

## What the Bible Teaches about Salvation

The salvation of man is a central teaching of the Bible. From the time that the first man sinned in the Garden, God has been seeking salvation for us all. God has acted from old to bring salvation to us. God has provided the *person* in whom we are saved, the *plan* for our salvation, and the *place* of the saved on this earth.

First, consider the **person** who saves us. At the center of our salvation is the person who is doing the saving and that person is Christ. Matthew wrote, "It is he that shall save his people from their sins (Matt 1:21)." John 3:17 says, "For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him." The greatest fact of the New Testament is that God in the form of Jesus existed in the image of man. Hebrews says of Jesus, "Having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation (Heb 5:9)." In Phil 2:5-9, Paul spoke of Christ who "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

Second, consider the **plan** of salvation. Christ does not save haphazardly. He saves by his divine plan. The Bible nowhere teaches that Christ will save us by a plan of our own choice. Christ saves us by a plan worked out in the mind of God: "Having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Eph 1:5)." The good pleasure of his will, not ours. If God is to save we who are lost, it must be according to God's own plan. God's plan teaches that we must believe (Rom5:1), repent (Acts 17:30-31), confess (Rom. 10:9-10), and be baptized for the remission of our sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). After explaining God's plan of salvation in Acts 2:14-39, Peter urged the people present to "save yourselves from this crooked generation (Acts 2:40)." To be saved today, we must obey this plan of God for our salvation (Rom. 6:16-19).

Third, consider the **place** of salvation. When we obey God's plan of salvation (Mark 16:15-16), the Lord adds us to his church (Acts 2:47). Paul declares in Eph. 2:16 that both Jew and Gentile are reconciled in one body, which is the church (Eph. 1:20-23). Since reconciliation takes place in the body, the church, the undeniable truth is that the church is the **place** of salvation. Has the Lord added you to the body, the church, of which Christ is the savior (Eph. 5:23)?

Who saves us? Christ. What is the plan for saving us? God's plan. Where are the saved? In the body of Christ, the church.