

simple christianity



Confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

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The New Testament Book of John – With Commentary Breaks

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the Holy Bible, The Amplified Version, and the New American Standard Version.

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SIMPLE CHRISTIANITY – A FOREWARD

The King James Version of the Bible contains 790,678 words, 1,189 chapters, and 31,102 verses across 66 books.

There are approximately **31,000 to 33,000 words of Jesus** found in the New Testament and if you include the Book of the Revelation that number increases, slightly.

Exact numbers vary depending on translation, but estimates based on the King James Version (KJV) and modern comparisons are helpful benchmarks:

- **Matthew:** Approximately 18,300 total words; about **8,200** are spoken by Jesus.
- **Mark:** Around 11,300 total words; about **5,400** are the words of Jesus.
- **Luke:** Roughly 19,400 total words; about **7,900** are spoken by Jesus.
- **John:** About 15,600 total words; around **8,000** are the words of Jesus.

Since this is so, other than for the obvious linguistic, cultural, social, political and geographical reasons, why do we need denominational ‘add on books’ explaining what the Bible is saying and teaching?

For example, Catholics often use the ‘man developed’ Catechism of the Catholic Church, containing around 100 pages, to further explain the Bible, as it provides teachings and interpretations in line with Catholic doctrine. Additionally, study Bibles like the Ignatius Catholic Study Bible offer commentary and insights to help understand Scripture better.

The ‘man developed’ Westminster Confession of Faith, containing around 450 pages, is a key document for Presbyterians, serving as a Reformed confession of faith that outlines their beliefs and doctrines. It was created in 1646 and remains a subordinate standard of doctrine in many Presbyterian churches worldwide, guiding their teachings and practices.

The Church of the Nazarene uses a ‘man developed’ book called "The Manual," containing around 300 pages, which outlines its doctrines, governance, and practices, in addition to the Bible. This manual is updated every four years and serves as a guide for the church's beliefs and operations.

And so it goes with many denominations’ teachings, or is it re-teaching and redefining subjects, (doctrines)? Subjects and doctrines such as the Essential Nature of God, The Names of God, The Attributes of God, The Trinity, The Divine Decrees, Creation, Providence, Man in His Original State, Man in the State of Sin, Main the Covenant of Grace, The Names and Nature of Christ, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. These seem to be man’s attempt to explain scriptures and the doctrines therein from an honest albeit anthropologic point of view.

After all, there is estimated to be around 45,000 Christian denominations and over 2.6 billion people themselves Christian worldwide and around 300 Christian denominations and around 235 people identifying as Christians in the United States; and there are around 100 versions of the Bible in English alone.

I suppose these are considered to be helpful efforts for the “Leadership” of the church to ‘get their stories denominationally straight’ and for the poor dumb “laity-sheep” to be properly intimidated to stay in line. But, isn’t reading, studying and preaching the Bible enough? Apparently not.

It just seems both interesting and odd that the men and women who undertake the arduous task of obtaining a bachelor’s degree, master’s degree or even a doctorate in one or more disciplines of higher religious education, in order to become pastors, Bible teachers and theologians, cannot behave and live with the same or similar humble simplicity as Jesus – while still exhibiting the steadfast resolve of Christ in His mission. ([15 richest pastors in America](#); the [Vatican and the Catholic church](#) - the walk of shame),

Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13)

Simple Christianity



It is my opinion, along with the opinions of thousands or even tens of thousands and perhaps millions of others, that Christianity has both become too complicated and has veered off the course set by Jesus.

The introduction to Christianity that most preachers use is simple enough, it just doesn't make a lot of sense and it is not Biblical. "That" being the infamous 'sinner's prayer'.

During the 1980's and 1990's a movement emerged to make the Gospel message and the meaning of salvation more relatable. It was an admixture of long held Biblical doctrines with human philosophies, i.e., a [syncretism](#). Words were redefined to fit contemporary social norms, hymns were updated and revised to move people emotionally, and many doctrines and confessions were modified or neglected all together. A wide divergence developed promoting differing political views, social views and musical factions.

This movement further splintered from traditional Biblical Christianity into various new age brands of Christianity, a new and improved kinds of positive thinking religion, all sorts of self-help gospels, a not-so-new name-it-and-claim-it gospel, a brand of communal christianity or the social gospel, (i.e., a twisted Socialist and Communist theology), and most significantly, a new One World Religions, combining Catholicism, Islam and Judaism.

From this chaos, has emerged polished kinetic, entertainment-based type of church program and is becoming the face of "church" transcending denominational lines and religious philosophies.

This strange transformation of the “church experience” has the uncanny ability to excite one’s emotions, producing adrenaline, dopamine and endorphins. It’s almost like going to a religious rock concert or play. It seems to be an attractive and fun alternative to the traditional church service, especially for the under forty crowd. but is discernably lacking the power to transform a person by the renewing of their mind into what is [good, acceptable and perfect](#) according to the Bible.

