

How To Be Saved And Gain Eternal Life



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HOW TO BE SAVED AND GAIN ETERNAL LIFE

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INTRODUCTION

When we think about God and wonder what He is like or what He wants from us, sometimes it seems hard to find answers. We listened first to our parents, then to our friends, teachers, and preachers. Perhaps we stared at the stars at night, wondering how it all started and who started it. And we pray. We try to talk to God, and we listen for God to talk to us.

If your life experience has been like mine, it isn't easy. I've never heard a booming voice from the heavens or seen any spiritual writing on the wall. And while I have seen a billboard along the highway signed "God," we both know that a church or believer designed and paid for that billboard.

Along the way of life, I heard about a book written by "*holy men of God (who) spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*" (2 Peter 1:21 NKJV) This is a quote from that book, the Bible, which has two parts. The first part, the Old Testament, tells the story of God's interaction with men, particularly the nation of Israel, and tells about the savior God would send, Yeshua (or, in English, transliterated, Jesus). The second part, the New Testament, tells of the life and teachings of this Yeshua (Jesus). So the source of authority for this study will be the Bible. We will look at the verses, or scriptures, of the Bible to find out the truth.

The particular question for this Bible study is perhaps the most important question facing every human who has ever lived. **What happens when we die?** Does anything remain of "us? Haven't we all wondered about this at one time or another? Perhaps we wondered this at the funeral of a friend or loved one. Is there anything left of them? If so, where are they now? We've all heard of heaven and hell. Are they real? Is that where the dead are? If we believe in God at all, can we believe He will save us from something bad and save us to something good? To keep this study short and to the point, we will not do a study of heaven or hell here. Each of those could be a very long study all by itself. **Suffice it to say, for now, that we are saved to a good place and saved from a bad place.**

If God saves us to a good place, obviously there won't be murders and robberies there, so it must be a happy place full of good beings. I have worried that I am not good enough to go there. Haven't you? I think of myself as mostly a good person, but I've done some things that I know were not good. If sin is doing things God is not pleased with, there is no question I have sinned. Can I still be saved? Can you?

There is good news. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote four narratives of the life of Yeshua, or Jesus of Nazareth, who is called "the Christ," meaning "the anointed one. You have probably heard him called Jesus Christ as if "Christ" were his last name, but it means Jesus, the anointed one of God. Their stories are in the books in the Bible called **the Gospels, which means "the good news."** And **they are good news,** for you will see in the verses below that **normal people, like you and me, can be saved.**

We are seeking to live forever in wonderful happiness with God. If we do not gain this salvation to eternal life, we forfeit that life and die. Let's just focus this study on how to be saved. There are so many, many places in the Bible where we are told how to be saved and gain eternal life, but below are some that seem important to me. Please read the following scriptures and any others you can find on the topic, and pray to God to guide you in understanding what He is trying to tell you. **You can be saved and live happily forever.**

Most of my Bible studies attempt to have every scripture in the Bible on the topic. Some people have complained that there are just too many Bible verses. But my Bible studies are to learn the truth about what the Bible says—not what some denomination told me to believe, not what some person told me to believe, but what the Bible really says. I want all the scriptures on the topic. I want the scriptures those with opposing beliefs use as their key scriptures, so I can analyze them. I want to know their reason for believing the way they do and give that a fair hearing. How can we find the "truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" if we don't have all the data and all the information available? Since my studies are meant to learn what the Bible really says on a topic, I typically use nothing from outside the Bible. Outside sources may or may not be valid. The only place we can read the words of Yeshua (Jesus in English) is in the Bible. So yes, I hope I have found every scripture on the topic. If I have missed a scripture, if you find other scriptures that address the question, or if you can in any way help me improve this writing or see a mistake, please contact me and let me know at dan@vigilantvaliant.com.

