

Scheme of Redemption

The Sin Problem

“For all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God” (Romans 3:23)

“For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23)

“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that He will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:2)

Sin Problem Solved - In Christ

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing IN CHRIST. In Him we have REDEMPTION through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.” (Ephesians 1:3, 7)

“But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:22, 23)

But Is Redemption (Salvation) Found Only in Christ?

The only religion completely dependent on its founder is Christianity. CHRISTIANITY IS CHRIST!

The Vedas (Hindu sacred writings) said, “Truth is one, but the sages speak of it in many different ways.”

The Buddha said, “My teaching point the way to attainment of the truth.”

Mohammed said, “The truth has been revealed to me.”

Jesus Christ says, “I am the truth.” (John 14:6 - *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*)

What Must I Believe About Christ?

Christ said: “*If you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.*” (John 8:24)

Then who or what did Christ claim to be?

- To be” *the way and the truth and the life.*” (John 14:6)
- To have all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-22)
- To be able to forgive sins (Mark 2:5-12; Luke 7:48)
- To be” *the resurrection and the life*” (John 11:25 - “*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.*”)
- To be the Son of God (Matthew 26:63, 64; Matthew 27:43)

- To be God. (John 10:30-33; John 8:58; John 14:6-11) Inspired men of God (Biblical authors) proclaimed Jesus to be God. (Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1, 2, 14, 18; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13)

Christ is God

John 10: 30-33---I and the Father are one. Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?” “We are not stoning you for any of these,” replied the Jews, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”

John 8:58---“I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!”

John 14: 6-11---Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” Phillip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say show us the Father? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

Isaiah 9: 6---For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

John 1: 1, 2, 14, 18---In the beginning was the Word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Romans 9: 5---Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

Titus 2: 13---while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us.....

Phil. 2: 5-8---Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature (Or, in the form of) God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, (held on to) but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

“When we speak of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son of God and the Holy Spirit, we are speaking of the three ways the one God has chosen to reveal or manifest Himself to us, three expressions of His existence. The only sense in which He is “them” is from our point of view, in that we are seeing Him in his various ways of expressing Himself within our dimension of existence.”

The Uniqueness Of Christ and Christianity Compared to Other World Religions

- No other religion has a personal god
- No other religion provides intimacy with God
- No other religion tells of the great love God has for us
- No other religion has a god that loves us so much that He became one of us to show that love
- No other religious leader offers to live within his followers
- No other religion gives assurance of forgiveness of sins
- No other religion gives assurance of heaven
- No other religious leader claimed to be God incarnate
- No other religious leader had hundreds of prophecies made concerning them, and then fulfilled every one of them
- No other religion offers grace based salvation
- No other religious leader was willing to die for his followers

Don't we have an awesome and wonderful God!

Many Factors in a Person's Salvation

God's Initiative

Titus 3:3-7 says: *"At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life."* (see also II Timothy 1:8-10)

"Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you." (James 1:21) (see also: I Peter 1:23)

Our Response

- **Belief** (faith): *"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."* (Hebrews 11:6) (see also: John 20:30,31; Romans 5:1; John 6:40)
- **Repentance**: II 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."* (see also Acts 17:30; Acts 2:38) Repentance is more than a feeling of regret and a mere desire for amendment. It is an open and unreserved acknowledgment of unworthiness, helplessness, and need, an abandonment of self and all its works, a committal to God with no sense of merit, right, or claim.
- **Confession**: *"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. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* (Romans 10:9, 10) (see also Matthew 10:32)
- **Baptism**: *"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? by no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin -- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin."* (Romans 6:1-7)

When we are baptized we die to an existence enslaved to sin and we are raised into a new existence ruled by grace.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Jesus said: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19, 20)

“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:26-28)

- **Works:** “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. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Jesus said: “Why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46)

“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that -- and shudder. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.” (James 2:14, 17, 19, 24) (see also James 4:17)

When we act in faith with a sincere heart, believing Christ to be the Son of God, confessing that belief, repenting and being buried with Christ in baptism (immersion), then:

We are Christians

We are in Christ

We are members of His church

We are saved

We are born again

We are born into the family of God

We are forgiven of past sins and have continuous forgiveness of sins

We even NOW* possess eternal life (*see I John 5:11-13)

Becoming a Christian - Biblical Examples

- **Pentecost** - Acts 2:36-39: “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off -- for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

- Eunuch - Acts 8:35-39
- Philip preaching good news - Acts 8:12 *“But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”*
- Paul recounting his conversion - Acts 22:1-16
- Cornelius - Acts 10:44-48
- Lydia - Acts 16:13-15
- Jailer - Acts 16:25-34

One Solitary Life

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another obscure village, where He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never had a family or owned a home. He never set foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never wrote a book, or held an office. He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness.

While He was still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends deserted Him. He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had - His coat. When He was dead, He was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave.

Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure for much of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever sailed, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as that one solitary life.

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“Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and, if true, of infinite importance. The one thing it cannot be is moderately important. I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen—not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”

C. S. Lewis