

Will All People Eventually Be Saved?

Bible Answers About Salvation

In talking with people about salvation one soon realizes that most people believe that things will eventually work out and that he/she will get to heaven. People feel that God is a God of love and that He simply will not see any person lost in Hell.

The Bible is crystal clear on this matter. The Lord Jesus Christ clearly warned, "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it" (Matthew 7:13-14).

It is true that Jesus often spoke of God's love for people, and He also perfectly manifested the love of God in His relationship with people. But, in addition to the above warning Jesus said the time would come when He would have to say to many people, "Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41).

To understand why Jesus would warn people of the judgment and eternal suffering one need only to go back to the Old Testament and notice a few situations. (1) In the days before the great flood, Noah was a "preacher of righteousness" for many years, but won no converts except his own family. The Bible says that "few, that is eight souls, were saved" and that, for the others, "God spared not the old world . . . bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5). In fact, Jesus said, "The flood came and destroyed them all" (Luke 17:27). (2) Of all of the men of valor, men of battle, that came out of Egypt only two were permitted to enter the land of promise, Joshua and Caleb. (3) Even though the children of Israel were like the sand of the seashore only a remnant was left to usher in the coming of Christ. Among the Jews there were only a few who really cared for God. Malachi wrote, "Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. 'And they will be Mine,' says the LORD of hosts, 'on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him" (3:16-18). The reason the majority will be lost is very simple: people will not respond to God's love and obey Him.

As we turn our attention to the New Testament we find that Jesus commanded the gospel to be preached to all nations. But, there never was a promise that all who heard the good news would believe it and turn to Christ. To the contrary, Paul warned, "and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the

presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed-for our testimony to you was believed" (II Th 1:7-10 NAS).

The very meaning of the term "church" (Greek, ekklesia, meaning "those who are called out"), indicates that the true church would always be composed of a group of believers called out of the masses of men to be "separated unto God." Paul confirmed this when he wrote, "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, that no man should boast before God" (1 Corinthians 1:21-29).

On one occasion, someone asked Jesus the direct question: "Lord, are there few that be saved?" (Lk. 13:23). Jesus answered simply, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and not be able" (Luke 13:23-24). The remarkable thing about this is that, although most people will die without ever being saved, any person can be saved simply by obeying the gospel (cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Jesus Christ died on the cross to atone for our sins, and rose again to assure our full forgiveness and justification before God. Now, anyone who really desires to be saved can receive this great salvation just as those on the Day of Pentecost in the second chapter of Acts. The gospel was preached and when the people heard this sermon they were pricked in their hearts believing that Jesus was truly the Son of God and they wanted to know what to do and they were told to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins (salvation, Acts 2:14-38). They that gladly received his word were baptized and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts 2:41, 47).

No, all people will not eventually be saved because everyone will not obey the gospel. But, what about you? Have you done what the people did in the first century to become a Christian? If not, why not? We invite you to attend our services where the simple, pure, unadulterated gospel is being preached without addition, subtraction or substitution.

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