
Why God Gave Man the Bible



A Study of the First Principles of Salvation

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Introduction

God has a definite purpose in everything He does. He has never engaged in idleness. He has never done something just for the sake of doing it. He had a purpose(s) in giving the Bible to man. Those purposes will be accomplished.

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.’” (Isaiah 55:8-11)

In this study we will explore some of the reasons God gave man the Bible especially considering those which pertain to man’s salvation.

To Tell Man He Is Lost

If God had not given man the Bible, man would not know about heaven, hell or sin. Without the Bible he would not know that he is lost and in need of a Savior.

“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?” (Luke 9:25)

Every effort to save man has been and will continue to be futile until he is made to recognize he is lost and needs salvation. As the person who has a physical illness must know of that illness and that he is in need of medical attention, the sinner must know of his spiritual sickness and see his need for salvation. Until one recognizes that he needs to be saved from his lost condition, he will never make the changes that must be made in his life to effect his salvation.

Sin dooms man to be lost. Sin, according to the Bible, is lawlessness or transgression of the law of God (1 John 3:4); all unrighteousness (1 John 5:17); what is not of faith (Romans 14:23); and not doing what God has shown to be good (James 4:17; Micah 6:8).

Though God created man in His image as a pure, upright being (Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 7:29), when man disobeyed God and sinned, he was separated from God (Genesis 3:23-24) because God could not have any part of sin.

As sin separated the first man from God, sin separates man from God today (Isaiah 59:1-2; Ephesians 2:12). Man, because of his sins, is lost and doomed to eternal death—separation from God in the place of eternal punishment (Romans 6:23; Matthew 25:41-46). How would man have known this if God had not given him the Bible?

Questions

1. What is sin?
2. Why is it important for one to know of sin?
3. Why does sin separate a person from God?
4. Who, according to Romans 3:23 have sinned?
5. What is the ultimate end of sin?

To Assure Man That He Desires All to Be Saved

The Bible clearly states that it is the desire of the heavenly Father that all people be saved (1 Timothy 2:3-4).

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”
(1 Timothy 2:3-4)

2 Peter 3:9 states that God allows this earth to continue to exist because He “is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

Truth, which Jesus identifies as the word of God in His prayer for His disciples in John 17:17, is God’s means of salvation. It, the gospel, is His power unto salvation (Romans 1:16). It has the power to free men from sin (John 8:32). It thoroughly furnishes man with all he needs to know in relation to life and godliness and how to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world so that he might be saved in the end. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; Titus 2:12).

In the Bible one learns of the wonderful love God manifested toward mankind. His love allowed His Son to die as a sacrifice for sin (John 3:16-17) even though man did not deserve His love (Romans 5:8). Such shows God’s intense desire for the salvation of every soul.

The Bible reveals that Christ built His church to stand forever as a haven of refuge for all who would obey Him and be saved (Matthew 16:18-19). Every soul that is saved is added to it (Acts 2:47). The Bible shows people how they may be a part of Christ’s church.

Questions

1. According to 2 Peter 3:9, why does God allow the earth to continue to exist?
2. What is truth? (John 17:17)
3. What is God’s power unto salvation? (Romans 1:16)
4. How is the greatness of the love of God manifested in Romans 5:8?
5. When one is saved, to what is he added?

To Explain All He Has Done to Save Man

God created man an intelligent being. Man is able to reason, study and understand (Genesis 1:26). God gave man the Bible to read and study so that he might learn and understand the way of salvation.

“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles — if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets...”
(Ephesians 3:1-5).

In preparing for the salvation of man, as seen in the Old Testament, God chose Abraham from whom He would develop a nation of people (Genesis 12:1-3). God cultivated and tutored that nation for hundreds of years that through it He might bring the Savior, Jesus Christ the seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:16), into the world. He blessed them when they were obedient but severely punished them when they departed from His way. We know all of this because God has given it to us in the Bible so that we might benefit from it (1 Corinthians 10:7-11; Romans 15:4). In the Old Testament, shadows, types, prophecies and promises all relating to salvation are found which find their fulfillment in the New Testament.

In the New Testament, that which is authoritative for people today, one learns:

- Of the sacrificial death, the victorious resurrection and the glorious coronation of Christ as king over His kingdom (Acts 2:22-36).
- Of the establishment of the church (Acts 2:1ff).
- That the word of God has been given to serve as man’s infallible guide in all matters pertaining to life and godliness (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3)

All this was done by God to save man from sin.

Questions

1. Can one understand Christ and His mission?
2. According to Romans 15:4, why were the writings of old written?
3. In whose “seed” would all the nations of the earth be blessed? (Gen. 12:1-3)
4. Who is the “seed” of Abraham?
5. What is man’s “infallible guide” for living?

To Reveal the Meaning of Salvation

Many people today either completely misunderstand or only partially understand the subject of salvation. There is no excuse for either of these situations. God has revealed His way of salvation in such a way that all can understand it (Ephesians 3:1-5). Since God requires all to know and understand it, He has revealed it in a way that it can be comprehended.

“Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” (Ephesians 5:17)

Written in terms that God expects all to understand, the Bible reveals:

- The meaning of salvation. When one complies with God’s conditions of pardon, all his sins are forgiven never to be remembered against him.
- The destiny of salvation. The end of the way of salvation is an eternal home in heaven and a crown of life.
- The method of salvation. The method by which one is saved is belief in and obedience to Jesus Christ.

In the Bible, salvation is pictured in many figures of speech which help one understand its meaning and that which it is able to accomplish in ones life.

