

Steps to Salvation in Christ

Often the question is asked, "what must I do to be saved, or how to get to Heaven and live forever?" So one is really asking how to become a Christian and obtain salvation in Jesus. Becoming a Christian is easy; being a Christian requires more work and understanding. So here are the steps to salvation in Christ and eternal life based on scripture alone, and something that is not considered enough, which is how to stay saved. The first step is to be like the Borean Christians. Acts 17:11 says, "*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*" One very essential step to keeping eternal life is to not fall into the group described in this verse. 2 Timothy 4:3-4 "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*" The last place you will find truth is from teachers that are just telling you what you want hear. You will quite often find these are some of the large television ministries like the faith healing movements or the so-called name it and claim never be sick ministries. This is a very quick way to be led from truth and lose your salvation. We must be like the Borean Christians at all times, even if it is something we do not want to hear because it might upset our lifestyle or be contrary to what we would rather believe. John 14:6 says, "*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" Jesus is the truth and the life and to reject areas of truth in God's Word is to reject elements of Christ. We must always look for truth at any cost for salvation.

How do we know if we are interpreting scripture properly? I once heard a wise theologian give a simple but good method of determining if you are viewing scripture correctly or if you are taking verses out of context. It was explained in terms of the perspective that you view the scripture. You can look at a scripture say via a fence post from all different angles and make it say something different depending on the placement of the fence post. So what we will do is take all scriptures relating to the passage or scripture concerned and make all the fence posts line up with all of the scriptures. If one fence post is out of line, then we have misinterpreted one or more of the scriptures. If all posts line up in a straight line that relate to the topic then we most likely have got the right interpretation. So while we look at this topic, we will be looking at other scriptures that relate to these scriptures to ensure that we have the full picture and come to the right conclusions.

If we were to base everything on this well known verse, we would conclude that this is all we have to do. John 3:16 "*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.*" Obviously there is more to the picture such as Mark 16:16 which says, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" This however does not mean that if you are to ill to get baptised that you cannot be saved. The thief on the cross was unable to be baptised but was still promised his salvation. (See Luke 23:43) So is faith and baptism enough? No, yet reading Ephesians 2:8-9 which says, "*For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*" would also lead you to conclude that we can be saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus alone. So what else is there?

It is now clear the Bible shows there is nothing we can do to earn our salvation but once we have it what are we expected to do to keep it? The second chapter of James shows that as a result of faith in Jesus, good works are a natural result of that faith. James 2:24 says, "*You see, then, that it is by our actions that we are put right with God, and not by our faith alone.*" If we have faith in God, then we will be obedient to God, and if we are obedient to God's word, then the fruit of our faith will be that of good works. As James shows in James 2:18-19 the demons believe in God, but they are not saved. It reads, "*Yes, a man may say, You have faith, and I have works: show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believest that there is one God; you doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.*" And James 2:26 says, "*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*" Paul corrected the Galatians when they tried to achieve salvation through good works alone instead of by faith with good works being the fruit of their faith and James showed that others had wrongly concluded that faith alone was adequate for salvation.

Since we now are under God's grace does this mean we no longer have to obey God's Commandments that so many misunderstand? Paul tells us in Romans 6:14-15 "*For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*" Paul makes it quite clear this is not the case much to the disgust of some people. God created us for the sole purpose of a loving relationship with Him and so He personally thundered His voice from the Mountaintop to give the guidelines on how to love Him and our fellow man. How much more important can it be when it revolves around the very reason for our existence? These guidelines on how to love God and our neighbour are so important that God did give them personally and has not done anything else like this ever before that the Bible tells us about and probably never will again. We can be assured that on something so essential that if there was to be any change on the most significant thing God ever told us about in such a dramatic event, that there would be clear scriptures given and we will not have to make any assumptions.

We are blessed to know that God's law has not changed according to the words of Jesus. Matthew 5:18-19 says, "*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*" Jesus not only tells us that the law is not going to change but in the following verses Jesus goes on to say that he is going to raise the bar even higher. That is, Jesus tells us that if we even contemplate committing adultery, then we have done so in our heart. Jesus then continues to give many more such examples showing that the Commandments will indeed stand forever. And why shouldn't they since they are the guidelines on love. To put an end to the Commandments would mean an end to loving God and our neighbour. Clearly no one would ever want that to happen. 1 John 3:4 says, "*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*" Since sin is breaking of the Commandments, we also know that it is our sin that nailed Jesus to the cross and caused Him all that pain and suffering. What Christian would want to go on leading a life of wilful sin knowing what it did to our loving saviour? But perhaps the real motivation will come from the fact that the Bible in so many places warns us that deliberate sin only leads to hell fire.

