

~ On Being Saved! ~

Have you ever been asked, “Are you saved?” There are many zealous Christians going about asking that question. In one community an evangelical college requires its students to go door to door asking, “If you were to die tonight, do you know if you would go to heaven?” If the one being questioned does not wish to preempt the Lord in judgment, but says, “I cannot answer this as my own judge and jury,” he is told, “What kind of a weak religion and faith do you have? I can guarantee heaven as your eternal home. All you have to do is repeat this prayer after me: *‘Dear Jesus: I know I’m a sinner. I know I cannot save myself. I know you died on the cross for my sin. I ask you to come into my heart, and forgive my sins, and take me to heaven when I die. Amen.’*”

This prayer, they claim, will guarantee the one who offered it heavenly salvation. This type of preaching is on radio, television, and in person. This is very popular in today’s easy virtue society. It offers a false hope of eternal life in bliss by merely parroting forty-four words that will guarantee a heavenly reception.

That seems like a pretty good deal. Just say the words and, presto, heaven is guaranteed.

What Biblical basis is there for this extraordinary claim? There is one verse that says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts 16: 31) Yes, the Bible does say this. However, it also says, “He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” (Mark 13: 13) There are over one hundred verses in the Bible that speak of being saved, and one would think that the whole testimony of the Word would be considered before arriving at conclusions by one or two verses of Scripture. Now, not all Christian ministers would agree to such an easy soul-saving formula, but in a time when society is looking for a quick fix with pills they can pop into their mouth or some easy entrance to heaven formula, many are enchanted by the siren song of soul savers.

A rich young man asked Jesus, “What shall I DO that I may inherit eternal life?” (Mark 10: 7) Jesus did not offer him the above prayer. Jesus did not say, “DO? There is nothing to DO but accept me as

your Savior. Nothing more is required.” As a matter of fact, the conditions offered this young man were so difficult that he turned down Jesus’ invitation and went away sorrowing. Jesus told him, “Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross and follow me.” (Mark 10: 21) The young man was wealthy and he enjoyed the advantages of wealth. Being told to divest of his wealth was bad enough, but then he was told to “take up the cross, and follow me”. If the same demands Jesus made of this young man were required of present church congregations, it might leave a lot of empty chairs. Most people wanted to receive what Jesus offered without cost, such as physical healing, loaves and fishes, casting out demons, but when he preached “except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood” they left off following Jesus. (John 6: 53) People are not especially interested in DOING anything, but will take what is offered free. At least this young man was willing to DO something, but obviously not what Jesus required.

Free grace

The free grace movement teaches that acceptance of Jesus, as one’s Savior, will qualify one for heaven.

What if one should continue in sin and live a life devoid of spiritual reality after once accepting Christ? They answer, in effect, that it does not matter. If Jesus removed sins as dark as scarlet when one accepts his grace, the same would be true after one accepts Christ. The cleansing power of Christ would extend equal forgiveness of sin both before and after one’s conversion. Sin, it is alleged, is no problem to Christ. Grace will abound without limit or requirement. It is argued that once one is saved, he cannot be unsaved. They overlook how the Jews were saved out of Egypt and saved from the Red Sea and were later destroyed in the wilderness. James says, “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth [implying he was in the truth], and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death.” (James 5: 19, 20)

In the first place, the mistake is made that the term *saved* (Greek, *sozo*) means being “saved to heaven”. Saved has to do with being saved **from** some condition. In theology, it means, “to **deliver** from sin”. We are all condemned in Adam, and before a relationship with God and Christ can be achieved, that judgment of death must be lifted from us. On the day

of Pentecost, a crowd was moved to repent and they asked Peter, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2: 37) They were told, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the **remission of sins**, and ye shall receive **the gift of the holy Spirit.**" (Acts 2: 28) We do not believe anyone has ever received more than this after accepting Christ and becoming his disciple. This was the starting place, "remission of sins" and "the gift of the holy Spirit". Was heaven promised these converts? No mention is made of that. While the reward for the overcoming Christian is a heavenly reward, it is not guaranteed by a mere confession of Christ followed by baptism.

Once in grace always in grace was not accepted by the Apostle Paul. He said, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain...I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (1 Corinthians 9: 24-27) When Paul faced his death at Rome at the hands of Nero, he gave three reasons for the basis of his assurance that he would receive a crown of righteousness at Jesus' appearing. None of those reasons

include the fact that he had accepted Jesus and been baptized. His reasons were, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness" – all things he did after accepting Christ. (2 Timothy 4: 7, 8) Why should any Christian hope for a similar reward without meeting those three conditions?

The Bible is written with two days of salvation being held forth, yet many mistakenly believe in only one day of salvation. Translators helped promote the idea of one day of salvation by improperly translating certain verses. The day is promised when God "will pour out his Spirit on all flesh". (Joel 2: 28) While at Pentecost the Spirit was poured out on God's "servants" and "handmaidens", it was not poured out on "all flesh" then. That was promised in the "last days". It is comforting to know that those who die without Christ, which includes the vast majority of mankind, will be visited with salvation when "the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely". (Revelation 22: 17) The Bible promises that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the

knowledge of the truth". (1 Timothy 2: 4) What this scripture doesn't say is that "all men" will be saved **today**. There is another day of salvation for poor, suffering humanity. That is what the world is waiting for – the "manifestation of the sons of God". That is when "the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God". (Romans 8: 19, 21) ■

There are many scriptures that speak of being saved and a lot of information can be gathered by looking at all the Bible says about this subject. *What Everyone*

Should Know about Being Saved is a special 74-page booklet that opens a lot of windows into the many verses of the Bible that speak of being saved. You owe it to yourself to look into this subject. The booklet is free upon request with no obligation on your part ever. Every verse on the Greek word *sozo*, "saved", is mentioned. It is just a fascinating study. You will be pleasantly surprised with all the Bible has to say about being saved. Click **REPLY**, and send an e-mail asking for the booklet. Include the name of this publication, your name, and your mailing address. Send for it today.