

HOLY
BIBLE

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION



***Defend
The
Gospel
Tracts***

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INTRODUCTION:

There are many differing plans of salvation in our society. Many different denominations have many different plans of salvation, and all of them claim theirs came from God. One may go to one “church” and ask how to get saved, and he will be told. He can then go to another “church” and ask how to get saved, and he may be given a totally different answer. One could even go to a public restroom and find a tract telling him how to get saved, then go to another public restroom and find another tract telling a different way to get saved. A lot of this may come from a false concept of Philippians 2:12 where Paul tells them to “...*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*” Paul isn’t telling them to make up their own “plan” of salvation. This isn’t what the text says. God has already given the plan, Paul just encourages them to be faithful to God until the end, regardless of what persecutions they must face. In this way, they will be working out their own salvation.

One thing is certain; all of these conflicting plans of salvation are causing mass confusion in the minds of those who are becoming religious in their thinking. If someone who knows nothing about the Bible asks one preacher how to be saved, then asks another, and is told a whole different way, then asks another, and is told still another way, this man is left utterly confused. Mass confusion is caused in the religious world at large due to these various plans. Could they all have come from

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God? Certainly not, you see, the Bible says ***“God is not the author of confusion but of peace...”*** 1 Corinthians 14:33. Since all of these plans cause mass confusion, then God cannot be the author of them all. He can only be the author of one of them.

It is our task to ascertain exactly which plan comes from God, and which plans come from the minds of men. The only way this can be done is by going to the word of God and finding out what God Himself says saves man. The Bible says:

- ***“If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God...”*** 1 Peter 4:11
- ***“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*** 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

If one teaches things religiously, he must only teach what God taught in His word. Notice that ALL scripture is necessary to make a man complete spiritually. Therefore, we must allow ALL scripture to work together in trying to figure out what saves man. We cannot take one verse which mentions something that saves us and conclude this one thing alone saves us. For example, many will go to John 3:16 where we are told that those who believe will not perish, and then conclude that all we have to do to be saved (keep from

perishing) is to believe in Christ (The same thing is done with Romans 5:1). However, what about Luke 13:3? In this passage Jesus says, “**Repent or you will all likewise perish.**” Nothing is said here about belief, or confession, or baptism or anything else. Can I teach from this passage a “Repentance only” plan of salvation? Certainly not! Likewise, we can’t take just John 3:16 and teach a “Faith only” doctrine. We must take ALL the Bible says on the subject of salvation, and then we can get the COMPLETE plan from the word of God. Therefore, when we go to God’s word and find out ALL the things that God says saves, put them together without any addition or subtraction, we will have *God’s plan of salvation*. Now, let’s move on to the first part of God’s plan. (We will study each of them in succession).

1) HEAR

The Bible teaches the necessity of hearing the Gospel. Many today teach something they call a “saving experience,” and through this “experience,” God called them.

- “The horse I was riding was struck by lightning, and I survived, and that’s how God called me.”
- “I survived a horrible car accident, and that’s how God called me.”
- “My family left me because of my drinking, and

My dear friend: This is truly God’s plan of salvation. Don’t be deceived by counterfeits! Read God’s plan, study it, obey it, and remain faithful to it, so you too may receive the crown of life at judgment.

CONCLUSION

It is important to emphasize this is God's plan, not one we made up. The Bible says to prove all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Therefore, I have done my best to give book, chapter, and verse for everything I have written in this tract. I hope you will study these things for yourself and come to the proper conclusion. The plan presented in this tract is certainly not the popular plan, but God's way is never popular with men. It is narrow and difficult (Matthew 7:13, 14).

This plan was not conceived in the mind of man. It was born in the mind of God and clearly revealed in His divine word. In fact, this entire plan is outlined in the second chapter of Acts:

- 1) Hear: Vs. 14-36. Peter stood up and preached to them so they heard the gospel.
- 2) Believe: Vs. 37. ***"They were cut to the heart..."***
Why? Because they now believed Jesus, the One Whom they had killed, to be the Son of God.
- 3) Repent: Vs. 38. Peter commanded them to ***"Repent."***
- 4) Confess: This is the only exception, but we know they must have confessed their faith based on Romans 10:9, 10.
- 5) Be Baptized: Vs.38. Peter commanded them to be baptized for the remission of their sins.
- 6) Remain Faithful: Vs. 41,42. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine...etc.

that's how God called me."

I cannot deny that sometimes near death or life-changing occurrences may give one the *incentive* to obey God, but this is not how God calls them. The Bible says God calls people to Him by the Gospel. In John 6:44, 45, Jesus said, ***"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day."*** This is the very verse many go to in order to get their "Saving experience" doctrine. "See", they will say, "God has to draw us, and He drew me with a car accident." It is true God must draw men to Him, but it is not true that God draws men by some drastic accident or life changing occurrence. So, how does God draw men? Well, the next verse tells us! In verse 45, the Lord continued, ***"It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught by God. Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me."*** This passage tells us HOW God draws men unto Him. It's by being ***"taught by God."*** It's by hearing and learning from the Father. God draws men to Him today by teaching them. Teaching them what? The Gospel! Notice 2 Thessalonians 2:14, ***"to which he called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."*** When Paul says ***"our gospel,"*** he is referring to Christ's Gospel, because he only taught Christ and Him crucified (Romans. 2:1-4). He only declared Christ's gospel of which he was not ashamed (Romans 1:15, 16).

Jesus understood how essential it was (and is) for

people to hear the Gospel. That's why he told His disciples in Mark 16:15 ***“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”*** He understood this to be the way God “draws” men.

We understand faith is necessary unto salvation, but how do we get this faith?

- Not by some mystical, unexplainable spiritual experience.
- Not by some devastating tragedy.
- Not by some life changing catastrophe.

But, by hearing the word of God! ***“So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”*** Romans 10:17.

Thus, the only conclusion we can come to is that hearing the gospel is necessary unto salvation.

2) ***BELIEVE***

Faith and belief are one and the same. When one has faith in something, it means he believes in that thing. When one believes in something, it means he has faith in that thing.

The Bible teaches faith saves. Since faith is necessary to salvation, it must be part of *God's plan of salvation*. There are many passages we could cite to show this, but only a couple will be necessary. Jesus said in John 3:16, ***“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in***

offered them money in order to obtain it (vs. 18, 19). Notice closely what Peter said to him in verse 20, ***“Your money perish with you....”*** Wait a minute! Simon, a child of God, perishing? Oh yes! Peter said ***“Your money PERISH with YOU”*** (emphasis mine-MP). The money wasn't the only thing said to perish. Simon was going to perish with it! So, a child of God can perish! Peter then told him to repent of his sin and pray to God asking for forgiveness (Vs. 22). Therefore, when a Christian sins, he needs to (1) Repent of that sin, (2) Confess his sin (publicly if it was a public sin or privately to God if it was a private sin) 1 John 1:9, and (3) Ask God to forgive him of the sin. But why even tell us all of this if it is impossible for a child of God to so sin as to lose his salvation?

The doctrine of “the security of the believer” (As taught by Calvinism) is false and erroneous. Once one becomes a child of God, he must continue to faithfully serve the Lord or else he will ***“perish.”*** He will lose his eternal salvation and spend eternity in Hell. He will be worse off than if he had never even become a Christian (2 Peter 2:20-22). Please study the things listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7 and make them a part of your life so that you will remain faithful to The Lord. Because remaining faithful to the Lord is an essential part of *God's plan of salvation*.

places a condition upon being fruitful. If these things are yours, you will not be unfruitful, indicating that if these things are not yours, you WILL be barren and unfruitful. Now, we all know that those who are unfruitful are cut off and cast into the fire (John 15:1-6). Notice verse 10 in 2 Peter 1. “*...for if you do these things you will never stumble.*” Again, the conditional word “*if*” is used, indicating that IF you do not do these things, you WILL stumble! Why tell us what to do to keep from stumbling if it were impossible for a Christian to stumble in the first place?

3) Christians are also told what to do if they fall. Remember the situation in Samaria recorded in Acts 8:5-25? I encourage you to read these verses, and then proceed with this tract. We learn that Philip went to Samaria and preached “*Christ*” to them (vs. 5). After hearing Philip preach and observing the miracles he performed, many men and women believed and were baptized (vs. 12). In verse 9, we learn that before Philip came to Samaria, there was a sorcerer named Simon who astonished the people there and made them believe he was someone great. We learn in verse 13 Simon himself believed Philip’s preaching and was baptized. He became a Christian... He became a child of God!!! However, Simon then observed that Peter and the other apostles had power to lay their hands on someone and impart to them gifts of the Holy Spirit (vs. 14-18). Some of the old Simon was creeping back in, and he wanted to have the power the apostles had. So, he

Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” The Lord also said in Mark 16:16, “*He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*” Surely, we can see from these two passages that believing in Jesus as the Son of God is part of God’s plan of salvation.

But these passages do NOT teach the “Faith only” doctrine. They teach the necessity of faith, but they do not teach faith alone saves us. Some teach from John 3:16 that all you have to do to be saved is believe, simply because belief is the only thing mentioned in this verse. However, this is not the proper way to handle the word of God. Remember, we’ve got to let ALL of the Scriptures work together. We can’t take just John 3:16, let it stand alone, separate and apart from all other New Testament passages, and conclude that faith only saves us, simply because it is the only thing mentioned there! There are other passages which mention other things that save us, and some of these passages say nothing at all about faith! We have already noticed Luke 13:3 as mentioning only repentance. We can’t teach “repentance only” salvation. We must let the two verses work together.

Perhaps the single most damaging passage to the “Faith only” doctrine is James 2:24. The whole section from 14-26 should be considered, but we just want to accentuate verse 24, because it is certainly the theme of all the verses mentioned. Verse 24 says, “*You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.*”

This is interesting; some today teach one is justified by “faith only,” and the Bible says that one is justified “**not by faith only.**” Dear reader, who do you choose to believe? I’ll choose the Bible.

Faith is certainly a PART of *God’s plan of salvation*, and it is certainly NOT God’s ENTIRE plan of salvation, because the Bible specifically says it is not (James 2:24), and the Bible specifically mentions OTHER things which save us. However, faith in Jesus, the Son of God, is an essential part of *God’s plan of salvation*.

3) **REPENT**

The Bible is very clear about repentance being an essential PART of *God’s plan of salvation*. A few verses will make this clear:

- The men in Acts 2:38, when asking what to do to be saved, were told, “**Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins....**”
- Paul said in Acts 17:30 that “**God...now commands all men everywhere to repent.**”
- Jesus said in Luke 13:3 and in verse 5, “**I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.**”

Repentance literally means “to turn completely

never so sin as to lose your salvation. On the contrary, the Bible teaches it is essential for a Christian to remain faithful to The Lord or else he will lose his soul.

- “**..Be faithful until death, and I will give you a crown of life**” Revelation 2:10.

The Lord, in this passage, places a condition upon receiving the crown of life (no doubt eternal life is meant). This passage says one must remain faithful until he dies, and he will receive the crown of life, indicating, of course, that if one became unfaithful, he would not receive the crown of life. Now, if it were not possible for a child of God to lose his salvation, this passage has no meaning.

There are many reasons why this idea of “once saved always saved” cannot be true:

1) Christians are warned against falling. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:12, “**Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.**” Why would Paul warn Christians against falling if it were not possible for them to fall?

2) Christians are told what to do to keep from falling. In 2 Peter 1:5-11, Peter gives us many characteristics a Christian must develop. Read them for yourself. Notice particularly verses 8 and 10. Verse 8 says, “**For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” Peter uses the word “if.” This is a conditional word, and whenever it is used, it places a condition upon something. In this case, it

folks to substitute sprinkling for baptism.

Some men teach salvation before baptism instead of by baptism. However, Jesus said, ***“He who believes and is baptized will be saved...”*** Mark 16:16. They want to tell us one is saved at the point of belief, then is baptized to show they are saved (or to join a church). However, this distorts the order of the passage, which states 1) Belief, 2) Baptism, 3) Salvation. It also contradicts John 1:12, which states, ***“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”*** This passage doesn’t say when one believes he automatically becomes a child of God. It says he has been given the ***“right”*** to ***“become”*** a child of God. Obviously by being baptized (Mark 16:16).

The Bible clearly teaches baptism as an essential part of being saved. It is an essential part of *God’s plan of salvation*.

6) REMAIN FAITHFUL

Once one becomes a Christian, he must then remain faithful to the Lord. Remaining faithful is certainly a part of *God’s plan of salvation*.

The doctrine of Calvinism teaches the idea of the “security of the believer,” also called the “perseverance of the saints.” You may know it better by the phrase “once saved always saved.” This doctrine basically teaches that once you become a child of God, you can

around.”

- To stop doing what you’re doing wrong!
- To change your life!
- To make a conscience decision and commitment that from this point on you are going to stop being a servant of sin, and start being a slave of righteousness (Romans 6:15-17)!

“Repent” was an old Koine Greek word (Common Greek which was in use during the time of Christ, from about 335 BC until 335 AD) which was used by the Roman military. If you were ever in the marching band, or the military, you may be familiar with field commands. While on the field, if the Field Commander said “forward march,” you understood you were to march forward. If he said “to the right flank march,” you understood you were to turn to the right and continue marching. If he said “about face,” you understood you were to turn completely around and march in the opposite direction. “Repent” was the word the Roman military used for “About Face.” It means to turn completely around and go in the other direction.

Now, apply this spiritually, and we have just what the Bible teaches. Before being saved, we must turn completely from our sins and commit to serving God totally. You can’t become a Christian and still be a servant of sin (Romans 6:1-14). There must be a significant change in your life (A newness of life,

Romans 6:4).

Therefore, we see repentance is clearly a PART of *God's plan of salvation*.

4) *CONFESS*

Confession an essential part of *God's plan of salvation* as well. Paul said in Romans 10:9, 10, ***“that 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. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*** Some teach that in order to become a Christian one must confess his sins with their mouth. But the passage doesn't teach this. It says to confess the Lord Jesus. We are to confess our faith in Him as the risen Son of God.

There is a time when folks should confess specific sins, but this time is *after* one has already become a Christian, then committed sin (see 1 John 1:7; James 5:16). Before we are Christians, and as a part of the process of becoming a Christian, God requires us to confess, not our sins, but our faith in Christ.

We see an example of this in Acts 8:37 with the Ethiopian eunuch. After hearing Jesus preached unto him (vs. 35) and then passing by water, he desired to be baptized (vs. 36). Philip then told him he must believe with all his heart. The eunuch then said, ***“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God”*** (vs. 37). Upon making

means “to immerse” or “overwhelm,” and the Bible shows baptism to be a burial (Colossians 2:12; Romans 6:3-5). I could take the time to quote many Lexicographers here, but I don't believe it is necessary. The word never means to “sprinkle” or “pour.” It always means to dip, plunge, immerse, overwhelm, bury, or submerge. Notice again, Paul said, ***“buried with Him in baptism...”*** (Colossians 2:12). To sprinkle a little water on someone's head will not meet the needs of Bible baptism.

The Bible does use a Greek word for “sprinkle” but not in reference to baptism. Notice Hebrews 9:19, ***“For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people.”*** Did you notice the word “sprinkled” in this verse? The Greek for this word is *rhantizo*, and it is defined “to sprinkle.” It is found three other places in the New Testament --- Hebrews 9:13, Hebrews 9:21, and Hebrews 10:22. In none of these passages does it refer to the baptism which washes away sins.

The New Testament writers certainly had access to this word *rhantizo*, yet they never used it in reference to the baptism which saves. Instead, they always chose to use the word *baptizo*, which means “to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge.” Obviously, God meant to say that in order for one to be saved he must be “immersed” not *rhantizo* (sprinkled). It is a misuse of Scripture for

make it. Therefore, he must have had water baptism in mind.

It would be hard to get around water baptism in Acts 8 with the Ethiopian eunuch. Let's go back there once again and make some observations. We see that Philip "***preached Jesus to him***" (vs. 35). While he was preaching Jesus to him, they came upon "***some water***" (vs. 36). Seeing the water, the eunuch exclaimed, "***See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?***" (vs. 36). From this statement, we can clearly see that after hearing "Jesus" preached, the eunuch made a definite connection between "water" and baptism. When he saw the water, he wanted to be baptized. A little later, we see both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him (vs. 38). This demonstrates a clear connection between water and baptism. It was water baptism the eunuch received! Later, we see that the eunuch "***went on his way rejoicing.***" Why was he rejoicing? He was now saved. His sins were remitted. He had gotten rid of the thing (sin) which separated him from God. He did so, the text tells us, by getting baptized in water! The only possible conclusion is that water baptism is the only kind of baptism which saves.

Others admit water baptism saves, yet they try to re-define the meaning of the word "baptism" itself. They tell us it is alright to "sprinkle" or "pour" some water on one's head, instead of complete immersion. We have already pointed the Greek word for "baptism"

this confession, Philip then took him into the water and baptized him into Christ (Gal. 3:26, 27).

Without a doubt, confession is an essential part of *God's plan of salvation*.

5) ***BE BAPTIZED***

The Bible is also extremely clear about the necessity of baptism for salvation. To baptize, according to Thayer, means "to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge." The English word "baptize" is just an anglicized word which comes from the Greek word *baptizo* and means to immerse or to completely cover. A more accurate translation would be "immerse." In fact, wherever the word "baptize" is found in the Bible, it is translated "immerse," "immersion," or "immerser" by some translations (e.g. HNV).

Now that we understand exactly what baptism is, let's go to God's word to show how it saves us. First of all, we must understand what "sin" does. Isaiah 59:1,2 says, "***Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.***" Sin separates us from God, putting us in a lost state. The natural conclusion from this fact is that if we want to be reconciled to God (saved), we must get rid of the thing which separates us from God -- Sin.

- They must be remitted...
- They must be eradicated...
- They must be taken out of the way...!

But, how? How do we get rid of our sins? God's word tells us how. Look at Acts 2:37,38, "***Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins....'***"

These men were guilty of killing the Son of God (vs. 36), and they now realized this sin separated them from God. They now wanted to know how they could get rid of their sins. So, they asked Peter and the apostles, "What shall we do?" Peter told them to be baptized for the remission of their sins.

This is exactly what Saul (Paul) of Tarsus was told to do. In Acts 22:16, the preacher Ananias said to him, "***And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.***" People talk a lot about "***calling on the name of the Lord.***" This verse tells how it is done - by arising, being baptized, and washing away your sins!

If we are separated from God and then get rid of the thing (sin) which separates us from God, we are

saved. Therefore, whatever got rid of the thing (sin) which separated us from God saved us. Since these passages tell us baptism remits or washes away the thing which separates from God (sin), the only conclusion we can come to is baptism saves. This is why Jesus said in Mark 16:16, "***He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.***" This is why Peter said in 1 Peter 3:21, "***There is also an antitype which now saves us---baptism...***"

Some will admit baptism saves, yet re-define the KIND of baptism spoken of in these passages. For example, they tell us the "baptism" in 1 Peter 3:21 isn't referring to water baptism; rather, it refers to complete immersion of oneself into Christ (or something else). However, in the entire context of 1 Peter 3:18-22, Peter is talking about water! He shows how Noah and seven others "***were saved through water.***" He then says in verse 21, "***There is also an antitype which also saves us---baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God)...***" Notice, Peter used a parenthetical statement. He used this statement in order to prevent a misunderstanding. He thought that while talking about water baptism some might get the notion that it was just the idea of taking a bath in water to remove outward dirt that saved. But Peter wanted them to understand water baptism as *typifying* Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (see Romans 6:3-5). Now, if Peter wasn't talking about water baptism, it would not have been necessary for him to make this parenthetical statement at all. Yet, he did