



*A Ministry of the
Church of God (Seventh Day)*

What Must I Do to Be Saved?



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Have you ever asked yourself, *Where will I spend eternity?* Sadly, many people make elaborate provisions for their short lives on earth but fail to plan for what lies beyond.

Preparing for eternity is what God's plan of salvation is all about. As the work of our heavenly Father, salvation rescues humanity from the ruin of sin and the eternal death it brings. It deals with our sins — the cause of our being lost, or separated from and out of touch with God.

Salvation leads to eternal life, and it is free. When we take the few steps described in the Bible to receive this glorious gift of God's grace, we must never consider it our work; it is God's. And in accepting that gift, we accept eternal life.

What, then, must we do to be saved?

Faith

The New Testament tells the good news of Jesus Christ, that salvation depends on accepting Him as our Savior by faith. Salvation is made possible only through Christ. The first step to salvation is believing this.

Carefully read these verses that teach this important truth:

- But as many as received Him [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name (John 1:12).
- For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).
- Nor is there salvation in any other; for

there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

- If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:9).

The Gospel of John was written as a record of the many wonderful things Jesus said and did while He lived on this earth. This Gospel gives us a basis for believing in Him:

- These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name (20:31).
- He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (3:36).

The apostle Paul saw the truth of salvation by God's grace in response to faith when he wrote: "For by grace are you saved by faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).

But what is faith, exactly? Like belief, faith is confidence and trust in the reality of God and in the work of salvation He has completed on our behalf through Christ, as taught in the Bible. Therefore, we are called to believe that Jesus is the Christ and God's Son — and that by His death, burial, and resurrection, we are forgiven of our sins and welcomed into His eternal kingdom.

Will you believe this great truth? If so, you can be saved — by God's grace.

Repentance

We must do more than believe in Jesus, however; we must also express our belief in Jesus as the Christ and the one who rescues us from sin. Sin leads to death, but God sent Jesus into the world to deliver us from our sins and from God's wrath upon sinners.

Preaching the gospel on the Day of Pentecost, Peter, a leading disciple of Christ, called upon the people to believe in Jesus. His words brought conviction to the people's hearts. They cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).

In response to their faith, Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (v. 38). In this one verse Peter gave two important instructions for anyone who desires salvation and eternal life: repent and be baptized. We will deal with baptism in the next section.

When we realize that God has worked out our salvation through His dear Son, we feel sorrow for our sins. This sorrow leads us to confess our sins to God. We can be sure He will forgive us and purify us.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

This process of regret for sins, confession, and turning from sins is called repentance. Genuine repentance always brings change. Before we repent, we accept sin as a normal way of life. But when we see how serious sin

is — that it brings death — we turn to God and repent, thus experiencing a change of heart.

Repentance goes beyond merely regretting sin to forsaking sin. It embraces the right way in contrast to the wrong way of the former sinful life. Paul supported this concept by preaching to both Jews and Gentiles “that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance” (Acts 26:20).

Paul said repentance should bring about a change in us: obedience to the Word of God. Why is this so vital? Because our deeds demonstrate that we have turned from our sinful ways to obey and serve the living God.

Baptism

According to Acts 2:38, the next step after repentance is baptism in the name of Jesus. In this chapter Peter preached, “Be saved from this perverse generation,” and three thousand souls gladly received his word and were baptized (vv. 40, 41). By faith, repentance, and baptism, then, the Lord adds to the church those who are being saved (v. 47).

Peter wasn’t the first to speak of baptism, of course. Jesus taught that believers should be baptized. Just before His ascension to heaven, He told the apostles:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things

that I have commanded you (Matthew 28:19, 20).

The New Testament describes baptism as a burial (Colossians 2:12), an immersion in water to symbolize the inner cleansing that believers receive by faith in the blood of Christ. Baptism publicly identifies the new believer with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:3, 4).

We must believe in Jesus as Savior and Son of God, then turn from our sins to Christ and obey God's Word. But until we are baptized in water in the name of Jesus, our response to God's offer of eternal life is not yet complete according to the Scriptures.

Accept God's Gift

If you value a long, happy life on earth, why not take the necessary steps to receive God's gift of eternal life when this life is done? You can respond to God's offer of salvation by placing your faith in Christ, repenting, and being baptized. You may want to talk with a Christian minister or believer to guide you through these steps.

We invite you to join your faith to God through Christ with this prayer:

"Dear God in heaven, I confess that I am a sinner. I ask that Jesus' blood cleanse me from all my sin. I commit my life to You and ask You to direct me in all my ways, by your Holy Spirit through Your Word. Thank You for forgiving my sin. In the name of Jesus I pray. Amen."

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