

The Good News about Salvation

As Described by Jesus

The following observations are typical of how the "good news" about salvation is described by Jesus (in the four "gospels," Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Other passages may exist, but those listed here will provide a sufficient overview of what the "good news" actually is. An occasional passage may have been included that only indirectly touches on this topic; this was done mainly when it was an issue that is often ignored by those who choose to preach something different – a message that Scripture describes as false.

Examine the Scripture passages and their context. Compare what they say to what you were taught (or what you teach).

I. *Background issues*

A. *Comments about Jesus' message and life*

[Matthew 4](#); [Luke 4](#) – The temptation of Jesus – a study in values! (Jesus shows by example how to respond to temptation. Note that it's not just a matter of quoting Bible verses. Rather, the verses that are quoted express the values that Jesus lived by.)

[Luke 4:17-21](#); [Luke 4:43](#) – Scripture quoted (and fulfilled in Jesus), accompanied by healing/restoration, etc. The good news had finally arrived (in Jesus).

[John 20:31](#) – The reason that some of Jesus' miracles were recorded in Scripture: to back-up the truth about Jesus – so we have a basis for believing that he is who he claimed to be, and that he actually did fulfill Old Testament prophecy. [Observation: It seems that most people like the excitement of the miracles, but refuse to pay attention to what they teach about Jesus and his kingdom.]

B. *The urgent need for a careful response*

[Matthew 22:14](#) – Warning: many are invited; few are chosen. [Many will be offered the opportunity to be in God's kingdom, but few will actually become a part of it.]

[Luke 13:23-30](#) – Few will successfully enter the "narrow door." So make every effort to enter.

[Matthew 25:40](#) (and context) – You will be judged according to what you do (or don't do).

[Matthew 24:25](#); [Mark 13:37](#) (and [Luke 12:35+](#)) – Various illustrations to show the need to be ready.

[Matthew 11:20-24](#) – (implied): Those exposed to the truth will be judged more severely if they fail to repent.

C. *About your response*

[Matthew 13:1-23](#); [Mark 4:1-20](#); [Luke 8:4-18](#) – Describes 4 basic ways people respond to the Word.

[Luke 10:16](#) – Your reaction to the messenger (who brings the good news) parallels your reaction to Jesus/God.

II. God's role in salvation

A. Sovereignty and responsibility go together

[COMMENT](#): God's sovereignty and our responsibility parallel each other. They always work together. We need to focus on our responsibility; but a right understanding of God's role will leave us humble and willing to depend on God (rather than being arrogant and demanding of him). Watch your attitude!

[John 6:37](#) – Sovereignty and responsibility in the same verse.

[Matthew 11:27-30](#) – Sovereignty and responsibility; those who learn from Jesus have rest.

B. Father (or a general reference to God)

[John 6:44](#) – People cannot come to me (Jesus) unless the Father who sent me brings them to me. I will bring these people back to life on the last day.

[John 8:43](#) – Those who do not have God as their Father cannot understand Jesus' words. (In other words, the Father gives them the ability to understand.)

[John 6:65](#) – People cannot come to me (Jesus) unless the Father makes it possible.

[John 14:15](#) – God will use the truth to make his people holy.

[Matthew 19:26](#); [Mark 10:27](#); [Luke 18:27](#) – It is impossible for you to save yourself, but God can do it.

C. Son

[John 5:21](#) – The Son gives life to anyone he chooses.

D. Holy Spirit

[John 3:3-8](#) – The Holy Spirit must cause you to be "born again." [Study this passage carefully. Most people misuse the concept of "born again." Since God's sovereignty and human responsibility *always* work together, this concept applies only to those who have done the things listed in the following sections.]

III. What you must do to be saved

A. Your actions

[Matthew 4:17](#); [Mark 1:15](#) – REPENT! (Jesus' message.)

[Luke 13:1-5](#) – Repent or something worse will occur to you. (Spoken after a tragedy had occurred and some people had died.)

[Matthew 7:26-27](#); [Luke 6:46-49](#) – We must hear and obey Jesus' words.

[Matthew 10:32-39](#)+ – The need to publicly acknowledge that you are following Jesus (even though some people will hate you because of it).

