

The New Testament Plan of Salvation

What God Did

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only (begotten) Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Ephesians 2:8,9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--- and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God---not by works, so that no one can boast.

Grace means God's "*unmerited*" or "*undeserved*" favor toward us. As sinners, none of us deserve to be saved. We are deserving of eternal death. And were it not for the amazing grace of God, that would be our final destiny.

What Does God Command Me to Do?

- (1) I must have FAITH in the Lord Jesus Christ. That means I must realize that I am a sinner and apart from Jesus Christ I can do nothing to save myself. I can't be good enough to save myself. I can't save myself by doing lots of good deeds for others. I can't save myself through good, clean moral living. I must put my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 11:6 "For without FAITH it is IMPOSSIBLE to please GOD."

- (2) I must BELIEVE in the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Acts 16:31 They replied, "*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.*"

(3) I must REPENT of my sinful ways and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:37, 38 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “*Brothers, what shall we do?*” (meaning, “*what shall we do to be saved?*”) Peter replied, *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*”

Repentance means to “return to God” or to “turn toward God.” Think of making a “U-turn” on the highway. Until you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior you are on the wrong road. You are headed in the wrong direction. That road is a DEAD END!!!

If you are to be SAVED you must make a U-turn! That means getting on the road of life that takes you toward God rather than away from God. That is repentance! Repentance involves the forsaking of sinful ways and accepting a brand new life in Christ.

(4) I must CONFESS my faith in Jesus Christ before men.

Romans 10:9,10 That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”

Over the years I have had a number of people ask if they could make their confession of faith and be baptized in private because of their fear of crowds. While I have always accommodated people who made such a request I have noticed a pattern. And that is this: Many of those who didn’t have enough courage to confess their faith in Christ in front of the whole Church did not remain faithful to the Lord and eventually stopped going to Church altogether.

Why is our public confession of Christ important? Jesus answers that for us in **Matthew 10:32, 33**:

“Whoever acknowledges Me before men, I will also acknowledge him before My Father in heaven. But whoever disowns Me before men, I will disown him before My Father in heaven.”

If you don't have the courage to make your confession of faith in Christ in front of Christians, you will likely never have enough courage to take your stand for Christ in the presence of non-Christians!!!

(5) I must be IMMERSED/BAPTIZED for the remission of my sins.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, *“Repent and be BAPTIZED every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*

Mark 16:16 **Whoever believes and is BAPTIZED will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.**

John 3:5 Jesus answered, *“I tell you the truth, no one can enter into the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and of the Spirit.”*

Matthew 28:19,20 *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, BAPTIZING them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Galatians 3:26, 27 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Some Churches teach that baptism is NOT necessary for salvation. The Bible makes a definite link between baptism and salvation.

I Peter 3:21 And this water symbolizes BAPTISM that now saves you also---not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God.

(6) I must be FAITHFUL to the Lord until death.

Many begin the race, but few end it. The roll books of churches are filled with the names of people who made the great confession of faith and were baptized and within a short period of time they disappeared and were never seen in Church again.

Revelation 2:10 Be FAITHFUL, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

The decision to accept Jesus Christ as one's Lord and Savior is a very critical decision and should never be made lightly. The Christian life is NOT an easy life. Quite the contrary, it is a life of sacrifice and surrender and service and self-denial.