

Bible Trek Ministries

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A SEMI-SIMPLE EXPLANATION OF SALVATION!

By Scott Barkley

First, understand this: Salvation according to the Bible, is a simple process. Jesus said unless we come like little children we cannot enter heaven.

Matthew 18:3

And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

Then he made the process simple enough for a child to do it. Our problem with salvation as it is given in the bible is two fold:

1. First, virtually nothing in our life experience comes as a free gift. We must work for a paycheck, to buy food, to have clothes etc. and therefore something as eternally important as our salvation **MUST** be at least that difficult to obtain.
2. Second, our adversary Satan, knows exactly how simple God made it and so he wants desperately to complicate it because with complication comes non-understanding and non-understanding will keep many from God.

This is being written so that you will know **EXACTLY** what the Bible says. Not what I say, not what your Priest or Pastor may say, but what God says in the Bible. What I say and 25 cents won't buy a cup of coffee. What God says will get you eternal life. This is a much more in depth explanation than the bible itself gives regarding salvation, but my

purpose is to connect the dots, to make the whole process make sense and more important – put in one place all the information needed to know ABSOLUTELY that you can be saved, and have the information afterwards when the devil (using ordinary people) will come against you to try and shake this experience from you. Therefore, I urge you to pay MORE ATTENTION to the scriptures, than my puny words. The scriptures are the words of God.

GOD IS IN THE RELATIONSHIP BUSINESS NOT THE RELIGION BUSINESS.

We are going to look at the three most important things to know regarding our RELATIONSHIP with God. **God is in the RELATIONSHIP business not the RELIGION business.** God is a God of his word, he is utterly fair, totally merciful and he is seeking to have a "LOVE RELATIONSHIP" with each one of us. God also is willing to will make a contract/covenant with us and he will not break it. **The question is: will we enter into this covenant with God?** The three things to know are these:

1.
 1. How do I enter into this relationship with God?
 1. What do I have to do to maintain this relationship?
 2. Can I lose this relationship once I have it?

Introduction:

One of the greatest questions asked is...

Why did Jesus have to die? The Bible says:

Romans 6:23

*For the **wages of sin is death**, but the **gift** of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 5:18-21

*Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was **justification** that brings life for all men. [19] For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also*

through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

[20] The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, [21] so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Justification- English translation would be "Just as if I'd never sinned" or to make right that which was not right. Here are a couple of verses to look at:

Acts 13:39

*Through him everyone who believes is **justified** from everything you could not be **justified** from by the law of Moses.*

Romans 3:24

*and are **justified** freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

Romans 3:28

*For we maintain that a man is **justified** by faith apart from observing the law.*

Romans 4:2

If**, in fact, Abraham was **justified** by works, he had something to boast about--**but not before God.

Romans 5:1

*Therefore, since we have been **justified** through faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Romans 5:9

*Since we have now been **justified** by his blood, how much more shall **we be saved** from God's wrath through him!*

Romans 8:30

*And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also **justified**; those he **justified**, he also glorified.*

Romans 10:10

*For it is with your heart that you believe and are **justified**, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

1 Cor. 6:11

*And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

Galatians 2:16-17

*know that a man **is not justified** by **observing the law, but by faith** in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be **justified** by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, **because by observing the law no one will be justified.***

*[17] "If, while we seek to be **justified** in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not!*

Galatians 3:11

*Clearly no one is **justified** before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith."*

Galatians 3:24

*So the law was put in charge to **lead us to Christ** that we might be **justified** by faith. {When you realize you are a sinner it leads you to needing a Savior}*

Galatians 5:4

*You who are trying to be **justified** by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.*

Titus 3:7

*so that, having been **justified** by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

Get the Picture???? "Just as if I'd never sinned"

