

Am I Saved

by Elder James Keen

"Have you been saved?" Many times, Christians ask others this question, but what does it really mean? How do I know if I have been saved? These are questions every man and woman should ask themselves at some point in their life.

What is Salvation?

From a Christian point of view, salvation is the rescuing of one's soul from the eternal punishment of hell. The punishment is the result of our sin. Salvation from punishment is made possible through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Not everyone is saved. In fact, the bible says that, "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:14). Are you one of the few?

Have I met God's qualifications?

The Bible teaches us that there are four qualifications that have to be met for someone to be saved. We must have a knowledge of the gospel message, the Holy Spirit must convict us of our sin and draw us to God, we must repent of our sin, and we must believe in Jesus with all of our heart. Let's discuss these four requirements in some more detail:

Do you understand the gospel?

It is impossible to receive something that you have never been offered. The same is true of salvation. Romans 10:13-14 says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? ..."

The word gospel literally means, "good news". It is the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God who came to make a way for man to have a relationship with God and to be saved from eternal punishment. He took our place and died the death that we should have died so that we can inherit eternal life. Have you heard and understood this message?

Have you been convicted?

We aren't speaking of a federal crime. We are talking about the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. This work of conviction accomplishes two tasks in us. First, conviction allows us to see our need for salvation and feel the shame of our sinfulness. King David recounts deep spiritual trouble brought about by the Lord as he was searching for salvation (Psalm 116).

In addition, conviction draws us to God. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: ..." (John 6:44). The Holy Spirit doesn't just leave us with a terrible feeling of emptiness; it also leads us to the solution to our problems, Jesus Christ. We don't come to Christ of our own accord; we are drawn to Him in a way that we can feel.

Have you repented of your sin?

Repentance involves realizing the error of a situation and turning away from it towards a better situation. That is what we must do to be saved. God convinces us of the sinfulness of our lives through His work of conviction (John 16:7-9). The apostle Paul wrote, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (II Corinthians 7:10).

What this means is that the sense of sorrow for our sin, which God gives us, leads us to repentance. True repentance involves turning away from your sins and turning to God *with all of your heart*.

Have you believed in Christ?

Christ is the source of salvation. In fact, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6). This belief in Christ is more than a factual knowledge of who He is, it is the belief that He is who He said He is, the Son of God, and that He can save you (Acts 8:34-37). The faith (belief) that saves is one that is of the *whole heart*. Only God can see our hearts (1 Samuel 16:7) and only God knows if we have truly believed with our whole heart.

The Reality of an Experience

Scriptures teach us that there are some who believe they are saved but are really just fooling themselves. Jesus said that in the day of judgment, many people will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" However, Jesus will say to them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:22-23) How do you know if you have really met God's conditions for salvation? How can you have assurance you won't be turned away at the Judgment?

You must first understand that there is no gradual process of salvation. You either are saved or you are not. Because God uses His Spirit to draw us to salvation through a deep sense of need and conviction over our sins, we can know the moment when we are saved because of the peace that replaces this emptiness and void in our heart. Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"

Everyone who is truly saved has a moment in their life when they truly repented of their sins and believed in Jesus through the drawing of the Spirit. They also have the momentary experience of grace where God took away that burden, forgave you of your sins, and placed the Holy Spirit within you. Perhaps you didn't recognize what had actually happened to you at that time. However, based on what you now know, do you have that experience? Salvation produces more than a one time experience, though, it results in a total change of your life.

Was there a Change?

When someone is saved, they become a new creature in Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." What has changed? Everything!

That same Holy Spirit which was convicting us now dwells within us and leads us. It is a discernable voice that provides direction (Acts 16:7), magnifies Christ (John 16:13-14), and will always fall in line with the Bible (I John 4:1).

Also, we have a desire and the ability to please God through good works. In fact, that is why God saved us, to do good works (Ephesians 2:10).

Summary

True salvation is more than a mental decision, repeating a prayer, or a progressive work. It's also more than an emotional experience. It is the divine intrusion of the human nature by something much greater than itself. It is something too significant not to be noticed. It is a total change that will affect your entire life, both now and in eternity. Now ask yourself this question, "Am I Saved?" If not, it is God's will that you turn to Him right now in repentance and faith. Seek Him until you find Him.