

Part C: True or False (circle one)

11. T F Repentance is not necessary. Acts 3:19
12. T F Confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10:9-10
13. T F Baptism has nothing to do with salvation. 1 Peter 3:21
14. T F Sin separates us from God. Isaiah 59:2
15. T F Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. John 14:6

Part D: Look up the following verses and match them with their main thoughts:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. 1 John 3:4 | a. Wages of sin is death. |
| 2. Romans 6:23 | b. The truth will make you free. |
| 3. Galatians 3:27 | c. Sin is Lawlessness. |
| 4. John 8:32 | d. Raised to walk in newness of life. |
| 5. Romans 6:4 | e. Put on Christ in baptism. |

Name _____

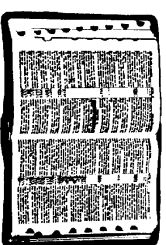
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Know The Truth



Correspondence Course

Mike Hughes

LESSON #3

God's Plan For Man's Salvation

Know The Truth Correspondence Course Lesson #3

God's Plan For Man's Salvation

The Bible was written for the purpose of revealing God's plan for man's salvation. This is, in essence, the theme of the Bible. The question might arise, though, "salvation from what?" Why do we need to be saved? Exactly how does God bring about this salvation? These are the questions that this lesson will answer.

Sin

In a word, the reason why we need salvation is because of sin. What exactly is sin? "Sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4). In other words, we sin when we transgress the law that God has laid down. Literally, sin means "missing the mark." Thus, when we sin, we have "missed the mark" in keeping the law of God.

When God created Adam and Eve, He put them in the garden of Eden to live there and tend to it (Genesis 2:15). Then God gave them a restriction: "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:16,17). Thus, God laid down His law, and gave the consequences of transgressing it. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve did eat of the forbidden tree and therefore sinned (Genesis 3:1-6).

What is so bad about sin? We can see the consequences of sin right from the very first sin. God told them that the day they ate of that tree, they would die. The reason why sin is so terrible is because it causes death "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23). This is so from two standpoints. First, physical death is the result of sin. Because Adam and Eve sinned, the chain of physical death began, and now all men will die physically. This was not God's original purpose, but sin

is the reason for it. It is not God's fault, but man's. Secondly, and even more serious, is that sin causes spiritual death. "Death" is a "separation." When we die physically, the spirit is separated from the body (James 2:26). When we die spiritually, we are separated from God. This is why sin is so terrible and destructive. God wants to have fellowship with His creatures, but sin makes it so that we are separated from God. "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God: And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1,2). God is a holy God, and He cannot endure sin. Therefore, those who have sinned lose their fellowship with God and are considered to be lost and dead spiritually (see Ezekiel 18:4).

It's the need of every person to realize that they have sinned. "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23). Every accountable person has transgressed God's law and is therefore lost in their sins. This is not so because we inherit the sins of our parents (Ezekiel 18). Nor has God made us so that we have to sin and have no choice. The truth is that every person has made a choice to sin. Every action we take is our own choice, and this is why God holds us accountable for our actions. It is vital to understand this; otherwise we cannot realize our lost condition and come to God for salvation.

Jesus Christ

Up to this point, we have seen that all people have sinned and are lost, separated from God. If they physically die in this state, then they will be lost forever, suffering the eternal consequences of rebelling against God. However, God has not left

us without hope, and this is why we have the Bible given to us. There is an answer to the problem of sin. We do not have to continue in sin and be lost forever. God has made available a way to be forgiven. The answer to the sin problem is Jesus Christ. Through Jesus Christ, our sins can be forgiven, and we can regain the fellowship with God that we lost when we first sinned. This is why the “gospel” is literally “good news.” God has provided a way to be saved and freed from our sins.

Who is Jesus Christ? Historically, Jesus was a man who lived in Palestine during the first century A.D. However, the Bible tells us that Jesus was much more than a man. He was actually “God manifested in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:15; John 1:1-14). Because of the sins of mankind, God the Father sent Jesus Christ to this earth in order to die for the sins of mankind (John 3:16; Romans 5:8). Remember, the wages of sin is death. Thus, Jesus became a sacrifice for sin. He fasted death for every man so that man does not have to bear the eternal consequences of sin (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus shed His blood on a Roman cross in order to satisfy the requirement for forgiving our sins (Hebrews 10:5-10). This sacrifice is truly the grace of God, because we did not in any way merit this “gift” from God. God did it because He loves us and wants us to be saved and forgiven. “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7). Not only did Christ die for our sins, but He was also raised from the dead never to die again (Romans 6:4). This assures us that we too can have victory over sin and death (1 Corinthians 15). This makes the message of the cross so great. If all Christ did was to die, then it would have been meaningless. However, He is “declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” (Romans 1:4). This is the basis for the hope of heaven.

