

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE STORY OF SALVATION

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PART 1: THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

THE INCARNATION

The sole reason Jesus was incarnated was to pay for the sins of humanity and rescue those seeking salvation.

“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10)

God does not force salvation upon anyone; however, there is an incentive to accept the free gift since those who are not born again when they are still alive will end up in hell and later the Lake of Fire. Everyone will be judged from the Lamb’s Book of Life at the Great White Throne Judgment. Anyone not found in the Book of Life will be sentenced to a second death in the Lake of Fire.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:11-15)

This leads us to a burning question which requires an immensely accurate answer. How does one obtain salvation?

SALVATION INTRODUCTION

Let us begin with what Jesus taught. The Jesus told Nicodemus it was necessary to be born again in order to enter heaven. This salvation experience requires you to be born to your mom (physically) and then born a second time spiritually.

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a



teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

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?

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. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” (John 3:1-7)

This was clearly a spiritual truth, but what did it mean? That answer by itself was vague and the God-man followed it up by reminding Nicodemus of the time poisonous serpents entered the Israelite camp as a result of the Israelite's whining in the wilderness. Those who repented of their griping and placed their faith in God were healed from the venomous bites. Jesus was alluding to His future crucifixion and the same type of faith that would be necessary for eternal salvation.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” (John 3:14-17)

JESUS IS THE WAY

Religion can be classified as whatever you believe to be true. It is essentially mankind's attempt to reach heaven. But it is God who redeems you, not the other way around. There is no spiritual truth apart from Jesus. Pursuit of any other religion means you are spiritually lost and the Bible makes it clear that all religions are not equally valid. This is why Jesus emphatically stated that He was the only way to heaven.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)

Peter and John visited the temple and were arrested by the ungodly religious leadership for preaching about Jesus of Nazareth, and in their defense, they lambasted the Sanhedrin as renegades for rejecting Jesus as the Messiah.

“This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts 4:11-12)

The apostle Paul stated that salvation is result of Jesus’ love and kindness toward humanity in conjunction with the working of the Holy Spirit.

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;” (Titus 3:4-6)

All these verses serve to prove one thing... salvation exists and Jesus is an integral part of the equation. Having discovered that salvation exists (being born again), how do we to obtain it?

CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

The concept of being born again refers to something dead that is made alive. God is triune; we see evidence of this truth with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. When Adam and Eve were created, they received a physical body, a soul, and a spirit.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:26a-27)

Jesus warned Adam not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Doing so would change the dynamics and usher in death.

“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Genesis 2:15-17)

Adam and Eve rebelled against the Creator and ate of the fruit, but their bodies did not immediately die.

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” (Genesis 3:6-7)

While their physical bodies continued living, their spirits died instantly, the consequence of sin. All their descendants are now born with a sin nature and a dead spirit.

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)” (Ephesians 2:1-5)

REPENTANCE

Jesus never laid out a plan of salvation; He only told people they needed to be born again. When the apostle Peter preached for the first time after the baptism with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, he told the crowd to repent of their sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Then Peter said unto them, 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 Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” (Acts 2:37-39)

Luke recorded that Peter spoke even more to the people who wanted to repent that was not recorded for future generations.

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” (Acts 2:40)

In the second sermon, Peter again told the people to repent, but this time he did not include water baptism.

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19)

We have to take into account that everything was new to the apostolic leadership. Jesus had ascended to heaven and they were simply figuring it out as they went along. The Book of Acts records their successes (with the Holy Spirit's help) and their mistakes (working in the flesh). Therefore, not expecting perfection from the apostles, we can learn from their triumphs and failures.

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?