

The Church of Jesus Christ



“How Are You Saved?”



The Church of Jesus Christ, Zion's Branch
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Forward

Many people in America hold dear to the proclamation that they are a “Christian”. Yet some don’t really understand that to be a Christian means more than just saying you believe that Jesus Christ is our Savior. Being a Christian means that you also practice in your daily walk the gospel of Jesus Christ.¹

To actually understand what it is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ, we must understand the scriptures that have been given to us in order to guide and comfort us. This means the scriptures in their fullness, understanding all of the directions, not just a few steps along the way.

Proclaiming to lead a Christian life with only a vague "love", a love that had no heart for obedience but rather a love for what is popular in our culture is not the path to eternal salvation.

If we love God, we will obey His commandments; and not because we think His commandments are heavy burdens, but because we see that they are best for us - they are guides and gifts to us from God.

The evidence which we have that a child loves his parents is when that child is willing, without hesitation or complaining, to do all that the parent requires him to do. As followers of Jesus Christ, we can show our love by yielding to all of God’s commandments, patiently doing His will in the face of ridicule or opposition.

So what do the scriptures teach as the path to eternal salvation?

Many Christian churches will pick out a specific point of doctrine and say the way to salvation is based on that one point (e.g., nothing is required of you but to believe in Jesus Christ).

Believing that Jesus Christ is our Savior is definitely where the path to eternal salvation begins. However, **this booklet will show that there are many points of doctrine that are required of us to obtain the best possible reward in the kingdom of God.**

Scripture references are taken from the Inspired Version of the Bible.

The King James Version of the Bible is also referenced and if the verse number differs, it is shown within brackets { }.

Scripture references only found in the Inspired Version are followed by (IV).
The words of Jesus Christ are in red.

What is Salvation

When our days on earth are over and the time comes to stand before our Creator, we will be judged according our faith and our works on earth.² This defining moment will determine where we spend eternity. Some will receive a glory equal to that of the sun (Celestial Glory), others to that of the moon (Terrestrial Glory), and still others to a glory comparable to that of the stars (Telestial Glory).³

During our time on earth, man has the opportunity to accept the gospel of Jesus Christ and repent for his sins. But for those who have denied the gospel, a non-glory reward awaits them.⁴

Receiving salvation in the kingdom of God is the hoped for reward of eternal life for all who claim Christian belief. Yet the way to obtain salvation is a much disagreed upon topic among Christians. We can determine what is required of us from the teachings of Jesus Christ. These teachings, as recorded in scriptures, were written by Jesus' apostles and the others who represented his church.

The scriptures state that Jesus Christ is our Savior and his way is the only way to salvation.⁵ The scriptures also state that we must be united in doctrine and that our doctrine must be in harmony with the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁶ Jesus taught these principals to the apostles to whom he granted authority to represent his church after his ascension. These apostles then taught others that were also granted authority to represent Christ's church.

Words of Jesus and the Gospel

"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

(Acts 4:12)

The Apostle Peter said these words while being questioned by the religious leaders at Jerusalem about the healing a lame man experienced when he and the Apostle John called upon the name of Jesus Christ. Peter told those religious leaders that it was only through the power of Jesus Christ that the lame man was healed. Peter then went further in his testimony and declared that Jesus Christ is the only name that God has ever or will ever recognize in our efforts to obtain salvation. That means we need to pay attention to what Jesus said and did if we want our efforts to result in eternal salvation rather than being for nothing.

"... these things I say, that ye might be saved."

(John 5:35 {34})

Jesus brought the message of the gospel (or good news) so that we can obtain salvation. The words above are those of Jesus telling the Jews that they should believe the words of John the Baptist concerning the testimony he gave that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Through belief in John's words and the words that Jesus said, we can attain salvation.

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."

(1 Corinthians 15:1-2)

These words are from the Apostle Paul in a letter to the Corinthians. Once again, the message is that belief in the words and message of the gospel are essential to salvation. Many claim to believe the words of the gospel, but twist them to suit their own views. Paul states that without a real belief, our hope of salvation is for nothing.

"Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved."

(Acts 11:14)

These words were said by an angel to Cornelius, a Roman centurion, as he prayed. The angel's message was to send for the Apostle Peter who would provide the words of the gospel that would let Cornelius and his household know how to obtain salvation. With the knowledge given to him, Cornelius then chose to heed the words and was baptized and received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Love of Truth

*“That which fell by the wayside are they who hear;
and the devil cometh and taketh away the word out of their hearts,
lest they should believe and be saved.”*

(Luke 8:12)

Jesus said this when explaining the parable of the sower. His explanation was that if the message of the gospel isn't received into a willing heart, by someone who desires to accept the message for what it is, then the devil is waiting to deceive that person and prevent them from obtaining salvation. This shows how important it is for us to love the truth as it is presented in the Bible rather than trying to change the interpretation to satisfy our own desires.

*“...with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received
not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”*

(2 Thessalonians 2:10)

With these words, the Apostle Paul is describing that the reward for those who do not love the truth is that rather than obtaining salvation, they will perish because Satan deceives them. This shows that we must put aside our views of what we want the scriptures to mean and instead accept the truth of the gospel as presented by Jesus and the apostles. Without a desire to have and to know the truth, we can be led down the path to believe in a gospel that is “unrighteous” rather than “righteous”.

