

## Is Jesus Your “Personal” Savior?

The short answer may be “Yes, but perhaps not in the way(s) you thought.” Please let me explain...

I’ll admit that I have never liked either the question or its implications, though those who ask it typically do so with well-intentioned motives. However, as with a lot of the things we say, sometimes the words we chose don’t necessarily convey the meaning we intend. So, if by “**personal**” **Savior**, you mean:

- **Exclusivity**- “No,” He’s the Savior of “*the world*,” John 4:42; 1John 4:14. Although the salvation He offers is available to me, it’s not an exclusive offer for just me.
- **Proprietary**- “No,” He has the same desires for and relationship with “*all*” who “*come to the knowledge of the truth*” to “*believe*” and “*be saved*,” 1Timothy 2:4; 4:10. My salvation and ensuing relationship with Him are no different than anyone else’s in nature or content. In these regards, neither I nor my relationship with Him is “special.” There is no “*partiality*” with God, Acts 10:34-35.
- **On My Own Terms**- “No,” He dictates the terms of salvation and relationship, Matthew 28:18-20. I cannot come to Him “on my own terms” or be saved “in my own way.” The salvation Jesus offers truly is one size fits all, and no one can “have it their own way” Titus 2:11-15. The terms of Jesus’ salvation are the same for everyone. Likewise, the terms for maintaining a continuing relationship are also the same for everyone. They are, therefore, certainly not “personal.”

For these reasons and in these ways, Jesus is not my/your “personal” Savior- or indeed, anyone else’s either. But if instead you mean by “**personal**” **Savior** that Jesus:

- **Bore your griefs** and **carried your sorrows** to the cross, then “yes” He can be **your** personal Savior, Isaiah 53:4;
- **Was pierced through for your transgressions**, **was crushed for your iniquities**, **was chastised for your well-being**, and that **by His scourging you** are healed, then “yes,” He can be **your** personal Savior, Isaiah 53:5;
- Had **your iniquity to fall upon Him**, then “yes,” He can be **your** personal Savior, Isaiah 53:6; and,
- Is the **offering for your guilt**, **bore your sin** and **iniquity**, and **interceded for your transgressions**, then “yes,” He’s **your** personal Savior, Isaiah 53:10-12.

[Please understand that I deliberately *personalized* the passages above from Isaiah 53:4-10 to make a point. None of these verses actually utilize the singular possessive pronoun “your” – they use the plural possessive “our” instead.]

Isn’t it interesting that we often want to share the *guilt* that required Jesus’ death with everyone (perhaps thereby hoping to minimize our own culpability?), but desire the *benefits* of it in an exclusively personal way? Unless we “personalize” the *guilt*, *iniquity*, *transgression*, and *sin* that necessitated Jesus death on the cross, how can we “personalize” the spiritual *healing* and *well-being* that emanated from it? Indeed, “*If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us,*” 1John 1:8-10.

Is Jesus your “personal” Savior? I certainly hope so, but perhaps not in exactly the ways you may have been led to believe. (Philip C. Strong; Southport Church of Christ; 7202 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227; online at [southportcofc.org](http://southportcofc.org); email to [mrpcstrong@hotmail.com](mailto:mrpcstrong@hotmail.com))