

INTRO

We believe scripture affirms that every person needs to surrender their life to God through Jesus Christ. Surrender is more than words of salvation, but rather, the initial acceptance of the Savior followed by turning your entire life over to Him. Thus, accepting Jesus Christ as your savior and making Him lord of your life are two different things. Frequently, believers accept Christ through salvation, but do not fully surrender the details of their lives to Him. That full surrender is how you allow Him to be your lord, which will produce the fruit of change in your thinking and behavior.

We believe that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, and therefore, his commandments, instructions and purposes on earth apply to every person, right now.

SALVATION IS THE BEGINNING

1) *Why do we need salvation?*

We need salvation because we are separated from God. We believe that all humans are fallen, as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience in the garden. Fallen mean separated, or cut off, from God. For many, that separation feels like an emptiness in the heart, or a sense there is more to life, and we believe scripture affirms only the love of Christ can repair our separation from God. It can't be repaired through religious habits, such as: praying, attending church, tithing, memorizing scripture, etc. Those are worthwhile endeavors, but they do not create a relationship, and salvation is about starting a relationship with God.

2) *How does Christ reconnect us to God?*

We believe that God became man when He sent Jesus to us, and therefore, Jesus was fully God and fully man. In His immeasurable love for us, Jesus suffered a criminal's death on a cross. In that bodily sacrifice, He took on our sins, enabling all those who believe to be free of sin's penalty, which is death. In its place, believers receive eternal life, which is life reconnected to God, in heaven, after our time on earth is over.

3) *How do we accept Jesus Christ?*

We accept Jesus Christ when we declare with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead. These two actions encompass the act of receiving faith, and by His grace, faith in Jesus Christ saves us from eternal death. Salvation is a gift from God, not a result of our good works or of any human efforts.

4) *How do I know I am saved?*

Many people have encounters with God, but not every encounter with God is a salvation experience. The difference may be described as a short-lived feeling of spiritual vigor versus a deeper sense of turning your life completely over to someone bigger than you. That deeper sense signals a new birth that produces life change. At salvation, peace of mind and heart will settle in you. Perhaps you will have an emotional response to that peace, as emotions are a natural response to accepting the promises of God. However, one's emotions (or seeming lack thereof) at the time of salvation are not a sign of whether they have actually accepted Christ.

LORDSHIP IS SURRENDER

We believe that surrender of life to Christ produces a change, or at least, the beginning of a change. If you aren't sure whether you're born again, the answer is found in your response to the question, "When you received Christ, was there a change demonstrated in your life?"

Surrender means you stop resisting and freely accept Christ's authority in your life. In other words, you start doing things His way and stop doing them yours. When we decide to stop resisting the full ministry of Jesus, we can accept everything He wants to do for us. He can do more beyond reconcile us to God through eternal life. We believe scripture declares that He wants to help us in this lifetime and in addition to salvation, he came to give us: inner healing, freedom from bondage, physical healing and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

When we accept everything He has for us, our thinking and behavior changes for the better. Our lives produce good fruit in the form of humility, forgiveness and perspective. We begin to see ourselves as children of God and understand our identity in Christ.

B. RELATED ISSUES

- 1) Water baptism is a symbolic act linking a person's spiritual death and resurrection (i.e. life before Christ and life after Christ) to Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It is a way of saying to God with your whole body that you trust in the saving power of Christ and you commit to following His ways.

Water baptism is not required for your salvation. Salvation comes from Christ's death on the cross. Therefore, your salvation begins when you believe in your heart that Jesus is your savior and the Son of God and confess with your mouth that you need Him and will commit to Him. However, water baptism is a command for believers modeled by Jesus himself and we believe it is a necessary step of obedience for continued growth in Jesus Christ.

- 2) We believe that when a person has been born again to new life in Christ, that person is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). He never leaves us or rejects us, but He disciplines our disobedience and brings correction in various ways.
- 3) We maintain an intimate relationship with God through communication (i.e. prayer), pursuit, obedience, and service to God. We lose that intimacy through neglect and sin. We have to repent in order to restore that intimacy with Him. Likewise, following this model with people will result in healthier human relationships.
- 4) We believe children can be saved. We do not put an age limit on the salvation experience because maturity and thinking processes develop individually. However, salvation requires awareness of our fallen condition and understanding the truth of Scripture and God's claim on our lives, regardless of someone's age.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1) *Salvation*

Ephesians 2:8–9 ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Galatians 2:16 ¹⁶ yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 3:8 ⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”

Titus 3:5 ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

Romans 10:9–10 ⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Acts 16:31 ³¹ And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

Acts 2:21 ²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

Joel 2:32 ³² And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

Hebrews 9:22 ²² Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

Genesis 1:26–31 ²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹ And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Genesis 3:1–7 ¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” ² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Romans 5:8 ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:12–21 ¹² Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— ¹³ for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. ¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹ For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 John 1:7 ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Revelation 1:5 ⁵ and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood

Revelation 5:9 ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,

Colossians 1:20 ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Romans 3:10–12 ¹⁰ as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

Romans 3:23 ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 5:9 ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

John 1:29 ²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

2) Lordship

Luke 4:14–21 ¹⁴ And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. ¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

3) Water Baptism

Matthew 28:19 ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Acts 8:12 ¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Mark 16:16 ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

4) Generally

Romans 8:38–39 ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 13:8 ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

CONCLUSION

Because the penalty for our sin has been paid by Christ's death, we no longer have to be separated from God. Through salvation, we have the hope of eternity with Christ in the life to come. Through daily surrender, we can have victory in this lifetime. In Christ, we can stand before God blameless and beloved because nothing and no one can separate us from His love.