

How does a person find salvation in Jesus Christ?

The answer is found in the Bible, God's Word to us.

The Biblical Experience of Salvation The Bible states that everyone has sinned and come short of the glory that God wants us to enjoy(Romans3:23). By experience and observation, we all know that our human nature is flawed by sin, that we are born with a tendency to be selfish, untruthful, and rebellious. And all of us have at one time or another yielded to our sinful nature. To deny that we have sinned is merely self-deception(1 John1:8)

The good news is that Jesus, who is God manifested in flesh, came to our world and gave His life on the cross to save us from our sins(Luke19:10). When He died He paid the full penalty for the sins of everyone in the world and opened the way for us to be forgiven of our sins(John1:29). As the Son of God conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, Jesus did not have a sinful nature as we do. Therefore, He could and did die for our sins.

As God manifested in flesh (John1:1; 1Timothy3:16; Matthew1:23), Jesus has the power to forgive us of our sins. No one can cleanse himself from his past sins, nor can he by his own efforts destroy his innate sinful nature. But Jesus can both cleanse him of his sins and give him a new birth of righteousness.(see 1John1:9;John 3:3-5)

How does a person find salvation in Jesus Christ? The answer is found in the Bible, God's Word to us. During His ministry, Jesus told us that the way into the kingdom of God is by a new birth of water and Spirit (John3:5). He taught that a person must repent to enter the kingdom of God (Matthew4:17; Luke13:3,5), and He assured us that God gives the Holy Spirit to all who ask Him(Luke 11:13).

After His resurrection, Jesus told His disciples that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"(Luke 24:49; Acts1:4-8).

Ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, about 120 disciples received the Holy Spirit with the sign of speaking in other languages as the Spirit within them gave the utterance. This was a most glorious moment, for it was the beginning of God's salvation for the whole world through the New Testament church.

Thousands of people witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the 120, and they asked the meaning of people speaking in foreign languages that they had not learned. The Apostle Peter explained that speaking in tongues was the evidence that God has poured out His Spirit because Jesus died for our sins and was exalted by God. Then the people asked the apostles, "what shall we do?"(Acts 2:37). They wanted to be saved, so they asked what to do in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit. "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.'" (Acts 2:38 NKJV). This name answer was given to the people of Samaria (Acts 8:5-17), to Paul (Acts 9:6-17;22:16), to the Gentiles in Caesarea(Acts10:34-48), an to the converts of John the Baptist(19:1-8).

This apostolic pattern-faith, repentance, water baptism, and infilling of the Holy Spirit-is still the pattern of salvation for us today. There is no other plan of salvation, no other true gospel. The

apostle Paul wrote, "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed"(Galatians 1:8).

Why have faith in Jesus? We cannot save ourselves, but by believing in Jesus we accept His death on the cross for our sins. This made available God's forgiveness. We are saved by grace through faith, and not by our works.(Ephesians2:8).

Why repent of our sins? Because we must confess that we are sinners and ask God to forgive us(1John1:8-10).with the help of God's Spirit, we are to turn away from our sinful ways and turn toward God and His righteousness in Jesus Christ. When we repent, we open the door to God's forgiveness.

Why be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ? Water baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts2:38), and sins are remitted (forgiven) in the name of Jesus Christ (Luke24:47; Acts 4:12; 10:43; 22:16). Since Jesus died for our sins, salvation is given to us through faith in Him, for we are buried with Him into His death and we also rise with Him in the likeness of His resurrection to "walk in newness of life."(See Romans 6:1-8)

Water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ follows the pattern established by the apostles, for the apostolic church always baptized converts in the name of Jesus Christ(Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16). (See also Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12; Galatians 3:27). At water baptism we call on the name of Jesus for the remission (forgiveness) of sins and the name of Jesus is called upon us. In this way, we express our faith in His death for the forgiveness of sins and in His resurrection for a new life in Him. When we use the name of Jesus Christ in water baptism, we fulfill the command of Jesus to baptize in the singular redemptive "name of the Father, and of the son, and of the Holy Spirit"(Matthew 28:19, NKJV).

Why receive the Holy Spirit? It is the birth of the Spirit into the kingdom of God(John 3:3,5; 1 Corinthians 12:13). During his ministry, John the Baptist foretold that Jesus would baptize people with the Holy Spirit. Although Jesus confirmed that those who believe in Him would receive the Spirit, the Spirit was not given to them until after He was glorified after His death and resurrection (John 7:37-39). After His resurrection, Jesus told His disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8).

On the Day of Pentecost believers first received the Holy Spirit (Acts2:4), and since that moment anyone who believes in Jesus, repents of his sins, and is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ can receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39). In the Book of Acts, Jews received the Holy Spirit(acts 2:4); Samaritans received the Holy Spirit (Acts8:17); Gentiles received the Holy Spirit(Acts 10:44;48); and the disciples of John the Baptist received the Holy Spirit (Acts19:1-6). These biblical examples show us that the gift of the Holy Spirit is available to anyone regardless of race, creed, color, or nationality. The Holy Spirit is the seal of God in our lives and the guarantee of our inheritance of eternal life (Ephesians 1:13-14).

How does a person receive the Holy Spirit? A person receives the Holy Spirit today the same way people received the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. When we believe, repent, and are baptized, we are ready to receive the Holy Spirit. Repentance and baptism are biblical faith responses to the gospel, and by faith we allow God to fill us with His Spirit. God gives the Spirit to anyone who opens his heart in obedient faith to Him.

How does a person know when he receives the Spirit? When a person receives the Holy Spirit he will speak in other tongues (languages) as the Spirit within him gives the utterance. This is the biblical evidence of being filled with the Spirit; speaking in tongues was the initial sign given to people in Acts when they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 8:16-18; 10:44-47; 19:6). Speaking in tongues is the one consistent biblical sign that the Holy Spirit has entered into a person.

If I have questions about the information in this article, what shall I do? Jesus said to people who had questions, "Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these the Scriptures are they which testify of me"(John5:39, NKJV). If you have questions, search the Bible to confirm the truth. Then by faith repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus, and receive the Holy Spirit. When you do, you will join the church established in the Book of Acts and millions of people living in nations around the world.

May God's love and grace bless your life and guide you always.

It is our hope that you have gained some knowledge about God's plan of salvation.

If you need further information or wish to talk with someone about Biblical salvation, please contact us.