

# Is There A Sure Way To Heaven?

## Foreword

As I write this small booklet, everyone should understand that it is being written with love for my fellowman. I do not expect any reward except to please God and Christ. If it were responsible for the saving of one soul, I would say that is reward enough.

After studying the Bible for many years, I have come to the conclusion that either people really do not care about eternal life or they are being "brain washed" by teachers and preachers with "itching" ears.

The Bible is very explicit as to how to become a Christian and what is God's plan of salvation.

By K.B. Partridge

## How To Please God As A Christian

The New Testament states clearly: (1) that the Old Testament was for our **learning** but was **fulfilled** when Christ died on the cross (Hebrews 10:9-10); (2) that the old law was **nailed** to the cross (Colossians 2:14); (3) that Christ has been given authority over **all things** in heaven and earth; and (4) that Christ will judge us on the last day (Matthew 28:18 and John 12:48). It brings out the danger of following man-made doctrines and the traditions of men (Colossians 2:21-23).

Christ said, "On this Rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." He said He would give Peter the keys to the kingdom with the authority to bind or loose both on earth and in heaven (Matthew 16:18, 19). If you read Acts 2:38, you will find the keys to heaven as referred to by Christ.

How we can have 500 different denominations all claiming to be followers of Christ is beyond my comprehension. The Bible **clearly** defines that Christ is to be given preeminence in **all things** (Colossians 1:18). Still, most churches have some other name on them, and even the name does not give a true account of their doctrine.

Some of the churches have mixed Old Testament rituals with New Testament ones and, in many cases, added many man-made doctrines not covered by any passages or verses in the Bible. Others claim to be New Testament churches but negate certain scriptures or their meaning.

We will attempt to clear up these misunderstandings by quoting the verses in the Bible that are applicable to the plan of salvation, how to live as a Christian and how you can **know** you will have a home in heaven.

## Is There A Sure Way To Heaven?

Do you want a **new** start in life? Do you want to **make sure** of eternal life? Christ said in Matthew 15:9, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." In Colossians 2:21-22, God's word says, "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using: after the commandments and doctrines of men."

Everyone should understand that the Old Testament is **not** in force today and that we are now living in the latter days under the New Testament. God gave Jesus Christ the authority over everything in heaven and on earth. Christ will judge us on the last day (Matthew 28:18, John 12:48).

Our first point to consider is in I John 5:13 where we find an assurance from the Bible that Christians can know they have eternal life. In fact, anyone can read I John and, if he lives according to these scriptures, **know** he will have a home in heaven with the Lord. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John 5:13). This is the same John who wrote John 3:16, which is so widely quoted, that belief or faith is the only requirement for being saved. As you read I John, you will certainly understand that **obedient** faith is required.

In I John 2:3-4, the verses read as follows: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

In Revelation 21:8 the word of God puts all liars in the same category as the unbelieving, murderers, sorcerers and idolaters. That is, they will be cast into the lake of fire!

A short synopsis of I John is as follows, but we suggest you read this book over many times. It explains how a Christian can **really** know he is saved.

The first five verses of I John point out that John knew Jesus Christ, the Son of God, personally and **confirm** to one and all that Jesus **is** the Son of God. The second five verses point out that God is light and that, as believers, we **must** walk in the light and have fellowship with fellow Christians if we expect to have our sins forgiven. If we die in our sins, our case is hopeless. If we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

The second chapter states that as Christians, we have an **Advocate** with the Father - Jesus Christ the Righteous (I John 2:1-2). The following verses from chapters 2 through 5 emphasize that relationship:

1. I John 2:3: ". . . We do know that we know Him if we obey His commandments."
2. 1 John 2:4: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."
3. 1 John 2:9: "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now."
4. 1 John 2:15: "Love not the world, neither the things in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him."
5. 1 John 2:17: "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."
6. 1 John 3:11: "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning that we should love one another."
7. John 3:18: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."
8. 1 John 3:23: "And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."
9. I John 3:24: "If we keep his commandments, we dwell in him and he in us ... and hereby we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us."
10. I John 4:4: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."
11. I John 4:12: "No man has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

12. 1 John 4:20: If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

13. 1 John 5:3: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

14. 1 John 5:12: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

This thought is also expressed in Acts 4:12. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." As you study I John, you can readily see that this book or epistle was written for the benefit of those who were Christians.

**How** do you become a Christian? Jesus Christ made it very clear that we must **believe, repent, confess** and be **baptized** if we are to obey the commandments toward salvation and become a Christian.

In John 8:24, He stated the following: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

In Luke 13:3, Christ said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

In Luke 24:47, Christ commands, "And that repentance and remission of sins be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

In Matthew 10:32-33, Christ said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But, whosoever shall deny me before men him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

Add to this what the inspired writer wrote in Romans 10:10, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

In Mark 16:15-16, Christ said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Can we **do less** than our Saviour commands and still expect to be **saved**? In addition to the plan of salvation, Jesus explains the need for **obedience** if we expect a heavenly home.