Since Adam, the **penalty for sin was death**. When Adam and Eve sinned they tried to cover themselves up with leaves. But God said that would not do and he killed an innocent animal to cover them with the animals skin (Gen.3:21). *This picture is very important*. The penalty for Adam and Eve's sin was immediately paid by an innocent, SUBSTITUTE sacrifice (this is portrayed over and over again in the bible : Passover in Egypt, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, all the sacrifices of the Jewish law, culminating in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross). Later, the Jews could cover up their sin temporarily as individuals and as a nation with the sacrifices - an innocent, SUBSTITUTE sacrifice in the form of a lamb or bull ...until they sinned again. The only way to appease God's law was that the penalty for sin would have to be paid. If God was to reverse his position (that the penalty for sin is death), he would have to reverse the position for Satan (which gives you a big clue why Satan wanted Adam and Eve to sin). If God had reversed his position he would be a liar and then we could not trust him for anything (including our salvation). So the reality is that, because God said he must exact this much of a price for sin, it is actually our guarantee that our salvation is true! God will not reverse it either!

Regardless of what you feel about God you must admit that he is absolutely fair, just and merciful.

- Fair: because all humans (and angels) are allowed freedom of choice
- Just: because God cannot condone sin (even though he loves the sinner) therefore he must exact the penalty based on his law.
- Merciful: because although he made the rule, he also paid the penalty

The sinless "Lamb of God" Jesus, becomes sin for us, becoming the substitute for our sins. God will pour out his wrath for our sins on his "*son, his only son whom he loved*" for the sins we commit. This is the perfect example of fairness, and mercy. God who cannot condone sin because he is righteous must exact the penalty for sin. He is the judge and yet, he also pays the penalty for the crime.

At Jesus' crucifixion, God the father turns his back on Jesus. Why??

*Deu 21:22 if a man guilty of a capital offense is put to death and **his body is hung on a tree,***

*Deu 21:23 **you must not leave his body on the tree overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day, because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse.***

Q. Was Jesus guilty of a capital offense? NO!

This is why he had to be killed by crucifixion- since he was sinless and had committed no offense he had to be "hung on a tree" to come under the Old Testament law so that he would be under God's curse! If he was a sinner, he would have had to die for his own sins. But if he was not personally guilty of sin, he could be our substitute sacrifice and he could bear our sins and go under God's curse. Satan unwittingly killed an innocent man (had it been us he would have had every right to kill us because we are sinners and the penalty for sin under Gods law is death.) But because Satan had Jesus killed, he himself lost the keys to earth's kingdom at this exact moment of Jesus death. Adam unwittingly

gave the dominion of the earth to Satan when he bowed to his rule in the garden. Adam was guilty and therefore Satan had the right to rule over him. **As long as we have sin, Satan has power over us.** However, because Jesus had no sin, Satan had no right to rule over him and see to it that he is killed (using the World/Roman system). Now, God says that anyone who believes that the penalty is paid through the substitute sacrifice of Jesus will be imputed the righteousness of Jesus and therefore be declared **justified** or **just as if I'd never sinned.** *(The Mosaic Law required that you transfer your sins to an innocent animal as a substitute for your sins. Lev. 1:4).* This literally means that you choose, of your own will, to remove yourself from Satan's Kingdom (which you were born into and later chose to sin and therefore put yourself under his rule) and accept God's substitute sacrifice. This is why we call Jesus - Lord. Where Satan was formerly our Lord, Jesus is now the new Lord of our lives. By the way, Is Jesus really the Messiah, the savior of the world or just another prophet?

According to the Laws of Probability: For any man to fulfill all of the prophecies concerning Jesus the Messiah by chance are a staggering Twenty Trillion to One!! In other words, it is impossible unless a sovereign God was controlling all of the events!

Using only the 17 very clear prophecies (also documentable from other sources than the Bible) that the Messiah Jesus would be born in Bethlehem, betrayed for the price of a slave etc., the odds of these coming true by random chance are: 1 chance in 480 billion X 1 billion X 1 trillion

The resurrection is God's proof that he accepted Jesus death as the payment of our sins!

Since Jesus personally carried our sins to hell, if God had not accepted the death of Jesus as "payment in full" he would have had to leave Jesus in hell. But because "IT IS FINISHED", the resurrection and subsequent return of Jesus to the right hand of the father proves that

God has accepted this substitutionary sacrifice as "payment in full" for our sins.

2 Cor. 5:21

*God made him who had no sin to **be sin** for us, so that in him **we might become the righteousness of God.***

Q. Up to the death and resurrection of Jesus who has the authority over this world?

A. Satan

But the barrier (sin) between God and Man is no longer in place due to Jesus payment of our sin. Since the authority Satan has over us is our sin (both our genealogical condition; born in a condition of sin as well as our choice to sin), this sin is now done away with (which is why the New Testament constantly refers to us as Justified or Just As If I'd Never Sinned) and Satan no longer is the rightful ruling power.

Now Jesus has it.

Matthew 28:18

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

If all authority is now Jesus, why does he not stop this whole process now?

When God set into motion this whole time period called MAN, he saw the end from the beginning. He saw every person who would live on the earth and he saw whether they would reject him or receive him by their own choice. To stop the process prior to everyone having an equal chance to accept him (by choice) would be to condemn every person from the time Jesus intervened in this world until the last one who would have accepted him to hell! Jesus is too merciful to do this.

2 Peter 3:9

*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.***

Instead God sends his son, pays the price for our sins, offers it to us as a free gift and calls us adopted sons when we accept this free gift!

Galatians 4:4-5 NIV translation

*But when the time **had** fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might **receive the full rights of sons.***

Galatians 4:4-5 KJV translation

*But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, [5] To redeem them that were under the law, **that we might receive the adoption of sons.***

ADOPTION! Under Jewish Law, if a man adopted a son he was making a covenant to protect him, guide him, nurture him etc.. **Because adoption was a " free will choice", you could disown your own natural son but never an adopted son.** This is why the New Testament uses this word over and over again. The first Christians were converted Jews who understood what this term meant. This is why they were willing to be sent to the coliseum and be torn apart by lions knowing that they **COULD NEVER LOSE THEIR ADOPTED INHERITANCE! NEITHER CAN WE!**

How do I enter into this relationship with God

Christianity is the **ONLY** religious system in the world where God comes to man. All other systems require you to:

1. Go to God
1. Be enlightened to become like God
2. Die and return eternally over and over again until you achieve godhood etc.

Jesus on the other hand **comes to us** to redeem us from the "Prince of this world" - Satan.

Jesus speaking:

John 12:31

*Now is the time for judgment on this world;
now the **prince of this world** will be driven out.*

John 14:30

*I will not speak with you much longer, for the **prince of this world** is coming. He has no hold on me,*

John 16:11

*and in regard to judgment, because the **prince of this world** now stands condemned.*

(Redemption in the Greek...like redeeming a slave from the slave market, a price had to be paid, released to a new way of life,) We enter into a relationship with Christ by accepting this gift.

The word gospel means "good news"

The "bad news" is:

Romans 3:23

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

The "good news" is:

Rom 5:8 but God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

The "bad news" is:

Rom 6:23 for the wages of sin is death, ...

The "good news" is:

...but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Rom 8:1 therefore, there is now **no condemnation** for those **who are in Christ Jesus,***

Note: according to this verse, if you are "in Christ Jesus" (another way to say saved), you cannot be condemned to hell! How do we become "in Christ Jesus"? Glad you asked!

Here it is-the way to be saved so simple that a child can understand and do it!

*Rom 10:9 that if you **confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart** that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved.***

*Rom 10:10 for it is with your heart that you believe and are **justified**, and it is with your mouth that you **confess and are saved.***

According to the Bible (Romans 10: 9-10), the only way to escape eternal condemnation and be "saved" (*in Christ Jesus*) and Justified or "Just as if I'd never sinned" is to:

1. believe in your heart (Jesus is Lord)
1. confess with your mouth (Jesus is Lord)

(Note: we confess with our mouth because the demons who were our former lords, cannot read our minds. By proclaiming our new relationship with Jesus our Lord, we put them on notice that we are no longer theirs and they are to leave us alone)

This verse makes it very clear that our **ONLY** action to enter into this contract or covenant relationship is these two things. One thing to notice is that it does not say "You **Might** be saved". **NO!** It says you **WILL** be saved! Notice also there is no **IF** in this contract (If you do this- get baptized, speak in another language, do some ritual, than God

will save you) - **it is not conditional**, therefore it is unconditional, and eternal.

Jesus action, dying on the cross, pouring out his blood to show us that he is the guarantor of the covenant shows us that we have no part from a "doing" perspective other than accepting this gift. Just to make sure however let's look at this verse.

*Eph 1:13 and you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the **gospel** of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a **seal, the promised Holy Spirit,***

*Eph 1:14 who is **the guarantee of our inheritance** until the redemption of the **purchased possession**, to the praise of **his glory.***

God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one, therefore they guarantee our inheritance of salvation...NOT US!

(The picture here is to be sealed - like a wax seal used in shipping during the time of the Bible, it signified ownership... this bag is not to be tampered with until it reach's its final destination).

VERY, VERY, VERY IMPORTANT: According to the Bible, our salvation is based on what Jesus did - not on what we have done!

*Eph 2:8 for it is by **grace** you have been saved, **through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--***

*Eph 2:9 **not by works**, so that no one can boast.*

This is one of the most important verse's in the Bible. By grace, by faith, gift of God, *not by works!* *It is hard for me to understand how church's can twist this doctrine into something it clearly states it cannot be. Salvation is by grace and cannot be earned!*

Grace means:

G Gods

R Rich's

A At

C Christ's

E Expense

...it is a undeserved present, a free gift.

Through faith = ***believing is action!***

Illustration: *A tightrope walker set up his line across Niagara Falls and then walked across it. When he returned across the wire, he had gathered a large crowd. He asked them "Can I do it again?" "Yes" they exclaimed. He then placed a large wheelbarrow on the wire. "Do you think I can walk across Niagara falls with this wheelbarrow?" "You can do it " yelled the crowd. "Hop in!" Faith is getting in the wheelbarrow. Many people say they believe in Jesus but they don't hop on. In James 2:19 the Bible declares that even the demons believe (the difference is that while they believe in Jesus, he is not their Lord) so believing in Jesus (that he existed, that he is God) does not qualify as Faith. Faith is turning the ownership and day to day management of your life over to Jesus. Accepting new management in your life and conforming to his will for your life.*

James 2:19

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder.

There are many places in the Bible where disagreement is not only possible but **inevitable**. However, when it comes to Salvation; **Jesus either did it all or.... if he didn't** - then we must know (from the Bible) what (if anything) we must do or add to what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

VERY IMPORTANT! There is only one entity in the world who wants to make what Jesus did on the cross **LESS** than what it was; our adversary - Satan. Therefore, **ANYTHING** that makes his agonizing death on the cross anything less **than the total payment for our sins** must be looked at very seriously. We cannot blindly accept what

well meaning church leaders might be saying. Satan can wiggle the lips on even an Apostle (Peter in Matthew 16:22-23) so you can be sure that he can wiggle the lips of Pastors and Priests of all denominations. This is why we can only trust the Bible as our source of truth – all other sources are subject to corruption by Satan. If the Bible says we are saved by grace and our denomination/church says we are saved by doing good works...one of these must be wrong since these are incompatible positions! Each one is opposed to the other. Either God saves us or we save ourselves (having looked at the sin in my life already I have come to the conclusion that there is no way I can save myself). This position is backed up by the Bible.

Q. But what about doing good stuff?

First understand that the best you can ever do falls totally short of God's standard. Here is what God says about our good deeds:

Isaiah 64:5-6

*... **How then can we be saved?** [6] All of us have become like one who is unclean, and **all our righteous acts** are like **filthy rags**; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind **our sins** sweep us away.*

The words translated here as filthy rags, in the original Hebrew the words are literally **Filthy Used Menstrual Rags**. If this is our good deeds truly "**How then can we be saved?** Can you imagine what our bad deeds must be. This is why God throws them away when we become saved:

Psalm 103:12

as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Psalm 130:3

If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

This points us once again to the fact that we cannot be saved based on what we do...only what Jesus already did. The best you will ever do is a used menstrual rag according to God.

Paul writes of our new life this way (remember Paul the Apostle was the Religious of the Religious. He would kill you if you didn't believe his way prior to his encounter with Jesus. It is estimated that Paul had killed over 5,000 people in the name of religion).

Eph 4:1 (therefore) as a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Therefore walk daily consistent with the blessings we have been given. Note: ***I urge you***, it does not say ***"you must"***.

Romans 6:15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

The balance of the law:

Gal 5:13 you, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

Gal 5:14 the entire law is summed up in a single command: "love your neighbor as yourself."

If you *"love your neighbor as yourself."* You will not steal his car, covet his wife or lie to others about him.

*Rom 8:8 those **controlled** by the sinful nature cannot please God.*

*Rom 8:9 you, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. **And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.***

The issue is not the sin...it is the control! Remember Adam & Eve....the issue was not the act of eating the fruit it was....obeying Satan and therefore giving control to Satan.

You may act at times like you are controlled by sinful nature but if you have given your heart to Christ you are really controlled by the Holy Spirit. God is then in the "process of changing you".

....and if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. Why? There are millions of people in church every Sunday who look like Christians but have never accepted Jesus as their Savior and Lord! They are not led by the Spirit! They have never made **a conscious choice** to accept God's free gift.

1 Cor. 6:9-11

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders [10] nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

{The above should just about cover everyone!}

[11] And that is what some of you were.
*But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

*Doing Good stuff is great but it is the result of the changed life. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH OUR SALVATION. We are accepted based on our **POSITION** not our **PERFORMANCE!***

Ok, we have a relationship (not a religion) with God because our sins are forgiven, the debt is paid and doing "good stuff" is a result of God through the Holy Spirit working through us. This then becomes the big question....

CAN I LOSE THIS RELATIONSHIP?

Once again we must look only to the Bible, not man's opinion.

Question: Why would God save us and then take our salvation away?

Question: If Salvation is the SOLUTION for sin, how can we say then that our (or a) sin will cause our salvation to be taken away?

Question: If there is an unpardonable sin (other than rejection of Jesus) than Jesus did not die for ALL sin. Salvation then is available ONLY to a select group since there are those who will not qualify for this salvation. This would mean that John 3:16-18, the most famous verse in the bible (and a host of other verses) is not valid.

John 3:16-18

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that **whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.***

*[17] For God did not send his Son into the world to **condemn the world**, but to **save the world through him.** [18] Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.*

Question: Why would God (who knows the beginning and the end) not take us immediately to heaven if he saw that later in our life we will reject him or sin to the point of being tossed out? After all...

2 Peter 3:9

*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish**, but everyone to come to repentance.*

In light of Ephesians 2:8-9 already reviewed...

*[...For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is **the gift of God--** not by works, so that no one can boast.]*

...this next verse is one of my favorites:

Romans 11:29

*for God's **gifts** and his call are irrevocable.*

According to the Bible our salvation is a **gift of God**. Romans 11:29 says that God's gifts are **irrevocable**! If your driving license is taken away it is REVOKED! God says his gift of salvation is irrevocable or can never be taken away!

Paul, arguably the greatest of the Apostles says the following:

Romans 7:14-20

*We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as **a slave to sin**. [15] I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. [16] And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. [17] As it is, **it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me**. [18] I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. **For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out**. [19] For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing. [20] Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, **but it is sin living in me that does it**.*

Now, if Paul says he can't stop sinning and he is a **slave to sin**, how can I ever hope to stop **sinning**. And if I can't stop sinning, EXACTLY which sin is it that will get me thrown out? If there is one sin that will cause me to lose my salvation, it only makes sense that a fair God would tell us what it is...but he doesn't.

In reality, our performance **as Christians** (when it is good), is the work of the Holy Spirit working in and through us - not us. When our performance is not good - "*it is sin living in me that does it*" (vs. 17). Our position in Christ has not changed. Paul, the greatest of the Apostles and author of most of the New Testament and the **slave to sin**, most certainly was not thrown out of God's Kingdom even though he could not stop sinning. Later he writes:

Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, [39] neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Since **NOTHING** can *separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord*. The only way we can be separatedis to **never have been joined**.

John addressed this issue of those who appeared to be Christians but later fell away from the faith:

1 John 2:19-20

They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.

