

## WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION?

By  
Dr. O. Wilburn Swaim, Th.D.

[docswaim@hotmail.com](mailto:docswaim@hotmail.com)  
[www.exhortationplace.com](http://www.exhortationplace.com)

Soul-winning is the work dearest to God's heart. He has no desire that any should perish, but has decreed that all might come to repentance (Ref. II Peter 3:9). God loves us so much (John 3:16), and in demonstration of that love He gave His only begotten Son to purchase our redemption (I Peter 1:18). Our responsibility following conversion is to win souls to Christ. Some reject this term contending that God wins souls, not men. The truth is, God saves the sinner, but chooses to use saved sinners to get other sinners saved. The terminology may be found in Proverbs 11: 30.[1]

There are some prerequisites for one to be a successful soul-winner. One, concerns the Scriptures. The Scriptures given herein must be both in the heart, and from the heart of the soul-winner. That is, you must yourself have experienced the verses, must know that you have, and have a burning desire to tell others. Otherwise the sinner will detect the falseness of your witness and reject your witness. Memorize them, live them, and proclaim them (Psalm 119: 9--11; I Corinthians 1:18-25).

Another prerequisite concerns power. The soul-winner must go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 15:4, 5; Acts 1:8). To do so, spend time praying for the one to whom you plan to witness. (There is certainly a place for spontaneous witnessing, but we are here concerned with planned, systematic soul-winning.) Insure that you are in fellowship with the Lord. Go forth in faith realizing you are doing His work: That it is His power, through the Word, that will produce results. You are but a clean, submissive vessel being used of the Lord. He has, however, promised great rewards for so being. (Psalm 126:5,6; Acts 1:8; I John 1:7-22; Isaiah 55: 10,11).

This work is not intended as an expert soul-winning plan, certain to always produce results. It is not presented as the best plan available, or as the one, which you must use. It is set forth to you as the one with which God has given me the most souls. May it serve as an instrument of example and a guide to you in formulating your own systematic layout of Scripture to use in your soul-winning effort. May our Lord grant you the joy of leading many souls to Christ (Psalm 126: 5, 6; I Thessalonians 2: 19, 20). Here's how:

### **I. Lead the Sinner to an Awareness of His Lost Condition (Romans 3:23).**

In a broad jump contest, one will out jump the rest. If it were jumping from earth to heaven, with hell in between, only a perfect jump would be sufficient. It really wouldn't matter how far one jumped, if he failed to jump all the way. (This can be illustrated with simple drawings on a piece of paper.) Only Jesus, the God-Man, is good enough to miss hell. All others fall short. This verse is not concerned with how much of a sinner one is, but the fact that none is as good as Jesus. Lead the sinner to make a verbal confession that he is a sinner, unworthy of spending eternity with God.

### **II. Inform the Sinner as to the Results of His Sinfulness (Romans 6:23).**

Explain "wages" as the payment for the work one does. Illustrate with an example of a wage earner drawing his paycheck at the end of the week.

Explain that "death" is "**separation**", and may be viewed in three ways: [2]

- A. Spiritual death. When Adam sinned, he died immediately spirituality. That is, he was **separated** from God by his sin. The spirit of man,

the part which God created with the ability to know Him, was rendered inoperative (toward God). Now, every human being inherits this condition at birth. We were born spiritually dead.

- B. Physical death. When Adam sinned, this process set in upon him, and he eventually died physically. That is, his spirit/soul **separated** from his body, and his body was rendered inoperative.
- C. Eternal death. When a man dies physically, in the state of being dead spiritually, the state of being **separated** from God continues for all eternity. God must have someplace to put such. At present, it is a place called Hell. In eternity, it is called the Lake of Fire. We generally speak non-technically of it simply as "spending eternity (i.e. being eternally **separated** from God, and all that is good), in Hell."

Obtain a voluntary confession from the sinner that if he were to die right now, he would spend eternity in hell. You must get the prospect lost before you can get him or her saved.

### **III. Explain God's Remedy for Sin (Romans 5: 8).**

The word "commendeth" means, "to prove or show forth." Literally, it is to combine two facts for the proving of one point. Fact # 1 is that all are sinners. Fact # 2 is that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. These two facts prove the point, that God loves the sinner--He loves you!

