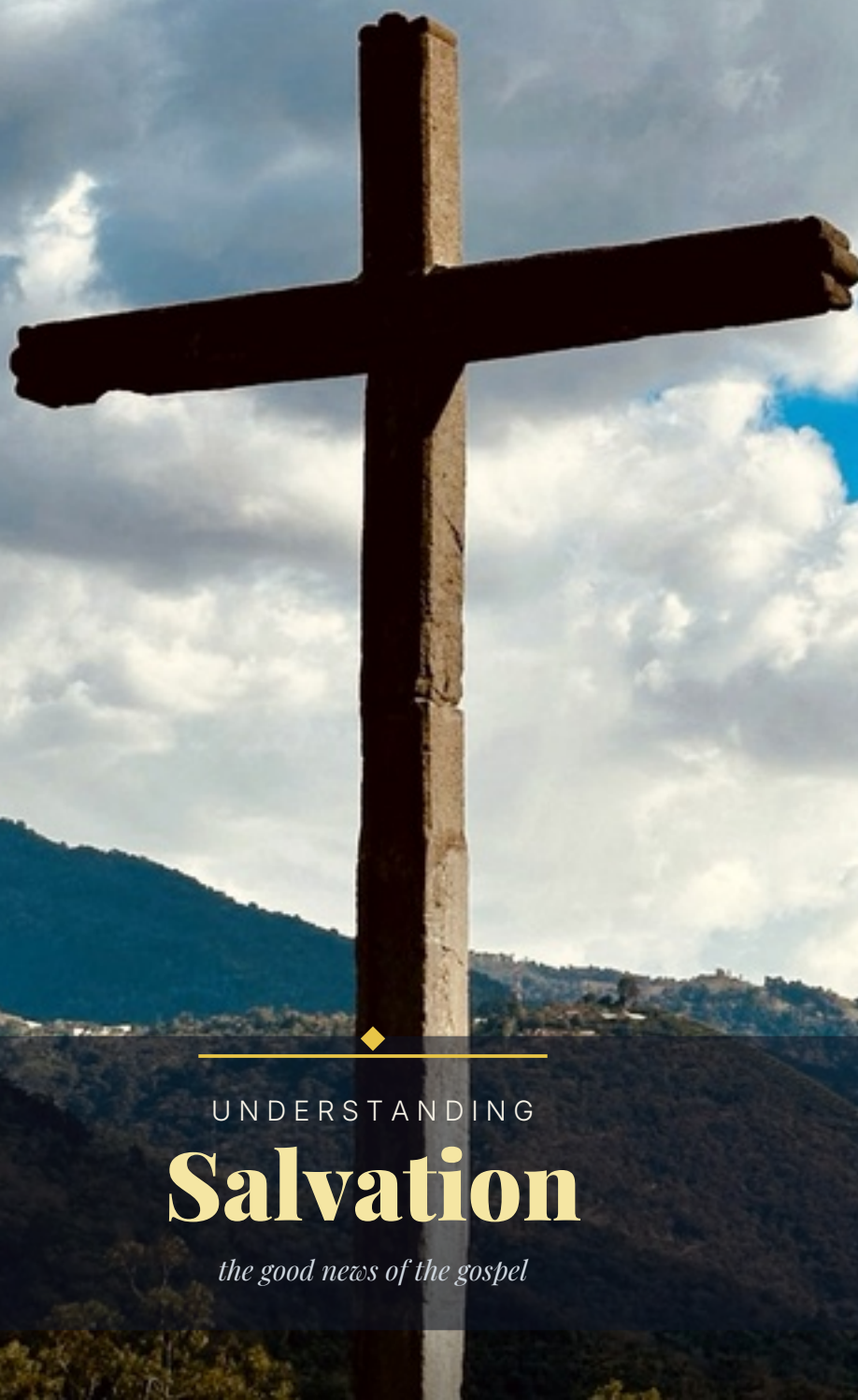




UNDERSTANDING

Salvation

the good news of the gospel

The Problem:

The word “gospel” means good news, but what makes it good is the bad news.

God is holy (Ps 99:5, Rev 4:8) and perfect (Mt 5:48), setting the standard for heaven. But all men sin (Rom 3:10, 23), and by our sin are separated from a holy God (Is 59:2). Nothing we can do, no amount of good works, can bridge this huge gap when the standard is perfect righteousness. Worse, the punishment for sin is death, eternal separation from God, hell. (Rom 6:23, Heb 6:2, Mt 10:28).