Jesus tells us that at the Judgement Seat of Christ many "religious people" will come to him and plead for their salvation.

Matthew 7:21-23

*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only **he who does the will of my Father** who is in heaven. [22] Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' [23] Then I will tell them plainly, '**I never knew you**. Away from me, you evildoers!'*

This passage is about "*Religious People*", , *People who were in church every Sunday* who in their mind were doing their religious duty. However, while they looked "religious", they never had a "personal relationship" with Jesus Christ. But is this what God wants? What is the "*will of the Father*"?

*John 6:40 "For this is **the will of my Father**, That everyone who **beholds the Son** and **believes in him** may have eternal life: and I myself will raise him up on the last day." NAS*

The one thing you do not want to be is a "religious person". Why? God is in the Relationship business NOT the religion business!

So what do I have to do to maintain this relationship?

NOTHING

But...when we truly understand what God did for us, we will be motivated (by our growing love due to an increased understanding of God) to allow God to accomplish the things he wants to do in our lives.

WE ARE A WORK IN PROCESS (see the book of Ephesians).

There is only one way we can be placed out of God's salvation. That is to **reject** God's provision for our sin - The Death of Jesus Christ. **Our performance** (compared to God's standard) will always be inferior, poor and full of sin. ***But our Position will not change.*** We are either out or in. Once in, never out because Jesus himself said...

John 10:28-29

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. [29] My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

The Apostle John says it this way:

1 John 5:11-12

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who

has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

The question then isCan I lose this relationship with the "Son" once I have it. The answer is NO!

Quick review: To get saved (Born again is another way to say it) takes 30 seconds! It requires only this:

1.
 1. Recognize you are a sinner (this is pretty easy for most of us) You don't need a Savior until you know you are a sinner.
 2. Believe that Jesus died for your sins as your substitute (the penalty for your sin has been paid)
 3. Believe that God raised Jesus from the dead (your guarantee that the debt is paid)
 4. Confess this with your mouth (puts the demons on notice that you are now Gods).

A simple prayer like this(one time and truly meant) is sufficient:
God, I recognize I am a sinner. I also recognize that you made a way for the barrier between us to be done away with. Jesus Christ did this by dying for my sins, as my substitute and in my place. I recognize that this is a gift from you and is not something I can earn and I accept this gift with my whole heart. From this point on, I ask you to be the Lord of my life and guide me in your ways. Lead me to a church where I can learn more of you and take the gifts you have already given me and use them to help others. I confess this today. (and when you have prayed this prayer – go and tell someone verbally)

VERY IMPORTANT! A non decision is still a decision. It is a decision to stay EXACTLY where you are presently at; A sinner, separated from God. If you die in this condition, you will get your wish, which is to be separated from God...eternally!

VERY IMPORTANT! A decision is just that-a decision. You cannot become saved because of some action your parents did for you (like getting sprinkled as a baby etc.) because that decision was not done by you, it was done by your parents. Only you can make this decision.

VERY IMPORTANT! If you cannot remember the day when you consciously accepted God's free gift, don't take it for granted that it is a done deal. 30 seconds is all it takes and the bible is specific that only YOU can do it, you must BELIEVE and you must CONFESS it. Most

people miss salvation by 18 inches – the distance from their head to their heart!

Many times people will ask me "Which denomination should I belong to"?

The answer is none of them. Be a Christian first and then go to the Church (whatever denomination it is) in your area that:

- Preaches that Jesus is the only way to be saved-doing the sacraments, getting baptized, speaking in another language ARE NOT CONDITIONS OF SALVATION!
- Teaches the bible (including what you have just read) literally.
- Has the atmosphere and style of worship that permits you to learn to worship God with the freedom to know him more and more each day. For some people, this is more regimented and for others it entails more freedom in the style of worship. NEITHER IS WRONG IF YOU ARE TRULY WORSHIPPING FROM THE HEART!
- Allows you to grow and have a personal area of ministry that God has already planned for you.

If you are a great singer, go to a church where your singing gifts will be used. If you are a good teacher, go to a church that needs a great teacher. If you are great with children go to a place that needs a great children's mentor.

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