

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS REGARDING SALVATION *STUFF YOU JUST HAVE TO KNOW!*

Continued...

Recapping very briefly what we learned last week, we discovered that mankind is God's **highest creation**, made uniquely in His image. Our ultimate reason for being is three-fold: 1) to have a loving, life-giving, joyous **companionship** with our Creator, 2) to glorify Him in what **we do** and what **we are** and, 3) to do God's work and will in ruling over the creation which He has made for us.

The problems in this world, we discovered, relate to the Fall of Mankind, something **every religion** acknowledges. The Fall, that is, mankind's sin and disbelief in God and His ultimate wisdom to know what is best for us, has led to spiritual death- **separation** from God and all that is good, eternally. But we learned that this situation hurts God deeply, and He is working with this world through His Son Jesus to **restore and renew** mankind to his original state of innocence and relationship- thus the term "**born again**".

We finished lesson one by sharing the beginning of things you have to know, among which were facts like you are unsaved, under penalty of death before you receive Christ. We also learned that God loves you far too much to see you perish and offered His best to prove His love for you: the gift of the sacrifice of His own Son who died for you so that you would live!

And now to this week's study:

MORE STUFF YOU JUST HAVE TO KNOW!

6) You should know that your sins have separated you from God. *"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you"- Isaiah 59:2* The idea being conveyed is of a **wall separating** and **hiding** two parties from each other. This is what sin does- it makes us clueless as to what is happening on 'God's side' and we live in the dark.

7) You need to recognize that Jesus is the only way to get to God. *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."- John 14:6-* To come to the Father is to obtain His favor, have access to Him and to enter His kingdom. No one can do this except by **virtue of what Jesus did**. This is what so many stumble over! We always want choices, but in the issue of sin and forgiveness, there were no other options! Only a sinless being could have done what was necessary, and the price He paid would have been useless had there been other ways available (read Jesus' words in Matthew 26:36-46)!

8) You need to understand that it is Jesus' death and His spilled blood alone that makes you right with God. *"God has purchased our freedom with His blood and has forgiven all our sins" & "Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us"- Romans 5:1 & Colossians 1:14* Every religion

recognizes the fact that a **sacrifice** is necessary to make **atonement** for sin in the sight of God.

9) Once you realize that your sins cost God the life of His Son (and Jesus His life and blood), you should repent. *“Your sorrow led you to repentance... Godly sorrow brings Godly repentance” & “except you repent, you will perish”- 2Cor 7:9, 10; Luke 13:3* Here is a “biggy”! God differentiates between kinds of repentance. But what do we mean by “repentance”? Repentance means to have a **change of mind** so profound that it **changes one’s conduct**. There are two ways people repent: 1) some say, “I am sorry” to make an offended party feel better, but they have no intention of changing their behavior, ultimately going to great extents to hide their misconduct. This God sees as **invalid** and leading to nothing but **death**. This actually creates more problems than it solves! 2) Some say, “Words are cheap. I truly am sorry, but I am now fixing this by getting the help I need to never do this again.” They not only make things right with the offended party, even repaying what needs to be repaid, but produce a plan of action they then follow that manifests character and conduct change **that is visible** on every level of their life. This is the only kind of repentance that **God recognizes**.

10) When you confess your sins to Jesus you are cleansed! *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”- 1 John 1:9* What God is saying is that if we will only confess our sins to Him, He will then forgive all that is past, treating us as blameless people who had **never sinned**. In the process, God promises to remove the stains of guilt and our bondage to those things we no longer want to do.

11) Remember: it is trust and belief in Jesus as Savior that forgives you, not good works you do. *“God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it” and “We are all infected and impure with sin. When we proudly display our righteous deeds, we find they are but filthy rags”- Isaiah 64:6 & Ephesians 2:8, 9* Good works are good, but they cannot change a spiritual condition. A prisoner found guilty of a crime that offers no parole can do good things in prison- but this doesn’t change the fact that he is **guilty** and condemned. His good behavior only benefits those around him **after the fact** of his crime. He is still guilty and under sentence! We are all prisoners because of sin and under penalty- the only way out is to have a re-trial and be declared innocent and that’s what Jesus does!

