

# SALVATION – What, Who, Why and How

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Salvation is God forgiving us of our disobedience so we can develop a loving relationship with Him. We know that eventually everyone's physical body will die, but their spiritual body will live forever. Therefore, to keep from going to hell after one dies and to make sure they go to heaven to be in God's presence forever, each person must be saved and Christ Jesus is the only being qualified to save anyone.

But why do we need to be saved and why is Christ Jesus the only one who can save us? In the beginning God created people (Adam and Eve) and He loved them very much and desired for them to love Him too. So, God gave them free will to decide whether to love God or not. But they eventually decided to disobey (or sin against) God. Before they sinned though, they enjoyed a good personal relationship with God (walking and talking with Him) and they were said to be spiritually alive. But as soon as they sinned, their relationship with God was severed causing them to immediately become spiritually dead (separated from God). Ever since then, since we are all descendants of Adam and Eve, every person who has ever lived has been said to have inherited Adam's sinful nature and is spiritually dead from their physical birth until they are saved by Jesus (until they have a personal relationship with Jesus).

Now, why can only Jesus save people? Since Adam, before he sinned, was physically (genetically) and spiritually perfect, the only one to be qualified to pay the penalty for his sinful nature (disobedience to God) was a perfect person. Jesus, who is called the God-Man, was God in human form (100% God spiritually and 100% man physically). Therefore, Jesus was spiritually perfect (His relationship was in perfect harmony with God the Father) and since Jesus was conceived by God's Holy Spirit (by immaculate conception), He was more than likely perfect physically (just like Adam).

Since the penalty for sin could only be paid by the spilt blood (or death) of a perfect qualified individual, Jesus sacrificed His life in order to completely pay for mankind's penalty. He didn't just die physically, He also died spiritually by taking to the cross all the sin of every person (past, present and future). Remember that sin causes separation from God, so Jesus died totally separated from God the Father and this was more terrifying and painful to Jesus than the horrific and terribly painful physical death by crucifixion. Ever since Jesus' crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection from the dead (defeating spiritual death for us), everyone now has the opportunity to become spiritually alive, be saved and spend their eternal life in heaven forever in God's presence. Jesus' sacrifice for us is a free gift offered by God's grace. Grace is getting something good without deserving it.

So, what must you do to be saved? How can you receive salvation? Well, the truth is that Christ Jesus has done the hard part by dying on the cross for you. All you have to do is develop a relationship with Jesus. You do this by truly believing that God exists, that He loves you, that you are a sinner and separated from God, and that you need to be saved. God will forgive you of your sin when you truly believe in Jesus and accept His payment for your sin. Now you should ask God for forgiveness of your sin, then repent of your sin (do your best to turn away from your sinful habits and lifestyle). Next, accept Christ Jesus as your Lord (the leader of your life) and start growing your relationship with Jesus by praying (talking to Him) often and by studying His Word – the Holy Bible – God's revelation of what He wants us to know. Then obey His Word and trust Jesus. Obedience to His Word helps you grow in a relationship with Jesus.

So, your acceptance of Christ Jesus as your Lord and Savior is the most important decision you will ever make, for it will determine your eternal destination – forever with God or without Him. And if you develop a loving relationship with Him now, you will also enjoy His presence today.