same. It is saying that something additional is needed, that the sacrifice that Christ made on the cross was not quite enough for our salvation.

We are not speaking here about a subtle distinction. Rather we are speaking about the cornerstone of Christian faith, the whole basis of salvation.

Every true Christian must be clear about this. Otherwise, he is basing his faith on a false foundation. And if he is doing this, then he is not saved.

The following table gives a stark summary of the entire matter:

Faith in Christ's sacrifice + Baptism = *no salvation*

Faith in Christ's sacrifice + Receiving Christ in the Eucharist = *no salvation*

Faith in Christ's sacrifice + Good Works = *no salvation*

Faith in Christ's sacrifice + Calling on God = *no salvation*

Faith in Christ's sacrifice + Doing something to receive Jesus = *no salvation*

Faith in Christ's sacrifice + NOTHING = SALVATION

In [Appendix D](#) we set out a number Bible verses that demonstrate beyond doubt that salvation comes by faith alone. You are urged to examine these and satisfy yourself that this is the message of the Gospel and that any other road to salvation is a false one.

In [Appendix E](#) we set out the Bible verses relating to salvation that contain the word 'receive'. If you examine these verses you will find that none have the meaning ascribed to them by the 'Receive Jesus' doctrine of salvation.

Definition of Key Gospel Terms

The power of the Gospel lies in its truth, and its truth is impaired if it is not expressed clearly and accurately. We are not all called to be evangelists, but we ARE all called to evangelize. And to do that we need to be **crystal clear** in our own minds about the true meaning of salvation.

A definition of each of the main terms is given below. [They should be considered as a "set" since their content is interconnected. Otherwise each definition would need to be greatly expanded.]

Taken together these terms define Christian salvation.

1. Propitiation: This is the English translation of the Greek word *hilasterion*, which in turn is a translation of the Hebrew word *kapporeth*, meaning "mercy seat." The mercy seat, which covered the Ark, was made of a single piece of pure gold. It represented Christ as the perfect protective covering (*kapporeth*) that shielded fallen man from the righteous wrath of God. The shed blood of Christ covers the sin of all mankind, and does so completely and perfectly. It is thus the *kapporeth* or propitiation for that sin, making full and final payment for it. In a single sacrifice, never to be repeated, his shed blood satisfied in full, once and for all, the unalterable demand by a holy and righteous God that every sin be punished, without exception. Propitiation in a Biblical sense is entirely a work of mercy and grace which both vindicates the righteousness of God and reconciles man with God. Through it the Father is saying, This is what your sin cost me, and I bore that cost in full in my Son. [Some Bible translations use the word 'expiation' instead of propitiation, but this is wrong. The word propitiation necessarily implies the objective settling of an account, while expiation does not.]

2. Grace: Webster's Dictionary (1828) defines grace as "...the free unmerited love and favor of God, the spring and source of all the benefits men receive from him... The application of Christ's righteousness to the sinner..." There is nothing that any man can do to earn his salvation, even in part, no matter how "good" he may seem in his own eyes. Salvation comes entirely by grace – "by grace ye are saved" (Ephesians 2:5). This means it is a free gift which God in his infinite mercy bestows on all who believe in his Son.

3. Justification: This marks a legal transition from one state to another, where the guilty individual is declared righteous solely on the basis of his belief in what Christ did for him on Calvary. Not only has the penalty for his crime been paid in full, but the crime itself has been expunged from the record. Legally he is now covered by the shed blood of Christ and stands before a righteous God as though he had never sinned. The crime and its penalty have been imputed to Christ and settled in full. Once the sinner is born again, he is justified or declared righteous before God and can never again come into condemnation. Justification occurs at the moment of salvation when we are born again in Christ.

4. Sanctification: To sanctify means to separate from the world and consecrate to God. Anything that is sanctified is made holy and belongs to God. The word "saint" comes from the same root, meaning "a sanctified one," a person who belongs to God. One who is sanctified thereafter stands in a privileged relationship to God. While justification is legal and instantaneous, sanctification is practical and progressive, taking place over a long period of time. From the moment he is born again the believer is indwelt continuously by the Holy Spirit. Through his daily submission to the will of God and his willingness to serve Him in all things, the believer is led by the Holy Spirit into a progressively more sanctified state. This too is a work of grace, a gift that comes to all who live in Christ and await his return.

