







The church of Christ

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At Granby, MO

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Plan of Salvation

I Introduction

A God has a Plan of Salvation

- 1 Even to those most unaware of scripture, the words “Plan of salvation” identify a state where:
 - a Someone or something is in a state where they need saving.
- 2 A great number of people in the world understand there are rights and wrongs,
 - a But believe them to be societal traditions or norms rather than to the direction of a God over all.
 - Thus, if they commit wrongs, they do not realize they need a plan of salvation (**Rom 6:16**).
 - b Sin is a wrong action against law, specifically, acting against God’s law.
 - That everyone has sinned, whether or not they realize it, is what the Bible teaches (**Rom 3:23**).
 - The Bible also contains the salvation from sin which has come to mankind:
 - **Jude 1:3** - *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*
 - **Romans 1:16** - *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

B God's Plans Do Not Fail

- 1 In **Acts 5**, Peter was before the Sanhedrin with other apostles.
 - a This was Peter's second forced visit to them regarding the proclamation of Jesus Christ.
 - b The apostles were under instruction by the Sanhedrin to cease teaching the doctrine of Jesus.
 - c Gamaliel , a teacher of the law, stood and spoke: **Acts 5:38-39**
- 2 **Gamaliel's point:** The objectives of God are successful.
 - a God is all powerful and all knowing.
 - b He is not a God of chaos whose objectives are left to chance and open to failure.

C Do you have objectives you want to accomplish? How important are they?

- 1 Do you have a plan so you can approach your goal in a measured, exacting fashion?
 - a Or are you trying to get where you want in chaotic fashion? (Many of us are here)
 - b We know what we want, but we do not establish a plan on how to get there.
Examples...
- 2 College – Business Plan; As a boy - Flowcharting
 - a Mapping out a specific plan of action helps to foresee success or failure.
 - b Still, I have left many things up to chaos and hope.
- 3 Man often believes chances of success by chaos are near to or equal to chances with a plan.
 - a So he marches forward. Furniture no directions. Computer software, no tutorial. Trip no map.
 - Confidence halfway through? Regretting no plan?
 - When man contemplates salvation, he should be certain to have a plan and that it is God's plan or as Gamaliel stated, **man will fail.**

II The Beginning of God's Plan and It's Objective

A **A plan is a course of action that is conceived before it is attempted.**

- 1 God's plan of salvation was developed before man was created.
 - a God wasn't surprised when man chose to sin. - God wasn't left wondering what to do.
- 2 **Ephesians 1:1-12** – Tells about God's Plan of Salvation
 - a **Vs. 1-** The audience addressed is Christians/Saints.
 - b **Vs. 3** – From God all spiritual blessings are through Christ from God
 - c **Vs. 4** – **Objective** – Before Creation, God chose man to be stand before him in **purity**.
 - d **Vs. 5** - The plan to accomplish this was scheduled to occur through Jesus.
 - **Vs. 6** - The plan demonstrates God's Grace.
 - **Vs. 7** - It forgives the man's sins through Christ, making them pure.
 - e **Vs. 8-9** - Wisdom of God's plan is demonstrated in revealing His will to man.
 - **Vs. 10** - This would occur in the fullness of times (**Galatians 4:4**) - Christian dispensation.
 - (i) **Vs. 10** - At that time, Jesus would bring into unity heaven and earth.

- f **Vs. 11 – Restating Objective:** Man’s inheritance of being in God’s presence as planned.
- g **Vs. 12 –** The ultimate result is the plan would glorify God.

- 3 God’s plan demonstrates His Goodness and His Love for man.
 - a Since God has a plan of salvation - we should understand how the plan saves.

III How Does God’s Plan Save? (See “What Does the Bible Say About Salvation?”) – God’s plan is not a singular component but a series of conditions which fulfill his plan.

A God’s plan is one full of Grace

- 1 From the creation God has demonstrated His grace. After creation, why would man need grace?
 - a Because our sins separated us from God (**Isaiah 59:1-2**)
 - God was under no obligation to accept us back. We brought darkness into our lives.
 - We made ourselves unclean by our choices. We rejected God.
- 2 There are many groups who state that Christians are saved by God’s grace.
 - a Such a statement cannot nor should not be denied in light of the apostle Paul’s words:
 - ***Eph 2:5*** - Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)
 - ***Eph 2:8*** - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
 - ***2 Tim 1:8-9*** - *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*
 - b It is evident by grace man is saved! The word of God says so. His Word stands forever (**Isaiah 40:8**) and is truth (**John 17:17**). Again, this is according to His plan from the beginning.

B How has man come to know of God’s plan? (Hearing)

- 1 From the **Ephesians 1** text it was seen the God’s wisdom was revealed.
 - a **Ephesians 3:5** establishes plan was given by apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit.
 - Today, those words have been written down so that man would know the plan of salvation.
- 2 Consider the necessity of having God’s Word if grace was the only component of salvation.
 - a It was expressed by the apostle Paul that preaching saves (**I Corinthians 1:21**).
 - b Through reading or preaching, man hears the Word to know of God’s plan of salvation.
- 3 Hearing the word of God is the birth of Faith (**Hebrews 10:17**).
- 4 According to **Hebrews 11:1**, “faith is the assurance of things hoped for”.
 - a The hope is the coming of Christ and eternity with God.
 - It comes from hearing the promises in the word.

b The latter part of **Hebrews 11:1**, “*The conviction (evidence) of things not seen*”, is believing in the information heard, though you haven’t seen it.

