

## Chapter 2

What is a christian,  
And how do I know I'm saved ?

(SAVED: rescued; spared from disaster)

### A. BEGINNING OUR INVESTIGATION

A Christian is someone who has made willful decision to put their trust in Jesus Christ as the only one who can save them from their sins. This commitment to the person of Jesus Christ involves receiving Him as Savior and Lord.

Knowing Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord is the most exciting relationship you can have. It is the beginning of a life of adventure with the all-loving, all-powerful God! To understand this more fully, it's helpful to first discover why Jesus came.

### B. BIBLE STUDY

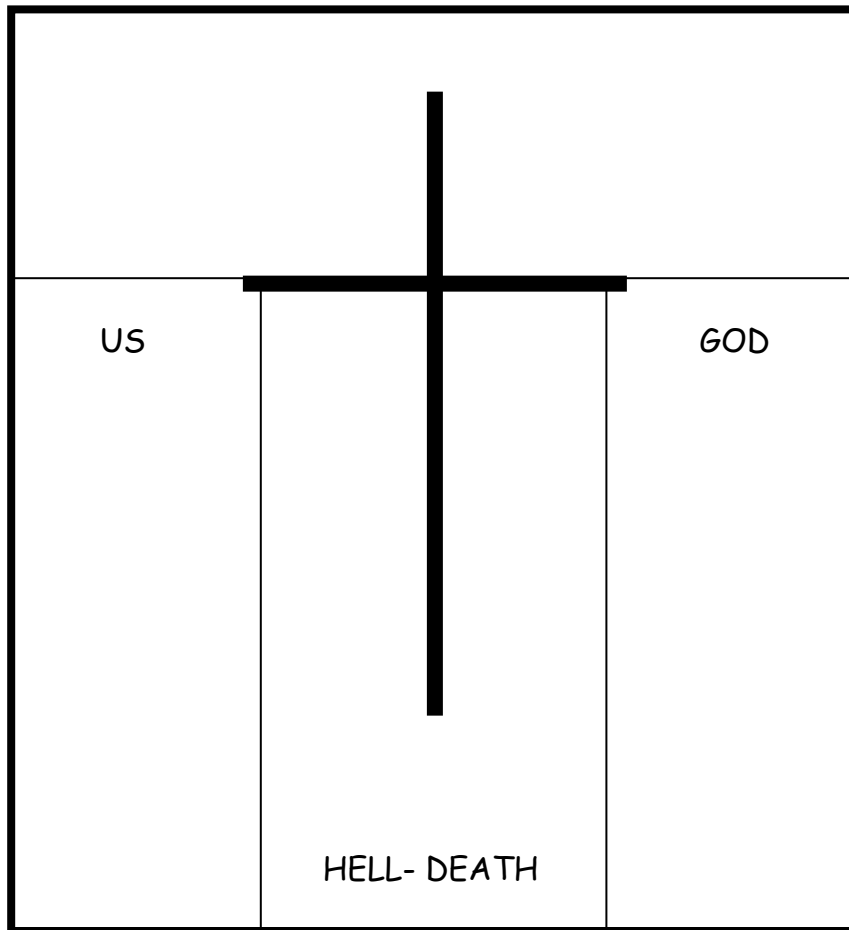
#### THE PROBLEM

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

What is the problem? Sin & Separation from God

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death."

What is the penalty? Judgment, Death, Eternal Separation from God



**THE REMEDY**

**Romans 5:8-9**

**"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's judgment."**

How was the penalty paid? Christ's death

**Eph. 2:8-9**

**"God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. <sup>9</sup>Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."**

How much does it cost? Free to us!

It is called, GRACE, or **G**od's **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense !

**HOW TO HAVE  
FORGIVENESS**

**1 Jn. 1:9**

**"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong."**

What comes first? REPENT

**Jn 1:12**

**"But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God."**

What comes second? BELIEVE-RECEIVE

**Romans 5:1**

**"Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us."**

What comes third? FORGIVENESS, PEACE WITH GOD, NEW LIFE

**I UNDERSTAND OUR NEED FOR A SAVIOR...  
HELP ME UNDERSTAND "LORD"...**

**Take a few minutes to answer and discuss these questions:**

1. If you could decide, would you live in a kingdom or a democracy?
2. If you could decide, would you be a slave or a volunteer?
3. If you could decide, would you do what you want or do what someone tells you to do?

4. If you could decide, would you like to be the person who chooses other people or would you like to be chosen by someone else?
5. If you could decide, would you be in control of your possessions, or would you relinquish control?
6. What does the term "Jesus is Lord" mean to you?

### KINGDOM / DEMOCRACY

**Rev. 19:16 "On his robe and thigh was written this title: King of kings and Lord of lords."**

We see that Jesus came as King of kings and Lord of lords. Being in relationship with Him means putting ourselves under His rule and authority and requires obedience on our part to his commands.

### SLAVE / VOLUNTEER

**James 1:1 "This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ."**

These early disciples clearly understood their role and relationship to Jesus. **Bond servants** were persons freed from slavery who then voluntarily put themselves back into the servant role. While volunteers are concerned with themselves, their convenience, their ability to choose and control, a slave has no agenda but that of the master. While "slave" is never a popular word or concept, we recognize that we have been slaves of sin until we are set free by Jesus Christ. We are freed persons who then, as the early disciples, put ourselves back into the service of a benevolent master.

### DO WHAT I WANT / DO WHAT SOMEONE TELLS ME

Most of us are *determined* to be INDEPENDENT, making our own decisions, but if Jesus is Lord, who then should then be controlling our decisions? Who are we to obey?

