

Salvation

Do You Know If You Are Saved?

How many here are saved? Are you sure? What is the basis for your assurance?

My hope is that each of you is saved, that you are sure you are saved and that you are basing your assurance of salvation on the Word of God. It is good to know what salvation entails, also. My questions were rhetorical ones; although I am glad some of you raised your hands! In the case where you believe you are saved, but are not really quite sure if what salvation is and what it entails then this message will hopefully clear up the questions about salvation.

As I've gone out and witnessed to folks, spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I have run across many who say they are saved. When I ask them that question about how do they know they are saved, many are unable to answer. This is an unfortunate circumstance in the world today. I am sure some of the people I have asked about their salvation only say they are saved to get away from this guy asking questions like this, but these are many of the people we need to be reaching. All of us when asked if we are saved, should respond with a resounding yes! It is that big of a deal and needs to be vocalized as such. We should also all be able to defend our faith. We should be able to tell someone who asks why we know we are saved.

Let's look at 1 Corinthians 15:1 – 4 for the basis of what salvation is, the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

¹ Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

² By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

³ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Isn't it wonderful how simple that is? You don't have to go to college and to seminary to understand what the Gospel is. You don't have to be a great theologian or scholar to understand what the Gospel is. In fact, it's the people that are just plain, regular folks that understand what the Gospel is more than those who are highly educated. I am not saying that someone who is educated like this is unable to know what the Gospel is, but as Scripture tells us both knowledge and wisdom come from the fear of the LORD. (See Proverbs 1:7, 9:10). Wisdom and knowledge don't start from any other source but the fear of the LORD.

In the first two verses of this section of Scripture we see Paul is talking about the Gospel and that by believing on the Gospel, we are saved! He then goes on to tell the church of Corinth, and all

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the rest of the world that eventually reads these words, what the Gospel is. Verses 3 and 4 tell us this. The Gospel is this, that Christ died for our sins according to Scripture, was buried, and rose again three days later according to Scripture. That is the Gospel we preach and the Gospel that saves people from eternal damnation. Jesus told us this in his conversation with Nicodemus in John chapter 3. Let's take a look at John 3:13 – 18,

¹³ And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

¹⁵ That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

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.

Jesus himself is telling us that we must believe in him to be saved, to not perish, but have everlasting life. When we believe on him, we are not condemned. Verses 19 and 21 defines the condemnation, who is condemned and who is not condemned.

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

²⁰ For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

²¹ But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

It's very simple. Those that do wrong do not want to be seen doing what they are doing or have what they are doing exposed. Those that are doing right, do want what they are doing to be seen, because they are being done according to what God says is right.

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Incidentally, the reference to Moses lifting up the serpent can be found in Numbers 21. Here is a section from that story that paints a wonderful picture of what is being talked about here concerning salvation.

⁷ Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

⁸ And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

⁹ And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

Picture the Israelites coming to Moses as the world, Jesus as the serpent of brass, and the pole as the Cross at Calvary and this paints an unmistakable picture of salvation for us. We have all been bitten by that serpent, the Devil, but when we behold Jesus, we receive eternal life. Much of the Old Testament serves as a picture of what Jesus would do and it is time well spent to ponder these things to develop a personal understanding of what God has done for us sinners through the sacrifice of His only begotten son, Jesus.

Speaking of the Old Testament, it is the only Scripture that was available at the time Jesus was on this earth. It was the only complete part of the Bible, we have now, when Paul wrote his letter to the church at Corinth. People were not reading the New Testament in Paul's day, they were living it! But when we read 1 Corinthians 15:1 – 4 earlier, Paul talked about “according to Scripture.” What the Gospel entails had been presented in Scripture, the Old Testament, hundreds of years before it actually happened. 1 Corinthians 15:3 said that Christ died for our sins according to Scripture. That Scripture is presented in several places in the Old Testament, but in an especially powerful way in Isaiah 53. We won't go through this verse because there just isn't enough time to do so. I lead a study group at work and we spent about a month and a half of Tuesdays brushing over the contents. But, it speaks of his life from growing up to his death, how his own despised him and treated him horribly, and how he willingly did what God had him do. The him being referred to here is the Messiah, or as we know him, Jesus Christ. The last verse of Isaiah 53 speaks directly to the Scripture spoken of by Paul, however,

¹² 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.