12) When you receive Jesus, you become God’s own child and He will no longer remember your sins. *“But to all who believed Him and accepted Him, he gave the right to become children of God” & “...having removed our transgressions as far as the east is from the west”, so that, “your sins and*

lawless deeds I [God] will remember no more"- John 1:12; Psalm 103:12; Hebrews 10:17 A gift must be **accepted** from another's hand and then **received** into one's own. Regarding the things of God, this is done through **prayer**: "God, I receive now this gift of forgiveness (salvation) you have provided for me through Your Son Jesus."

13) You need to know that when Jesus forgives you, your sins are washed away and no one can condemn you again. "There is no condemnation now for those who live in union with Christ Jesus" & "...nothing can separate us from His love"- Romans 8:1, 38 Guilty prisoners are not just declared **innocent**, but their record is **made clean** and they need not fear **God's punishment**- we are now objects of love, not of wrath. This is true with one proviso: that we live a life of obedience to God. No **outside influence** can separate us from God. Only we can through disobedience. This brings us to...

14) You must not be ignorant that Satan is real and he has designs for destroying your faith. "The thief comes to kill steal and destroy"- John 10:10 Jesus described Satan as a thief because a thief has no other design in coming but to plunder for his own enrichment. There is nothing evil desires more than to **steal affection** and **people** from the God it rebelled against. Satan will attempt this in the same way he did in Eden: through a smear campaign of **doubts based on lies** in an attempt to cause distrust in the character, wisdom and goodness of God. He will also attempt this through temptation to **intellectual pride** and sensuality, but there is good news...

15) Jesus helps people when they are tempted! Satan cannot win over your faith! "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it"& "Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you" & "he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him"- 1 Corinthians 10:13; James 4:7-8; 1 John 5:18 God provides supernatural strength to help us overcome- this will be in next week's study. God also does creative things to get us out of compromised situations. All we need to do is **see the exit sign** and...**RUN!**

As we conclude this study, I want to make it clear that the **consequences** of "The Fall" are also on the mind of God. There are repercussions that every human deals with living in this world. God sees and God **hurts over this**. That is why our loving God did not just make salvation merely a spiritual cleansing. When Jesus "saves" someone, he begins a **restoration process** whereby His original intentions for us begin to be realized. Among the consequences of the original sin was the loss of intimate relationship with God, the difficulty of making a living, **fear**, **sickness** and problems on every side. To all these difficulties there is good

news you must know in the form of these promises God makes in His Word, the Holy Bible, to you:

All Christ has belongs to you. “All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. So you should not be like cowering, fearful slaves. You should behave instead like God's very own children, adopted into His family— calling Him "Father, dear Father." For His Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us that we are God's children. And since we are His children, we will share His treasures — for everything God gives to His Son, Christ, is ours, too”- Rom 8:14-17

You don't need to live in want again. “My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus”- Phil 4:19

You no longer need to fear sickness. “No evil will befall you, nor will any plague come near your tent” & “I, the LORD, am your healer” & “[Jesus] Himself took up our infirmities and carried our diseases”- Ps 91:10; Exodus 15:26, Matthew 8:17

Problems need not define your life. “Leave all your worries with Him, because He cares for you”- 1 Peter 5:7

Everything we have discussed above and in our last study is truth from God to you. Every one of us is responsible to do something with this knowledge. For forgiveness of sin and salvation we need only pray and receive the gift God offers us in Jesus and that I believe every person on earth sincerely desires- total forgiveness and undying love. Whether in a prayer you pray on your own and then share with others, or through the prayer we will offer at the end tonight, remember this from God Himself to all who would come to Jesus:

“I, God, who began my good work in you, will continue that work until it is finished on that day when Jesus returns.

I will never leave you or forsake you!

I am with you always, even to the end of the age!”

- excerpted from Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20