

God's Plan For Man's Salvation

Before you begin reading this, I ask you to write down the answers to the following questions: Have you been saved? How were you saved? When were you saved or in other words, how old were you when you were saved? Have you been baptized? If so, were you immersed, or did you have water poured on you? Were you baptized before or after you were saved? Once you have answered these questions, please continue reading.

All men are lost in sin and cannot save themselves. However, in His matchless grace, God has made salvation available to all. There are many conflicting ideas about salvation, but God's plan is clearly revealed in the New Testament, but first, we need to ask a question.

Why Do We Need God's Plan?

First, it is because everyone sins. No one is "good enough". In Romans 3:23, Paul tells us, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." In 1 John 3:4, we learn that sins are not inherited, but are transgressions of God's law. Second, we know that sin leads to a spiritual death. In Romans 6:23, Paul tells us, "For the wages of sin is death." This death here is not a physical death, although there are some sins that lead to a physical death. This "death" is separation from God and His matchless grace. Third, goodness alone does not save us. Good works, being a good moral person and acts of worship cannot take away sin. In Acts 10:2, we read about a name named Cornelius who truly was a Godly man, however he needed to hear "words to you by which you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 11:14). When we look at David, a man after God's own heart, he was sorry about his sin and he knew that acts of worship alone would not save him (Psalm 51:15-16). He appealed to God's lovingkindness (Psalm 51:1). Lastly, God's plan offers us the only hope. Jesus said in John 8:24, "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." (cp. John 14:6). Without Christ, we really would have no reason to live. As you can see, without God in our lives, we would have no hope of salvation, which brings us to our second question. What is God's role in His plan for our salvation? There are some things that God has already done for us to make salvation available to all.

God's Role In God's Plan For Our Salvation

First, God sent His Son. In John 3:16, Jesus says, "For God so loved the world, that He sent His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." Second, He also bestowed His grace. In Ephesians 2:8, Paul tells us, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God." Thirdly, Jesus died for us. Again, Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:7, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace." Finally, The Holy Spirit revealed God's plan for man. God's plan for our salvation in Christ was "revealed through the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:9-13) to chosen men who would teach it to others. These chosen men are apostles and prophets.

Writing about God's plan of salvation in Christ, the apostle Paul said it had "now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:5). We should thank all parts of the Godhead every day for what they have done for us, but that's not the end of the story. There is something that we must do, which leads to our final question. What is mankind's role in God's plan for our salvation?

Mankind's Role In God's Plan For Our Salvation

First, we must hear the gospel. Romans 10:17 tells us, "So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." We must also believe the gospel of Christ. In Mark 16:15-16 we read, "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.'" This faith will cause one to obey, just as Noah's faith caused him to build an ark and Abraham's faith caused him to obey and go to another country (Hebrews 11:1-8). We must also repent and give up one's will to Christ as Lord. When the Jews on Pentecost asked Peter what they can do to save themselves, he told them to repent (Acts 2:37-38). In Acts 26:20, Luke writes, "But declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance." What exactly is repentance? Repentance is a change of will, and in obedience to the gospel of Christ, it is a commitment to do the will of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must also confess faith in Christ as God's Son (Romans 10:9-10). We must be baptized for the remission of sins. When those pierced in the heart as a result of believing Jesus as the Christ asked the apostles what they needed to do and were told, "Repent and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Baptism is immersion in water, not sprinkling or having water poured on you. When Phillip baptized the eunuch, they both got down into the water (Acts 8:38). Finally, we must be faithful for the rest of our lives. When one is baptized in the name of Christ, the Lord adds him to the church. He then should "walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called" (Ephesians 4:1).

I leave you with these questions: Have you done everything that we have studied to become a child of God? If not, why not? Today is the day to make it right and be added to the church just as the Jews were on Pentecost (Acts 2:41).

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