

OUR NEED FOR CHRIST

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In Matthew 1:20-21, the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, to inform him that Mary, his espoused wife, had conceived of the Holy Spirit, “and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: *for he shall save his people from their sins.*” Jesus came to “save that which was lost” (Matt 18:11; Luke 19:10). He is “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). Jesus himself said, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me*” (John 14:6). Concerning Jesus Christ as the one and only source of the salvation of mankind, Acts 4:12 says, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Our need for Jesus Christ to obtain eternal salvation is one of the most fundamental and essential teachings found in God’s word.

The wages of sin

In Genesis 2:17, God warned Adam in His commandment not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that “*in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*” Adam did indeed die *in the day* that he ate the forbidden fruit in Genesis chapter 3, but he did not die physically. Adam lived for 930 years and only then did he physically die (Gen 5:5). Therefore, his death in Genesis 3 was *spiritual* death. Speaking of this very event, Romans 5:12 says, “*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*” As Adam died spiritually on the day he committed his first sin, so all men have died spiritually the moment they committed their first sin. Paul applied this to himself in Romans 7:9: “*For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.*” Paul obviously did not die physically when he first sinned, but rather spiritually. God says in Ezekiel 18:4, “The soul that sins, it shall die.” Romans 6:23 likewise says that “*the wages of sin is death.*” Again, this is speaking of spiritual death. The word “death” actually means “separation.” Physical death occurs when the spirit is separated from the physical body (Jas 2:26). *Spiritual* death occurs when a man’s soul is separated from God. Isaiah 59:2 says, “*But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*” Colossians 1:21 says that we “were sometime *alienated and enemies in*

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(continued)

your mind by wicked works.” That is how a man becomes “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Eph 2:1).

The blood of Christ

All people who have lived long enough to become accountable for their actions have sinned (Rom 3:23; 5:12; 1 John 1:8,10), and consequently become separated from God (Isa 59:2). In this condition, men have “no hope” and are “without God in the world” (Eph 2:12). If this condition remains, the separation from God becomes permanent. Those who die in their sins cannot go to heaven (John 8:21; 1 Cor 15:17; Rev 20:12), but will “be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (2 Thes 1:9). Therefore, reconciliation with God and remission of sins are necessary for anyone to be able to go to heaven. However, Hebrews 9:22 teaches that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. Jesus Christ became the one and only sacrifice for the sins of mankind (Isa 52:13-53:12; Dan 9:27; Zech 9:11; Matt 1:21; John 1:29, 3:16-17; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 2:1-2). He became a sacrifice for sins, being “wounded for our transgressions,” “bruised for our iniquities,” and having “the iniquity of us all” laid upon him (Isa 53:5-6). It is only by the blood that Christ shed in his death on the cross that men are redeemed, reconciled to God, forgiven of their sins, and set free from sin (Matt 26:28; Luke 24:47; John 3:16-18; Acts 2:38; 5:30-31; 10:34-43; 20:28; Rom 3:24-25; 5:6-11; 1 Cor 5:7; 10:16; Eph 1:7; 2:13; 4:32; 5:2; Col 1:13-14, 18-22; Heb 9:11-14, 22-28; 10:4-23, 26-29; 12:22-24; 13:12-13, 20-21; 1 Pet 1:2, 18-19; 1 John 1:7; 5:6, 8; Rev 1:5-6; 5:9-10; 7:14; 12:11). Jesus Christ is the one and only remedy for man’s lost and hopeless condition due to his sins. Christ offered one sacrifice for sins forever and no more offering is needed (Heb 10:11-23). It must be emphasized again that not all sins will be forgiven, even though Christ shed his blood for the remission of all sins. From the establishment of the New Covenant, belief in and obedience to the gospel of Christ is the only means of attaining this salvation that comes by the blood of Christ (John 3:18; 8:24; Acts 10:43; Rom 2:8-10; 6:16-18; 2 Thes 1:7-10; Heb 5:9; 2 Pet 1:2; 4:17). This obedience includes repentance (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 2:38), and baptism into Christ (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Gal 3:27; Col 2:13; 1 Pet 3:21).