

GOD'S NEW TESTAMENT PLAN of SALVATION

Lesson Twenty-Three

INTRODUCTION:

Slowly and deliberately – step by step – this course of study gradually has unfolded GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE for the loving learners of his word, the Bible. If you are among the relative few whose interest in divine revelation has carried you all the way through the course faithfully up to this point, you should now be prepared to start making some conclusions, which will affect all the remainder of your religious life on this earth.

Dear, we came a long way in our study together already! After showing how RIGHTLY TO DIVIDE THE WORD OF TRUTH and HOW ALL THINGS BEGAN, we paid careful attention to the THREE DISPENSATIONS – PATRIARCHAL, JEWISH and CHRISTIAN – contained in the Bible. We discovered that although GOD HIMSELF does not change, yet HE HAS CHANGE HIS WILL from one dispensation to the next, so that what WAS BINDING upon the PATRIARCHS BEFORE MOSES was not binding on THE JEWISH NATION after he received God's Ten Commandments law from Mount Sinai. In like manner, God's OLD TESTAMENT (Ten-Commandments) LAW, which governed the Jewish nation for the 1500 years from Moses to Christ, was, in a figure, "NAILED TO THE CROSS", thus becoming of NO EFFECT to the CHRISTIAN, after the NEW TESTAMENT came of force on the day of Pentecost after the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Rather than God joining the NEW Testament to the OLD Testament and binding BOTH of them contradictorily upon the Christian conscience, we proved conclusively that CHRISTIANS (i.e., from Pentecost onward) are NOT GOVERNED by the OLD Testament, but by the NEW Testament. Thus it is that NOTHING God bound upon the Jew through Moses (including the Ten Commandments) is binding in the NEW TESTAMENT AGE.

To illustrate what effect this has, let us consider the REPENTANT THIEF ON THE CROSS. In what DISPENSATION did he live? The JEWISH. Since the New Testament did not become of force until 53 days LATER, it follows that this thief LIVED AND DIED a JEW in the JEWISH DISPENSATION. He was NOT A CHRISTIAN, since the Christian dispensation had not yet begun! As a Jew, he was governed by the LAW OF MOSES (i.e., the TEN-COMMANDMENT LAW). Neither Moses' law from Sinai nor the later preaching by John the Baptist required baptism, in the name of Jesus Christ. Moreover, since Jesus had power while on earth to forgive sins (Matthew 6:9), if he saw fit to make a special case for this thief, saying, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise," surely that was his business. (Luke 23:43) But, when we come ON PAST THE THIEF to the OTHER SIDE OF THE CROSS, we find that the TEN-COMMANDMENT LAW NO LONGER BINDING and that from Pentecost in Acts 2 onward, everyone must NOW BELIEVE in Jesus Christ and REPENT and also "BE BAPTIZED everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38)

Baptism in Jesus' name was not essential to salvation FOR THE THIEF, for he lived and died in the JEWISH religion and dispensation, when this baptism was NOT YET GIVEN. However THREE DAYS AFTER the thief and Jesus Christ both died, Jesus arose from the

dead. It was DURING THE 40 DAY PERIOD HE WAS ALIVE ON EARTH, AFTER THE THIEF WAS ALREADY DEAD that Jesus FIRST ANNOUNCED the terms of the GREAT COMMISSION. It was in this commission that Jesus first announced baptizing disciples "IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST." (Matthew 28:19) In Mark's record of this commission, he shows JESUS' CONNECTION between THIS BAPTISM and SALVATION, quoting Jesus as saying, "He that BELIEVETH and IS BAPTIZED shall be SAVED." (Mark 16:16)

From this commission we learned that, once of force, it was to be binding upon ALL MEN, in ALL NATIONS, in ALL THE WORLD, by ALL AUTHORITY and FOR ALL TIME TO COME – EVEN "UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD." Thus those who lived and died before (or are still alive) FROM THAT DAY ONWARD, "EVERYONE" must not only BELIEVE and REPENT but also "BE BAPTIZED... FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS." Thus the PEOPLE OF TODAY CANNOT BE SAVED LIKE THE THIEF ON THE CROSS. We are under a DIFFERENT TESTAMENT – THE NEW TESTAMENT. Let us see what to do:

I. First, WE MUST HEAR THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

- A.** Without the GOSPEL OF CHRIST, there could be NO SALVATION. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the GOSPEL which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; BY WHICH also ye are SAVED, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures..."

- B.** Jesus commanded the GOSPEL to be PREACHED FOR SALVATION.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and PREACH the GOSPEL to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be SAVED; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16)

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of PREACHING to SAVE them that believe." (1 Corinthians 1:21)

The angel said to Cornelius, "Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who **shall tell thee** WORDS, whereby thou and all thy house shall be SAVED." (Acts 11:13-14)

- C.** The preaching must be HEARD.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be SAVED. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not HEARD? And how shall they HEAR without a PREACHER?" (Romans 10:13-15)

"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye HEAR in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will NOT HEAR that prophet, shall be DESTROYED from among the people." (Acts 3:22-23)

II. Second, WE MUST BELIEVE (i.e., have faith) IN JESUS CHRIST.

Note: To "believe" in Jesus Christ and to have "faith" in him is all ONE AND THE SAME. When Jesus told Thomas to examine him after his resurrection, he commanded him to "be not FAITHLESS but BELIEVING." (John 20:27) Those who try to distinguish between faith and belief affect a distinction where there is NO DIFFERENCE.