This particular Bible study, "How to be Saved and Gain Eternal Life," is a "milk of the word" Bible study, a light Bible study. So, I have compiled below just some scriptures I found on this topic. Since this is the main topic of the Bible, there are hundreds of scriptures about it. Those that follow are just a few that are clear about getting us started. This is meant to be a short introductory study, not a thorough thesis. For a more thorough Bible study on salvation, please see my study,

"HOW JESUS AND HIS 12 APOSTLES SAY WE ARE SAVED?" My Bible studies may be found at www.vigilantvaliant.com.

I use the King James Version (KJV) only because it was by far the main English translation during my life. While there are other good translations of the Bible, I am using the one I am familiar with, the KJV. Yes, it is old-fashioned English, but it can also be poetic and beautiful. So, all scriptures are quoted from the KJV Bible (King James Version), unless otherwise noted. All scriptures will be indented and in italics. All **bolding**, underlining, *italicizing*, (parentheses), highlighting, and [brackets] are done by me for emphasis. Be aware and realize that when I say any word is in the Bible X number of times, that means in the King James Version (KJV). If you look it up in another version, say the New International Version (NIV), the count will be different because they may use other words that mean the same thing, perhaps more modern words. This is not an error or flaw in the Bible, but just using different words, such as "day of his birth" in one version and "birthday" in another version. The meanings are the same.

END OF INTRODUCTION

SAVED FROM WHAT?

*"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: **the soul that sinneth, it shall die.**" (Ezekiel 18:4)*

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

*"For **all have sinned**, and come short of the glory of God;" (Romans 3:23)*

This verse is famous in Christendom. It is not from one of the four gospels, which are stories of the life of Jesus, but from one of the epistles (or letters) the first disciples or apostles wrote to the new Christian churches for guidance. Paul, the disciple, is pretty clear here. If we sin, we earn death. But everyone dies. Yes, because all sin. But remember, there is good news!

SAVED TO WHAT?

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

God can give us eternal life. We have all seen cemeteries full of dead people. Everyone's physical body dies, and their physical bodies are buried in the ground. So it is clear that this eternal life is not in our present physical body. Here, and in many other verses, the Bible says we are saved to "eternal life."

*"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be **no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain**: for the former things are passed away." (Revelation 21:4)*

Thank God, it will be an eternal life with no sorrow, no crying, and no pain.

SAVED BY WHOM?

If we are to be saved, it must be by God. Which God? The Bible is clear: there is only one God! Any other gods are false gods, whether they are carved statues covered with gold, demons or evil spirits who pretend to be gods, or even the modern-day false gods of wealth, power, and pleasure. The ancient Romans, Egyptians, and every nation made themselves some kind of god, but I am guessing you know in your own heart that **there can only be one true God**. The Bible introduces Him as the Creator God, the Living God, the Eternal God, and God the Father.

*"10 Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that **I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.** 11 **I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour.**" (Isaiah 43:10-11)*

*"6 Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; **I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.** 7 And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? And the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. 8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? Ye are even my witnesses. **Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any.**" (Isaiah 44:6-8)*

"I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:" (Isaiah 45:5)

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8)

What is the name of the one true God? Do we really know? Yes. He told us His name in the Bible when Moses saw a burning bush that was not consumed or burned up. When Moses went to see this and stood there, God spoke to him and told him His name.

"1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. 2 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. 3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4 And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. 5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." (Exodus 3:1-5)

"13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? 14 And God said unto Moses, I Am That I Am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you. 15 And God said moreover unto Moses, **Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.**" (Exodus 3:13-15)

So His name is "I AM". This is, of course, the English translation. If someone is speaking to you as a friend would you want them to use your name, or some translation? It seems to me that God would like us to use His real name. So what is that in the original language? Do we really know? Yes! We really know.

"and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, Yahweh, I was not known to them." (Exodus 6:3 Legacy Standard Bible (LSB))

The BibleHub Interlinear Bible shows the above verse below! It is not meant to read smoothly, but accurately. Below is the image of Exodus 6:3. Start reading on the top right. Start the second line on the right.

The screenshot shows the following text from Exodus 6:3:

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To be careful not to misuse God's name, they replaced the name of God in our English Bibles with the word Lord.

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

How is the one true God going to save us?

