

God's Simple Salvation Plan

As you will understand, hopefully, by the end of this compressed link that Christian salvation is quite simple and stands in direct contrast to the world's so called major religions.

So let's start with a relevant verse,

II Corinthians 11

³ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

And here's a verse exemplifying this simplicity,

John 6

²⁸ Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

²⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

This concept of simply believing is inherent in this very familiar verse which many may have seen on a billboard or even a sign in the end zone of many football games, John 3:16

John 3

¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

¹⁵ That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This concept hearkens back to an incident in the Old Testament wherein the Jews were engaging in idol worship like that of the Ancient Egyptians from whom God, using His servant Moses, had just freed them.

Numbers 21

⁸ And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

⁹ And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

There's a lot going on in this verse but for our purposes the point is to realize by *simply* looking and believing upon the object as commanded by God was enough to save the people from death. In this case it was physical death where in ours in the New Testament era it is spiritual death.

Speaking of the Jews of Israel some may be questioning where they fit in to this concept. This is especially so when most so called Biblical scholars and “prophecy experts” are absolutely certain they are “God’s Chosen People” as they continue many of the customs of Moses and the Old Testament. The Jews with all their laws and study would seem to have the right idea. But nothing that today’s Jews and their ‘profits of God’ supporters do is correct in what it takes to achieve Christian salvation. In fact all their efforts are even counter-productive to salvation and contradict what the New Testament actually dictates what a “Jew” really is.

The Apostle Paul was a convert from Judaism and all its procedures and laws. He was a convert from the most religious sect of Judaism, the Pharisees. This was the same class of Jews that was instrumental in killing God in the flesh, Jesus Himself. After a conversion from Jesus Himself (Acts 9) Paul became the author of most of the New Testament...and an ardent enemy of the Jews who wanted to literally kill him as they did Jesus (see for example, Acts 13-15).

But let’s stay on point, the simplicity of New Testament salvation.

The next several passages from the Paul authored Book of Galatians indicate that the Jews (the physical descendants of Abraham) and physical Israel ARE NO LONGER “God’s Chosen People” and their excessive works, study and worship are worse than worthless but actually blasphemous in the eyes of God and His “lamb of the world”:

Galatians 3

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

⁷ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵ But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

²⁶ For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

²⁷ For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹ And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

In this next passage many of the early Christian leaders of the New Testament including newly converted Christian Paul and the Apostle Peter, the former follower of Jesus while He was on earth, are gathered to discuss the concept of the physical works God required of the Jews in the Old Testament.

Acts 15

- ⁸ And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;
- ⁹ And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.
- ¹⁰ Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?
- ¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.
- ¹² Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.
- ¹³ And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:
- ¹⁴ Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.
- ¹⁵ And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,
- ¹⁶ After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:
- ¹⁷ That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.
- ¹⁸ Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.
- ¹⁹ Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:
- ²⁰ But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

Notice in this case they're specifically talking about the act of circumcision which many Jews still carry on today as one of many carryovers from the Old Testament (there are health benefits but this is a *physical* act and has nothing to do with *spiritual* salvation). Another physical act many Christians consider a necessity is water baptism. While some Christians argue this is still necessary it is a *physical* act that, while exemplifying one's conversion, is NOT needed for *spiritual* salvation. This is illustrated in the Apostle John's Gospel:

John 1

- ³³ And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

True John did baptize believers and even Jesus Himself. But this was before the crucifixion or sacrifice of the Lamb of God (i.e., Jesus Himself) later on. Once the crucifixion was done all physical work for salvation or works of the Old Testament Jewish law were nullified and all that is now required for salvation is to believe in Jesus Christ.

Also, as a sidebar look at what they all agree on IS required of the Christian to stay away from, fornication (sexual immorality), pollution of idols (worship of foreign gods including money and “New” Age stalwarts like the sun and moon), things strangled (improperly killed by choking so it still contains blood) and from blood (drinking of an animal’s or even human blood as practiced by many modern day nature and Satan worshippers).

Getting back here’s Paul writing to the Gentile region of Ephesus located on the west coast of modern day Turkey:

Ephesians 2

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

⁶ And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

⁷ That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

For specific purposes of this article verses 8 and 9 once again indicate the simplicity being discussed. The preceding verses indicate the why, God’s infinite mercy on His crowning creation, mankind which was originally made in His image.

Another group many be wondering about is that of the ‘born again’ believer that some may have seen on television or dancing around in some other venue or even a so called “Christian” Church.

John 3

⁴ Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?

⁵ Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

But, once again, the concept of ‘born again’ is a simple one and does not necessarily involve all the pomp and revelry of what some self professed ‘born again believers’ seem to think is needed for salvation. Again the key is people are confusing *physical* acts with *spiritual* salvation.

So what does one have to do to really be a “Christian” in the eyes of God? While simple it is not so easy. This next passage from the Book of Hebrews is a good one to both conclude the discussion on the concept of there being no PHYSICAL work or religious procedure required for spiritual salvation as well as a segue into a very closely related concept to this discussion.