- A birth. (John 3:1-5) It is a birth which washes away sins (Acts 22:16) and adds one to the body of the saved. (Acts 2:47)
- A death. (Romans 6:1-5) A Christian has died to sin. Death to sin is accomplished when one is buried in water and raised to a new life. Immersion in water, baptism, is the only act connected with the religion of Christ in which one is buried and raised. Therefore, in baptism one dies to sin – his relationship to sin is terminated.
- Redemption. (Ephesians 1:3-7) One is redeemed by the blood of Christ which was shed on the cross (Eph. 3:7). Redemption takes place in Christ (Romans 3:24). Since redemption takes place in Christ, and one is baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27), therefore, redemption from sin and Satan does not take place until one is baptized into Christ.
- Justification. (Romans 4:23-25) Jesus paid the penalty for sins so that God might be just and the justifier of all who have faith in Jesus. (Romans 3:24-26)

Questions

1. What is the meaning of salvation?
2. What is the destiny of salvation?
3. What is the method of salvation?
4. How is salvation a birth?
5. How is salvation a death?

To Realize What One Must Do to Be Saved

From the beginning of time, God has always revealed what He desires of man. The Bible reveals that the principle which effects salvation has been the same in every dispensation. In the Old Testament it stated one must fear God and keep His commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13). In the New Testament it reveals one must fear God and work righteousness (Acts 10:34-35).

“Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.” (Acts 10:34-35)

God has revealed in the gospel what people must now do to be saved—to have salvation, one must obey Jesus Christ and His gospel (Hebrews 5:8-9).

According to the New Testament, the gospel of Jesus Christ, to be saved one must:

- Hear the gospel, the word of God. (Romans 10:17)
- Believe in both Father and Son. (Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24)
- Repent of his sins. (Acts 17:30-31)
- Confess his faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 10:10; Matthew 10:32)
- Be baptized. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21)

The Scriptures plainly teach that baptism in water has a key role in the salvation of the sinner. The Bible relates that baptism:

- Causes one to be “born again” allowing him to enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:3-5)
- Brings salvation. (Mark 16:15-16)
- Puts one into the body of Christ, His church. (1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:47)
- Gives one remission of sins. (Acts 2:36-38)
- Washes away sins. (Acts 22:16)
- Unites one with Christ in the likeness of His death making him a new creation. (Romans 6:1-7)
- Makes one a Christian. (1 Corinthians 1:12-13)
- Makes one a child of God (Galatians 3:26-27)
- Cleanses the sinner. (Ephesians 5:25-26; Titus 3:4-5)
- Saves. (1 Peter 3:21)

Questions

1. According to Acts 10:34-35, who is accepted by God?
2. According to Hebrews 5:8-9, to whom does Jesus grant salvation?
3. What five important things must be done by the sinner if he is to be saved?
4. If one is to be a child of God, what must he do according to Galatians 3:26-27?

To Reveal What One Must Do to Keep Saved

Jude ascribes to God the ability to preserve His people faultless until the judgment.

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.” (Jude 24-25)

God is working in behalf of His saints to keep them secure. He has provided them:

- The example of Jesus for them to follow. (1 Peter 2:21-22)
- The resurrection of Jesus to assure them of their resurrection in the final day. (Romans 6:5)
- His word which is able to save their souls. (James 1:21)
- A plan of pardon for the child of God who sins. (Acts 8:22-23)
- The local church. It is the purpose and intent of Jesus that His church be presented without spot or blemish, i.e., be saved. (Ephesians 5:25-26)

The Lord realized His disciples would need help to keep saved. He understood they would be surrounded with worldly influences and that temptation would be strong. He knew that the cares, riches and pleasures of this life would tempt many to leave Him.

Jesus prayed to the Father in behalf of His disciples that God might “Sanctify them by Your truth: Your word is truth” (John 17:17). This prayer reveals how one may remain saved.

To “sanctify” means to set apart or separate from the world and to consecrate oneself to God. This is accomplished by the word of God. When one applies the word of God to himself and lives by it, he is in fellowship with both the Father and Son (2 John 9), and thus has salvation. One must keep the commands of God being faithful even to the point of death (Revelation 2:10) and he will receive the crown of life at the final day.

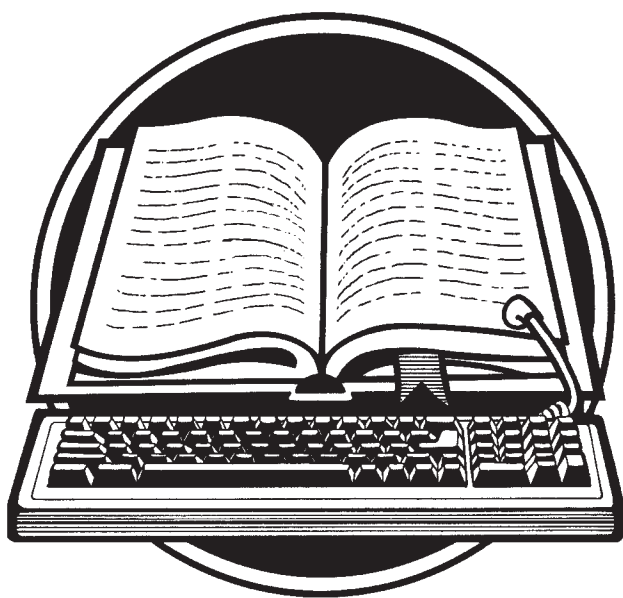
Questions

1. How does following the example of Jesus contribute to keeping one saved?
2. What role does the local church have in keeping one saved?
3. What does “sanctify” mean?
4. Why do the cares, riches and pleasures of this life cause many to lose their faith?
5. According to Revelation 2:10, what must one do obtain a “crown of life?”

Conclusion

God's purpose in giving man the Bible is only fulfilled when each person learns its message and applies it to his life so that he might have the salvation of his soul. Have you obeyed the word of God so that you might have your sins forgiven and be saved?

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