Jesus Christ said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6). The way that we gain our reconciliation with God is through Jesus Christ. However, this salvation that we can have is not unconditional. God is not going to save anybody while they are still in their sins. Sin is what separated us from

God in the first place. Now God has done His part in sending Jesus Christ to die for our sins, but He has also laid down conditions that we must meet if we will be saved. Jesus told believers in John 8:31-32, 31 “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31,32). If we don’t abide in His word, then we are guilty of transgressing His law and thus sin. Therefore, we must know the truth and abide within it in order to be true disciples of Jesus. He is “the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:9)

Salvation

Just what do we need to do in order to be saved from our sins? God has given basic requirements that we must meet in order to be saved.

1. **Faith** is required. Without faith, we cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6). We must believe that He is, and that He rewards all who diligently seek Him. The kind of faith that God requires is an active and obedient faith. If we believe, we will act upon our faith and do what God commands. The Bible does not teach the popular concept of “faith only.” The Bible does teach that faith must work together with obedience (works) in order for us to be justified and saved (James 2:14-26).

2. **Repentance** is necessary for salvation. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of action. It is a turning from sin, a resolve to not commit sin anymore. Sin sin separates us from God, then we must resolve to put sin behind us and refuse to continue in it. “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19). If we will not repent, then we will die in our sins, lost and separated from God for an eternity in the punishing fires of hell (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). This does not have to be, if we will turn from our sins and follow Jesus Christ.

3. **Confession** is also required for salvation. Jesus said that “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:32). The apostle Paul wrote that “if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth con-

fusion is made unto salvation.” (Romans 10:9,10).

4. **Baptism** is necessary in order to have our sins forgiven. When the Jews on Pentecost realized that they had crucified the Son of God, they were pricked in their hearts and asked, “What must we do?” Peter answered, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38). Baptism, which is immersion (burial) in water, is the final act of obedience that puts a person into a proper relationship with Christ. “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” (Galatians 3:26,27). Baptism, then, serves to put on Christ. It is the act in which we contact the blood of Christ, making possible a new life in Him. “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:3,4). If we refuse to be baptized, then we will not conform to the likeness of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. We will never be raised to walk in newness of life, which means our sins will not be forgiven. Thus, baptism plays a vital role in our salvation (1 Peter 3:21). This is not so because we just decided that it was necessary. It is so because this is what God has said. It is so because this is what God has said. Remember, proper faith means taking God at His word and obeying every condition He has laid down. “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16).

Of course, baptism is not the end of obedience. It is simply the beginning of a new life. God expects us to be faithful to Him, living according to the standard that He has given in His word (Revelation 2:10; Ephesians 4:1).

Sin has terrible consequences. However, we can be saved from our sins if we will come to Jesus Christ and obey God’s conditions for salvation.

Please answer the following Questions, then cut out this panel and mail it back.

Part A: Fill in

1. The Bible was written to reveal God’s plan for what? _____
2. Sin is _____. 1 John 3:4
3. God told Adam and Eve, that in the day they ate of the forbidden tree, they would _____. Genesis 2:16,17

4. The wages of sin is _____. Romans 6:23

5. What did Jesus Christ come to do for every man? _____ Hebrews 2:9

6. Jesus Christ is declared to be the _____ with power, according to the Spirit of _____, by the _____ from the dead. Romans 1:4.

Part B: Multiple Choice (circle one)

7. What have all people done? Romans 3:23
 - a. Lived perfectly.
 - b. Sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.
 - c. Earned salvation.
8. Jesus Christ was: 1 Timothy 3:15; John 1:1,14
 - a. Just an ordinary man.
 - b. A good teacher but not the Son of God.
 - c. God manifest in the flesh.
9. Without faith, Hebrews 11:6
 - a. It is impossible to please God.
 - b. We can still be saved.
 - c. God will overlook our sins.
10. Baptism is for: Acts 2:38
 - a. Entrance into a denomination.
 - b. Remission of sins.
 - c. Fulfilling a church-ordained ritual.