*"For there is one God, and **one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;**"* (1 Timothy 2:5)

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

The Bible says we are saved through Jesus Christ (Messiah), meaning Jesus the anointed one, or chosen one. The custom back then was to anoint a person with oil to choose them to be king, so the anointed one is the chosen one. Here, and in many other verses, the Bible says we are saved by "Jesus Christ."

Since we have learned the name of God is Yahweh, we should strive to know the name of His Son, the Savior. "Jesus" is just a transliteration from Greek into English. From the best of my studies so far, the Hebrew for this was Yeshua. Of course, English Bibles use Jesus, as we do below. But for your own prayer time, you might want to use His real name, Yeshua.

JESUS SAYS HE IS THE SON OF GOD

Who is this Jesus Christ, through whom we can gain eternal life? In the Gospel of John, Jesus Himself tells us who He is.

*"5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6 **Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.** 7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;** and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (John 14:5-9)*

So Jesus says **He is the only way** to come to the Father. Not "A" way, not one of the ways, but the ONLY way. He also says that if we have seen Him, we have seen the Father.

*"1 **These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:** 2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, **that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.** 3 **And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.** 4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:1-5)*

In John 17:1-5 above, Jesus declares He is the Son of God.

*"35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, **Dost thou believe on the Son of God?** 36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? 37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and **it is he that talketh with thee.** 38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him." (John 9:35-38)*

Jesus healed this man who was blind from birth. When the man's eyes were healed, he saw Jesus was the one who healed him. The man did not know then that Jesus was the Son of God. But later, when he saw Jesus again, Jesus asked him this question, making it clear that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God.

*"34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? 35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; 36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because **I said, I am the Son of God?** 37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. 38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." (John 10:34-38)*

The religious leaders of His day were attacking Jesus for blasphemy because they heard Him claim He was the Son of God.

MARK SAYS JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

*"1 **The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;** 2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4 John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. 5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; 7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. 8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. 9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. 10 And straightway coming up out of*

*the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: 11 **And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.***" (Mark 1:1-11)

Mark starts his gospel (the good news about Jesus) by immediately saying that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Also, when John the Baptist baptized Jesus, God Himself said to Jesus, "Thou art my beloved Son."

PETER SAYS JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

*"13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.** 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for **flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.**"* (Matthew 16:13-17)

Jesus often called Himself the Son of Man. In his gospel, Matthew tells us about Jesus asking His disciples who they think He is. **Peter says Jesus is the Christ (Messiah, Savior) and the Son of God.** Jesus confirms this and says His Father, God, revealed this to Peter.

JOHN SAYS JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

*"30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 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 20:30-31)

DEVILS SAY JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

*"40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with diverse diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. 41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, **Thou art Christ the Son of God.** And he, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ."* (Luke 4:40-41)

*"27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, **Jesus, thou Son of God most high?** I beseech thee, torment me not. 29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) 30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him."* (Luke 8:27-30)

Not that we trust devils, but here they are crying out in fear.

There are many more scriptures about who Jesus is, but these should suffice for a start to make it clear who we are talking about. Yeshua (Jesus) was not just a good man, a prophet, or a religious teacher. We see in the Bible clearly that **Jesus is the Son of God** sent to be **our Savior**. So if Jesus was sent to be our Savior, how does that work for us? How do we take advantage of it? **How do we make Jesus our Savior?**

HOW TO BE SAVED

BELIEVE - HAVE FAITH

Now that we know what we are being saved from—death—and what we are being saved into—a happy eternal life—and who is doing the saving, Yeshua (Jesus), let's see what the Bible says we need to do to be saved. Let's start with what is probably the most famous verse in the Bible: John 3:16.

*"16 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.** 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 **He that believeth on him is not condemned:** but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."* (John 3:16-19)

"30 And brought them [Paul and Silas] out, and said, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* 31 *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*" (Acts 16:30-31)

Here is the good news: If we believe in Jesus, we can be saved!