**John 14:15 "If you love me, obey my commandments."**

If we love Jesus, what will we do? We are to follow Him with single-minded obedience.

**Coming to Jesus is not just a continuation of life as it has been with the addition of His blessing. We enter into a life of obedience (doing what Jesus tells us to do). As we see in Matt. 7:21-27, obedience is more than lip service. It is foundational to life and involves action. This lifestyle requires living in Bible study and prayer so we know how and what to obey.**

### **CHOOSE / CHOSEN**

The volunteer mentality is to pick and choose. However, in John 15:16 we see that we did not choose Jesus. He chose us! We are special and are designed to be part of God's plan in the world.

Each of us is called and appointed to a unique place in God's plan. We choose to respond and obey His command to fulfill the purpose to which we are called. This again involves communication. He will guide and direct us along His chosen path if we are willing to spend time talking and listening to Him.

### **KEEP CONTROL OF MY POSSESSIONS / RELINQUISH CONTROL OF MY POSSESSIONS**

We are speaking of resources and who has the right to control them. This goes beyond just material and financial possessions, but includes our time, talent, occupation, family, etc.

#### **Acts 2:42-47**

**They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, sharing in the Lord's Supper and in prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had. They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.**

We see that when this community acknowledged Jesus as Lord, that included all areas of their life. Members of the New Testament community

were not concerned with protecting themselves, their time or possessions because all belonged to the Lord, anyway. They held nothing back, and look at the results:

1. No one was in need; everyone was cared for.
2. Wonders and signs (miracles) were taking place.
3. People were growing spiritually.
4. The church was growing numerically as people were coming to know Jesus.

In our affluent society and Baby Boomer mentality, giving up anything is a major issue. We may have a great deal of uncomfortable feelings and even fears in giving up control. Let's remember to whom we are giving control. See Matt. 11:28-30. Our trust in Him grows as we know Him, His character and His intent toward us.

#### **Mt. 11:28-30**

**Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light."**

If Jesus is Lord, then He has absolute authority over all of my life. I can no longer compartmentalize it. It involves every area of my life, and every dimension of my being.

"All that I know of myself to all that I know of Jesus"

This can be expressed as a commitment of the:

1. INTELLECT . Christianity is based in FACT. It is not a blind leap of faith. We are free to investigate everything about our faith, but we must commit to Jesus with our mind.

2. EMOTIONS . As Christians, we enter into a LOVE relationship with the Lord. Our relationship with Christ does not depend on our emotions, but as in marriage, we develop a bonding, an attachment that grows and grows.

3. WILL . We are not forced into a commitment to Jesus, but are asked to make a decision, to choose to be committed to Him. The choice is based in our decision-making center, the will. **It is very clear in Scripture that we must make a choice; we cannot stay neutral (see 1 Kings 18:21). To not choose is to choose a life apart from Christ.**

### PERSONAL REFLECTION...

**Consider your relationship with Christ. Have you asked Jesus Christ to come into your life, to be your Lord and Savior?**

- If you have, are there areas of life where you need to let Him be the absolute authority?
- If you have not, and want to, here is a simple prayer to guide you:

**"Dear Jesus, I need You! I believe that You died on the cross for my sin and rose from the dead. Thank you for forgiving me. I want to receive Your gift of salvation by inviting You to come into my life and take control. I want to follow You!"**

If this is your prayer, or if you'd like to discuss any of the topics we've dealt with so far, please contact one of the pastors. We'd be happy to hear from you.

### THE AWESOME RESULTS OF BEING A CHRISTIAN...

**What happens after we make a commitment to Jesus? From Scripture we see we can expect to see changes in our lives. Take some time and look these up:**

1. 2 Corinthians 5:17. We get a new start in life. The old is forgiven and forgotten.
2. John 3:16. We are given eternal life with God.

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| 3. | Romans 8:9.               | We are given the gift of the Holy Spirit and His ongoing presence in our lives. |
| 4. | Galatians 5:16-18.        | We are enabled to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, not our sin nature.         |
| 5. | Galatians 5:22.           | Christ's character will begin to develop in us.                                 |
| 6. | Philippians 4:19.         | All the resources of God are at our disposal.                                   |
| 7. | Hebrews 10:24-25.         | We are brought into the fellowship of the church.                               |
| 8. | 1 Corinthians 12:4 and 7. | We receive spiritual gifts to effectively do ministry.                          |
| 9. | John 1:12.                | We become a child of God.   |

**DEALING WITH DOUBTS IN OUR  
RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST**

What are some reasons we might begin to doubt our salvation?

**Doubts, questions, and varying emotions are common parts of everyone's life, but they are very unreliable gauges of anyone's relationship with Christ. The Christian lives by faith in the trustworthiness of God and His Word. How does this work?**

**A. *Do not depend upon feelings.*** (No matter how you feel, God always remains committed to you)!

1. **FACT** - God and His Word, absolute truth.
2. **FAITH** - Our trust in God and His Word, despite how we feel.
3. **FEELINGS** - Up and down. Good feelings may come and go, but the facts of God's love for you and His forgiveness remain consistent.

So, what if I don't "feel" like a Christian tomorrow?

The more we learn of His Word, the more we will be able to answer any doubts with solid facts. Our feelings will begin to respond to the truth of God's Word and not to our circumstances.

**B. *Don't confuse the gift of salvation with the growing process.*** (Read 1 Peter 1-2).

Example: Compare PHYSICAL BIRTH vs. SPIRITUAL BIRTH (John 3).

**C. *Remember His promises: He will never leave or forsake us.***

See Hebrews 13:5-6; John 6:37; and Matt.28:19-20.