

## The Gospel

The Gospel is GOD's response and solution to the human condition of sin.

Jesus loves us and cares for our souls. The Bible says that the soul is of more value than all the world. (Matthew 16:26-27) Salvation has to do with the saving of someone from something. Biblically speaking, salvation involves the saving of man (humanity) from sin – transgression of God's law. Salvation is the most important and precious gift a person can receive. It is a free gift from God, not earned by works and accomplished through the finished work of Jesus Christ.

“What shall I do to be saved?” Many may wonder who's in need of this saving from sin? According to the scriptures, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) In addition to humanity, which clearly fall under the umbrella of sin, the Bible states the penalty of sin when it says “the wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23) Sin is serious. Sin has consequences. Sin is what separates man from God, and breaks the relationship man has with God. The advent of sin took place in the Garden of Eden with our parents, Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve broke God's Law, the law of sin and death – which is a law that basically states that if you sin, you die. (Romans 8:2) God initially gave one law or command, and that was to “not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” (Genesis 3:16-17) When man defied God's law, sin entered in the world. Man has been sinning ever since.

Fortunately, God already knew that man would sin and therefore, before the foundation of the world, made provisions for man to get back into a relationship with Him. (Ephesians 1:4-6) The love of God transcends all understanding in that, although man have sinned, God loves us enough to make a way for man to come back to Him. This is good news. The agent by which salvation comes is through the **gospel** (or good

news). The apostle Paul wrote, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also the Greek.” (Romans 1:16) Estranged from God, men and women face two basic spiritual needs. First, they need to be restored to God’s fellowship. They are guilty before God, and somehow they must find forgiveness. Second, they need power to change. Their sin reveals their spiritual impotence. If life is to be different, someone will have to show them how to overcome their failures and find the strength to be new persons. Men and women need something done for them and something done in them. In the salvation of a person’s soul there are, primarily, two necessary parts: **God’s part** and **man’s part**. These two parts can be considered as, **what God has done** and **what we must do**.

**God’s part** has to do with the atonement of sin. The Bible says, “God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life; for God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” (John 3:16-17) The high price of sin could not be paid by man. Mankind needed (and needs) a savior: Jesus Christ. God had to come and defeat the sting of death, thus paying the price for our sins Himself. (Philippians 2:6-7) The love of God compelled Him to send Christ.

Secondly, Christ had to die for our sins. Christ’s perfect and sinless life served as payment for our sins today, yesterday and ever more: something man cannot do – live a sinless life. The Bible talks about the purpose of Christ death, “who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.” (I Peter 2:21-24)

The third crucial aspect of the gospel, which God did on our behalf, was to be buried. (Matthew 27:57-61) Christ died like a common outlaw, on an old rugged cross,

and was buried in a tomb on our account. This is further proof, along with witnesses who saw these accounts, that Jesus was actually dead. And, unlike mortal men, on the third day of His death, Christ rose again. (II Corinthians 5:14-15) The grave could not hold our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. The good news that Christ rose from the dead indicates that just as He rose, if we die in Christ, when we rise we'll walk in the newness of life – which is a life with Christ. (Romans 6:4) The fact that Christ came, died, was buried, and rose again the third day is good news for humanity. If Christ did not come and sacrifice on our behalf, man would remain in sin and thus be condemned from the life of God. (I Corinthians 15:12-17)

Partaking of God's salvation has to do with **man's obedience** to the gospel of Christ. This obedience can be broken into five parts: the hearing of the gospel, believing, repenting of ones sins, confessing Jesus as Lord, and being baptized for the remission of sins. Before a person can obey the gospel of Christ, he or she must first hear the gospel. The Bible says, "how shall they call on him whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14)

Secondly, a person must believe in the Lord. Without belief, a person cannot be converted or convicted in his or her heart of the things Christ commands, says, and promises. Scripture teaches us that, "without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6) Our salvation is in Christ Jesus. A person cannot come to the Lord or partake in the precious, free gift of salvation without believing on Him. In John 8:24, Jesus says, "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

In addition to hearing and believing, a person must also repent of past sins. The book of Acts explicitly states that, “The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent.” (Acts 17:30) Repentance is a turning from the old way of life, dominated by selfish and sinful passions and it is a change of mind –a new attitude- about God and Christ, and the direction of one's own life.

Confessing Jesus as Lord is also necessary for our salvation. A person must believe Jesus to be the Son of the living God. An example of this confession (and baptism) was made by the eunuch to Philip when he said, “Behold here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?”

“And Philip said, if thou believeth with all thy heart thou mayest.”

“And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

(Acts 8:36-37)

The last part of obeying the gospel, our obligation for attaining the free gift of salvation (aside from living a righteous life after initial salvation), is baptism. Baptism washes away sins. Baptism (term meaning to dip) is a submersion. In the example of the eunuch, when he asked Philip “what doth hinder me to be baptized,” the Bible says both he and Philip went down into the water and Philip baptized (or submerged him). (Acts 8:36-39) It was only after baptism that the eunuch began to rejoice and go his way. While Peter was preaching on the day of Pentecost, the people realized that they crucified the Messiah they were long awaiting for. The people were pricked in their heart for what they did. They interrupted Peter’s sermon and asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do, then Peter said to them (what they must do), “repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...” (Acts 2:37-38). Baptism

is essential to obeying the gospel, thus receiving salvation. Christ Himself gave the command to, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized **will be saved**; but he who believes not **will be condemned.**”

(Mark 16:15-16) There are many examples for the necessity of baptism. Obeying the gospel, for salvation, is accomplished through *faith*. In Romans 10:17 the Bible says, “so then *faith* comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Faith (**full assurance in trusting Him**) is more than just believing. It has to do with *trusting* and *obeying* His word (review Hebrews 11 – by faith, by faith, etc...). The heroes of *faith* trusted and therefore acted (or obeyed); because they had *faith*, God did His part in them. It is this *faith* which will enable a person to obey the gospel by trusting (hear, believing) and acting (repent, confessing, and being baptized) on the word of God. [see attached chart]

A person can only obtain salvation through the obedience of the gospel of Christ. There is no way around Christ; the bible says, “no man can [go] to the father but through [Christ];” Christ is our mediator. (John 14:6) This free gift is a result of **what God did** for us and **what we must do**. Obeying the gospel brings us **from being lost in sin to a saved relationship** with God –through faith. Praise God, for “...now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (II Corinthians 6:2)

**In Conclusion and Summary, the Gospel involves:**

**A. The Human Condition / Problem = “SIN”**

Romans 3:23, 6:23

**B. What God HAS Done in Response to our Problem**

- |                 |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. Jesus Came   | John 3:16-17           |
| 2. Jesus Died   | 1 Peter 2:21-24        |
| 3. Jesus Buried | Matthew 27:57-61       |
| 4. Jesus Rose   | II Corinthians 5:14-15 |

**C. What We MUST Do to Attain Salvation**

- |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Hear the Gospel                | Romans 10:17            |
| 2. Believe the Gospel             | Mark 16:15-16           |
| 3. Repent of our Sins             | Luke 13:3-7             |
| 4. Confess Jesus as Lord          | Romans 10:9-10          |
| 5. Baptized for Remission of Sins | Acts 2:38, Romans 6:3-4 |