

What is Salvation?

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Salvation is the deliverance from sin and its eternal consequences, brought about by faith in Jesus Christ. This means that by putting our faith and trust in Jesus, we are no longer condemned to the punishment required for our disobedience to God.

When God created humanity, He created us in His image – perfect and whole (Genesis 1:26-27). Since God wanted a reciprocal relationship with us, He gave humanity a free will. We in turn, however, chose to sin against Him, which broke the relationship. God is holy – all good, all loving and all just; and, therefore, He is committed to destroying and punishing evil. (Numbers 14:18) It would be contradictory to His nature to simply overlook our sin and disobedience. Rather than going against His own nature, God made another way by sacrificing His own Son, Jesus Christ, in our place. Jesus was perfect and sinless, undeserving of punishment and death. Yet because of God's infinite love for us, He willingly sentenced His own Son to death. John 3:16-17 says, *"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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

What is sin?

Sin is described in the Bible as a breaking of the law of God (1 John 3:4) and rebellion against God (Deuteronomy 9:7; Joshua 1:18). Sin is any act considered to go against the will and plan of God and His divine law. God is all holy and His directives are all holy, so any choice that goes against God's will and plan is considered sin. The definition of sin in the Bible literally means to "miss the mark." *"Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness."* (1 John 3:4)

What are the results of salvation?

Salvation has implications for both this life and the life to come (eternity). Regarding this life, Jesus said, *"Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* (John 10:7-10). God's intended purpose for us is to live a fulfilled life in relationship with Him. Faith in Jesus, who is "the gate," restores our relationship with God. Salvation doesn't mean life will be easier, nor will it solve all of our problems, but it does allow us to experience the fullness of God's love, care, guidance and provision.

Regarding the life to come, or what happens after we die, salvation means we will spend eternity in Heaven and in restored relationship with our God. We believe in a literal heaven, a place of perfection, where our bodies and minds will be restored. We'll live in the fullness and wholeness God intended for us from the beginning, and a place where *"God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."* (Revelation 21:3b-4)

Why do I need salvation?

Romans 3:23-25 says that *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith."* All of us, without exception, have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Specifically, we've all willingly chosen to follow our own will and desires, and have not



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lived according to God's plan and purposes for our lives. Because of that, we are all in need of the salvation offered through Jesus Christ.

Additional Scriptures

"As it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one . . .'" (Romans 3:10)

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned." (Romans 5:12)

"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God," (Isaiah 59:2)

"Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey it, whatever you may command them, will be put to death." (Joshua 1:18)

How do I receive salvation?

The Bible says that salvation is available to everyone, without exception. Jesus' self-sacrifice on the cross for our sins extends across any and all sin and is completely sufficient for the covering and forgiveness of our sins. We can't earn salvation, but can only receive it as a free gift from God through putting our trust in Jesus. Romans 10:9-13 says, *"If you declare 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 profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, 'Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.' For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"*

Scripture says that salvation includes two components: repentance for our sins and acceptance of God's forgiveness through Christ. "Biblical repentance means to turn to God and away from evil. It involves a change of mind, a sense of regret, and a placing of one's trust in God and His will." (Foursquare "Declaration of Faith") 2 Peter 3:9 says, *"[God] is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

When we've repented of our sin and recognized our need for salvation, we can then accept God's forgiveness. This specifically means putting our trust in Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9). There is nothing we can do to earn or deserve salvation; it is freely given to us, upon our repentance, and is based solely on God's love for us. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)*

Additional Scriptures

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." (John 1:12)

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in[a] Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

Are there other paths to salvation?

No. The Bible is clear that the only path to salvation is through putting faith in the redeeming work of Christ. Everyone has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Through God's sacrifice of his son, Jesus, He has created a way for restoration of all of humanity. Romans 5:18-19 says, *"Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."*

Additional Scriptures

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me." (John 14:6)

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