Hebrews 4

⁴ For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

⁵ And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

⁶ Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

This hearkens back to the Book of Genesis where God ‘rested’ on the seventh day. Now obviously an eternal and all powerful God well beyond human comprehension doesn’t need to sleep so this ‘rest’ is a spiritual rest. So what is God and by extension His “body”, i.e., the body of Christ to “rest” from? The many *physical* works required of His former Chosen People, the Jews of the Old Testament. But as indicated *throughout* the Old Testament the Jews constantly failed God and turned from His commands to worship false idols. The most famous case many may be familiar with is the Jews’ worship of the golden calf (representative of the Egyptian god Osiris and/or goddess Hathor from whom they were just rescued). This is point conveyed in verse 6 where it states those of “unbelief” (i.e., the Jews and their physical laws) do not get to enter into God’s “rest”. Again, this “rest” is relief from all the laws of the Old Testament that no man, Jew or Gentile, could fulfill as discussed previously in the gathering of the New Testament Christian leaders per Acts 15.

So we have established that God’s New Testament salvation plan is really simple but this does not necessarily make it easy.

The following passage is from the Book of James, half brother of Jesus.

James 2

¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

¹⁸ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

- ²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?
- ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?
- ²² Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?
- ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.
- ²⁴ Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.
- ²⁵ Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?
- ²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

So what gives here? The entire first part of this link emphatically stated that there is no “work” that is required for salvation. However, once again, discernment is the key. The “work” the Christian believer is to perform is not of a *physical* nature (circumcision, confession, water baptism, etc.) but of a *spiritual* nature. (As a sidebar notice the part about the devils also believe. This reinforces the concept that simply believing is far from enough for the Christian. And it’s a concept that has gotten many so called Christians in trouble over the centuries. One group was the Protestant offshoot group centered in England known as Calvinists. They “believed” and thought themselves “predestined” to heaven and became quite the revelers and partiers of their time since they “believed”; obviously they missed this passage in James’ Gospel).

Here Jesus, once again, trades spiritual punches with the ultra religious Jewish sect of priests known as the Pharisees:

John 5

- ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.
- ¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

But he had already explained what he meant by “work” in the previous chapter:

John 4

- ³⁵ Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.
- ³⁶ And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

The “harvest” being referred to here is a *spiritual* harvest of present day *physical* human beings. This concept is furthered illustrated in Matthew’s Gospel which explains this very same concept in a different setting:

Matthew 9

³⁵ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

³⁶ But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

³⁷ Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;

³⁸ Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Paul’s letter to Timothy is most famous for the well known mantra “the love of money is the root of all evil”. But in this passage Paul speaks of spiritual richness (“rich in good works”) that one obtains from becoming spiritually born again and spiritually working to harvest human souls in a spiritual sense:

I Timothy 6

¹⁷ Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

¹⁸ That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

¹⁹ Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Here the symbolism of bearing fruit (i.e., a believer converting non-believers to the Christian faith) is utilized to discuss the “work” that all believers must undertake:

Matthew 3

¹⁰ And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

¹¹ I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

In this passage notice the concept of the *simplicity* of becoming a Christian. But Paul, as indicated by the repeated beatings or in this case whipping by the authorities at the behest of the local Jewish population (yes the same Jews who the profits of God claim are “God’s Chosen People”), certainly did not have an *easy* time of it.

Acts 16

³⁰ And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

³¹ And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

³² And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

³³ And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

³⁴ And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

This passage from Paul’s Book of Romans sums up many of the concepts discussed in this link:

-God’s salvation plan for eternal life is really quite simple

-Belief in Christ and God’s “richness” (i.e., the accumulation of spiritual wealth which is gotten by getting the message out to and converting non-believers)

-Complex religious practice like those of the Jews are absolutely the incorrect way to enter into God’s “rest”

Romans 10

¹ Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

² For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

³ For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

⁵ For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

⁶ But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

⁷ Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

⁸ But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

- ¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
- ¹¹ For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.
- ¹² For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.
- ¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Just to be sure here's John the Baptist's (not to be confused with the Apostle John author of many Books of the New Testament including Revelation) summarizing the forgiveness of the world's sin New Testament style:

John 1

- 29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

And here's the Old Testament complex equivalent of this very simple concept (remember or go back and re-read the passage from Acts 15 again):

Leviticus 22

- 17 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 18 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering;
- 19 Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.
- 20 But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you.
- 21 And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.
- 22 Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.
- 23 Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.
- 24 Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land.

In conclusion this entire discussion is explained (and now gives deeper meaning) to Jesus final words at the Last Supper (and hopefully the reader understands it has nothing to do with some stupidity from things like Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code"):

Matthew 25

²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

²⁷ And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

²⁸ For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

²⁹ But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom

So here we have the New Testament or covenant canceling out the physical works of the Old Testament or covenant and the true believers in Christ will gain access to the Father's kingdom or quite simply, heaven.