

God's Plan of Salvation

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The book of 1st Corinthians defines the "Gospel" as the good news about the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His sinless existence, sacrifice and resurrection all prove His position as the Son of God. (**I Cor. 15**)

So, how do we appropriately respond to this great news?

In **Romans 1:5**, Paul explains that the Apostles were given authority "to bring about obedience of the faith." Later, in **Romans 6:17**, he expresses relief because the Christians he was writing to had "become obedient to the standard of teaching." In this, we see that salvation, while certainly an act of grace on God's part, is not passively obtained. In order to become a Christian, one must obey the Lord's instructions to:

1. Hear the Gospel

"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (**Romans 10:17**)

- The first step to salvation is hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is why the Lord told His disciples to preach the Gospel to every creature (**Mark 16:15**). He knew they needed to hear it!
- The eunuch obeyed the Gospel after Philip had "Preached Jesus to him" (**Acts 8:35,38**).
- It is the Gospel by which men are called to obtain glory in Christ (**2 Thessalonians 2:14**).

2. Believe in Jesus as God's Son

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (**Mark 16:16**).

- After one hears the Gospel, he must believe that Jesus is the Son of God (**John 8:24**).
- After those men in **Acts 2** heard Peter preach the Gospel (**vs. 14-36**) they came to believe. This is manifested in the fact that they were "cut to the heart" (**vs. 37**).

3. Repent of your sins

"God...now commands all men everywhere to repent." (**Acts 17:30**).

- After one hears the Gospel, and believes that Jesus is the Son of God, he must then be willing to repent of his sins.
- After hearing and believing, those in **Acts 2** were told to repent (**Acts 2:38**).

4. Confess Faith in Christ

"With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (**Romans 10:9, 10**).

- After hearing, believing, and repenting, one must be willing to confess his faith in Jesus as the Son of God.
- After the eunuch heard and believed the Gospel, and before Philip baptized him, he confessed his faith in Jesus as the Christ (**Acts 8:37**).

5. Be Baptized"

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Mark 16:16).

After hearing, believing, repenting, and confessing faith, one must humbly submit to Christ by obeying the command of baptism. It is baptism that connects one with the blood of Christ which washes away his sins; so baptism can be said to "Wash away sins" (**Acts 2:38**) (**Acts 22:16**) (**Ephesians 1:7**) (**Revelation 1:5**).

- It is baptism which places one in Christ where salvation is (**2 Timothy 2:10; Galatians 3:26,27**).
- In each case of conversion in the book of Acts, each obeyed the command to be baptized:
 1. Those at Pentecost: **Acts 2:38**
 2. The Samaritans: **Acts 8:12, 13**
 3. The Ethiopian eunuch: **Acts 8:36-38**
 4. Saul (Later known as the apostle Paul): **Acts 9:1-6, Acts 22:16**
 5. Cornelius: **Acts 10:43, 47, 48** Lydia and her household: **Acts 16:15**
 6. The Philippian Jailor: **Acts 16:30-33**

6. Remain Faithful

"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." (**Revelation 2:10**).

- The Gospel teaches that once one hears, believes, repents, confesses, and is baptized to become a child of God, he must then remain faithful to the Lord until death in order to finally make it to heaven.
- Those who fall away from the Lord and don't come back repenting, confessing, and praying for forgiveness will lose their souls (**2 Peter 2:20-22; James 5:19-20; Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9**).