

Jesus is Savior Study Guide

Understanding 1.4

“Jesus Saves” What does that mean? Jesus saves us from what?

First, does the Bible declare that Jesus saves? Yes, it does:

Luke 2:10 And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

Many verses teach us that Jesus is the savior in the New Testament. But what does Jesus save us from?

Some people believe Jesus saves us from an unfulfilled life. Life just doesn't feel complete somehow. The marriage isn't working out the way we hoped it would. The children were supposed to bring such joy. But they've become a disaster with bad choice after bad choice. The job is unfulfilling too. People less deserving get the promotions. The money isn't as good as it should be. “Jesus, will you save me from all of this mess?” “If I believe in you, will you clean this all up and make my life fulfilling and satisfying and happy?” Is that what Jesus saves us from?

Another common misconception is that Jesus saves us from our self-destructive habits and their consequences. Jesus will fix us. He's the higher power that the alcoholic leans on to get control over life. If you're hooked on drugs or medications or sexual addiction or adultery or fornication or homosexuality or pornography or rage or anger or whatever your passions have driven you to practice, Jesus will save you from them. He'll clean you right up. Jesus will deliver you from your self-destructive decisions and habits. Is that what Jesus saves us from?

Now don't misunderstand, there is great benefit to knowing Jesus. Jesus will lead us to make godly choices instead of self-destructive choices if we will obey Him. Our lives may improve greatly when we repent and believe and surrender our lives to Jesus. But hear this: Jesus saves us from something far more terrible than an unfulfilled life or a life that's driven by self-destructive habits.

So what does Jesus save us from? We're told in this verse:

Matthew 1:21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

When the angel tells Joseph about Jesus' birth, he says Jesus will save his people from their sins. Now what does that mean exactly? It certainly cannot mean that Jesus stops people from sinning. If you're a believer, let me ask you a question: Do you still sin? If you're honest, you answered, “Yes.” If you answered, “No,” then you just lied and made my point. Believers continue to sin even after they've experienced the salvation of Jesus. So when the Bible tells us that Jesus saves us from sin, it must mean more than saving us from the act of disobeying God.

Side note: not everyone has an unfulfilled life. Some people are happy with their lives. Not everyone is making bad choices and needs deliverance from their self-destructive behavior. Some people live very healthy lives. Nonetheless, all of us have something in common. All of us whether we're rich or poor or male or female or happy or sad or educated or uneducated or addicted or clean fulfilled or unfulfilled – all of us will come before God on judgment day to be judged regarding how we lived our lives.

The Bible promises this appointment:

Hebrews 9:27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,

What behaviors condemn us?

Revelation 21:8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

God has promised to eliminate evil from existence. The Bible calls it the wrath of God. God has promised to bring purity and holiness back. In fact, He’s promised to destroy the heavens and earth that we currently experience and replace them with a new heaven and a new earth – a new creation that has never been touched by evil or disobedience to Him.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

There is coming a day when evil will be no more. Isn’t that great? No more dying. No more crying. No more lying. No more sickness. No more racism. No more addiction. No more hatred. No more poverty. No more evil.

As I think about that I get happy. Won’t that be great? But then this thought comes to me: If God destroys evil, I’ll be destroyed. If God casts liars out of His presence, I’ll be cast out of His presence because I’ve lied. What about you? I’m toast. If God casts those who’ve committed evil into hell, I’m doomed because I’m a sinner and so are you!

Now do you see the problem? What does Jesus save us from? We should really word it this way: “WHO does Jesus save us from?”

Plain and simple: Jesus saves us from God. Yes, that’s right. Jesus saves us from the ultimate consequence of our disobedience - the judgment of God.

Specifically, Jesus saves us from the wrath of God. When God destroys evil, when He pours out His wrath, punishes and eliminates sin, we who have repented of our sin and placed our faith in Jesus will not be destroyed because Jesus SAVES us from the wrath of God. Look at this:

Romans 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

For those who are in Christ, the judgment of God against evil will be survivable.

John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

Notice, please, the reason those who reject Jesus will be condemned on judgment day: “the wrath of God remains on him.” God’s fierce anger against sin is every person’s greatest problem. If God hates sin, and we sin, how does God make a way for us to be with Him forever? How does He save us when He destroys evil? How can we be counted as righteous before Him despite our sin?

God, in the Person of Jesus, entered time and space for the specific purpose of solving this problem. How did He do it? Jesus allowed Himself to be sacrificed as the perfect Lamb of God. Jesus received all of God’s wrath against sin upon Himself as He died on that cross.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. **6** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Jesus cries out to His Father from the cross and says:

Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Jesus never sinned. Jesus never committed any act in thought, word, or deed that could have caused His relationship with His Father to be damaged. Yet, Jesus experiences estrangement from His Father as His Father punishes Him for the sins of the world while He dies on the cross.

It is through the death of Jesus that all who receive Jesus are acquitted. When we place our faith in Jesus and follow Him the Bible describes an exchange that happens in heaven:

2 Corinthians 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

By God’s grace, Jesus takes the punishment we deserve upon Himself at Calvary and bestows us with the righteousness of God.

The Lord maintains His justice as He redeems all who believe. Our disobedience has been fully punished. Jesus received the punishment for sin on the cross. Therefore, sin has been justly punished and we are allowed to be saved from God’s wrath through faith in Jesus:

Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-- **26** he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

No one enters heaven because they’re good enough to be there. Those who are in Christ enter heaven because God’s righteousness has been applied to their hearts through faith in Jesus:

Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, **6** whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7** so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

All who believe are saved from the wrath of God against sin because of the work of Jesus on the cross. Jesus saves us! To appear before God on judgment day without the saving work of Jesus applied is to appear before God with no defense. God’s refusal to coexist with sin demands eternal separation for those who have rejected the saving work of Jesus Christ.

If you’re reading this and you’ve never submitted your life to Jesus Christ, today is the day of salvation. Pray right now. Ask the Lord to forgive your sin. Ask the Lord to cleanse your heart. Repent and believe. Your salvation is only possible if you are in Christ:

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Study Romans 8:1 closely. Who escapes the condemnation of God? Only those in Christ Jesus escape the wrath of God.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

- 1) Where does the Bible tell us that Jesus is the Savior?
- 2) What does Jesus save us from?
- 3) What did Jesus do that assures all believers will escape the wrath of God?
- 4) Why is it impossible to earn our way to heaven?
- 5) Why is there no other way to heaven other than faith in Jesus Christ?