

SALVATION IS IN CHRIST JESUS!

Honestly, I do not know of any who claim any form of Christianity that would disagree with the words of the title of this brief message. I do not know of any real or proposed "Christian" who believes one can be saved outside of Christ. Yet, let us provide a few statements from the Bible to verify that this is indeed true. "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*" (Eph. 1:3). "*According as he hath chosen us in him...*" (Eph. 1:4). "*In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*" (Eph. 1:7). "...*that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory*" (II Tim. 2:10). Many others could be cited to show that salvation is **in** Christ Jesus, but these should suffice to anyone of an honest heart.

Now, let us add to that generally accepted truth another truth of the New Testament that may not be so well accepted, but truth nevertheless. The apostle Paul, writing to the church at Rome, stated, "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*" (Rom. 6:3). Very shortly thereafter, he wrote to the churches of Galatia saying, "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*" (Gal. 3:27). These two verses are the only verses in the New Testament that tell how to get **into Christ**. It is obvious from both that one is **baptized into Christ**. The truth is, the only way to get into Christ Jesus is to be baptized into Christ Jesus!

Many are those claiming the status of "Christian" who deny that one must be baptized in order to be saved. Most pronounce salvation at the point of "belief" and add baptism as a sacrament to be observed after salvation to symbolize the salvation you received at the point of belief. Friends, it is not possible to be saved prior to baptism unless one can be saved **outside of Christ Jesus**, for one is not in Christ until baptism. Those religious institutions begun by man hundreds of years after the Lord built His church (Matt. 16:18) and teaching salvation before baptism are spreaders of false doctrine and directing people to eternal damnation. No matter how "good" some of the people are, no matter how "sincere" they are, no matter how "many" they be, they are lost! Salvation is **IN** Christ Jesus!

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How Many Churches Did Christ Build?

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). No more is needed to answer the question which serves as our title. Jesus only promised to build one church. Since the church is the kingdom (Matt. 16:19) one may as well ask, "how many kingdoms did Christ build?" The church is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23). *"There is one body..."* (Eph. 4:4), there is *"...yet but one body"* (I Cor. 12:20). Very seldom will one find anyone who would argue that Jesus build more than one church. Very seldom will one find anyone that will argue that there is more than one church in the Bible. So, why the question?

It is much easier to admit the singularity of the church in the Bible than to admit that all the denominations of the world today are not the church of the Bible. As simple common sense will easily show, the multitude of denominations cannot be the one church of the Bible, they are a multitude, not one. Yet, most every denomination will tell you they are the Lord's church.

It is high time that man take responsibility for himself! True in many areas of life, but especially true, in the realm of religion. No longer can man just take the word of his preacher, accept what he has always been taught or just believe what seems right to him. The world is full of false messengers. Some knowingly and others having been deceived themselves, men are going about teaching man-made doctrines and adding people to man-made institutions and calling them Christians. God does not recognize these as His children (Matt. 15:13).

The day of judgment **will come**, in the which all will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and be judged by the things they have done as they compare to the gospel of Christ (II Cor. 5:10; John 12:48; Rev. 20:12). *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven"* (Matt. 7:21).

Friend, this is a serious matter! Your soul is at stake! If you are wrong in your beliefs, you will burn in hell for eternity! If the church of which you are a member is not the one church found in the Bible, you will be lost, not matter how much you believe your church to be right. God is the source of authority! *"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"* (Heb. 10:31).

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