

# What Saves Man? What Do the Scriptures Say?

"For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little" (Isaiah 28:10, 13).

"For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). "For what does the Scripture say?" (Romans 4:3).

Scripture tells us what saves: *some on God's part; some on man's part*—much more than many people appear to realize.

## God's Part

### God

2 Timothy 1:8-9 "according to the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace ..."

### Grace

Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast." See also vv. 4-7.

### Mercy

Titus 3:4 "But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

### Love of God – John 3:16

### Jesus Christ (Son of man)

Luke 19:10 "for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." // 1 Timothy 1:15 "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." See also Matthew 1:21; 18:11.

### In His name and by the Spirit of God

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation\* in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." See also 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 John 5:13.

### Through Him [Christ]

John 3:17 "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." // John 10:9 "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." // Romans 5:9 "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."

### Through the grace of Jesus Christ

Acts 15:11 "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they."

### By the blood of Jesus

Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified\* by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." // 1 John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." // Hebrews 9:22 "without shedding of blood there is no remission." // Ephesians 1:7

### Through the death of His Son

Romans 5:10a "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled\* to God through the death of His Son, ..."

### By His (Jesus Christ's) life/resurrection

Romans 5:10b "much more, having been reconciled\*, we shall

be saved by His life." // 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 (See v. 17, especially.)

## Gospel

Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation\* for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." // 1 Corinthians 15:1 "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain."

### Truth

John 17:17 "Sanctify\* them by Your truth. Your word is truth." // 2 Thessalonians 2:10b "because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved." // vv. 11-12.

### Teaching of Jesus

John 5:34 "Yet I [Jesus, lgb] do not receive testimony from man, but I [Jesus] say these things that you may be saved."

### Word (of God)/Scripture

James 1:21 "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." // Acts 11:13 "Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, 14 'who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.'" // 2 Timothy 3:16-17

### Foolishness of preaching

1 Corinthians 1:21 "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached [‘foolishness of preaching,’ KJV, lgb] to save those who believe."

### Renewing of the Holy Spirit

Titus 3:5 "He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit..." // John 3:5

### Influence of others

1 Corinthians 9:22 "to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some." // 1 Corinthians 10:33 "just as I also please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved." // James 5:20 "let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins."

## Man's Part

Acts 2:40 "And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, 'Be saved from [‘save yourselves from,’ KJV, lgb] this perverse generation.'" // Phil 2:12 "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure."

### Hearing the Gospel

1 Corinthians 15:1 "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold

\*See definitions in the legend at the end.

fast that word which I preached to you – unless you believed in vain.” // Romans 10:17 “So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” [But must obey, Hebrews 5:9.]

### Love of the truth

2 Thessalonians 2:9 “The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”

### Faith/Believing

Mark 16:16 “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” // Acts 16:30 “And he brought them out and said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ 31 So they said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.’” // They also were baptized; see Acts 16:32-34. // 1 Corinthians 1:21 “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached [‘of preaching,’ KJV, lgb] to save those who believe.” // Romans 10:8-9 “But what does it say? ‘*The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart*’”\*\* (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 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.” [John 8:24; Romans 5:1; Hebrews 11:6]

**Obedience to the faith/Scriptures** - Romans 6:17-18; 16:25-26

### Repentance

Acts 2:38 “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; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” // 2 Corinthians 7:10 “For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.” // 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” [Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30]

### Confession

Romans 10:9 “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.” [Romans 10:10; 1 John 1:8-10]

### Calling on the name of the Lord

Acts 2:21 “*And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.*”\*\* [quote from Joel 2:32] // Romans 10:13 [Jesus warned, however: “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” (Matthew 7:21).]

### Baptism

1 Peter 3:21 “There is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer\* of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ...” // Mark 16:16 “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” See also Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-39; 8:35-39; Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 3:27; Col. 2:12.

### Washing of regeneration

Titus 3:5 “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ...” // Acts 22:16 “be baptized, and wash away your sins, ...”

### Works

James 2:14 “What *does* it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 24 You see then that a man is justified\* by works, and not by faith only ... 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” // James 2:17, 20; John 6:29; Galatians 5:6

### Hope

Romans 8:24 “For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?” [1 John 3:2 “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”]

### Continuing in the doctrine of Christ

1 Timothy 4:16 “Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” Or, “hold fast,” 1 Corinthians 15:2.

### Enduring to the end

Matthew 24:13 “But he who endures to the end shall be saved.” See: Matthew 10:22; Mark 13:13; 2 Timothy 2:12; Hebrews 3:14-19; Revelation 2:10b.

### Conclusion

In light of these Scriptures, who would argue (or, would even assert) that any one of these (e.g., God, Christ, grace, faith, repentance, confession, baptism, obedience) is not an essential part of what saves? Dare anyone add to or take away from what God has said? Galatians 1:6-12; Revelation 22:18-19.

“*Test all things; hold fast what is good*” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

\* answer: in 1 Pet 3:21 “was used by the Greeks in a legal sense, as a demand or appeal. Baptism is therefore the ground of an appeal by a good conscience against wrong doing.” (Vine). // “as an appeal to God for a clear conscience,” ESV, RSV.

\* justified: “to declare to be righteous ... acquittal ... deem to be right” (Vine).

\* reconcile: “to change from enmity to friendship ...” (Vine).

\* salvation: “deliverance from the wrath of God ...” (Vine).

\* sanctify: “to make holy” (Strong); “the separation of the believer from the world in his behavior ...” (Vine).

Reference: W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers. 1985.

Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the NKJV (©1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.).

\*\* *Oblique type style*, indicates a quote from the OT; *italics* of regular type “indicate expressions in the original language which require clarification by additional English words, as also done throughout the history of the King James Bible” (Preface to NKJV). Words within [brackets] in quotations are added for clarification.

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