- Without hearing or belief, faith cannot rise.

5 There are some such as the demons, who hear and believe, but will not be saved.

How is this possible?

a They do not have faith unto salvation.

- Such a faith is spoken about in **2 Timothy 3:15** as a faith in Jesus.
 - (i)** That type of faith is described in **Romans 16:25-26** as having obedience.

b Faith saves because through obedience (**James 2:17** – faith without works is dead), confession, repentance, baptism, and living faithfully results. These are all a manifestation of faith.

C **Faithful Belief** - Grace Saves, Faith Saves...

1 **John 3:16-17** - *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

2 Faithfully Believing in Christ as the son of God saves (**Matthew 16:16-20**).

a A faithful belief obeys the commands of God unlike the belief of the Pharisees and scribes of (**Mark 7:9**) who rejected God’s commands for their own traditions. **Such a rejection is a denial of Christ.**

- **Matthew 10:33** -*But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*
- These men had heard, they had a belief in God, but a lack of faithful belief does not result in salvation.

3 Grace saves. Faithful belief saves.

D **Faithful Confession**

1 Faithful confession is derived from Faithfully believing. **Romans 10:9-10** speaks of faithful confession.

a Faithful confession is not the declaration of sin.

b Rather, based on hearing and belief, it is acknowledging that Jesus is Master over your life.

- That action is undertaken because:
 - (i)** Christ declared himself the son of God and you belief in his resurrection which validated His claims.

2 Our lesson thus far is then reiterated by Paul in **verses 14-17**.

a **Vs. 14** – To confess, you must believe. To believe, you must hear. To hear there had to be a preacher.

b **Vs. 17** – Thus, Faithful confession and Faithful belief come from hearing.

3 Grace Saves, Faithful belief saves, Faithful confession saves.

E **Faithful Repentance**

1 **Acts 2** records the entrance of the first Christians into the Lord’s Church.

- a** They had preachers before them – Peter’s sermon being recorded in the text.
 - He tells them who Jesus was and what they did to Him.

- As they heard the word, their belief and confession are evident.
 - (i) In **vs. 37**, they ask *“Brethren, what shall we do?”*
 - They would not ask this if they did not believe the words of Peter. There questioning about what action they should take to be right in the eyes of God, demonstrates they were confessing Christ as Lord and intended an obedient faith.
 - b Peter’s response in **vs. 38**, acknowledging their faithful demonstration was that they should *“repent, and ... be baptized... for the forgiveness of [their] sins”*.
- 2 Repentance is expected of all men (**Acts 17:30-31**) and saves **2 Corinthians 7:10**.
 - a This is an item to be addressed later in this series of lessons, so the adjoining condition will be examined at this point.
- 3 Note: Grace saves, faithful belief saves, faithful confession saves, faithful repentance saves...

F Faithful Baptism

- 1 Baptism saves - **1 Peter 3:21** and is the second condition Peter mentioned for forgiveness of sins.
 - a This is the objective of the plan of salvation – achieving purity.
 - A faithful baptism is an obedient one.
- 2 If man follows his own traditions in regard to baptism, he is not operating according to faith.
 - a It is well known that baptism means to immerse or bury as described in **Romans 6:4**.
 - It does not mean to sprinkle or pour.
 - The immersion is in water which corresponds to Jesus’ discussion with Nicodemus in **John 3:5**.
 - Numerous proofs of this are seen throughout the New Testament: **Acts 8:36-38, Acts 10:47, Ephesians 5:26, Hebrews 10:22, I Peter 3:20-21**.
- 3 Faithful baptism saves.

G The Final Part of God’s Plan – Faithful Living

- 1 Living faithfully is quite understandable from knowing what faithfulness is.
 - a It is obedience to what has been heard through the Word of God.
 - b The Word of God directs man toward a life of purity and goodness.
 - c This was God’s desire in the beginning as he created man in His image – pure and holy
- 2 Faithful living will be examined further in the final three lessons of this series.

IV Closing

A God’s plan of salvation is very simple.

- 1 As Christ puts it: **Matthew 11:30**, *“My yoke is easy, My burden is light.”*
 - a Though simple, it is not chaotic...
 - It is not contradictory.
 - It does not enable evil to continue or dismiss it without consequence.
- 2 God’s Plan is Hearing and Faithfulness.

B The world tries to confuse individuals by focusing on a few verses declaring salvation.

- 1 To do so is to declare salvation by man’s design and not God’s.

- a Such a plan will only fail.
- 2 It is only God's plan of salvation that will succeed.
- a This plan will always succeed.

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Matt 11:28-29

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."