Faith

The apostle Paul defines faith as “the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”.⁷

Some examples of faith include:

- Our confidence that God exists
- That Jesus Christ, the son of God, was born of a virgin
- That the gift of the Holy Spirit was sent after Jesus ascended to his Father
- That there is an eternal life after our physical body dies

These are all things which we have not seen, yet we are certain do exist, have happened, or will happen. Paul also states that without faith it is impossible to please God.⁸ The scriptures below show that faith is essential to salvation.

*“And he said to the woman,
Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”*

(Luke 7:50)

Jesus said these words to the woman who anointed his feet with oil. Previously, Jesus had told Peter this woman had many sins and then told the woman “Thy sins are forgiven”. Thus, we can see that faith is required for forgiveness of sins and forgiveness of sins is required for our salvation.

*“... Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”*

(Acts 16:30-31)

These words were told to the jailer who had imprisoned the Apostle Paul. An earthquake that freed Paul and the other prisoners had awakened the jailer. At this point the jailer asked the question about what he had to do to be saved. Paul then answered that he had to believe and preached the message of the gospel to the jailer and his family. That same night they were baptized.

As the following scripture shows, faith alone is not enough to obtain salvation:

*“For as the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without works is dead also.”*

(James 2:25{24})

Works are also required. Not just any works, but the works that show God our belief in His commandments. So, what are the works that are required for salvation?

Baptism

As we saw above, the jailer and his family were baptized. This is a work or act of righteousness that fulfills the commandments of Jesus:

*“He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved;
but he that believeth not, shall be damned.”*

(Mark 16:15{16})

Jesus gave these instructions to his apostles just before his ascension. He also instructed his apostles to go into the entire world, and preach the gospel to every creature. We can see from this that he granted authority to his apostles to represent his church and that they were to teach the words and acts of Jesus as their doctrine. Jesus was baptized to show us the way to fulfill all righteousness.⁹ The instructions to his apostles show that belief in the doctrine of Jesus and baptism by an authorized representative are required of us as well in order to obtain salvation.

The word baptism is derived from the Greek word *bapto* or *baptizo*, which means to cover wholly or entirely with a fluid. When we are baptized, our body is immersed in water, which is symbolic of our body being cleansed from sin. It also symbolizes that we are burying our natural sinful self in the water and being resurrected as a spiritual self, free from sin, when we come up out of the water.¹⁰

Another place in the scriptures says:

“The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us,”

(1 Peter 3:21)

Just before this verse, Peter is telling the members of the church to whom he is writing that the flood in Noah’s day is a representation of the baptism of the earth to cleanse it of the sinful men that inhabited it at that time. This supports our belief that baptism washes away our sins and that such an act is necessary for our salvation as “no ... unclean person ... hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God”.¹¹

God’s Chosen People

“And so all Israel shall be saved; ...”

(Romans 11:26)

The Apostle Paul wrote these words indicating that those who belong to God’s chosen people, the house of Israel, will be saved after the gospel has gone out from Israel to the Gentiles (unbelievers) and subsequently, the gospel is restored to Israel through the excessive pride of the Gentiles. The scriptures tell us that baptism by an authorized representative of Jesus Christ allows us to inherit the same promises that God made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the house of Israel;¹² thus, providing another reason to be properly baptized.

Confession

*“... if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,
and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath
raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”*

(Romans 10:9)

Above, the jailer acknowledged his faith in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior and showed his belief through the act of baptism. By his example, we can see that confession is more than just saying words. Just as someone who “confesses” to committing a crime admits he or she participated in the criminal act, in order for our heart to show that we truly believe, we must live the gospel as Jesus Christ did, fully committing ourselves in word and deed.

Prayer

*“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the
name of the Lord shall be saved.”*

(Acts 2:21)

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

(Romans 10:13)

Unlike Jesus Christ, we are not free from sin. Consequently, in order to repent for our sins, we must call upon God in the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus told the apostles that they must “Pray that ye enter not into temptation”.¹³ This is not something that needs to be done just once, but we continue to need Jesus Christ to intercede with God on our behalf throughout our lives, even after baptism washes us clean of the sins that we had up to that time.

We also call upon God to thank Him for His plan of salvation and for the necessities of life, to request His guidance to be good servants, for His protection and help in coping with this world and for many other reasons. Prayer is the way we can communicate with God and we must do it often to remain steadfast in the gospel.

Endurance to the End

“... but he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved.”

(Mark 13:13)

Jesus gave this message to his disciples, indicating that we must continue to live by the true gospel until the end of our life. This is completely contrary to the “once saved, always saved” belief to which many Christians subscribe. It is also contrary to the belief that if we confess our sins on Sunday, we can do whatever we want the rest of the week. Jesus expected his disciples and us to continue in the gospel each and every day, picking ourselves up when we fall short and sin, and submitting ourselves unto God’s ways.