5. Atonement: The word 'atonement' is closely related to the word 'propitiation,' and is derived from the same Hebrew root, *kaphar*, which means to cover over, to purge, to reconcile. Atonement in the Bible is always substitutionary or vicarious since it is only by the blood of Christ, who suffered and died in our place, that atonement is possible. Christ voluntarily substituted himself for each one of us on the cross, making perfect atonement for our sins and thereby reconciled us with God. We find salvation only when we see that Christ died in our place and paid our sin debt for us. He did for each of us individually what we could never do for ourselves. Atonement is thus the core doctrine of Christianity. [Some Bible commentators maintain that the English word 'atonement' means 'at-one-ment' since it leads to reconciliation, but this is highly misleading since reconciliation is the fruit of atonement, not atonement itself. Furthermore, even the word *reconciliation* does not mean 'at-one-ment' but rather the removal of condemnation and the restoration of the original harmonious relationship between man and God. Hinduism teaches that man can become 'one' with god, but Christianity does not. Man is not divine in *any* sense and can never be.]

6. Redemption: To redeem something means to pay the price required to buy it back. Christ paid that price or ransom on Calvary for each one of us. Man was completely enslaved by sin but Christ redeemed him and set him free. This freedom comes in three stages: (a) justification, which removes the individual permanently from all condemnation before God; (b) sanctification, which redeems him permanently from the power of sin at the moment he is saved and enables him thereafter to grow in Christ; and (c) glorification, which will free him completely from his sin nature after physical death when, at the Second Coming, he will receive a glorified physical body ("...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." – Romans 8:23).

7. Faith: Biblical faith means to believe the promises of God, in particular that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah and that, through his death and resurrection, he set us free. This is why a Christian is often called "a believer." Faith means trusting completely, with our whole heart, in the person of Christ, the truth of his teaching, and his redemptive work on Calvary. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. The Bible states that anything that is not of faith is sin, and that without faith it is impossible to please Him (Romans 14:23 and Hebrews 11:6).

8. Adoption: Christ our Redeemer restored the believer to a living relationship with God. He did this perfectly, so that our heavenly Father looks upon each one of us as He does upon His Son. As such every believer is an adopted child of God: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Romans 8:16-17).

APPENDIX D

Bible verses which clearly show that salvation is based solely on belief in the Gospel

*Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and **believe** the gospel. (Mark 1:14-16)*

If salvation came by receiving Jesus into your heart or into your life, then why did Jesus preach that we should believe the Gospel? Why didn't He tell them to receive Him into their hearts and lives?

*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that **believe** on his name (John 1:12).*

The Bible makes it clear that we "receive" Jesus when we believe in Him, when we believe the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should **believe** and be saved (Luke 8:12).*

Jesus says that those who believe are saved. He said it is the word of God, the Gospel, that is sown and that we need to receive into our hearts. This means we need to believe with our hearts.

*He that **believeth** and is baptized shall be saved; but he that **believeth** not shall be damned (Mark 16:16).*

If one needs to "receive Jesus" in order to be saved, then why didn't Jesus say that? Why did Jesus say that those who didn't believe would be damned, rather than those who didn't receive? Notice also that Jesus did not say that those who are not baptized would be damned, but only those who did not believe. Salvation hinges on belief alone, with nothing added.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever **believeth** in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).*

Salvation comes through believing in Jesus, believing in the sufficiency of His sacrifice on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins.

*He that **believeth** on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that **believeth** not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him (John 3:36).*

If it were necessary for us to receive Jesus in order to be saved, then why didn't Jesus say that? Jesus tells us that our salvation is based on our belief in Him, in His death on the cross as our only means of atonement.

*But these are written, that ye might **believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that **believing** ye might have life through his name. (John 20:31).*

We receive life through Jesus by believing the Gospel, not by receiving Jesus in some manner.

*Howbeit many of them which heard the word **believed**; and the number of the men was about five thousand (Acts 4:14).*

The Bible says that they were saved because they believed the Gospel message, not because they received the Jesus in some manner.

*But when they **believed** Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women (Acts 8:12).*

They heard the Gospel preached by Philip and they believed. Once they believed, they were saved. Belief was the basis of their salvation, belief in Christ and His sacrificial work on the cross.

*And Philip said, If thou **believest** with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I **believe** that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:37).*

The baptism of the Ethiopian was based on his belief in Christ. Philip had already "preached Jesus unto him," beginning in Isaiah 53 (which foretells Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross). The Ethiopian heard the Gospel and believed. He did not receive Jesus into his heart as the means of salvation.