In Hebrews 5:9, Jesus became the author of salvation to all those who obey Him.

In Luke 6:46, He complains, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

In Luke 6:47-48, He likens a man that is obedient to His sayings to a man who built his house on a rock which could not be shaken by the storm.

In Luke 6:49, He likens a man that hears his sayings and doeth them not to a man who built his house on sand, and, when the storm came, the house was destroyed.

In Matthew 7:21-24, Jesus says, "Not everyone 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. Many will say in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

In Matthew 7:13-14, Jesus warns that just a few will find eternal life: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many** there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth to life, and **few** there be that find it."

Since the beginning of time, God has **instructed** men and women of what He requires of them. It was simple for Adam and Eve. They only had to refrain from eating of the tree of knowledge of good or evil. They **disobeyed** God and **sinned** with the consequent result of pain, suffering and death for all mankind.

Down through the ages of the Old Testament, the same thing occurred many times. God commanded and man disobeyed and was consequently punished. Even God's chosen people on many occasions practiced idolatry or disobeyed His commandments and were punished by having their nation destroyed and being cast to the four corners of the earth. So, it continues to this day. God gave us His holy, inspired word and requested that we not add to it or take away from it. A good point to check is baptism.

Let's just begin with Christ Himself. In Matthew 3:13-17: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting on him. And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Christ came from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. Why? Had He sinned? Of course not! He tells you in plain words it was done to **fulfill** all righteousness. Also, notice He came **up** out of the water. Surely He had to be **immersed** first to be able to come up out of the water. Then the Holy Spirit descended on Him. In as much as He was sinless and knew He was the Son of God, it is apparent that Christ was setting an example for all of us to follow. In John 3:5, "Jesus answered Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." How else can you be born again of water and Spirit except by baptism in obedience to Christ's commands?

In Acts 2:38, Peter, who was given the keys to the kingdom by Christ and let the world know what the keys meant when he was questioned by the assembled multitude, said: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the

remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Notice that fulfillment of the four steps of salvation which are included in what Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" includes confessing Christ as Lord and Saviour and believing that Christ is the Son of God. You are then born again by water and you receive the gift of the Holy Spirit even to this day.

In Acts 22:16, Ananias gave Paul the Lord's message, "And now why tarriest thou, arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

In Romans 6:3-6, the inspired writer tells us how we must be baptized: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:21).

Is there a question in anyone's mind that **baptism** means **immersion**? When you are buried or planted with Him, you have obeyed the right doctrine. Sprinkling or pouring is a man-made substitute for true baptism and falls into the same category as all other man-made doctrines. "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear" (I Peter 4:17-18). Christ said in Matthew 16:26, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Is not eternal life more important than a few years of life on this earth?

The writer of the Ephesian letter says, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body the fullness of him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:22-23).

Colossians 1:18 further states: "And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."

In Ephesians 4:4-6, we find: "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Can we not understand from the previous verses that the church is the **body** of Christ, that Christ is the **head** of the body and is to be given preeminence in **all** things? Can we not find in Acts 2:47, that the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved?

God does not make mistakes and when the perfect law of liberty was completed, it became the Bible for all people: for the Jews and for the Gentiles. In II Timothy 3:16-17, God's word says, "all scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good words."

Does this not tell everyone that **God's word** is all that is needed to become a Christian, to organize a church and to worship God in a manner that is pleasing to Him?

In John 17:20, Christ prays to the Father that we all be one - all those who believe on Him through the word. However, if you read of the seven churches of Asia in the book of Revelation, you will find that four of the seven were in danger of condemnation for changing their methods of worship or leaving their first love. What do you think 1900 years of changes by men has created?

That is the reason men with a lot more wisdom than I have decided the only way to please God would be to **go back** to His word and establish the church with the same doctrine that was in effect in the first century. This was done in the first part of the early 1800's. This church is in existence today and is correctly named the church of Christ. There is no other doctrine but the Bible, no hierarchy. Each congregation is ruled by elders; has deacons and evangelists, or ministers; and attempts to please God in its manner of worship.

They realize by adding to or taking away from the word of God only leads to apostasy and a multiplicity of religious faiths, which has been proven through the last two centuries.

Yes, there is a sure way to heaven:

1. Become a Christian according to God's word.
2. Put God first in your life.
3. Love your neighbor as yourself.
4. Have obedient faith.
5. Eliminate man-made doctrines.

You have a choice: Follow God's way; or, follow man-made doctrines that are so prevalent today.

If you study the Bible, you will find that God saw the **end** from the **beginning**. He is infallible and His final visit to man was through Jesus Christ. His word, the Bible, is **all** we need. Do not listen to these preachers with "itching" ears that are only interested in your money.