[Luke 12:8-9](#) – Jesus will acknowledge everyone who acknowledges him, and will deny all who deny him. (Note the context – being persecuted or killed for Jesus' sake.)

[Matthew 18:35](#) – You must forgive others the same way you want to be forgiven. [Also mentioned in the "Sermon on the Mount" – [Matthew 6:14-15](#).]

[Mark 10:14-15](#); [Luke 18:17](#) – The need for a child-like trust.

[John 3:16-21](#) – We must trust Jesus (and delight in what is good and true, rather than in what is evil).

[John 5:23-24](#) – Those who honor the Son and who pays attention to what he says (and believes and lives according to it) will have eternal life.

B. Your values and priorities

[Matthew 8:19-22](#); [Luke 9:57-62](#) – Following Jesus takes priority over everything else.

[Matthew 13:44-45](#) – The priority of the kingdom.

[John 3:16-21](#) – We must trust Jesus and delight in what is good and true, rather than in what is evil.

[Matthew 16:24-27](#); [Mark 8:34-38](#); [Luke 9:23-26](#) – Whoever wants to follow Jesus must carry his own cross, etc.

[Luke 14:26-27](#)+ – Jesus comes ahead of family. You must be willing to consider the cost before you claim you are going to follow him, etc.

[Luke 12:13-21](#) – A warning against those who focus on material possessions. (See also [v. 34](#) – Your heart will be with your treasure.)

[John 5:44](#) – (An example of people who had the wrong priorities.) How can you believe the truth about Jesus, when you are more interested in getting praise from each other, and don't look for the praise that comes from the only God?

IV. What will happen if you are saved

A. The "fruit of salvation" – results which will occur

[Matthew 12:33](#); also [Luke 6:43-45](#) and [Matthew 7:15-23](#) – A person can be recognized by his fruit. [When you hear someone downplay (or totally ignore) the need for "fruit," who are you going to believe – them or Jesus? It's amazing how many people consider Jesus to be a liar on this matter!]

[Matthew 21:43](#) (also [Mark 12:1](#)+); [Luke 20:9-19](#) – God's kingdom will be taken from the merely religious and given to those who have the kingdom's fruit.

Never forget: Things such as these do not cause salvation; but salvation causes things such as these.

B. General effects on your attitude and actions

[Matthew 5](#)+; [Luke 6:20](#)+ – The "Sermon on the Mount" describes the values of a disciple; similar passages can be found elsewhere.

[John 10:27](#) – Jesus' sheep pay attention to what he says (and they obey him).

[John 14:15](#), [John 14:21](#), [23-24](#) – Those who love Jesus will obey him; they are the ones who will have the Father's love. Those who don't love Jesus won't obey him.

[Matthew 22:34-40](#); [Mark 12:28-34](#) – The two greatest obligations: Love for God and love for neighbor (all people).

[Luke 10:25-37](#) – "Love for neighbor" further illustrated by "the parable of the good Samaritan."

C. Specific examples of effects on attitude and actions

[Matthew 15:3-9](#)+ and [Mark 7:6-8](#)+ – Such a person will not exalt man-made rules above God's Word (unlike religious people, such as those described in this passage).

[Matthew 18:15-17](#) – Some often-neglected comments about discipline. A follower of Jesus is serious about wanting to undo the damage that unrepentant sin causes – whether it is in him (mentioned in other verses) or in someone else (mentioned here).

[Matthew 20:25-28](#); [Mark 9:35](#); [10:42-45](#); [Luke 9:48](#) – Strive to serve, not to be served.

[Matthew 28:18-20](#); [Mark 16:15](#) – The command to make disciples...

[Luke 24:47-48](#) – The message of repentance and [as a result] forgiveness – this is what they were to "witness" about.

D. Consequences – now and in eternity

[Matthew 12:48-50](#); [Mark 3:33-35](#); [Luke 8:21](#) – Those who obey God are part of Jesus' family. [This passage also teaches us that the spiritual relationship is more important than the physical relationship.]

[Luke 12:8-9](#) – Jesus will acknowledge everyone who acknowledges him. (Note the context – being persecuted or killed for Jesus' sake.)