The result of this exploration of alternative methods of presenting the Gospel, seems to have created a drift from actually knowing the God of the Bible and the Bible itself. Many theologians and Bible organizations are sounding the alarm regarding the rise of Biblical illiteracy, especially among professing Christians. According to the [“State of the Bible 2020 report” released by the Barna Group and the American Bible Society](#), U.S. adults who say they read the Bible daily dropped from 14% to 9% between early 2019 and 2020.

The study found that the proportion of Americans who read the Bible daily also fell to fewer than one in 10 (9%), the lowest number on record during the 10 years of the State of the Bible research study.

Unapplied knowledge is just idle information.

There are a multitude churches which have remained theologically faithful and doctrinally sound, but often they will present the Gospel Message and the Bible in ways that are theologically complex and hard to understand for daily living. Many of these remaining faithful churches and preachers and pastors who tend to be “educationally academic” in their approach to preaching and teaching the Bible, may be good at disseminating information and even for indoctrination. But when presented this way it can have limited effectiveness to inculcate [the power of the Gospel which for salvation to everyone who believes](#).

“From Keeping It Simple Stupid” to “Simple Is As Simple Does”

"Simple is as simple does" can mean that a person's approach to matters in life and spirituality can be judged by their actions; if someone behaves in complex and unintelligible ways, it reflects their inability find simple solutions to problems and

the inability to relate to most people. This phrase emphasizes that actions are more telling than appearances or claims of the ability to reason or to think critically.

The Bible was written for every man, woman, boy and girl to read and understand. It has not remained that way and for some very good reasons, many would say. But, God intended His Word to be intelligible and useful for everyone who would believe.

Keeping It Simple

The Gospel Message literally means “good news” and occurs 93 times in the Bible, exclusively in the New Testament. The gospel is, broadly speaking, the whole of Scripture; more narrowly, the gospel is the good news concerning Christ and the way of salvation.

The Old Testament Law was given to Israel during the time of Moses ([Deuteronomy 5:1](#)). The Law can be thought of as a measuring stick, and sin is anything that falls short of “perfect” according to that standard. Despite our “goodness” or “badness” relative to each other, we are all in the same spiritual boat, i.e., we have sinned, and the punishment for sin is death, i.e. separation from God, the source of life ([Romans 3:23](#)), and in order for us to go to heaven.

The Jewish Law which was the forerunner of Christianity, established the fact that being made spiritually clean from sin or “perfect” can only happen through a *blood-letting sacrifice* of an innocent life ([Hebrews 9:22](#)). (Although this makes little sense to the contemporary mind, it was well known and was a legalistic and burdensome thing to the ancient Jew.)

The Gospel involves Jesus’ death on the cross as the sin offering to fulfill the Law’s righteous requirement ([Romans 8:3–4](#); [Hebrews 10:5–10](#)). (Just for your information, under the Jewish Law, animal sacrifices were offered year after year as a reminder of sin and a symbol of the coming sacrifice of Christ ([Hebrews 10:3–4](#)). When Christ offered Himself at Calvary, that symbol became a reality for all who would believe ([Hebrews 10:11–18](#)). The work of “atonement”, being made “at one with God”, is finished now, and that’s good news. No more burden of guilt,

shame or fear from one's lack of perfection or sinlessness, for anyone who believes in Jesus, what He has done and what He promised to His followers.

The gospel also involves Jesus' resurrection on the third day. "He was killed for our sins and was raised to life for our "justification", or our being declared "not guilty", justified and in good standing with God ([Romans 4:25](#)). The fact that Jesus negated the penalty of sin, (our faults, failures and imperfections), and death (sin's penalty) is good news, indeed. The fact that He offers to share that victory with us is the greatest news of all ([John 14:19](#)).

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile" ([Romans 1:16](#)).

The gospel is a *bold* message, and we are not ashamed of proclaiming it.

It is a *powerful* message, because it is God's good news.

It is a *saving* message, the only thing that can truly reform the human heart.

It is a *universal* message, for Jews and Gentiles both.

And the gospel is received by faith; salvation is the gift of God ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)).

The gospel is the good news that God loves the world enough to give His only Son to die for our sin ([John 3:16](#)). (This statement is only useful to those who choose to believe it).

The gospel is good news because our salvation and eternal life and home in heaven are guaranteed through Christ ([John 14:1-4](#)). "He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you" ([1 Peter 1:3-4](#)).

The gospel is good news when we understand that we do not (and cannot) earn our salvation but God offers this "Gift" without cost.

The gospel is the good news that we, who were once enemies of God, in His sight, have been “reconciled” or brought into agreement with God and with His standard of perfection, by the blood-sacrifice of Christ, reestablishing unified relationship with God.

The gospel is the good news that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” ([Romans 8:1](#)).

