

**Is Your Church Helping  
You Go to Heaven?**

# Salvation

Hundreds of denominations exist today. Most claim that their purpose is to help people get to heaven. Are there really so many roads to heaven? Jesus said:

*"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."*

This quote from Matthew 7:13-14 suggests that the way to heaven is difficult to find and that there is only one road. Are you being led down the right path or the wrong path?

One road sign on the right road is the truth about how to become a Christian. No matter what men say or any denomination teaches about this issue, we should seek to enter into God's kingdom the way the Bible tells us to.

(1) Acts 2:37-38 → When Peter's audience asked what to do to be saved, Peter said:

*"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

(2) Acts 22:16 → When Saul (the apostle Paul) saw Jesus and believed, he was told to go to Damascus where Ananias said:

*"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord"*

(3) In Acts 8:35-38 the man from Ethiopia became a Christian. Here is what happened:

*"Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized? Then Philip said, If you believe with all your heart, you may. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him."*

If someone is telling you that the process of being saved is different from the Biblical examples (and all the examples in Acts are like the ones above), you should investigate. Your salvation is too important to settle for less than certainty.

Many people are misled by their feelings. Salvation is certainly something to become emotional about, but feeling good about something we believe has happened to us does not insure that what we experienced was true salvation. We all remember Waco Texas, we remember Jimmy Jones, and we remember the mass suicides in California. These people felt strongly about what they were doing, but they were misled.

# Worship

One common misconception about worship is that God accepts any worship that is offered Him. This is not true. In Isaiah 1:12-15 the prophet had this to say:

*"When you come to appear before Me, Who has required this from your hand, To trample My courts? Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood."*

As above, God does not want our worship when we are doing evil, but sometimes He rejects our worship because we are not worshipping Him the way He has asked. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, the high priest, are good examples. Numbers 26:61 "And Nadab and Abihu died when they offered profane fire before the LORD." Consider also the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4:1-15.

It is commonly accepted that there are five acts of worship in the church: singing, communion, contribution, prayer, and preaching. Today, some require tithes (10%), but they have no New Testament authority; they accept women preachers, but Paul told us that women should not teach men (1Timothy 2:12); they have communion once every three months or even less often, but the early church observed it more frequently, probably weekly.

Some folks sing songs with little scriptural content. Others read prayers written in prayer books or say memorized prayers. Many churches today offer entertainment and not worship. Congregations the apostles established did not practice these things and today the true church of Jesus Christ worships as did the church Jesus built or it is not the true church.

Most of us would like to think that if we expend all the time, effort and expense of worshipping God, our labors would be acceptable and pleasing to God and that we will one day stand before the Lord and hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Perhaps, however, it is time to heed John's warning in 1John 4:1 where he says:

*"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."*

# Moral Behavior

The Bible teaches us that there is, and always has been, a single moral standard of right and wrong. This standard does not change because it is based upon the character of God who is the same today as He always was and ever will be. Lying, for instance, is wrong now and always will be, no matter what the circumstances are. Some religious groups allow a sliding scale of right and wrong which follows the “politically correct” opinion of society. If homosexual activity and if drunkenness were moral issues when the New Testament was written they should be moral issues today. If it is wrong to eat meat on Friday, it should always have been wrong, and if priests cannot marry today it should have been so in the time of the apostles (See 1Timothy 4:1-4)

About morality the Bible says:

*"Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience "*  
*(Colossians 3:5-6)*

We cannot afford to be deceived. Even if the religious group we support teaches us false doctrine, we are still responsible for living the truth. For the sake of spiritual safety, we all had better be sure that what we believe and practice is true and pleasing to God. Surely, we all want our Lord to be pleased with what we lovingly offer to Him.

In Matthew 7:21 Jesus said:

*"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."*