A. WITHOUT FAITH (i.e., BELIEF) we cannot please God.

"But without FAITH it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must BELIEVE that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6)

B. What IS faith?

"Now faith is the SUBSTANCE (i.e., assurance) of things HOPED FOR, the EVIDENCE (i.e., conviction) of things NOT SEEN." (Hebrews 11:1) In other words, we must be convinced that what the gospel says of Jesus Christ is true.

C. How does faith (i.e., belief) COME?

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not HEARD? And how shall they HEAR without a PREACHER?" (Romans 10:14)

"So then FAITH cometh by HEARING, and HEARING by the WORD of God." (Romans 10:17)

D. Is BELIEF (i.e., faith) essential to salvation?

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be SAVED; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)

"For by grace are ye SAVED through FAITH." (Ephesians 2:8)

E. Are Christians supposed to WALK by FAITH?

"For we WALK by FAITH, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7)

F. What if we DOUBT?

"...whatsoever is NOT of FAITH is SIN." (Romans 14:23)

"...he that BELIEVETH NOT shall be DAMNED." (Mark 16:16)

III. **Third, WE MUST REPENT OF OUR SINS.**

A. Repentance is COMMANDED of all men everywhere.

"...God...now commanded ALL men everywhere to REPENT." (Acts 17:30)

B. Repentance is "FOR REMISSION OF SINS" (i.e., salvation)

"...REPENT and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ FOR the REMISSION OF SINS..." (Acts 2:38)

C. Repentance is ESSENTIAL TO CONVERSION, that SINS be BLOTTED OUT.

"REPENT ye therefore, and BE CONVERTED that your SINS may be BLOTTED OUT..." (Acts 3:19)

D. What if we will NOT repent?

"I tell you, Nay: but, EXCEPT ye REPENT, ye shall all likewise PERISH." (Luke 13:3)

IV. **Fourth, WE MUST CONFESS OUR FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.**

A. CONFESSION IS FOR SALVATION.

"...The word is nigh thee, even in thy MOUTH, and in thy HEART: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt CONFESS with thy MOUTH the LORD JESUS, and shalt BELIEVE in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be SAVED. For with the HEART man BELIEVETH unto righteousness; and with the mouth CONFESSION is made unto SALVATION." (Romans 10:8-10)

B. Alien sinners CONFESS FAITH IN CHRIST before baptism.

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou BELIEVEST with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD. And he... baptized him." (Acts 8:35-38)

C. What if we do **not** confess Christ?

"Whosoever therefore shall CONFESS me before men, him I will CONFESS also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall DENY me before men, him I will also DENY before my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32-33)

V. **Fifth, WE MUST BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST.**

A. SALVATION IS IN CHRIST. (2 Timothy 2:10)

We are BAPTIZED into Christ. (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27)

Note: Since salvation is IN CHRIST, and we are BAPTIZED INTO Christ, it follows, therefore, that we are BAPTIZED INTO SALVATION!

- B. Baptized TO BE SAVED. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:40-41; 1 Peter 3:21)
- C. Baptized FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS. (Acts 2:38)
- D. Baptized TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT. (Acts 2:38)
- E. Baptized TO REJOICE. (Acts 8:38-39; Acts 16:34)
- F. Baptized TO WASH AWAY SINS. (Acts 22:16)
- G. What if we are NOT baptized?

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of WATER and of the SPIRIT, HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD." (i.e., cannot be saved)
John 3:5

CONCLUSION: It has become popular among many so-called "Christians" denominations to preach PART of the foregoing New Testament plan as "ESSENTIAL" for salvation, and PART as "NON-ESSENTIAL." God's word makes NO SUCH DISTINCTION. Jesus TAUGHT IT ALL; let's PREACH AND DO IT ALL.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON TWENTY-THREE

1. How many dispensations of religion are contained in the Bible?

2. Are God's requirements pertaining to ONE religious dispensation also binding in another?

3. In what religious dispensation did the repentant thief on the cross live and die?

4. Did God require the same things for salvation in the JEWISH dispensation as in the CHRISTIAN dispensation?

5. If not, is it proper to compare what God requires for salvation under the Christian dispensation with what Jesus did (or did not) require of the thief on Calvary under the Jewish dispensation?

6. Did Jesus first announce the term of the Great Commission BEFORE or AFTER the thief was already dead?

7. How long after the thief died was it baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins was first preached?

8. If, AFTER the thief was dead, Jesus later required baptism for remission of sins of ALL MEN, would the question of whether the thief WAS or WAS NOT baptized have any bearing on this later requirement? Please explain.

9. Was the NEW TESTAMENT of force, while Jesus lived on earth before his death on the cross?

10. In what notable declaration did Jesus announce the terms of his salvation under the New Testament?

11. List five things God requires for salvation according to the teaching of the New Testament.

12. Is the "GOSPEL" connected in any way with our salvation?

13. Must the gospel be PREACHED for our salvation, is preaching unessential.

14. When God's word (the gospel) is preached, what is the first thing we must do toward our salvation?

15. What if we fail or refuse to HEAR?

16. What is the second thing we must do for salvation?

17. Are belief and faith the same thing or different things?

18. Can we come to God without faith?

19. What if we do not believe in Jesus Christ?

20. Who all are commanded to repent?

21. Can we be saved except we repent?

22. How is confession made?

23. Is confession necessary or unnecessary to be saved?

24. Wherein does 2 Timothy 2:10 locate salvation?

25. Is BAPTISM essential to salvation? Explain why the New Testament connects baptism and salvation together.

EASY TO LEARN BIBLE COURSE

LESSON TWENTY-THREE OF TWENTY-SIX

QUESTIONS ON LESSON TWENTY-THREE

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