Simpler Yet

Even if you don’t know it or can’t recognized or won’t accept it, in so many ways, you are messed up – in fact, you were born that way! And it is because of that innate condition, even though it is no fault of your own, your life will always be a struggle. No matter how intelligent, no matter how rich or connected you become, your condition will always present new obstacles. And, you will die frustrated and unfulfilled unless you change your core self and your core beliefs. You will die and your soul / spirit will descend into what is described as an outer darkness, where there is misery, wailing, endless terror and intolerable pain for eternity. But it need not be this way.

God loves you and has given you a choice. Follow Him. Believe in His Son, Jesus and follow Him and His accept and adopt His Mindset and His ways.

The Benefits of Christianity

Unconditional Love
Satisfying, lasting Joy
Peace that transcends natural understanding
Inexplicable Patience
Undue Kindness
Unearned Goodness
Dependable Faithfulness
Comfort Giving Gentleness
The Power of Self-Control

Without Christ

Only conditional love
An insatiable search of happiness
Peace only from gain
Results oriented patience
Requite kindness
And eye for an eye goodness
Faithful to laws or dogma
Occasional gentleness
Control over or by others

IF YOU WILL ACCEPT IT, GOD GIVES

Mental, emotional and spiritual relief through forgiveness of your sins, faults, and bad deeds - past, present and future - if you surrender your life, your mind, will and emotions to Jesus and conform thinking to His Gospel Truth.

Ongoing forgiveness and cleansing from sins through confession to Jesus and a new turning away from wrong doing, with continual forgiveness and peace by forgiving others of their misdeeds and sins.

God's abundant provisions for your life according to your true needs and more than you can even think to ask.

I WOULD BUT I AM NOT READY TO GIVE UP SOME THINGS

If you are thinking that you would like to have all that knowing and following Jesus has to offer, then it this is all far away from you. The correct question to ask is, "What do I have to give in trade?" And the answer is, "Just You".

If you are thinking I have to give up *this or that* to be a Christian well think again. God really does not want your *this or that* bad habits. In fact, God cannot tolerate those things anyway, so you keep them – or not. But like I said, it is *those things* that are causing your problems in the first place. So think it over. Shed the things that are causing your misery, loneliness, poverty, ill health, worries, low self-esteem, etc., and find peace and true personal and spiritual fulfillment or stay the way you are, being uncertain of your future and miserable. It really is your choice.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Just go! Go to God and talk to God. Tell Him your situation. God knows that most people cannot just unload a lifetime of thinking a certain way and shed each and every practice or habit they have accumulated over a lifetime. He will speak into your heart and mind and begin to unburden you of your *this and that*, one thing at a time. Later on, you might want to find a Bible church to meet people who are on a

similar journey and learn some things from them. Maybe you'll want to get a Bible and see what else God has to say to you.

And believe it or not, you really can hear from God through prayer, through the Bible, through His Church, and circumstances, *IF* you trade in your natural mind for a Spiritual mind by being born again in your spirit. Just tell God that is what you want and then pursue Him. It's simple. Don't make it harder than it needs to be.

Or, hey, drop me a note and let's talk.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

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Simple Christianity - Part II



Would Jesus be welcomed in His Church, if He were to return today? Likewise, would you be welcomed in your church if you were truly following all that Jesus commanded and in the ways He demonstrated?

Could He resume His ministry as it was prior to His ascension to heaven without being expelled from most churches, attacked by the ‘woke left’, assailed by the radical Islamic front or jailed by our own government?

This is, of course, a ridiculous question because the Bible tells us that Jesus is coming back, but it will be to gather His elect and take them, (rapture them), to stand before the Throne of God so God may begin seven years of judgement on the earth. But the point is that Jesus was far too radical for most Christian church denominations to put up with Him. (non-denominations included).

Just to be clear, Jesus came to earth, was born in a manger in Jerusalem, and did exactly what He came to do in exactly the time that God the Father allotted. When His earthly mission was finished, it was finished. Then He sent us, His disciples, saying, *“Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I am going to the Father. Verse 13. And whatever you ask in My name, this I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Verse 14. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.”* [John 14:12](#).

I believe this hypothetical is worth considering as a way to determine if becoming a Christian is for you, or to evaluate your own claim as being a Christian and to help refocus Christians minds on the commands and teachings of Jesus.

Let's begin with some of Jesus' most controversial statements and acts:

GO AND DO AS I HAVE DONE

It wasn't enough that Jesus demonstrated and performed what He taught, He told His disciples to go and do the same. *“And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Heal *the* sick, raise *the* dead, cleanse those with leprosy, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give* (exactly as Jesus did it).

Why would Jesus choose to perform the impossible? Was it to demonstrate the power of the Kingdom of God? Jesus had announced that people should “repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is not at hand”, and they have not only seen and experienced His power, but now His disciples are told to exercise this same power under His authority. So, what has changed since that day? I have searched the scriptures and what I have found is that Jesus is the same today as He was then and His final earthly words were to *“follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even until the end of the age.”*

DO NOT MONITIZE AND DO NOT CAPITALIZE

*Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, or a bag for *your* journey, or even two tunics, or sandals, or a staff (in this ministry of Christ Jesus); for the worker is deserving of his support. And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house until you leave *that city*. As you enter the house, give it your greeting. If the house is worthy, *see that your blessing of peace* comes upon it. But if it is not worthy, take back your *blessing of peace*. And whoever does not receive you nor listen to your words, as you leave that house or city, shake the dust off your feet. Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for *the* land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment, than for that city.*

I don't know about you, but I find it very unsettling that not only are Jesus' disciples (more specifically, the pastors, preachers, evangelists, teachers and theologians), inviting people to church rather than going out with the church, they are not doing what they say, they are sending others in their place. Then they capitalize on their methods and acquire wealth and fame for themselves. I not only find it unsettling, but I find it despicable.

DO NOT PATRONIZE PEOPLE – TELL THE TRUTH – STAY ON GUARD

“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be as wary as serpents, and as innocent as doves. Be on guard against people, for they will hand you over to *the* courts and flog you in their synagogues (if you are doing as I have shown you, commanded and taught you); and you will even be brought before governors and kings on My account, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given you in that hour. For it is not you who are speaking, but *it is* the Spirit of your Father who is speaking in you.

What part of being sent out as “sheep in the midst of wolves” and to “be as innocent as doves” do you not understand? Hiding behind a bevy of attorneys or cowering in the shadows!

THE GOSPEL WILL DIVIDE THE GOOD FROM THE BAD

“Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death (because of My Message). And you will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

The Message of the Gospel is divisive only because people will choose the darkness of this world over the Light of the Gospel. One of the primary reasons the nation of Israel has been reviled, persecuted and endlessly punished is because of their absolute standards and enduring success as a people and a nation. Now, even more so, will the world hate and persecute Christians for living the standards of Christ.

STAY ON THE MOVE – DO NOT SETTLE DOWN IN BUILDINGS

“But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish *going through* the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

Does it become even slightly apparent that the contemporary churches are not following the commands and examples of Jesus? And please, for those of you who are the paid professional church folks, please don't try saying, “that message was just for *those* Apostles”, because if that were true, then the message and command to “go and make disciples of all the world” would have ended after these men were martyred.

But it did not end there. Jesus told His disciples and His Apostles to “*Go, therefore, and make disciples*”. He did not tell them to go and make Christians or church attenders or religious adherents. He did not even tell them to “go and make men and women, boys and girls who will have a personal relationship with Me”, although that would be an outcome. Jesus told them to “*Go and make disciples, of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit teaching them to follow all that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*” *And as the preceding generation passed away, the present generation is to carry the same message, following the same instructions, using the same methods in the same way.*

Jesus commanded and commissioned His disciples to be disciple-makers and to make disciple-makers, each using his or her Spiritual Gifts as they went. They and we are to continue until He returns for His Church.

So many in the church are overly concerned about the appearance and their brand that I am fairly certain that these ‘church leaders’ would object strenuously to these and other words and methods of Jesus if they were spoken and taught in their own churches! For example:

BRING A SWORD

Matthew 10:34, *“Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. Verse 35. For I came to TURN A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; Verse 36 and A PERSON’S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD.”*

FULFILL THE LAW

Matthew 5:17, *“Do not presume that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill the Law and the Prophets.”*

CALL SINNERS

Mark 2:17, *“And hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”*

SAVE THE WORLD

John 12:47, *“If anyone hears My teachings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.”*

CAST FIRE & BRING DIVISION UPON THE EARTH

Luke 12:49, *“I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! Verse 50. But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished! Verse 51. Do you think that I came to provide peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather to create division;*

These are just a few of the things Jesus demonstrated and commanded that we, His Church, do.

I have heard so many preachers, bible teachers and detractors alike, try to justify or explain away these Words of Jesus because they just cannot fathom the gentle and sweet ‘dashboard Jesus’ saying such things as we find in the verses cited. These same confused preachers really get tied in a knot over John 14:12. They will begin

their commentary of teaching it with, “*what this really means is...*” or, “*times and technologies have changed, so our methods need to change*”.

Jesus said what He meant and meant exactly what He said. He is our model for our counter cultural resistance to the growing global threat of the Satanic evils of false gospels, a new religious paganism, the rise of false teachers, false religions, hiding within the new One World Religion (see the [Abrahamic Family House](#)) and the pseudo-religion of the Communist-Marxist-Globalist movements, And we need to get on with it.

Jesus’ time on earth was spent fulfilling the purpose, and will of His Father ([Matthew 5:19](#), [Matthew 5:39](#)). Jesus was on [a singular mission \(John 6 :38\)](#) and nothing would stand in the way of accomplishing that mission: [“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”](#)

A TWO-SIDED COIN

We are told, on one side of the coin, to “*Go and make disciples of all the nations*”, while at the same time, we are told to “*be as gentle as sheep and innocent as doves*”. We are not only to tell others of God’s Love, His mercies and His grace for all people, but we are to be like-minded, united in spirit, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted courteous and compassionate toward each other as members of one household, and humble in spirit; and never return evil for evil or insult for insult avoid scolding, berating, and any kind of abuse, but on the contrary, give a blessing pray for one another’s well-being, contentment, and protection; for you have been called for this very purpose, that you might inherit a blessing from God that brings well-being, happiness, and protection. For, “THE ONE WHO WANTS TO ENJOY LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FREE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING treachery, deceit. “HE MUST TURN AWAY FROM WICKEDNESS AND DO WHAT IS RIGHT. HE MUST SEARCH FOR PEACE with God, with self, with others AND PURSUE IT EAGERLY and actively, not merely desiring it.

