

DON'T

“ASK JESUS TO COME INTO YOUR HEART” FOR SALVATION!”

INTRODUCTION

"Ask Jesus into your heart" and you'll be saved is a doctrine taught by many radio and TV religious personalities today. Many ordained clergymen who believe this teaching are trying to convert sinners to salvation with this approach, and are encouraging the members of their own congregations who have already asked Jesus into their own hearts to go out and proclaim this same doctrine. Millions of salvation-oriented publications are being printed, purchased, and distributed that say basically the same thing: "Believe, repent, and ask Jesus into your heart; then sign your name and date of commitment."

So why am I saying, "**DON'T ASK JESUS INTO YOUR HEART**" for salvation!-' when this is a very popular, strongly promoted, and widely publicized religious teaching today?

IS "THE SINNER'S PRAYER" IN THE BIBLE?

All that is necessary to determine whether or not one is to ask Jesus into his or her heart for salvation is to see if there are any examples in the New Testament of anyone being saved in this manner.

The New Testament writings contain the gospels, the book of Acts, the epistles, (which include the book of Revelation, letters written to the seven churches). The gospels are the life, teachings, and commands of Christ. The epistles are letters written to people who are already saved, Christians. So one needs to go to the book of Acts, because this book inspired by God tells us the actions and experiences of the apostles and disciples in continuing to establish the New Testament church as founded by Jesus. It tells us how they taught people to be saved, or to become Christians.

While reading the book of Acts, please be alert to any examples of anyone being saved or converted to Christianity by asking Jesus into his or her heart. You might be surprised to notice that there are none.

THE FIRST RECORDED SERMON AFTER JESUS' ASCENSION TO HEAVEN

The apostle Peter preached on the day of Pentecost the first recorded sermon after Jesus' ascension to Heaven and answered in response to a question regarding salvation. Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (NASB)

Please notice that Peter did not say,... Repent, and Let each of you ask Jesus into your heart for the remission of sin, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

You can see that there is a difference in what Peter said compared to what is said by many today

WHAT DID JESUS SAY TO DO?

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (NASB)

Please notice that Jesus did not say, "...All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, telling them to ask Me into their hearts: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

For another account of the Great Commission look to Mark 16:15-16, in which Jesus said, "...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized (immersed in water) shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. " Jesus did not say. ...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and asks Me into their heart shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

SO WHY, THEN, "ASK JESUS INTO YOUR HEART"?

The Scripture verse probably most often quoted by those who teach "ask Jesus into your heart for salvation" is Revelation 3:20 which says, "Behold I (Jesus) stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." This verse is often said to mean that Jesus is standing outside the heart of a non-Christian, and by asking Him in, the unsaved person will therefore be saved.

However, by beginning with Revelation 3:13 and ending with Revelation 3:22, the Scriptures depict Jesus standing outside of and knocking on the door belonging to a group of Christians from the church at Laodicea. It must be noted that "church" means the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23) and a person cannot be part of that one body (Ephesians 4:4-5) unless they are a Christian. (1 Corinthians 12:11-13; Galatians 3:26-29; Romans 8:9; Acts 2:38, 5:32) Therefore, the Laodiceans are not non-Christians, but rather Christians who because of their indifference and self-righteousness are now in danger of losing their salvation unless they repent. The angel (messenger/ Hebrews 13:2) delivering this message was not ordered to deliver it to unsaved people, but to this specific group of lukewarm Christians. Jesus wanted it delivered because He cared for them and loved them enough to warn them about their condition. (Hebrews 12:5-11) Their indifference and self-righteousness made Jesus sick to His stomach; for He said He would spew (vomit) them out of His mouth.

Also, nowhere in Revelation 3:14-22 (particularly verse 20) is the word heart used. So even though Revelation 3:20 is very often quoted by those who teach "ask Jesus to come into your heart for salvation," it is at the same time used out of context and misinterpreted.

Read the first three chapters of the book of Revelation, paying attention to the seven letters written to the seven churches. And please keep in mind that the seven churches are groups of Christians in different locations, but all part of the one body of Christ.

DOESN'T MATTER IF ONE TEACHES "ASK JESUS INTO YOUR HEART FOR SALVATION" EVEN THOUGH JESUS NEVER SAID TO DO SO?

Does it matter to Jesus whether or not someone urges you to pray "**THE SINNER'S PRAYER**" and "ask Jesus into your heart for salvation" even though He never said to do so, as compared to the Scriptures already quoted! Acts 2:38, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, Revelation 3:20, etc....), and as related to the following Scriptures?

Acts 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, [to see] whether these things were so. (NASB)

Galatians 1:8-9 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed. (NASB)

Revelation 22:18-19 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book (NASB)

1 Thessalonians 2:13 And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted [it] not [as] the word of men, but [for] what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe. (NASB)

Yes it does matter to Jesus!

CONCLUSION (OR NEW BEGINNING)

Although we say, "DON'T ASK JESUS TO COME INTO YOUR HEART FOR SALVATION," we do believe that Jesus' Spirit does live in the heart of a Christian. For example:

Galatians 3:26-29 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (NASB)

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, 22 who also sealed us and gave [us] the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge. (NASB)

And we don't want people to harden their hearts to Jesus and His teachings and commands.

Hebrews 4:7 He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts." (NASB)

Proverbs 28:14 How blessed is the man who fears always, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity. (NASB)

Therefore, we do want all people to desire to have the Holy Spirit take residence in their hearts. However, it is the means of having the Holy Spirit move into their hearts with which we are most concerned.

We are not questioning the sincerity of those who teach "ask Jesus into your heart for salvation" but rather we are deeply troubled over the false sense of security of salvation given to those who believe this man-made teaching.

Proverbs 28:26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But he who walks wisely will be delivered.

Psalms 119:105 Thy word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path. (NASB)

Mark 7: 7 'But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.' (NASB)

2 John 9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. (NASB)

We are also concerned about those who teach this because of the strict warnings against teaching a different gospel than that of Christ, and because of the warnings against adding to and subtracting from the book of Revelation.

Therefore, we ask all of you who believe in this teaching of asking Jesus into one's heart for salvation to please reconsider your position in light of the entire New Testament, and specifically the Scriptures already quoted.

Also, if you have asked Jesus into your heart, we ask you please to reconsider your supposed security and have your sins washed away (Acts 22:16) when YOU are baptized by immersion in water (provided you still believe and are repentant), then you can have confident assurance of your salvation (John 5:13) because you will have been "born of water and the Spirit (John 3:5; Acts 2:38); you will have obeyed God (Acts 5:32), and you will belong to Christ because you will indeed have received the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9).

Finally, if you believe and are repentant, but have been immersed for reasons other than to become a Christian (to get saved), we ask you to please consider being immersed in the name of Jesus Christ (according to His teachings).

Acts 19:1-5 And it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples, 2 and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they [said] to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (NASB)

Mark 16:16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. (NASB)

1 John 5:10-12. The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning His Son. 11 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. (NASB)

The Holy Spirit is not promised to those who have been immersed for reasons of membership in a religious congregation, outward sign of an inward grace, proof of sincerity to others; nor to those who have said the "sinner's prayer", not believed, not repented, or have "asked Jesus to come into their heart!"

Romans 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. (NASB)

ARE YOU SURE THAT YOU INDEED HAVE RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT?