

The Essentials of Salvation

Test yourself: Are you in the way or not? In this article, I review some key teachings of the scriptures, and note some heretical doctrines.

1. First and foremost Yayshua is our Lord and Messiah. He is Yahweh Elohim (The L-RD G-D). This truth is of saving importance.
2. Next to the recognition of the Creator, repentance and living a righteous life is the next most important teaching of the scripture. Without repentance, which is turning away from sin, no man can be saved.
3. The third most important doctrine is the teaching on the forgiveness of sins. Sins are forgiven by the acceptance of the blood atonements provided for sins, the most important atonement being that provided by Yayshua.

The above are the positive doctrines one must profess and practice. There are, however, heretical practices, and beliefs which are damning, which outwardly look like the truth to untrained eyes. Any heretical teaching or practice can be damning under the following conditions: (a) The truth is clearly known. (b) The truth is rejected. (c) A state of guilt follows.

Guilt is liability to punishment or judgment. A person feels guilty when they commit a transgression of sufficient degree to cause a crisis of faith or confidence in their status before God. The remedy is confession, repentance from the sin, and recognition of atonement, which returns one to a state of grace. The onset of guilty feelings is a warning sign that something is amiss. Usually, when someone does something that is wrong the first time, he feels guilty, but there is another way than repenting that humans escape the guilt. They rationalize (self deceive) themselves that the act committed was no sin at all. The result is a "seared conscience," meaning they no longer have any guilty feeling about the act they continue to do. A seared conscience can be healed only by unraveling the illogical rationalization that produced it, or by a direct act of the Spirit of God. A seared conscience comes through willful sin which is not repented of but which is forgotten about. The act itself can be continued or repeated at a latter date without a feeling of guilt. A seared conscience is also known as the sin against the Holy Spirit, and anyone with a seared conscience has no forgiveness in this age or in the next. For the seared conscience was created by rationalizing away a willful sin.

All manner of sin can be forgiven while it is being practiced except the sin against the Holy Spirit. For example, if one is not immersed (baptized) he is forgiven, but if one refuses to be immersed, having been convicted he should be immersed, then he commits the sin against the Spirit, and has no forgiveness. The Christian world usually teaches that the sin against the Holy Spirit is attributing the miracles of Yayshua to the Devil. The truth is, that any sin against the Spirit's direct conviction and witness is the Sin against the Spirit. Yayshua happened to know that the Spirit was using his signs to convict people of the truth, including those leaders who were saying that the signs were of the Devil. The Rationalization given by the leaders is only an example of resisting the Spirit's conviction, not the definition of it. If we put this another way, if a person feels guilty over a sin, and instead of repenting and asking forgiveness, he rationalizes it all away, then even though the guilt feeling leaves, the guilt remains and the person remains in a state of damnation. The person's status changes from righteous to wicked, from saved to lost, from a member of God's people to a pagan. See Ezekiel 18.

When Yayshua said that the sin against the Spirit has no forgiveness, he meant that unlike other sins, it has no forgiveness while it is being committed. He did not say it could never be forgiven, but that it "has no forgiveness." This means that a person who has become wicked through the sin against the Spirit can confess the sin and repent of the sin, and accept the atonement provided. Barring this, such sin remains on the books unforgiven in perpetuity. Now, there are people who have deceived themselves into thinking that they are still in the faith, who at some time in the past have sinned against the conviction of the Spirit, and have rationalized it away so that they no longer feel guilty. The warning sign of guilt feeling is thus not present, but real guilt is. For Yayshua will say to them "Away from me you workers of lawlessness!" even though they say "Lord, Lord" to

him. So, since such self deception is possible, the question is how can a believer test to see if they are really in the faith. For many will stand at the judgment and say did we not believe the right things and do the right things, but God will say "You resisted my Spirit when he convicted you of a certain matter, and you never repented of it!"

So sincerity is not enough to be sure, and that is why the scripture commands, "Examine yourselves, whether Ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Yayshua is among you, except ye be reprobates?" (II Cor. 13:5). In other words, if you are a reprobate, then Yayshua is not in the midst of ye when ye gather together. So how do we do this test? How do we examine ourselves? The Spirit only convicts believers of "sin, righteousness, and judgment." For that is why He comes into the world. Hence, the question boils down to what is sin, and what is righteousness? Many imagine that they are convicted of a certain matter, and it has nothing to do with sin or righteousness. Sin and righteousness are actually opposites. A righteous act or belief is not sinful, and a sinful act or belief is not righteous. Hence we can boil the question down to "What is sin?" Is there something that God said was a sin that at one time I felt guilty about, but now no longer feel bad or guilty about? We are not speaking of ignorance of God's will here, but actually having known it when convicted, and having rejected it. Neither are we speaking of having recognized God's will and simple negligence in practicing it as we should because of forgetfulness or circumstance. We are speaking of rejecting the conviction as a conviction. It is one thing to reject immersion, knowing you ought to be immersed, and another to neglect it too long. One is rebellion. The other is human nature. I pick immersion as an example here, because it is the conviction that all religious Jews and many Christians share in common. To know in what cases rebellion is possible, we simply need to review for ourselves the question what is sin? Not what we think it is, but what did God say it was? SIN IS THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW (I John 3:4). Now, you may not know the whole law, but you do know or have been taught much of it. As much as you have understood and have been convicted of the truth of, have you turned away from it? NOW WE KNOW THAT WHAT THINGS SOEVER THE LAW SAITH, IT SAITH TO THEM WITH THE LAW, THAT EVERY MOUTH MAY BE STOPPED, AND ALL THE WORLD MAY BECOME GUILTY BEFORE G-D (Romans 3:19). Notice that Paul does not just limit the Law to Jews. He applies it to the whole world!

Now we know what sin is, we only need to ask, of the laws in the scripture, have we rejected any of them after being convicted to do them? No doubt with all the talk about parts of the law being abolished, many are not convinced as they should be. If you are simply not convinced, then you have not resisted, and hence are off the hook. But, let me warn you, the Law is the only objective standard of thinking, and insofar as you hold erroneous views, though they be not damning, they are a great danger. For such illogic if not corrected, leads to rejection of truths that are critical, and may eventually put you in a position of having to make a hard choice about continuing in the faith. If you search the scriptures, seek God, hold and apply the truths mentioned at the beginning, then you will grow in the faith. If you felt guilty in the past about not doing something the scriptures say to do, then now is the time to remedy the situation.

There are only three requirements for salvation!

1. You must be willing to repent of what **you know is sin**. (Willful rebellion is the opposite of repentance.)
2. You must confess that Messiah Yayshua is Yahweh manifest in a human body.
3. You must faithfully trust Him, accepting His substitutionary sacrifice for sin.

God does not hold against us that which we do not know if we are one of his people. As long as we are on the path of repentance and confess him and accept his provisions for forgiveness, we continue in the faith. That means listening to the teaching of the Spirit of God and responding when He convicts our hearts to take the next step, whatever that may mean in your personal situation. For not everyone is at the same level of maturity. God does not require perfection in this life for salvation. He only requires that you aim at it.