Even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, though it is not certain that you will, you are still blessed, happy, and to be admired and favored by God. DO NOT BE AFRAID OF THEIR INTIMIDATING THREATS, NOR BE

TROUBLED *or* DISTURBED by their opposition. But in your hearts set Christ apart as holy, acknowledging Him, giving Him first place in your lives as Lord.

Always be ready to give a logical reason to anyone who asks you to account for the hope *and* confident assurance that comes about by faith that is within you, yet do it with gentleness and respect.

And see to it that your conscience is entirely clear, so that every time you are slandered *or* falsely accused, those who attack *or* disparage your good behavior in Christ will be shamed by their own words. For it is better that you suffer unjustly for doing what is right, if that should be God's will, than to suffer justly for doing wrong.

For Christ died for sins, once for all, He, who is the Just *and* Righteous for the unjust *and* unrighteous. The Innocent for the guilty, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit. We too must follow His example.

So, now what do you think? Would Jesus be welcomed in His Church, if He were to return today and resumed His ministry as it was prior to His ascension to heaven without being expelled from most churches for His radical approach? Wouldn't He be attacked by the 'woke left', assailed by the radical Islamic front or jailed by our own government?

Likewise, would you be welcomed in your church if you were truly following all that Jesus commanded and in the ways He demonstrated?

This is not just a hypothetical, is it? It is a question to be considered and answered. So, what say you?

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young

SIMPLE CHRISTIANITY – Part III



“As a person thinks in his own heart, so is he”

There is a verse in the Bible that makes a great point about the inward thoughts and intentions of a person, despite what they may project to you. This expression means that what someone says or does is not necessarily what they think in their heart. People may be courteous or polite but have contentious thoughts and sentiments. This is particularly troublesome if that person is you.

Ultimately, what "a man thinks in his heart, so is he." The book of Proverbs is known for such concise wisdom. People ruled by sin are influenced by the chief deceiver, Satan, and become deceivers themselves – to the point of being self-deceived.

The main takeaway here is that AS YOU THINK, SO IT SHALL BE WITH YOU, both now and for all eternity. It is important to realize that you were created as an eternal being. God placed you into carbon-based organic flesh-blood-and-bone-shell, so to speak. When the [sapiant](#) outer-you passes away, the [sentient](#) inner-you, your true essence, continues to exist. And “as you have thought, so it will continue to be for you.”

*If you based your life on the lusts and passions of this world which cease to exist and dies, like your flesh, then that will have directed your after-life existence (sentient) into a waste land of outer darkness, horrors of torment, rot, decay and fire. This is the result of rejecting Jesus Christ, **“being lost, alone without God”**.*

*If, however, you have set your mind, while you live, on things of the Spirit of God, then you will have life and peace. You will live eternally in the presence and light of God. Revelation 21:4 and Revelation 22:1-5 tells us, **“and God will wipe away***

every tear from your eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

*“You will see the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb of God (Jesus), in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illuminate them; and they will reign forever and ever.” This is the result of accepting Jesus Christ and your savior and Lord, and **being born again - saved!***

In this regard, Oswald Chambers, in one of his devotionals, says, "The work of salvation through Jesus is complete and finished forever. "I am not being saved — I am saved." (*Oswald Chambers, in My Utmost for His Highest devotionals on 12/5/2019.*)

This made me wonder.

I have heard some say "*you are BEING saved*", referring to "the process of Sanctification" (that is to "set it apart for God's special use and purpose". But most of the time when Christians use the word sanctification, they are referring to the progressive work of God to make a believer more like Jesus Christ.)

First, if you believe (or want to believe), it would be important to know what the word 'saved' means. Here is what I have found in the Bible:

SAVED: Strong's concordance #4982 = sozo = safe, save, make whole, heal, be whole.

1) to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction; (from injury or peril)

2) to save a suffering one (from perishing), i.e. one suffering from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health

3) to preserve one who is in danger of destruction, to save or rescue

4) to save in the technical biblical sense; to deliver from the penalties of the Messianic judgment

To be made safe, saved, made whole, healed, to be made whole, and kept safe and sound, rescued from danger or destruction in your marriage; with your family; with your friends; in your career or job; in your body, mind, soul and spirit; where you live; where you travel; while you sleep and when you get up.

