

Dear Samuel,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked what you might do to have genuine salvation.

When Jesus died and was resurrected, he paid the ransom price so that all people would be freed from the Adamic curse of death. This is an important thought to keep in mind because if you believe that you have to be a true Christian (one who is selflessly dedicating his life to do the will of God as Jesus did) in order to be “saved” or acquire salvation, there are some serious questions that must be addressed. What is the fate of the countless millions who have never heard of Jesus? What about those who lived before Jesus’ time? And what about the person who believes, but does not make any changes in his life for the better? When Jesus fulfilled his mission on earth, which was to die, He redeemed everyone who ever lived in the past and everyone who was yet to live. Numerous scriptures bring out this fact. For example, 1 Timothy 2:3-6 says, “This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men--the testimony given in its proper time.” And again in 1 Timothy 4:10 we read, “that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.” These scriptures indicate that all men will have an opportunity for salvation, however, there is a special class (a heavenly class) who are to be favored first. John 5:28-29 says, “a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, (we believe this implies the heavenly class will rise to eternal life) and those who have done evil will rise to judgment.” This scripture implies a separation of the two classes that are to be saved—one in heaven and one class on earth who will be judged at a time yet future. This latter class that is to be judged, we believe, will be resurrected on earth and will have ample time to learn of the Lord and of his righteousness. “For just as through the disobedience of the one man (Adam) the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man (Jesus Christ) the many will be made righteous.” (Romans 5:19)

Even though the letters in the New Testament speak to the saints (the “called-out” ones, those striving to be of the heavenly or church class), the scriptures, as you can see, do not minimize Jesus’ sacrifice for everyone else. Those who are called out to sacrifice are judged now as they strive to copy the character of their Master, Jesus. Those not called out are not judged now, but will be later in the “day of judgment” on earth when the heavenly class has been completed.

What can you do to achieve genuine salvation now? If you feel you are being called to be part of the heavenly class that is to bless the entire world in the future, you must first believe that you are a sinner and turn your back on sin. You must believe and have complete faith that Jesus died for your sins and for the sins of the entire world.

Then you must devote yourself to serving God by doing his will and not your own. By so doing you will receive a greater and greater measure of the holy spirit. Your decision to follow in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus is an inward on-going character transformation that should be outwardly manifested by full water immersion (baptism). As you progress along on your Christian walk with Jesus you will be developing the fruits of the spirit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).

However, if you do not feel you are being called at this time to sacrifice your will in order to do the will of God and be part of the heavenly class, do not despair. Jesus’ sacrifice unequivocally gives everyone a chance for salvation during the 1000-year Judgment Day on earth. During that judgment period the dead, both good and evil, will be awakened and have an opportunity to learn what true righteousness is and have God’s laws written in their hearts. Those who prove themselves worthy will be granted perfect everlasting life on earth. Those who prove to be incorrigible after an adequate trial period will be taken away in the “second death” from which there is no redemption. The end result of that judgment will be the eradication of tears, pain, sorrow, crying and finally death itself. (See Revelation 21:1-4.) We look forward with great anticipation to that glorious day!

We hope we have encouraged you as well as answered your question. The important point to remember is that there are two parts to salvation: part one for those who are being tested now during this Gospel Age in order to achieve heavenly salvation and part two for the great majority of people who will be tested during the 1000-year judgment period, who, if proven to be righteous, will achieve everlasting life on earth.

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Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio