

Why (not how) Were You Saved?

Of course God wants you to “*come to the knowledge of the truth*” and be eternally saved in heaven with Him- He wants that for everyone, 1Timothy 2:4. This is the ultimate end goal. But for many Christians, they obeyed the gospel of salvation (1Corinthians 15:1-5; Mark 16:15-16) in their youth or young adulthood. Is just trying to “*remain faithful*” for the rest of their lives in order to go to heaven the sole objective of salvation? Don’t misunderstand- such is surely important (cf. Hebrews 3:12), but is that all there is to it? Again, “**Why were you saved?**”

It was **not** just:

- So you could have a *better* or more *blessed life* here- though such may happen, it may not, cp. Matthew 5:3-10 and Matthew 10:38-39;
- So you could have a better *family* or *family life* here- though the gospel will make you a better husband, wife, parent, child, etc., it may also cost you your family, cp. Ephesians 5:22 – 6:4 and Matthew 10:34-37;
- To make you a better *person* here- it can make you *better*, Ephesians 4:25 – 5:10, or it might just make you *sad* and/or *bitter*, Matthew 19:13-22; 27:3-5; or,
- To make a better *citizen* here- again, it can do just that, Romans 13:1-7, or it might make you a worse citizen, Acts 4:18-20; 5:29.

Obviously, your obedience to the gospel may accomplish any of these things. But they are not “why” you were saved. You see, **your salvation is not JUST about you**. It is so easy in our present culture to become “me” oriented. Most everything is judged by how it affects “me”- my *life*, my *family*, my *job*, my *citizenship*, and even my *relationships*. Unfortunately for some, their own *salvation* is also apparently all that matters to them. It is the “why” they were saved, at least in their own minds. But there is a major problem with this type of thinking....

Question: Is that the way Jesus lived? Is that the way Jesus taught us to think, feel, and act? Is that the example He left us to follow? “*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma,*” Ephesians 5:1-2. Think about this passage, please. Was His *loving sacrifice* offered to enable us to be better *people* and *citizens*, and have better *lives* and *families* or *family life*? Certainly not, it was to save us from sin, and enable us to have a better *ETERNITY* than eternal damnation! However, don’t stop here...

Remember also that God wants salvation **for everyone**, (don’t forget 1Timothy 2:4). So consider some additional passages in these regards, and answer a few questions:

- Matthew 13:23. Exactly what is the “*fruit*” that is to be born? (cf. John 15:8)
- Romans 7:4. Again, what “*fruit*” is to be produced from our being “*joined*” to our *spiritual Husband*? (cf. Ephesians 5:23ff)
- Hebrews 6:7-8. In keeping with the imagery of *seed*, *soil*, and *rain*, what are we to be producing that is “*useful*” to the Master? (cf. 2Timothy 2:21)

OK, I know- I’ve cited a lot of passages, but have not directly answered the question posed in our title: “Why were you saved?” If it’s not JUST to attain heaven and avoid hell when we die, what is it? Note 1Peter 2:9-10 carefully, “*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, **that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**; for you were once not a people, but now you are the people of God*;

you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” Of course “personal salvation” is part of the purpose, as v.10 clearly indicates. But, v.9 also provides a purpose- *“that (a purpose word) you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you...”!* Thus, **my** salvation is not just about “me,” but also includes what I can and should do for the salvation of others. Please reread the parable of “The Unmerciful Slave” in Matthew 18:21-35; and then consider carefully and *personally* v.33 relative to all that has been said above, *“Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow-slave, even as I had mercy on you?”* All who have been saved by God’s mercy have the obligation to share the same with other needful *fellow-slaves*, don’t we? Think about it, won’t you? (Philip C. Strong; Southport Church of Christ; 7202 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227; online at southportcofc.org; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)