*(Please Note: **In this world you will still have tribulations** (troubles and stresses), **but the eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous**, (those in right standing with Him through faith in Jesus), **and His ears are toward their cry for help.** (But), **the face of the LORD is against evildoers** (and non-believers – those who reject Jesus as their savior), **to eliminate the memory of them from the earth.***

*The righteous, (those in right standing with Him through faith in Jesus), **cry out**, and the LORD hears and rescues them from all their troubles. The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. The afflictions of the righteous are many, but the LORD rescues him from them all. (see [Psalms 34:16-19](#))*

With that said, there are 4 essential uses (tenses) of the word SAVED that can apply to you:

*John 3:17, "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that **THE WORLD MIGHT BE SAVED** through Him." (NASB)*

*Acts 2:21, "AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD **WILL BE SAVED.**" (NASB)*

*Acts 2:47, "praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those **WHO WERE BEING SAVED.**" (NASB)*

*Ephesians 2:8, For by grace YOU **HAVE BEEN SAVED** through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” (NASB)*

What struck me is the uses of this Word, SAVED (SOZO) shows a *progression*:

ALL MIGHT BE SAVED

THOSE WHO WILL BE SAVED

THOSE WHO WERE BEING SAVED

YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED

Why is this significant or interesting?

It is interesting that many believe that they "MIGHT BE SAVED".

Many others believe they are among those "WHO WILL BE SAVED"

Some believe they are among "THOSE WHO WERE BEING SAVED"

And some of you know "YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED".

WHICH ONE OF THESE 4 USES DESCRIBE YOU?

No kidding. Only one of these four scenarios can secure your eternal destiny in heaven with God, that one is KNOWING that YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED.

Anything less can be tragic.

How can you tell which 1 of the 4 fits your situation and condition?

NOW, HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD:

John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

You will follow Him.

You will yearn to Think as He thinks;

You will endeavor to Act as He acts;

You will desire to Do as He does;

You will long to Be as He Is.

And, His Reward is waiting for you:

John 10:28-30, "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand."

"My Father, who has given them to me is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."

"I and the Father are one."

Be Certain - It will show and it will tell.

Your Brother and Friend

Mike Young

PS: Ultimately, what "a man thinks in his heart, so is he." The book of Proverbs is known for such concise wisdom. People ruled by sin are influenced by the chief deceiver, Satan, and become deceivers themselves.

Simple Christianity - Part IV



Jesus had a divine appointment with a cruel Roman cross. Read what He said when Peter proposed *to get in the way of His mission*:

Matthew 16:21- 23, "From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You. "But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

We do not literally have an appointment with a crucifixion, but, the Bible is clear in **Galatians 5:24**, that *"Those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."* and again in **Galatians 2:20**, the Apostle Paul reminds us that, *"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."* which must be true for all who follow Jesus because we are on mission with Jesus. Our 'old self' must die so our new selves can follow and serve Him.

Jesus always, taught the Will of His Father, then, demonstrated what He taught. *He expects us to do the same.* Ephesians, chapter six, gives us a clear teaching and picture of the type of preparation and the kind of *resolve* we are to assume.



*Ephesians 6:10-17, tells us, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to **stand firm** against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to **stand firm**. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”*

Stand, i.e., continue safe and sound, stand unharmed: [Acts 26:22](#).

Stand ready or prepared: [Ephesians 6:14](#). One who does not hesitate, does not waver, of one who vanquishes his adversaries and holds the ground, also of one who in the midst of the fight holds his position against the foe, to persist, continue, persevere: (so as not to fall from thy faith).

Jesus’ example of steadfast, unmovable courage; *this is our example and our command to do the same:*



Jesus has taught us how to **CONFRONT THE STORM.**

[Mark 4:35-41](#), *“On that day, when evening came, He said to them, “Let us go over to the other side.” Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Hush, be still.” And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” They became very much afraid and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?””*



Jesus has taught us how to **CONFRONT DEMONS.**

[Luke 8:26-33](#) *“Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He came out onto the land, He was met by a man from the city who was possessed with demons; and who had not put on any clothing for a long time, and was not living in a house, but in the tombs. Seeing Jesus, he cried out and fell before Him, and said in a loud voice, “What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me.” For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had seized*

him many times; and he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, and yet he would break his bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert. And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him. They were imploring Him not to command them to go away into the abyss.

“Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and the demons implored Him to permit them to enter the swine. And He gave them permission. And the demons came out of the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.”



Jesus has taught us how to **CONFRONT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.**

[John 19:8-12](#) *”Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid; and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, “Where are You from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. So, Pilate said to Him, “You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?” Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason, he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.” As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, “If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar.”*



Jesus has taught us how to **CONFRONT THE RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT.**

[Matthew 24:57-67](#), *“Those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. But Peter was following Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the officers to see the outcome.*

*“Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on, two came forward, 61 and said, “This man stated, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.’” The high priest stood up and said to Him, “Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?” But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, “I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus *said to him, “You have said it yourself; nevertheless, I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”*

Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; what do you think?” They answered, “He deserves death!” Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him.”