[Matthew 10:32-39](#)+ – When you publicly acknowledge that you are following Jesus, sometimes people will hate you because of it (just like they hated Jesus).

[Matthew 11:27-30](#) – Those who learn from Jesus have rest.

[Matthew 19:29](#) and context; [Mark 10:29-31](#); [Luke 18:29-30](#) – These passages mention some of the things you will get for following Jesus. (But note that these things are not what saves you.) Again, watch your attitude... many people won't get what they expect – [Matthew 20:1](#)+, [v. 23](#), etc.

[Matthew 24:13](#) (also [Mark 13](#) and [Luke 21](#)) – As we approach the end, conditions will get worse and worse. Those who endure to the end will be saved. (God's people have no need to fear.)

V. Comments about the unsaved

A. Those who do not accept the good news

[Matthew 10:32-39](#)+ – They may hate you when you publicly acknowledge that you are following Jesus.

[Matthew 11:16-19](#); [Luke 7:31-35](#) – (An example.) Unsaved people will always come-up with excuses for not accepting the truth and repenting of their sins.

[Matthew 21:13](#); [Mark 11:17](#); [Luke 19:46](#) – (An example of how they can corrupt something that's good.) A warning about turning God's temple into a house of thieves. (See also [John 2:14-17](#), at the beginning of Jesus' ministry.)

[Matthew 21:43](#) (also [Mark 12:1](#)+); [Luke 20:9-19](#) – God's kingdom will be taken from the merely religious and given to those who have the kingdom's fruit (the fruit of salvation, which is required of all who are a part of his kingdom).

[John 3:16-21](#) – They are already condemned because their deeds are evil. It will stay that way, if they refuse to trust Jesus and to delight in what is good and true.

[Matthew 11:20-24](#) – (implied): Those exposed to the truth will be judged more severely if they fail to repent.

[John 14:24](#) – Those who love Jesus will obey him; those who don't love Jesus won't obey him. It's as simple as that. (Which characterizes your lifestyle?)

[John 8:21](#) (and context) – One of many examples of Jesus judging people who refused to repent. (Or perhaps Jesus is warning them about the judgment they already have coming to them.)

B. Those who lead others astray

[Matthew 18:6-11](#); [Mark 9:42-50](#); [Luke 17:1-4](#) – Warnings about causing a child (or others) to stumble. "Cut off" whatever causes you to sin! [Sin is serious! Note that it is ultimately your sinful nature that needs "cut off," and God needs to be the surgeon!]

[Matthew 23](#); [Mark 12:37](#)+; [Luke 11:39](#)+; [Luke 20:45-47](#) – A warning about the hypocrisy and actions of the leaders. These were the highly-esteemed, supposedly "Bible believing" leaders of Jesus' day. [Note also that they were serious about "soul-winning... but they were "winning souls" for the wrong side! See [Matthew 23:15](#).]

C. Those who have "temporary faith"

[Matthew 12:43-46](#); [Luke 11:24-26](#) – A temporary change leaves a person worse off than no change at all.

[John 2:23-25](#) – An example of "frivolous faith."

[John 6:26-27](#) – An example of coming to Jesus with the wrong motives.

VI. How does John the Baptist's message compare to Jesus' message?

Though from a slightly different perspective (since he came before Jesus), John's message was fully compatible with the message that Jesus proclaimed. [Two passages from the book of Acts are also included.]

A. The need to confess, repent, etc.

[Matthew 3:6](#); [Mark 1:5](#); also [Luke 3:3](#) and context – John baptized the people after they confessed their sins; also mentions repentance, fruit (related to repentance), etc.

[Acts 13:24](#) – John preached a baptism, (symbolic) of repentance, to all the people of Israel.

B. The need to look to Jesus for salvation

[Matthew 3:11](#); [Mark 1:7](#); [Luke 3:16](#) – After me will come one more powerful than I...

[John 1:6-8](#) – He came as a witness to testify concerning the light (Jesus). (Also several other passages in John: [John 1:15](#), [26-36](#); [3:23-36](#); [5:32-33](#); [10:41](#).)

[Acts 19:4](#) – John had a baptism of repentance and told the people to put their trust in Jesus. [The baptism was symbolic of the repentance that had taken place in their hearts.]