

Salvation

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:18

3R's OF SALVATION

Three Phases for Becoming Right with God.

“R” 1 – Realize—Your sin before God and your need of God’s *One Son and Savior*, Jesus (Matthew 1:21), for Peter confessed Jesus to be **“the Christ the Son of the Living God”** (Matthew 16:16), and Jesus said, **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me”** (John 14:6). Because they compare themselves among themselves (“I’m as good as my neighbor.”), people live in denial that they’re sinners. They ignore God’s truth and develop their own religious systems. Jesus called this *self-righteousness* (Luke 5:32). Self-righteous people think man-centeredly, and in a spirit of feigned humility believe that, “All truth is God’s truth.” As individuals and a group, they refuse to recognize their need to get right with God on God’s terms. Such people need to shift their consciousness from off themselves to God. They need to get serious with God before it’s too late. They should . . .

“R” 2 – Repent—means to “change one’s mind” about sin and being indifferent to God’s way of salvation through Jesus (Acts 2:38). Sin is breaking God’s absolute moral Law (1 John 3:4). The obvious commentary on human sin can be found on daily newscasts which provide abundant evidence—child abuse, spousal abuse, robberies, fraud, lying, slanders, thefts, rapes, murders, wars, etc.—that people are spiritually separated from God’s kingdom rule in their lives (Ephesians 2:1, Isaiah 59:2; John 3:5). Our collective sin nature causes us to proudly disobey God in thought, word and deed.

Regardless of how good we might happen to feel about ourselves—"I'm OK, You're OK!"—God says we're all sinners. **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Romans 3:23; See Isaiah 53:6.). The Bible says, **"There is none righteous, no, not one"** (Romans 3:10). Nobody goes to be with God who is not right with God. Therefore, people must scrap their self-righteousness, their *good-works* schemes for getting to heaven known as *religion*, and penitentially receive the gift of God's righteousness through Christ by faith (Luke 18:9-14). God made Christ **"who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"** (2 Corinthians 5:21). God's only provision for becoming and being right with Him is through the cross of Christ (1 John 2:2; 1 Peter 3:18). If people refuse God's gracious offer of His righteousness and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, they will spend eternity separated from God in hell (Luke 12:4-5, 20). To avoid such an eternal state, people need to . . .

"R" 3 – Receive—God's gift of salvation by believing the Gospel message, **"that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures"** (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). In Jesus Christ, God has done for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He stands ready to give the gift of His righteousness to us through faith in the Gospel message (Ephesians 2:8-9). God will not save those desperately trying to earn their salvation by doing good works, through "self-righteousness" (Titus 3:5). Only persons who believe Jesus died for their sins are saved. **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. . ."** (Acts 16:31; See Romans 5:1.).

COMMUNICATE YOUR HEART TO GOD

Prayer is simply talking with God. Believing on Jesus, not our praying, saves. But these words of prayer may help frame your thoughts about your sin, God's Gospel, and His gift

of forgiveness and righteousness in Jesus Christ: *Dear God, I know I am a sinner and desperately need your forgiveness for my sins. I believe that your Son, Jesus, died as my substitute on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins, and that He was raised from the dead. I accept by faith your forgiveness and righteousness on account of Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice for my sins. Thank you Lord Jesus, for forgiving me and placing the eternal life of Christ in my soul. Amen.*

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

To gain confidence of your salvation, you must cultivate the new spiritual life God has given you. You can do this *by* publicly confessing your salvation in Jesus Christ before other people (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:9), *by* submitting to Jesus' command to be baptized (Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36-38; 1 Corinthians 1:16), *by* learning about your new found Christian faith from the Bible (1 John 5:13), *by* fellowshiping with God through prayer (Philippians 4:6), *by* attending and being involved in a Bible believing church (Hebrews 10:23-25), and *by* living obediently to God in the power of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25). From this time forward, if you fail to have an interest in these matters of faith, you will have no assurance you are saved, and should not presume the reality of your conversion to Christ. As the Bible says, **"Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you . . . for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you"** (2 Peter 1:10-11).