*And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life **believed** (Acts 13:48).*

The Gentiles were saved because they believed the Gospel message that was preached to them. When someone believes the Gospel, it means that they believe in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross for their eternal salvation.

*And they said, **Believe** on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house (Acts 16:31).*

This is an account of a lost man asking Paul and Silas what he must do to be saved. If it were necessary for him to invite Jesus into his heart in order to be saved, or to somehow "receive" Jesus into his heart, or even to pray and call on God to save him, then surely the apostle Paul would have told him that? Instead, Paul tells him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that **believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Romans 1:16).*

The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation for those who believe it.

*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have **believed** in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:16).*

Salvation comes by faith, by believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

*But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that **believe** (Galatians 3:22).*

Salvation – forgiveness of sins and eternal life – is given to them that believe the Gospel.

*In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye **believed**, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise (Ephesians 1:13).*

We are saved by hearing the Gospel message and believing it.

*The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who **believe**, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places (Ephesians 1:18-20).*

The greatness of God's power, particularly in salvation, is given to them that believe.

*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that **believe** (1 Thessalonians 2:13).*

They received the Gospel message by believing it. This is how they were saved.

*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter **believe** on him to life everlasting (1 Timothy 1:15-16).*

Jesus Christ saves sinners that believe in Him and in the sufficiency of His sacrifice for their sins.

For we which have **believed** do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world (**Hebrews 4:3**).

We enter God's rest through salvation by believing the Gospel.

*But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that **believe** to the saving of the soul (**Hebrews 10:39**).*

Notice it says believe to the saving of the soul. When we believe the Gospel message, we are saved.

*Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that **believeth** on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which **believe** he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner (**I Peter 2:6-7**).*

Those that believe in Jesus are not confounded; they will not suffer guilt and shame for their sins before God. Salvation is based on belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

*And this is his commandment, That we should **believe** on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment (**1 John 3:23**).*

God's commandment is that we believe the Gospel, not that we receive Jesus into our hearts.

*These things have I written unto you that **believe** on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may **believe** on the name of the Son of God (**1 John 5:13**).*

Believing in the name of Jesus means believing and trusting in the Gospel of Jesus Christ for eternal salvation.

*And he said to the woman, Thy **faith** hath saved thee; go in peace (**Luke 7:50**)*

Jesus said that it was her faith that saved her. Faith is not an act of receiving, but a matter of believing.

*And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by **faith**. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they (**Acts 15:9-11**).*

Their sinful hearts were purified (made clean) by faith, not by somehow receiving the person of Jesus Christ. It was this faith, through the grace of Jesus Christ, that saved them.

*Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and **faith** toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21).*

Paul, one of the foremost of God's servants, taught no other means of salvation than turning to God in repentance and putting our faith in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross.

*To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by **faith** that is in me (Acts 26:18).*

Jesus says that we are sanctified (washed from our sins) by faith alone, not by receiving the person of Christ.

*Even the righteousness of God which is by **faith** of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that **believe**: for there is no difference (Romans 3:22).*

The righteousness of God is given to us in salvation. We receive this by faith; it is given to those who believe, not those who receive the person of Christ.

*Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through **faith** in his **blood**, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God (Romans 3:25).*

Through His sacrifice on the cross and His shed blood, Jesus disposed God to be gracious and merciful toward all sinners who had faith in what Jesus did. We are saved by our faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, which He shed for us on the cross.

*Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by **faith** without the deeds of the law (Romans 3:28).*

We are justified, cleansed of our guilt before God, by faith alone. Faith is necessary for salvation, not the act of receiving the person of Jesus Christ.

*But to him that worketh not, but **believeth** on him that justifieth the ungodly, his **faith** is counted for righteousness (Romans 4:5).*

Our faith is counted for righteousness. God applies the righteousness of Jesus Christ to our personal account, when we put our faith in the sacrificial work of Jesus on the cross. This means believing that His sacrifice was the full and complete payment for our sins. Receiving the person of Jesus Christ into our hearts or into our lives has nothing whatever to do with the forgiveness of sins.

*Therefore being justified by **faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1).*

We are justified (cleansed of our sin guilt before God) by our faith. Faith is the agent of salvation, not receiving.

*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the **faith** of Jesus Christ, even we have **believed** in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the **faith** of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:16).*

Again, the Bible emphatically assures us that we are justified (cleared of all guilt before God) by faith. This faith believes in the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ, the work that He did on the cross, bearing the full weight, the full penalty, of our sins before God. This is the faith that saves, the faith that justifies us.