Jesus Christ’s Grace and Mercy

*“And if the righteous scarcely be saved,
where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”*

(1 Peter 4:18)

The Apostle Peter wrote these words indicating that at the time of judgment, the people that have tried to follow the right ways of the gospel are barely saved. Assuming Peter, an authorized representative, knew what he was talking about, it shows that there is something beyond what we can do by ourselves to obtain salvation.

Consider the following scriptures:

*“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world
but that the world through him might be saved.”*

(John 3:17)

*“But we believe that through the grace of the
Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, ...”*

(Acts 15:11)

*“For by grace are ye saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;”*

(Ephesians 2:8)

*“Not by works of righteousness which we have done,
but according to his mercy he saved us,
by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”*

(Titus 3:5)

Each of these scriptures is the testimony of one of Jesus' authorized representatives that the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ are necessary for our salvation. This grace and mercy is available only because of faith (“by grace are ye saved through faith”), which is backed up by our deeds (“faith without works is dead”). There is no doubt that our faith and works will fall short, but that is where the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice he made on the cross make up for what we lack. When we have combined faith with works and endured to the end of our lives, then Jesus will take away any sins that remain so that we are clean and can enter into the presence of God.

Hope

“For we are saved by hope; ...”

(Romans 8:24)

The hope of salvation in the kingdom of God is the primary reason to believe the words of Jesus, to have faith, to act upon that faith by being baptized by one having authority, and to endure to the end. Hope is what helps us to continue believing and acting as a representative of Jesus even in the face of those who mock us or tear down our beliefs. Hope is what drives us to pray even when our prayers are not answered immediately. Hope is what allows us to trust in God and Jesus even though we have not seen them and that Jesus' grace and mercy can overcome our shortcomings.

Hope is our confident expectation that there is a resurrection and the opportunity to live forever with God and Jesus. However, without believing that all of these things are necessary for salvation, why would we have legitimate reason to hang onto that hope?

Conclusion

This booklet has shown that in order to obtain salvation, we cannot simply rely on a single point of doctrine. Instead, we must:

- Believe the words of Jesus and the gospel and that we must love these words as the truth,
- Have a faith that is backed up by acts of righteousness,
- Be baptized by one having authority to become part of God's chosen people, the house of Israel,
- Confess by both words and deeds that we believe Jesus Christ,
- Pray to repent of our sins and for strength to continue in the gospel,
- Endure by keeping the commandments of the gospel and putting aside the temptations of this life,
- Trust that the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ can make up for the shortcomings in our faith, and
- Hope for resurrection and salvation in the kingdom of God.

Pray For Guidance

Ask God to reveal to you, through the power of the Holy Spirit whether, the statements presented here are true. Having experienced the goodness of God in our lives, we know He will answer the prayers of those who have a contrite heart and invite you to unite with us in the great work God has prepared for mankind.

We hope you will contact us with any questions or comments our beliefs have generated.

Sincerely,

The priesthood and members of The Church of Jesus Christ, Zion's Branch

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Services

(Services subject to change on special occasions)

First Sunday of each month:

10:00 AM Worship and Sacrament Service

11:00 AM Sermon

(Fellowship lunch to follow)

Remaining Sundays

10:00 AM Worship and Scriptural Study

11:00 AM Sermon

Sunday Evenings

6:00 PM Scriptural Study

Wednesday Evenings

7:00 PM Prayer Service

Endnotes

¹ 2 John 1:6-9

6 *And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*

7 *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*

8 *Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.*

9 *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*

² Revelation 20:12-13

12 *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

13 *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works.*

14 *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

15 *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

³ 1st Corinthians 15:40-42

40 *Also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial, and bodies telestial; but the glory of the celestial, one; and the terrestrial, another; and the telestial, another.*

41 *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory.*

42 *So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;*

⁴ Mathew 12:26-28 {31-32}

26 *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men who receive me and repent; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven unto men.*

27 *And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him; neither in this world; neither in the world to come.*

28 *Either make the tree good and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by the fruit.*

Hebrews 6:4-8

4 *For he hath made it impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,*

5 *And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,*

6 *If they shall fall away, to be renewed again unto repentance; seeing they crucify unto themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*

7 *For the day cometh that the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them who dwelleth thereon, by whom it is dressed, who now receiveth blessings from God, shall be cleansed with fire.*

8 *For that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; therefore they who bring not forth good fruits, shall be cast into the fire; for their end is to be burned.*

5 John 14:6

6 *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

6 John 17:20-21

20 *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;*

21 *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

7 Hebrews 11:1

1 *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

8 Hebrews 11:6

6 *But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

9 Matthew 3:41-46 {13-17}

41 *And then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him;*

42 *But John refused him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and why comest thou to me?*

43 *And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer me to be baptized of thee, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him.*

44 *And John went down into the water and baptized him.*

45 *And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and John saw, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Jesus.*

46 *And lo, he heard a voice from heaven, saying, This is my be-loved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him.*

10 Romans 6:1-6

1 *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?*

2 *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

3 *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

4 *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

5 *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection;*

6 *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

11 Ephesians 5:5


5 *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

12 Galatians 3:27-29

27 *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

29 *And if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*



¹³ Luke 22:40

40 *And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.*

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