

WHAT IS TRUTH?

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Truth is a Person – the Person of Jesus Christ. He said of Himself in John 14:6, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

So in order to know truth, we must know Jesus. But how can we know Him? The Bible promises to reveal Jesus to us if we seek Him with all our heart. Jeremiah 29:13 says, “You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”

If the Lord is drawing your heart to know Him, He will lead you into a personal relationship with Himself! Jesus promised, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:44 NASB)

This is good news! The Bible calls it The Gospel. Some people call what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:3b-4, “the gospel in a nutshell”: “that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...”

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”

But what is salvation? It means deliverance – but from what? And why? And how? All world religions teach that people need to be delivered, but each one has a different understanding of what we need to be delivered – or saved – from, why we need to be delivered, and how a person can be delivered. The Bible makes it clear, however, that there is only *one* plan of salvation – God’s plan.

Other religions teach that a person must observe religious rituals or obey certain commands or achieve certain levels of spiritual enlightenment. But none of these are part of God’s plan of salvation.

Let’s take a look at God’s plan of salvation in the Bible:

THE ABC'S OF SALVATION

ADMIT YOU ARE A SINNER IN NEED OF FORGIVENESS.

BELIEVE IN JESUS FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF YOUR SINS.

CONFESS JESUS AS YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR.

ADMIT YOU ARE A SINNER IN NEED OF FORGIVENESS.

1. **Because I am a sinner I am separated from God. Sin is rebellion against God. It is going your own way.**
 - “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23 ESV)
 - “All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. (Isaiah 53:6 NLT)
 - “All day long I opened my arms to a rebellious people. But they follow their own evil paths and their own crooked schemes.” (Isaiah 65:2 NLT)
2. **Because God is holy and just, He cannot allow sin to go unpunished. The punishment for sin is death and eternal separation from God in Hell.**
 - "There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God." (1 Samuel 2:2 NIV)
 - “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23 ESV)
 - “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matthew 10:28 ESV)
 - “He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.” (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 NIV84)
 - “And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the Lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Revelation 20:10 ESV)

3. I cannot save myself. Salvation is a free gift of God. I cannot earn it and I don't deserve it.

- “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV)
- “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us...” (Titus 3:5a NKJV)
- “[We] know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.” (Galatians 2:16 NIV)

BELIEVE IN JESUS FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF YOUR SINS.

1. Jesus is the Son of God who LOVED ME SO MUCH THAT HE died in my place, in order to pay for my sins so I could be forgiven.

- “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16 NIV)
- “But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8 ESV)
- “This is real love – not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.” (1 John 4:10 NLT)
- “He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.” (Ephesians 1:7 NLT)

2. Jesus rose from the dead to give me life – NOW AND FOR ETERNITY.

- “...just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” (Romans 6:4b NIV)
- “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?’” (John 11:25-26 NIV)

3. We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. The object of our faith is Christ Himself, not a Promise, a Prayer, or a Creed.

- “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV)
- **BY GRACE ALONE** – “and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:24 ESV)
- **THROUGH FAITH ALONE** – “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1 NIV)
- **IN CHRIST ALONE** – “For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 2:5 NIV)

CONFESS JESUS AS YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR.

1. To confess means to agree with what God declares to be true. God give you the faith to believe that Jesus is the Lord God over all, who died in your place and rose again to give you spiritual life. This is the New Birth and it is completely the work of God.

- “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” (1 Peter 1:3 ESV)
- “But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)” (Ephesians 2:4-5 NLT)
- “...if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord’, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” (Romans 10:9-10 NIV84)
- “But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1:12 NLT)

2. Believing in Jesus is more than just believing facts about Christ. It is confessing your faith and trust in Christ Himself who took the punishment from God for your

sins so that you could be made right with God. Your sins were placed on Christ so that Christ's righteousness could be credited to your account.

- "For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." (2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT)
- "God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood." (Romans 3:25a NLT)
- "He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed." (1 Peter 2:24 NLT)

3. God gives you the desire to repent, that is, He causes you to change your mind about who He is and what He has done. Repentance is a change of mind that results in a change of actions. You are willing to say, "I'll go Your way instead of my own way." It is *not* a work we do to earn salvation. It is *not* changing your behavior so that God will accept you. No one can repent and turn to God unless God draws him to Himself. Biblical Repentance is a gift of God and is only possible because of God's grace.

- "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." (John 6:44a ESV)
- "God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel." (Acts 5:31 NIV84)
- "God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life." (Acts 11:18b NIV84)
- "I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus." (Acts 20:21 NIV)
- [Paul said], "I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds." (Acts 26:20 NIV84)

4. You must confess that salvation is from God, not from yourself or anyone or anything else. Because Jesus is God in human form, He is the only one who could pay the penalty for your sin.

- "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12 NIV84)
- "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" (John 14:6 ESV)
- "You did not choose me, but I chose you." (John 15:16a NIV)

- Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.” (Ephesians 1:4-5 NLT)
- “...Christ ... is the image of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:4b NIV)
- “It is because of him [God] that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.” (1 Corinthians 1:30 NIV)

5. Believing in Jesus is a commitment of your heart and life to Christ. When God calls you to belong to Christ, He gives you the desire to surrender your will to His will.

- “Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me.’” (Matthew 16:24 NLT)
- “For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.” (Philippians 2:13)
- “We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives.” (Colossians 1:9b NIV)

6. For those who place their faith and trust in what Christ has done to purchase their salvation, He promises new life now and a home in Heaven forever!

- “...just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” (Romans 6:4b NIV)
- “This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” (2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)
- “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” (1 John 5:11b NIV)
- “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; If that were not so, would I have told you that I'm going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” (John 14:1-3 NIV)

7. When you become God's child, Jesus comes to live in you in the person of the Holy Spirit. He is the guarantee of our salvation. He also promises that He will keep you saved forever!

- When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory." (Ephesians 1:13b-14 NIV)
- "Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body." (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NLT)
- "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:3-5 NIV)
- "To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen." (Jude 1:24 NIV 84)

SAMPLE PRAYER OF SALVATION

If you have realized your need to be forgiven, that God provided the only way for you to be saved by sending His Son Jesus to die in your place and raising Him from the dead, and that God is calling you to belong to Him, then you can place your faith and trust in Christ alone, surrender your life to Him as Lord and Savior and you will be saved!

The following is a sample prayer. Remember, saying this prayer or any other prayer will not save you. It is only trusting in Christ that can save you from sin. This prayer is simply a way to express to God what is already in your heart.

Dear God,

I know I have sinned and deserve to be punished. Thank you for loving me so much that you sent your only Son, Jesus Christ, to take the punishment for me by shedding His blood on the cross as payment for my sin. I believe that He died for me and rose again to prove He was God and to give me eternal life. I accept your free gift of salvation by grace through faith. I surrender my life to you as my Lord and Savior.

Thank you for making me your child! Thank you for my new life in Christ! I know that Jesus is living in me and I am in Him. Lord Jesus, please live your life through me to let

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others know that I belong to You. Thank you for Your promise to keep me saved and to give me a home in heaven with You forever!

In Jesus' name,
Amen