*This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of **faith**? (Galatians 3:2).*

In salvation we receive the Holy Spirit. This enters into us the moment we are saved. We do not 'open' ourselves to 'receive' the Holy Spirit. Rather, we believe in the Gospel of Christ and the Holy Spirit then enters into us. There is nothing we can *do* to make this happen. It comes by faith and faith alone.

*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by **faith** (Galatians 3:24).*

*For by grace are ye saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8).*

*That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by **faith**; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God (Ephesians 3:16-19).*

This verse clearly states that Jesus dwells in our hearts, but that He does so by faith. This is the product or outcome of salvation, **not** the means of salvation. Anyone who tries to 'open' himself to 'receive' salvation is making a great mistake.

APPENDIX E

Bible verses relating to Salvation which contain the word 'receive'

*Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not **receive** the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein (Luke 18:17).*

Jesus speaks of receiving the kingdom of God in this passage. It does not connect salvation with receiving Jesus into our hearts.

*But as many as **received** him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name (John 1:12).*

This is the first of only two verses in the entire New Testament which speak directly of "receiving Jesus" for salvation. However, if you examine the context of this verse, and compare Scripture with Scripture, it will be abundantly clear that we *receive* Jesus only by **believing** the **Gospel**.

*Then they that gladly **received** his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls (Acts 2:41).*

These people were saved by receiving "his word," which is the **Gospel** message of salvation. They were not told to "receive" Jesus into their hearts.

*Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had **received** the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John (Acts 8:14).*

Again, these people were saved by receiving the word of God, which is the **Gospel** message of salvation. They were not told to "receive the person of Jesus" for salvation, but simply to believe in the sufficiency of His sacrifice on the cross.

*And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also **received** the word of God (Acts 11:11).*

The Gentiles were saved when they "received the word of God." Again, this refers to the **Gospel** message. You "receive" the word of God by believing the Gospel, not by receiving something into yourself.

*To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may **receive** forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me (Acts 26:18).*

We receive forgiveness of sins when we are saved. This verse does not teach us to receive Jesus for salvation.

*And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now **received** the atonement (Romans 5:11).*

We receive the atonement when we are saved. This verse does not teach that we need to receive Jesus into our hearts or into our lives for salvation.

*For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which **receive** abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17).*

We receive abundance of grace when we are saved. Again, receiving Jesus is not mentioned.

*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have **received**, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain (1 Corinthians 15:1-2)*

This verse speaks of getting saved by receiving the **Gospel** message. We receive the Gospel in the same way that we receive Jesus, that is by believing.

*For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye **receive** another spirit, which ye have not **received**, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him (2 Corinthians 11:4).*

This verse speaks of false conversions and the risk of *receiving another spirit*, a false spirit. We ought to be very careful when we try to receive someone or something into ourselves for salvation, as this is contrary to the Bible. By doing so it is possible to receive a false spirit from Satan.

*As ye have therefore **received** Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him (Colossians 2:6).*

This is the second of the two verses in the entire New Testament which speak of "receiving" Jesus for salvation. Again, it does not refer to the opening of one's heart and inviting Jesus in, any more than John 1:12 cited above. It is clear from the context that we receive Jesus only when we put our faith in the Gospel.

*And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having **received** the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost (1 Thessalonians 1:6).*

In order to get saved, we must receive the word, which is the **Gospel**.

*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye **received** the word of God which ye heard of us, ye **received** it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe (I Thessalonians 2:13).*

Again, salvation comes by receiving the word of God, which is the **Gospel**.

*And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might **receive** the promise of eternal inheritance (Hebrews 9:15).*

When we are saved, we receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Again, salvation does not come through receiving the person of Jesus Christ.

*Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and **receive** with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls (James 1:21).*

Again, the engrafted word, which is the **Gospel**, is able to save our souls when we receive it, that is, when we **believe** it.

*He that **receiveth** you **receiveth** me, and he that **receiveth** me **receiveth** him that sent me. He that **receiveth** a prophet in the name of a prophet shall **receive** a prophet's reward; and he that **receiveth** a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall **receive** a righteous man's reward (Matthew 10:40-41).*

Some preachers who teach the 'Receiving Jesus' doctrine of salvation like to cite this passage because the word 'receive' is used so often. However, it is clear from the context that Jesus is referring to receiving the message, the **Gospel of Christ**, and not the person.