

The BIBLICAL Way To Be Saved

THREE MEN ARE WALKING DOWN THE STREET. (This is not a joke, but it is a hypothetical situation.) One man is a teacher in the Lutheran Church, one is a teacher in the Catholic Church, and the other is a teacher in a Baptist church. A stranger walks up to them and asks, "I know that sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2). So, what must I do to be saved from my sins???"

THE LUTHERAN TEACHER RESPONDS, "According to the *Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Lutheran Church*, Smalcald Articles, Article 1, the first and chief article is this... All have sinned and are justified [a synonym of "saved," lmt] without merit by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood, Romans 3:23f. And, since it is necessary to believe this, and it [ie. justification, lmt] cannot be otherwise acquired or apprehended by any work, law, or merit, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us as St. Paul says, Romans 3:26-28."

NEXT, THE CATHOLIC TEACHER SAYS, "According to the Council of Trent, Session 6, Chapter 7, Jesus Christ merited Justification for us by His most holy Passion on the wood of the cross, and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father; the instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith." Furthermore, taking a stab at the Lutheran teacher, he says "Session 6, Canon 9 of the Council of Trent says, "If any one saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified; in such wise as to mean, that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to the obtaining the grace of Justification, and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will; let him be anathema.""

THE LUTHERAN, NOT WANTING TO LET THIS go, replies, "Article 5 of the Smalcald Articles states, "Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered [nor can anything be

granted or permitted contrary to the same], even though heaven and earth, and whatever will not abide, should sink to ruin. ... And upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the Pope, the devil, and the [whole] world. Therefore, we must be sure concerning this doctrine, and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the Pope and devil and all things gain the victory and suit over us.""

AT THIS POINT THE MAN, bewildered, thinks to himself, "Wow. I didn't mean to start a fight."

FINALLY THE BAPTIST TEACHER GETS A WORD IN edgewise: "The Southern Baptist Convention's website says this: "Are you ready to accept the gift of eternal life that Jesus is offering you right now? Let's review what this commitment involves: I acknowledge I am a sinner in need of a Savior - this is to repent or turn away from sin. I believe in my heart that God raised Jesus from the dead - this is to trust that Jesus paid the full penalty for my sins. I confess Jesus as my Lord and my God - this is to surrender control of my life to Jesus. I receive Jesus as my Savior forever - this is to accept that God has done for me and in me what He promised. If it is your sincere desire to receive Jesus into your heart as your personal Lord and Savior, then talk to God from your heart: Here's a Suggested Prayer: "Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and I do not deserve eternal life. But, I believe You died and rose from the grave to make me a new creation and to prepare me to dwell in your presence forever. Jesus, come into my life, take control of my life, forgive my sins and save me. I am now placing my trust in You alone for my salvation and I accept your free gift of eternal life.""

HOW SAD!!!!!! The man who asked the question— after hearing three different and contradictory "answers," not only did he witness division, which is against God's will, but he was thoroughly confused! Instead of being better off, he was worse off! Like we said, this may be a

hypothetical situation, but it is no joke! And while it is hypothetical, the answers are not —you can look them up for yourself, and the scenario perfectly represents the sad reality within “Christendom.” (Note well that this is not God’s fault, not at all: “God is not a God of confusion,” 1 Corinthians 14:33.)

THE POINT IS NOT TO PICK ON ANY ONE church; rather, the point is to illustrate THE IMPORTANCE OF GOING TO THE RIGHT SOURCE FOR ANSWERS. And in spiritual matters, the only true answers are in the Bible!

WITH REGARD TO SALVATION —and we admit we could be mistaken! So if you think we teach (bind) something that is not in the Bible, let’s get together and study this!!! With regard to salvation, **the Bible teaches that to be saved a person must:**

- 1) **HEAR** the gospel, Romans 10:14.
- 2) **BELIEVE** that Jesus was raised from the dead, Romans 10:9.
- 3) **CONFESS** Jesus as Lord, Romans 10:9.
- 4) **REPENT** (change) sinful thoughts and behavior, Acts 17:30-31; 2 Corinthians 7:10.

Note well that these rule out infants, young children, and anyone who cannot truly and firmly understand spiritual things.

Also note that, while repentance is necessary for salvation, it is not mentioned in Romans 10. In fact, it is not mentioned in John 3:16,

Acts 16:31, Romans 5:1, or a whole slew of other passages that speak of salvation. Now, we do not conclude from this that repentance is not necessary; rather, we conclude from this that no single passage contains a complete, explicit list of all that is necessary for man to do to be saved. This is the point to be recognized. (Acts 17 doesn’t mention belief. John 3 doesn’t mention confession. You get the point.) Having established this, in order to be saved, in addition to the above mentioned conditions, one must...

- 5) **BE IMMERSED** in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21.

Note well that this excludes sprinkling and pouring. It also excludes immersions that have been done for the wrong reason, for example, being baptized as an outward sign of an inward commitment, or into a specific denomination.

GOD PROMISES THAT EVERYONE who complies with these conditions will be saved. Praise God for His mercy and grace!!! Now, to stay saved we must continue to obey God, Hebrews 3:12-14, et al.

WAS YOUR CONVERSION EXPERIENCE INCOMPLETE? You can make it right today, even if you need to be baptized again (the disciples at Ephesus were “re-baptized” for the right reason and authority, Acts 19:1-5!). Let us know if we can help!

By L. Tosti

The Indian River Church of Christ

We meet in the Shopping Center at 2 South Main Street in Philadelphia NY.

We assemble Sunday mornings at 10 for Bible study and at 11 for worship.

We also assemble Thursday evenings at 7:15 for Bible study.

Our website is www.indianriverchurchofchrist.com.

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