What does the Bible say in regards to those that do not keep the Commandments? There are many verses and we will cover a few here now. One of the strongest texts in the Bible on this subject is found in 1 John 2:3-4. *"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."* John could write that with such assurance because it is one of the most deeply established truths in the Bible. Jesus spoke of those who said, "Lord, Lord," but did not do the will of the Father. Then He described many who would seek entrance to the kingdom claiming to be workers of miracles in the name of Christ. But He would sorrowfully have to say, *"I never knew you: depart from me."* Matthew 7:21-23. This is obviously very serious because Jesus is saying, *"Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of heaven"*. God's grace does not cover deliberate disobedience that cannot have genuine repentance. To know Christ is to love Him, and to love Him is to obey Him. The valid assumption of the Bible writers is clear and simple. If one is not obeying Christ, he does not love Christ. And if he doesn't love the Master, then he doesn't know Him. Thus we can see how knowing, loving and obeying are all tied closely together and are absolutely inseparable in the life of God's faithful people. The beloved John summed it up in these words: *"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."* 1 John 5:3. It should be our hearts desire to love God and man and should not grieve us to do so. It also does not matter if it is just one Commandment or all Ten Commandments we intentionally break as James 2:10-11 says, *"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you are become a transgressor of the law."*

Here is all of Matthew 7:21-23 clearly telling us that to practice deliberate sin will definitely not get us into the kingdom of Heaven. We have to take these words very seriously. *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and in your name have cast out devils? and in your name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity."* The New King James Bible translates the last phrase of verse 23 as *"depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"*

Does this include the fourth Commandment? Yes, the Sabbath is one of the Ten that I am not going to discuss in much detail here. I will however point out a few facts. Besides the two assumptions that are used to try and justify Sunday keeping, the Bible and history show them not to be correct. It has been established by many historians and theologians holding PhD's in their field that Matthew and Luke were written between 60 and 80 AD and there was never a better time for Luke to tell us of a day change but instead he states in Luke 23:56, *"...And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment."* Jesus also showed that the Sabbath would still be kept after the cross and speaks of no day change when He is talking to the Apostles about the destruction of the temple in about 70 AD. Jesus says in Matthew 24:20, *"And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath."* World leading historians also confirm this and that the Sabbath was kept by Jews and Gentiles till about 120 AD where the persecution of the Jews for Sabbath keeping became so great that some Christians decided to start keeping Sunday using the rationalization that it was in honour of the resurrection in order to avoid persecution and death. The Sabbath was changed to Sunday when it was made law in 321 AD by the most powerful Church on Earth and the Bible tells us that this Church would do this in Daniel 7:25. It reads *"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."* This time period equates to 1260 years where this Church murdered 50 to 100 million Christians, primarily over Sabbath keeping. Satan just about murdered the true Sabbath out of existence and people today won't even contemplate what the truth is here because they don't want to know as this would mean giving God one day of their week that most don't want to do. As a result of the persecution, it was well after 400 AD when Sunday eventually took on the name the Lord's Day. If we deliberately try to avoid truth here or we know the truth and still continue to disobey God, then we now know the consequences. There is no shortage of people who will give you a multitude of excuses, so if you do desire to find the truth here from the Bible and we need to, you can read the document called "Sabbath and Antichrist Truth Revealed."

The following passage tells us there is no sacrifice that will cover deliberate sin and that to continue in sin is to trample Jesus under foot and count the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing even though we are under grace. It also shows that the punishment will be worse than physical death given in Old Testament times, which means not being saved. Hebrews 10:26-29 says, *"26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"*

How do we avoid being one of the majority that takes the broad gate Jesus warns us of in these verses? Matthew 7:13-14 *"Enter you in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."* This verse in Revelation shows that as a result of faith in Christ and a desire to keep God's Commandments and remain obedient to Him, that this is the wonderful blessing we are told we will receive. Revelation 22:14 *"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."*

Now that we are under grace, God makes a new covenant with the house of Israel. So often did the children of Israel disobey God and not keep His Commandments, that under the new covenant God tells us that He will write them on our hearts and in our minds. God does not want us forgetting His law of love. Without it, this world is in chaos, which as we can see is well and truly the case. Here God says he will write His law on our hearts and in our minds but what law? Paul tells us in Romans 14:5, Galatians 4:9-10 and Colossians 2:14-17 that the ordinances comprising the Ceremonial law was nailed to the cross and to still observe these ceremonial Holy day Sabbaths, not to be confused with the Sabbath of the Lord in the Ten Commandments, puts us back into bondage. Sadly, these scriptures are all too easily misunderstood.