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I let Scripture speak for itself here. Another description of his death and what he suffered for us is found in Psalm 22. Please remember this Psalm was written hundreds of years before this happened to Jesus, and even before execution by crucifixion was started. Yet, it perfectly describes how Jesus would die and how he would be treated, even while on the Cross.

As was said before, the Old Testament is a picture of what was to come in the New Testament. We see about the resurrection of Christ being alluded to in places like Jonah 1:17, speaking of leaving Jonah in the mouth of the whale for 3 days and 3 nights. In Hosea 6:2, Scripture speaks of the nations of Israel, Ephraim, and Judah being revived after two days and being raised up on the third day.

But Psalm 16:10 brings out the Scripture Paul was speaking about in 1 Corinthians 15:4,

¹⁰ For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

We know this because this is the same place Peter spoke of when addressing the Jews in Acts 2 and this specifically in Acts 2:31 – 32,

³¹ He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

³² This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Peter used Scripture to preach the Gospel to those Jews who had not believed that Jesus was their Messiah. Paul used Scripture to preach the Gospel to both Jew and mainly Gentile. He used Scripture to reaffirm his message. Paul, even as we heard from our last meeting, spoke that the Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica because they searched the Scriptures daily to see if what they were being told was so.

When we are saved by believing on the Gospel, that is, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are saved once and forever. Scripture does not speak of us having to be resaved time and time again, but it does speak of our salvation as a permanent thing. I like to tell people, that just as we cannot earn our salvation when we are lost, we cannot earn our damnation when we are saved. Let's look at a couple examples that show this. Paul brings out this idea in his first letter to the church at Corinth. 1 Corinthians 1:4 – 9 says,

⁴ I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

⁵ That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and *in* all knowledge;

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⁶ Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

⁷ So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

⁸ Who shall also confirm you unto the end, *that ye may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁹ God *is* faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is clear Paul is talking to believers in Corinth, although they will need some correction. But the point for our study is that they are waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, just as we are today. He goes on to point out that Jesus will confirm us to the end, that we may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the day Jesus comes for us, His Church. We will not be here for the time when God's judgment is poured out on the earth. Verse 8 and 9 assure us that we will be blameless in that day because God has called us unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord and that God is faithful. We can count on God's Word always.

Jesus says in John 6:37 – 40,

³⁷ All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

³⁸ For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

³⁹ And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

⁴⁰ 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.

Here we have assurance from Jesus himself. Paul was merely reminding those in Corinth of what Jesus had already said to His disciples several years before. Jesus said He will not cast us out, but will raise us up again at that last day, the day of the Lord. It is Jesus' will to do what God the Father said to do and it's God the Father's will that all who believe on Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, be saved from eternal damnation. No one's promise is better than that of God's promise. If God said it, that settles it.

John said in 1 John 5:10 – 13,

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¹⁰ He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

¹¹ And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

¹² He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

¹³ 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.

Will you believe on the Son of God? Will you believe that His death, burial and resurrection has not only saved you from eternal damnation, but has given you the eternal security that only God can promise? Remember the words of Jesus in John 10:27 – 29,

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.

²⁹ My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved; eternally saved!

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Saints in the hands of Christ
(Jn. 10:28, 29.)

Firm as the earth thy gospel stands,

My Lord, my hope, my trust;

If I am found in Jesus' hands,

My soul can ne'er be lost.

His honor is engaged to save

The meanest of his sheep;

All that his heav'nly Father gave

His hands securely keep.

Nor death nor hell shall e'er remove

His favorites from his breast;

In the dear bosom of his love

They must for ever rest.

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Psalm 22

¹ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*

² O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.

³ But thou *art* holy, *O thou* that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

⁴ Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

⁵ They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

⁶ But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

⁷ All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying,*

⁸ He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

⁹ But thou *art* he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

¹⁰ I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou *art* my God from my mother's belly.

¹¹ Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* none to help.

¹² Many bulls have compassed me: strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

¹³ They gaped upon me *with* their mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion.

¹⁴ I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

¹⁶ For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

¹⁷ I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me.

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¹⁸ They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

¹⁹ But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

²⁰ Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.

²¹ Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

²² I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

²³ Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

²⁴ For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

²⁵ My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

²⁶ The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.

²⁷ All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

²⁸ For the kingdom *is* the LORD'S: and he *is* the governor among the nations.

²⁹ All *they that be* fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

³⁰ A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

³¹ They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.