(Rom 3:23)

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

(Rom 6:23)

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is not just a problem for us, but also for God, because He loves us (1 Jn 4:8, 16) and wants to save us and have us with Him forever (1 Tim 2:4, Jn 17:24). Yet He cannot set aside justice. (Deut 32:4, Is 30:18, Ps 97:2) The punishment for sin must be carried out. The bad news is that there is nothing we can do to save ourselves. (Eph 2:8-9) The good news is that God Himself provided the solution!

(Eph 2:8-9)

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

The Solution:

Jesus Christ – the only begotten Son of God, born of a virgin by the Holy Spirit, fully God and fully man – lived a sinless life, meeting the standard for heaven and owing no sin debt (Heb 4:14-15), died on the cross in our place (Rom 5:8, Jn 3:16), bearing our sin and punishment (Heb 9:28, 1 Pe 2:24), satisfying the demands of justice (Heb 10:1-14). Then He rose from the dead (1 Cor 15:1-20), proving He has the power to give eternal life (Jn 17:2-3). Whoever puts their faith in Him will be saved, because through the sacrifice of His blood our sins are forgiven and erased. We are made righteous through Christ! (2 Cor 5:21, Col 2:13-14, Mt 26:28, Rom 5:9, Col 1:13-14, 1 Pe 1:18-19, 1 Jn 1:7-9)

(Rom 5:8)

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

(2 Cor 5:21)

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

The Uniqueness of Christ:

Jesus Christ is set apart because He is God (Col 2:8-10, Mt 16:16-17, Mt 26:63-64, Mk 3:11, Jn 8:58-59, Jn 10:30-33, Jn 20:28-29, Rom 9:5, Titus 2:13, Heb 1:8-9, 2 Pe 1:1, Jn 1:1/Rev 19:13, Rev 1:8, 17-18), and the only way to heaven. (Jn 14:6, Jn 3:36, 1 Jn 5:11-12, Acts 4:10-12, Jn 10:7-11) This testimony is confirmed through prophecy (Ps 22, Is 53, see Appendix) and miracles (Jn 10:24-25, 37-38, Acts 2:22), most notably His resurrection and ascension into heaven.

(John 14:6)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Every false religion must pervert one or more of these fundamental truths, asserting that God's standard is not that high, men are basically good, Jesus isn't God or the only way, and that there are things you can do to get to heaven. Each of these assertions is a lie!

Our Response:

We are commanded to repent (Acts 2:38-39, 3:19, 17:30-31) and believe in Jesus (Rom 10:9, Gal 2:16, Phil 3:8-9, Acts 16:31, 19:4). This is not just believing Who He is, but putting our faith completely in Him, surrendering our will to Him as our leader (Lk 6:46).

Repentance means to turn from our own ways to begin to follow His ways as revealed in His word. (Jn 14:15)

(Rom 10:9)

if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

(Acts 2:38-39)

Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

His Response:

Jesus promises us eternal life (1 Jn 5:13, Jn 11:25-26) as well as abundant life now (Jn 10:10). This does not mean that we won't have difficulties (2 Tim 3:12, Jn 16:33), but that Jesus will stay close to us through it all. (Rom 8:35-39, Heb 13:5, Mt 28:20, James 4:7)

(Rom 8:38-39)

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus also promises us the Holy Spirit to help us live abundant lives. (Acts 2:38-39, Jn

14:16-17, 26, Jn 3:3-8, 1 Cor 6:19, Eph 1:13)

Reference: Water Baptism & Holy Spirit Baptism Booklet

Our Responsibility:

We are to continually pursue holiness (1 Pe 1:15-16), a life set apart for the glory of Jesus. (see Sermon on the Mount, Mt 5-7)

(Acts 2:42)

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

This verse gives us three primary practices that build our relationship with Jesus.

- 1 study the scriptures (2 Tim 2:5, 3:16-17, 1 Pe 2:2, Jam 1:21-22, Col 3:16, Heb 4:12)
- 2 develop a life of prayer (1 Thes 5:16-18, Phil 4:6-7)
- 3 gather regularly with other believers (Heb 10:24-25)

Reference: Spiritual Disciplines Booklet

Appendix: Notable Prophecy about Jesus

virgin birth	Is 7:14, Mt 1:18
ministry in Galilee	Is 9:1-2, Mt 4:12-16
triumphal entry	Zech 9:9, Jn 12:13-14
30 pieces of silver	Zech 11:12-13, Mt 26:15, 27:6-7
born in Bethlehem	Mic 5:2, Mt 2:1
crucifixion	Ps 22, Is 53, Jn 19
pierced side	Zech 12:10, Jn 19:34
bones not broken	Ps 34:10, Jn 19:33
resurrection	Ps 16:10, 1 Cor 15:3-4
ascension	Ps 68:18, Acts 1:9-11, Eph 4:8-10