Jesus did not draw back and He tells us that we must not draw back. He proceeded boldly to the Cross and secured our salvation! Jesus has all authority in heaven and on the earth and is with us until the end!

WHAT HE REALLY MEANT

Remember, Jesus came to earth for these stated reasons – and these same reasons are *our method and our calling*.

John 14:12, *“Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I am going to the Father. Verse 13. And whatever you ask in My name, this I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Verse 14. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.”*

Conclusion - Simple Christianity

Finally, let's review what the Bible tells us about the results of becoming a Christian; then we will work our way back through the process of becoming a Christ follower to the call of Christ to and what it means to follow Him – and let's keep it simple.

(In this review, please try to decide if these things speak to you, your heart and your mind; try to determine if what you are hearing, seeing and experiencing in church matches what Jesus taught, and finally, if you are professing to be a Christian, if your life models the life of Jesus).

(I). What is Being Saved, Anyway?

The simplest definition of being saved is found in the Bible. John 3:16 says, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life”*.

The Bible says the word “saved” means,

1), You will be made safe, to save, to be made whole, to heal and to be made healthy, to be whole; to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction; (from injury or peril).

2), to save a suffering one (from perishing), i.e. one suffering from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health,,

3), to preserve one who is in danger of destruction, to save or rescue,

4), to save in the technical biblical sense; to deliver from the penalties of the Messianic judgment.

In a more practical sense, to be saved means you are to be made safe, saved, made whole, healed, to be made whole, and kept safe and sound, rescued from danger or destruction in your marriage; *with your family; with your friends; in your career or*

job; in your body, mind, soul and spirit; where you live; where you travel; while you sleep and when you get up.

To be saved means will can find mental, emotional and spiritual relief from guilt and shame through forgiveness of your sins, faults, and bad deeds - past, present and future - if you surrender your life, your mind, will and emotions to Jesus and conform thinking to His Gospel Truth.

It also mean will can have ongoing forgiveness and cleansing from sins through confession to Jesus and a new turning away from wrong doing, with continual forgiveness and peace by forgiving others of their misdeeds and sins.

Additionally, being saved means God's abundant provisions for your life according to your true needs and more than you can even think to ask.

DISCLAIMER:

*Salvation is the greatest gift one could receive, but don't be deceived, **in this world you will have tribulations** (troubles and stresses), **but the eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, and His ears are toward their cry for help. The face of the LORD is against evildoers, to eliminate the memory of them from the earth.***

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears and rescues them from all their troubles. The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. The afflictions of the righteous are many, but the LORD rescues him from them all. (see [Psalms 34:16-19](#))

You see, God's blessings as they relate to His salvation are not about material gifts that ultimately disappoint. It is not about things that wear out, rot, rust, decay and fade away. God's gifts and blessings are permanent, eternal and bring the results He promises.

God's gifts and blessings are so specials that we, as humans and mortals, cannot handle them without becoming corrupted by them unless we have been prepared ahead of time. Therefore, the Bible explains that

*“God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, so we may obtain **an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away**, reserved in heaven for you, for those who are protected by the power of God through faith **for a salvation** ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which perishes though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as **the outcome** of your faith, **the salvation of your souls**.*

Finally, let me assure you that ‘a sample tasting’ of salvation will not work. Many people decide to ‘try it out first’, only to drop out later, saying it wasn’t for them or it did not deliver as advertised. In order to receive the things of God, it is *either all in, or not in at all*.

(Hebrews 6:4-8 warns that *“it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away (or renounced the faith), to restore them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and produces vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned”*.)

(The Bible gives examples of those who “give God a try” and then turn away disappointed. (see [Matthew 13](#)).

(II). Being Saved Is A Sacrifice

God the Father sacrificed His Son so that everyone who would believe would be saved from God's judgements, while on this earth and from perishing and being condemned to an eternity in the horrors of an outer darkness of pain and terror.

Likewise, we offer our life as a sacrifice. First, we sacrifice the things in our life that lead to worry, doubt, shame, fear, hurts, calamities, and we trade that old life for one that promises peace, purpose and great promise. Secondly, we sacrifice ourselves, that is having things our way, (self-centeredness), to a life of sacrifice for the things of God and the love and concern for others. And by the way, this is not a decision a person can successfully make on their own. It is something that God puts within our hearts and minds, but we have the responsibility to decide and to respond. It's called free will. Every person has the gift and power of choice.

So, What Do I Have To Do To Be Saved?

Being saved is both the easiest of things to do and the most difficult, all at the same time. Read what Romans 10:9-13 says: *“If you acknowledge and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord recognizing His power, authority, and majesty as God, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

For with the heart a person believes in Christ as Savior resulting in being made righteous, which is being freed of the guilt of sin and made acceptable to God; and with the mouth he acknowledges and confesses his or her faith openly, resulting in and confirming one's salvation. For the Scripture says, “WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM, whoever adheres to, trusts in, and relies on Him, WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED in their expectations.” He is abounding in His riches and blessings for all who call on Him in faith and prayer. “WHOEVER CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD in prayer WILL BE SAVED.”

