

That Soul-Saving Message & Plan
James 1:21-25
By Russell Earl

Thesis: I want to show the one true soul-saving plan from the Bible.

- Intro:
1. It is true that many groups today have their own “plan or belief” about what God requires of mankind to obtain salvation.
 2. While other plans may be viewed as being “easier or less rigid” they fall short of God’s requirements.
 3. Some have even added ideas that cannot be supported from the Bible.

I. The Plan of the world (**Ephesians 2:8-9**).

- A. All “good” people go to heaven.
 1. This idea hasn’t changed much. It’s simple yet falls short of God’s plan for man’s salvation.
 2. Has anyone ever been “good” enough to gain eternal life?
 3. How would one define “good”? Isn’t it true people have different standards of what is “good”? How would one know they have been “good” enough to gain salvation and eternal life?
- B. “Good” means earning salvation by our works.
 1. Can anyone do enough to be called “good” in the sight of God and receive salvation and eternal life as a result of their “goodness”?
 2. When works is mentioned with faith in the Bible its works we do because we love the Lord. Faith in itself is also a work. Would anyone say remaining faithful to God is easy and thus is not a work?
- C. Well, He or she “has a good heart”
 1. What is a “good heart”? Can someone with a good heart gain salvation & eternal life?
 2. This phrase is often used for those trying to justify others disobedience. It takes more than a “good heart” to gain heaven.

II. The Plan from some local “churches”

- A. The plans derived from men create confusion.
 1. Here is a sample of what a local congregation says concerning salvation:
“Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith. Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot “lose” it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.” HC
- Do you see the faults in this “plan”? What does it mean to “receive” Christ by faith? By their statement it must refer to faith alone & once saved always saved, an idea not found in the Bible (**1 Peter 3:21, 3:17, Gal 5:4**).

2. Our 2nd sample shows the way salvation is being treated by another local congregation.

Hell-Fire and Brimstone - Those Days are Gone

“We find that people are much more likely to make improvements in their spiritual lives when motivated by sound, biblical teaching that is delivered with a sense of grace and purpose. *“Find your path...”*”

- Interestingly enough grace is found in the Bible and purpose can be too, however this type of “salvation and worship plan” is not the same as in the Bible. Grace is extended to those who repent and put Christ on in Baptism. However, is that what’s being said here? (**Acts 2:36-38,41**)

B. Man’s plans are not adequate.

1. Man’s plans are not adequate because they were created by man. No one can gain eternal life by following someone else’s plan. No one can keep a car if they create a payment plan of their own (only paying once every few months, etc). They must follow the plan put in place by the company.
2. Today we must follow the plan put in place by God and the Bible reveals that plan to us.

III. The Plan from the Bible.

Hear – **Romans 10:17**, Hear & learn –**John 6:45**

Believe - **Mark 16:16**

Repent – **Acts 26:20**

Confess – **Acts 8:37**

Be Baptized for remission of sins & to be placed into the body of Christ –
Acts 22:16 , Gal 3:26-27

Look at the example of Paul’s conversion –

He Heard- **Acts 9:3-6**

He Believed- **Acts 9:6-9**

He confessed- **Acts 9:5-6a**

He repented – **Acts 9:8-9**

He was baptized – **Acts 9:18** (a result of repentance was receiving sight and the right to be baptized –**John 1:12**

He was faithful unto death – Paul’s letters affirm his faithfulness

- Conc:
1. The Bible’s plan reveals God’s plan-the only plan that makes man right in the sight of God and fit for eternal life.
 2. No worldly ideas or man made traditions can do what God’s plan does for us.
 3. Full Invitation