

God's Plan of Salvation

The Bible is not just a book written by some 40 different men, but it is the only book that contains the words of our Creator (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Without this book we would not know about our origins, that we have been created in the image of God, that sin has separated us from Him or that we need Jesus Christ (Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 59:1-2; Acts 4:12). *"By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"* (Romans 5:12). Because it is the case that *"all have sinned"* (Romans 3:23), which in turn created a chasm between us and God (Isaiah 59:1-2), the consequences of our choosing sin over righteousness are that we are *"....aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having NO HOPE...."* (Ephesians 2:12). That is of course, as long as we remain 'outside' of Christ!

The word 'religion' refers to *"God's system, His plan or design for binding sinful man back to Himself."* Anything other than Christianity can not and does not fall into that definition of religion. As the Bible unfolds there was no need for religion, because there was no need for binding man back to his Creator. However, just barely three chapters into Genesis we are introduced to bad choices that were made by Eve and then Adam; choices which God calls, *"sin."* The resulting punishment was banishment from the Garden, separation from God, physical death. A consequence that all of humanity has faced since that day. The need for a divine system to recall man back to God was then introduced – enter religion. The entire purpose for the book of Genesis is to reveal to mankind in every generation that they need religion, that they need God's divine system of recall.

God planned His religion before the foundation of the world, and purposed a plan that included Christ Jesus to carry it out (Genesis 3:15; 49:10). This plan was consummated in Christ Jesus, His church, the kingdom of God and body of Christ. It is the case that the church or kingdom of God was in the plan, because Christ came to seek and save

the lost, and the church of Christ is the only religious body of the saved (Acts 2:47; 2 Timothy 2:10). Without the church of Christ, there is no place to add the saved, which was Christ's intent when He said He would build His church (Matthew 16:18). There were no interruptions, no postponements; everything was on schedule, just as God pre-planned it in eternity (Ephesians 1:4-10). God promised Abraham that it would be through him, through his genealogy that all families of the earth would be blessed [receive forgiveness of sins – Acts 3:26] (Genesis 12:1-3; 22:17-18; 26:4). Paul explains that it is through Christ that Abraham became the father of many nations, not Israel; *"if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed"* (Galatians 3:29).

Moral law is recognized by most all men whose consciences know the difference between right and wrong (Romans 2:14-15). Therefore, not one person who ever lived on earth will be afforded an excuse for not knowing what is right and then seeking God's will (Romans 1:20; 2:1). Anyone who can read, can know and understand God's will as revealed to us in the Scriptures (Ephesians 3:3-5). We can know that there is truth and that it is absolute (John 8:32). Because truth is absolute there can only be one correct answer to spiritual things, and one correct way to be saved.

Fulfillment of God's scheme of Redemption came about at the establishment of a *"New Covenant"* (Hebrews 8:6-13). This new covenant also referred to as the New Testament or gospel of Christ offers peace to all who obey. Bible peace, is forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, salvation, fellowship (Acts 3:26; Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 2:14-15). The New Covenant teaches that all men and women must put their trust in Jesus that He will provide them salvation. However, we will only benefit from the salvation Christ provides us when we obey the terms of the New Covenant. In other words, even though Jesus *"finished"* or *"completed"* the work of God at Calvary (His eternal plan to redeem mankind), it is now up to man to respond to the work that was done through faithful obedience.

The New Covenant terms of reconciliation have been provided by the gospel of Christ – the Word of God (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). Heaven can only be gained by the work of Christ, plus our faith in His shed blood, followed by an active obedient faith (Hebrews 10:18-19). There is no argument that faith is required (Hebrews 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-10; et al). But faith alone cannot, nor does it save one soul! As a work designed by God, faith must motivate a person to obey God in repentance (Acts 20:21; Luke 24:46); in confession of the deity and lordship of Jesus Christ (Matthew 10:32-33; Philippians 2:9-11); and in the final step of being baptized in order to receive the forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21).

God's design for redemption included all things together, in order for all obedient souls to be added to the saved of all generations (the church of Christ – Acts 2:47). Only when we are "In Christ" (added to His church in baptism) can one expect to obtain true salvation (2 Timothy 2:10; Galatians 3:27; 1 Corinthians 12:13). The conditions of pardon are clear and totally dependent upon your willingness and open heartedness in accepting the truth of God's plan. Won't you study to be approved unto God (2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11), making absolutely sure you are in the faith (2 Corinthians 3:5) and not deluded by error (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12)?

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**Gods Design
for Redemption**



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