There is only one law that God saw fit to give personally and write onto stone tablets with His own finger while thundering His voice from the mountaintop while all the children of Israel cringed in fear. And those stone tablets were only copies of the originals that are in the real Ark of the Covenant in the Heavenly temple now and probably will be forever. The temple and Ark on earth were made to exact dimensions as directed by God to Moses, as they were copies of what's in Heaven. The law that God said He will write in our hearts and minds is no other and can be no other than His Ten great rules of love that give us guidance on how to love God and man. This New Covenant being so important, we are told about it twice in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews 8:10 *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."* The second is Hebrews 10:16 In our hearts and in our minds God tells us. God does not want us to forget His law or to be a burden but to be our hearts desire to love and obey Him. When we have a real desire in our hearts to love, this will come automatically without being grievous. 1 John 4:8 says, *"He that loveth not knows not God; for God is love."* And 1 John 4:20 reads, *"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?"* This is truly what it is all about. A loving relationship with God and man. For those that picked up on the fact that the new covenant was made with the house of Israel and wonders if it also includes them, the answer is yes. Both the Old and New Covenants were made with the house of Israel. When we become Christ's we also become children of Israel. Galatians 3:28-29 tells us, *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."* See also Romans 2:28-29

Having covered the main steps for salvation we must ensure that Satan does not deceive us at the end. Matthew 24:24 Says, *"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."* We must not be fooled by such things and one very important fact to remember is that when Christ returns, the whole world will know about it and that Jesus' feet will not touch the Earth as He will come in the clouds with His angels to gather His children. This is why Jesus said if anyone says I am here or over there do not believe them. Matthew 24:27 says, *"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."* We must not be drawn in by the false prophets and their miracles.

Paul also speaks of those at the end that do not accept truth and continue to sin. He tells us God will send them a strong delusion so they won't even be able to see truth and will just believe a lie. We should ensure that we don't go down this path at any cost. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 reads, *"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."*

Another deception that is spreading at a very fast rate in the last 30 years that we need to know about is one of a seven year tribulation period. This interpretation of the Bible is not even that. It was a manufactured prophecy to lead people away from discovering the truth of who the real antichrist power was. Jesuit priests were commissioned to write a counter interpretation of prophecy to lead the early Protestants away from the truth. This goes right back to the 15th century where they knew all to well what the truth really was then and nothing came from it. But typical of Satan's character, he looks for any way to deceive people from truth and take as many from the kingdom as possible. It does not matter if the deception takes several centuries to take hold. Many of his deceptions are just slowly weaved into the Church over a long period of time as that is more subtle and so slow that people don't even realize what Satan has done or is doing. The Bible does indeed speak of a tribulation period but it does not say how long it will be. The seven years is taken from a Messianic prophecy that many don't understand and as for a scripture that specifically states a seven-year tribulation period, it does not exist in any way shape or form. It is extremely important that we know that this was manufactured. Along with this lie come other distortions of scripture such as a secret rapture before the second coming of Christ. This can lead many into holding off accepting Christ to see if such a secret rapture does take place and if it does they will then accept Jesus as their Lord and saviour. This is a very dangerous move and based on more lies and Satan's plans. There is no better time than the present to take on the blessings of knowing Christ and having Him in your life directing your path. There is a lot more to these manufactured lies that when taught by unsuspecting Christians can sound very credible so be careful. A lot more can be found about who was responsible for these lies in the document "Sabbath and Antichrist Truth Revealed."

Finding the right Church. Though not necessarily a salvation issue can help to keep us in truth. This is not an easy task but I believe my family have found the true Church according to the Bible. I am not saying what Church this is because there is so much prejudice towards it. That prejudice even came from my own family because of the rumours and lies we had heard, but in our search for truth we found these things untrue. I am just going to say how the Bible describes God's end time remnant Church. I will give one scripture in relation to this which says, Revelation 12:17 *"And the dragon (Satan) was wroth with the woman (Church), and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."* So here is the criterion. It must be a Church that keeps all of God's Ten Commandments of which there are over 400 in the world and most of these are probably good. It will be a Church that Satan is making war with because it has restored all God's Commandments including the Sabbath that Satan went to so much effort to destroy and still does. We should therefore expect to hear lots of false rumours and lies about this Church. The Bible also says it is a worldwide movement and there are only two and God is going to destroy one with His coming. It will be a Church that teaches the three Angels messages in Revelation. There is only one Church that does this in the World. If you find the Church that does these things you have found God's remnant Church. Summary. Understand these four points. 1) God loves you. 2) Sin separates you from God. 3) Jesus saves and died for your sins and 4) you can be saved by confessing Jesus is Lord. So confess your a sinner, Romans 3:23. Understand *the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Romans 6:23. Accept Jesus into your heart as your Lord and saviour and repent of your sins. Be baptised by full immersion in water. Love God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself, that is keep all God's Commandments. Jesus said in John 14:15, *"If you love me, keep my commandments."*