"8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* 10 *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* 11 *For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* 12 *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.* 13 *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* 14 *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17 So then **faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:8-17)***

"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)

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24)**

"28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye **believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:28-29)**

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that **every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:40)**

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

"27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and **they follow me: 28 **And I give unto them eternal life;** and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:27-28)**

"25 Jesus said unto her, **I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 **And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.** Believest thou this?" (John 11:25-26)**

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: **no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)**

Jesus says He is the only way.

CONFESS - REPENT

The Bible makes it clear that we are to confess our sin and repent of it.

What is sin?

What does it mean to confess our sins?

What does it mean to repent?

Bible definitions are all we care about, so let's look at a few scriptures.

Sin is a transgression of God's law and His commandments.

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for **sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4)**

Sin is any iniquity. <https://www.wordnik.com/words/iniquity> defines iniquity as: "Gross immorality or injustice; wickedness; a grossly immoral act."

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:2)

It is easy to see that confessing means more than just acknowledging our sin. Cops get confessions all the time. "Yeah, I killed Louie, and he deserved it." "Sure I killed Louie. What are you going to do about it?"

We don't need to be rocket scientists or prophets of God to know that in the Bible, **confession includes repentance**. Again, the Bible defines in itself that repentance is **turning from our sin and changing our behavior**.

*"Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; **repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.**" (Ezekiel 14:6)*

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, **and turn from their wicked ways;** then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)*

*"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso **confesseth and forsaketh** them shall have mercy." (Proverbs 28:13)*

*"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. **Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.**" (James 4:8)*

*"**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**" (1 John 1:9)*

These verses are more very good news! God will forgive us if we confess and repent! To repent means more than just feeling bad about our sin. It involves a **deliberate decision to turn from our sin** and live the way God wants.

*"1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, **Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**" (Matthew 3:1-2)*

*"7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 **Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:** 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 11 I [John] **indeed baptize you with water unto repentance.** But he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: 12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:7-12)*

When the Pharisees and Sadducees came to John the Baptist for baptism, he stressed the need for repentance.

*"From that time **Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**" (Matthew 4:17)*

*"2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, Nay: **but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**" (Luke 13:2-3)*

*"Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, **and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**" (Acts 2:38)*

*"**Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.**" (Acts 3:19)*

Thank God, with confession and repentance, we can be cleansed from our sins.

BE BAPTIZED

"3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore **we are buried with him by baptism into death**: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so **we also should walk in newness of life.**" (Romans 6:3-4)

"15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved**; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16)

"18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you**: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:18-20)

"32 And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. 33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. 34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. 35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. 36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, 37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. 38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, This Is The King Of The Jews. 39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. 42 **And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.**" (Luke 23:32-43)

There is no indication that this thief had been baptized. Therefore, baptism must not be a requirement for salvation. God can save whom He will. But we will see from the verses below that baptism is expected as an act of obedience.

BE OBEDIENT

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: **the devils also believe, and tremble.**" (James 2:19)

That makes it clear that just believing God exists is not what is meant by Believing in the Son of God to salvation.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 7:21)

"16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, **what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?** 17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but **if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.** 18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, 19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? 21 Jesus said unto him, **If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.**" (Matthew 19:16-22)

Obedience to the commandments is required but leaves us lacking. We must trust and follow Jesus.

"18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you**: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:18-20)

In Matthew 28:18-20 above, Jesus says to teach people to believe, then baptize believers, and then teach them to obey what Jesus/God has commanded them. So obedience is part of showing you truly believe, truly love God, and want to be saved.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so **faith without works is dead also.**" (James 2:26)

And that makes it clear that saying we have faith but continuing to live in sin shows we don't really have faith.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." (John 15:10)

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Revelation 12:17)

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (Revelation 14:12)

ENDURE TO THE END

Isn't it just plain common sense that if you declare at the beginning that you love someone but then, through the years, fall away and ignore them or leave them for someone else, that your love was not true enduring love? Ask any person whose spouse has left them for another person. That is what all the following verses mean. If we love God through to our death, then we really truly love God. Anything less than this is not real, true love.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;" (John 8:31)

"21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I, Paul, am made a minister;" (Colossians 1:21-23)

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (James 1:12)

"But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Hebrews 3:6)

"12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;" (Hebrews 3:12-14)

"11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24:11-14)

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22)

God will not turn away from us, but we can turn away from God. The Christian life is not a walk in the park. There will be trials and tribulations. This tests our love and faith.