The proof and the outcome of your salvation will emerge and become evident over time as you follow Him and His teachings to the best of your ability. God knows that most people cannot just unload a lifetime of thinking a certain way and shed each and every practice or habit they have accumulated over a lifetime. He will speak into your heart and mind and begin to unburden you of your *this and that*, one thing at a time and you will begin to discover the fruit of the Spirit which is the

result of His presence within you as love and an unselfish concern for others, joy, inner peace, patience, and not the ability to wait, but how we act while waiting, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, all will become evident, and it will become your sanctuary, your place of safety.

What Comes Next?

If you have submitted yourself to God and have decided to follow Him, the best part now begins, which I will rightly call Your *Journey to Perfection*. This Journey to Perfection is also obliquely known in theological circles as *the process of sanctification*.

Theologians and seminary trained preachers will describe or define this Journey, calling it “the process of sanctification”, using use terms and words which are likely as foreign to the average Christian as the word sanctification itself. For example, theologians will describe “sanctification as the translation of the Greek word *hagiasmos*, meaning “**holiness**” or “a separation.” In the past, God granted us **justification**, a once-for-all, **positional holiness** in Christ. In the present, God guides us to maturity, a **practical, progressive holiness**. In the future, God will give us **glorification**, a permanent, **ultimate holiness**. These **three phases of sanctification** separate the believer from the penalty of sin (justification), the power of sin (maturity), and the presence of sin (glorification).

Chew on all that for a while and you might say, “all I wanted to know was what comes after I ‘get saved’.

Put in simpler terms, once you decide and surrender your life to follow Jesus, you enter upon a Journey. It starts slowly at first. Very unlike what you might expect. A picture of the first steps of this Journey can be seen in the Bible in Matthew chapter 4.

Matthew 4:1, *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Verse 2. And after He had fasted for forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. Verse 3. And the tempter came and said to Him,*

“If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” Verse 4. But He answered and said, “It is written: ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT COMES OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’”

Verse 5. Then the devil took Him along into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, verse 6, and he said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written:

‘HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS ORDERS CONCERNING YOU’;

and

‘ON THEIR HANDS THEY WILL LIFT YOU UP,

SO THAT YOU DO NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’” Verse 7. Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written: ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’”

Verse 8. Again, the devil took Him along to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; verse 9, and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.” Verse 10. Then Jesus said to him, “Go away, Satan! For it is written: ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’” Verse 11. Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to serve Him.

Then, like Jesus, you will be led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And, like Jesus, after you have fasted (your former way of life) for forty days and forty nights, you will become hungry (for some of the former things). And the tempter will come and say to you, “If you are a child of God, command that these stones of your past become bread for this night.” But like Jesus, you are to answer and said, “It is written in scriptures by the Breath of God: ‘HUMANS SHALL NOT LIVE ON the BREAD of desire ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT COMES OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’”

Then the devil will take you with him into the holy city and have you stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and he will say to you, "If you are a child of God, throw yourself down; for it is written:

'HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS ORDERS CONCERNING YOU'; and

'ON THEIR HANDS THEY WILL LIFT YOU UP,

SO THAT YOU DO NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'" And like Jesus, you will say to him, "On the other hand, it is written: 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

Again, the devil will take you to a very high mountain and show he will you all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he will say to you, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then, like Jesus, you will say to him, "Go away, Satan! For it is written: 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" Then the devil will leave you; and behold, angels will come and minister to you.

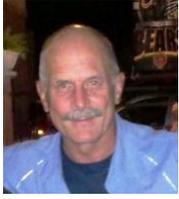
Like I said, God knows that most people cannot just unload a lifetime of thinking a certain way and shed each and every practice or habit they have accumulated over a lifetime. He will begin by speaking simple things into your heart and mind and will begin to unburden you of your *this and that*, one thing at a time.

In The Simplest of Terms - being saved as a Christian means:

1. Admitting you are a sinner.
2. Believing Jesus died and rose again for you paying the price due for sin.
3. Trusting Him alone to forgive and save you from hell.
4. Turning from sin and choosing to follow Him.

Your Brother and Friend,

Mike Young



Michael Young, Sr.

I am a practicing Christian, a disciple of Jesus, a husband of over 50 years, a father and a grandfather, a business man, a veteran and a friend to all who will have me. I have served or am serving, at various times, as an Evangelist, a Pulpit fill pastor, an Associate Pastor of Evangelism and as Senior Pastor of a church plant. My passion is for practicing and teaching the Bible, building small groups, reaching the lost with the message of the Gospel of Jesus, recovering the straying Sheep of God and the gathering together the Called of God, in neighborhoods, business settings and in churches by equipping other Christians. I have authored a few small books and I have a background in professional business management, finance and investments. I am glad to meet you, even if it is virtually. Write me at any time and let's become friends. [View all articles and posts by Michael Young, Sr.](#)