"3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." (1 Peter 1:3-9)

SUMMARY

Here's a short summary of how to be saved: 1. Believe in Jesus and ask Jesus to save you; 2. Confess and repent of your sins; 3. Be baptized; 4. Obey God; 5. Endure in faith for the rest of your life. If you slip and sin, confess and ask forgiveness. It is not slipping that will cause us to fail, but quitting. If you stop running a race, you can't finish it, and you can't win.

If you have never really confessed belief in Jesus, but now you do believe, why not tell God right now? Below are some sample prayers for salvation. These are only samples. Just pour your heart out to Jesus and let Him know you believe in and love Him. Confess that you've sinned, ask for forgiveness, and ask Jesus to save you and guide you. You might ask Him right now to help you stay true and endure to the end.

"Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to come into my life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior for the rest of my life."

"Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me. Come into my life. I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Help me to live for You the rest of this life. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen."

If you have believed, you really should be baptized. Not sprinkled as a baby, but as a rational adult who can make decisions, be immersed, buried with Him, and be raised with Him to new life.

How?

Where?

You may or may not be shy or a little turned off by the people in Christian churches, but there is only one true church, the body of true believers in Jesus. They are in many denominations, and there are many little or big local groups with many different names. Some are more Bible-believing than others, and some are more active in the community than others. Some are old-fashioned, and some are modern. Pray to God to help you find a good one He is happy with for you to be baptized at and attend. Try to let Him guide you. If you can't really feel any strong guidance, just pray and pick one out of the phone book or off the internet. Call and make an appointment to talk to the pastor and tell him you want to be baptized. You do not have to "join" this local church. By your faith, you are already saved and a child of God in the Church of God. Just ask to be baptized. The pastor will ask you some questions to make sure you understand the qualifications shown above. See if God leads you to feel comfortable with the preacher and the church. Do not let this preacher or pastor confuse you. First things first. You can't learn the whole Bible at once.

After baptism, study the Bible. Humans are social creatures, and it is comfortable to have others to study with, ask questions, or just chat with. It is helpful to have Christian friends, like a family around you, like a support group, so it is important to attend a local church. Pray to God about which church to attend. You might want to "try out" the church you were baptized in by attending worship services. You may not like their music; you may not like their building, but you already know those aren't the important things. Do they preach the Bible?

The word "church" comes from the Greek word "ekklesia," noted in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance as G1577, the 1577th Greek word in the concordance. It appears 114 times in the New Testament. It is always translated "church." It is usually used alone, as in, "the church," as it was the entire body of believers in Jesus the Christ, later nicknamed "Christians." The word is used a few times with the name of the city of the specific group being written to or addressed, as in "the church in Smyrna" or "the church in Pergamos". Eight (8) times it is referred to as the "church of God," and three (3) more times as "churches of God." Once, it is referred to as the "church of the Living God," once as the "churches of Christ," and once as the "church of the Firstborn," referring to Jesus. This knowledge isn't meant to say that it must be the name of the denomination of the church you attend. It means, in God's eyes, that those who believe in Him are His church, God's church. As you grow in knowledge, you can follow the Holy Spirit of God's leading to the local assembly He wants you in.

What does God want from you? You have heard of giving offerings and sacrifices to God. You have heard of pagan religions offering their children as burnt offerings to God. You have heard of people becoming monks in a monastery on the top of a hill who never talk to anyone. When you wonder, "What does God want from me?" God does tell you directly.

*"6 Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? 7 Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and **what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?**" (Micah 6:6-8)*

As a final word of encouragement, **study the Bible yourself** to grow in knowledge and understanding. Pray every day, often throughout the day. **Stay close to God, and He will stay close to you.**

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." (James 4:8)

May God guide, bless, and protect you in your Christian walk.

[For a more thorough Bible study on salvation, please see my study, "HOW DO JESUS & HIS 12 APOSTLES SAY WE ARE SAVED?"]