God loves sinners so much that He sent Christ to die for them. Since sin brings death (i.e. **separation**), and Christ is sinless, [3] how is it that Christ died? The word "for" is the key. It means "in behalf of." II Corinthians 5:21 explains that Christ became sin for us, and died in our place to pay for our sins. Note also I Peter 2: 24 and 3:18.

Illustrate the above. Draw stick figures on paper, or use objects to show how God took the burden of sin off the sinner and placed it on Christ. His wrath was then poured out upon Christ, He being punished for our sin, in our place. Emphasize that it was the sin of the one to whom you are witnessing that caused the death of Christ. Don't stop until it is clear that he realizes and **accepts** his guilt.

### **IV. Lead to the Knowledge of How to Get Saved (Romans 10: 9, 10).**

"Lord" means "Master." "Jesus" means "Saviour" (Matthew 1: 21). "Believe in thine heart" indicates genuine faith that results in appropriate actions. A helicopter mechanic may say his machine is ready to fly. To get in it and ride in the test flight is an action that manifests genuine faith. Mere knowledge of the facts of the gospel doesn't save. It is full dependence on the God of those facts, based on the facts, to do what He said--that is Bible faith. Ultimately, it is firm conviction that God has done it.

In verse ten we find that true faith, accompanied by outward confession of the inward reality, brings salvation. Verse thirteen may be the equivalent of the "confession" spoken of in verse ten.

Hebrews 11: 6 gives a good definition of faith. One must first believe that God is real, and then that God will do what He promises. Also, study verse thirteen.

### **V. Lead the Sinner to Receive Christ as Saviour (Romans 10: 13; John 5: 24).**

Briefly review the facts so far presented and insure the sinner understands and agrees with them. Then secure a definite assurance that he wants God to save him, change his life, and believes that God will save him when he calls on Him.

Bow your head and say, "Let me pray for you, and then I want to help you pray." Briefly thank the Lord for salvation in Christ, and for being willing to save all who call upon him. Ask that the Holy Spirit would open the sinner's heart (call him by name), and save him now. Without saying "Amen," ask the sinner to pray a prayer after you. Ask him to pray out loud so you can bear testimony to his confession. Tell him to repeat after you, but only the words which he sincerely means, and which are prayed in faith. Lead him to pray something like this: *Dear God, I confess that I have sinned against you...(pause for him to repeat this), I'm sorry for my sin...I believe that Jesus died for me...was buried...and rose again the third day... I now repent of my sin... and receive Him as my personal Saviour and Lord... Lord, save me now...and help me to live for you for the rest of my life...in Jesus Name I thank you for saving me...Amen.*

At this point you may look up to see a new convert with tear filled eyes, or there may be no emotion. It largely depends on the emotional makeup of the individual, and the degree of sinfulness of the past life. Remember, we are saved by faith, not feeling. Don't ask, "Are you saved?" He needs assurance from the Word upon which he can hang his confession. The verse to use is John 5: 24. Read the verse to him, then say, "Have you heard the Word? Did you believe when you prayed? Then this verse is speaking to you. It says that you have, right now, everlasting life. Do you now, based on this verse, have everlasting life?" An affirmative answer shows he has turned loose of all others hopes, and is trusting Christ. Hesitancy calls for further explanation and efforts to lead him to be able to say, "I'm saved." We are not trying to talk one into anything. Pray for wisdom to discern the difference.

Now share with the new convert four steps that will guarantee his spiritual growth and success in being faithful in days ahead. The four steps are:

1. Make his profession public through baptism (baptism means joining a local church);
2. Explain that the church should be a Bible believing church, and point out the importance of being faithful to it.
3. Read the Bible and pray daily. Briefly share the related information given above; and
4. As Christ does begin changing his life, tell others about Christ and begin becoming a soul-winner. Dr. Swaim has a booklet which could be given to them to help them get started. Your church also should have literature available to aid the new convert.

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<sup>1</sup> The writer realizes that it is not likely that Solomon had in his mind the modern day concept of "soul-winning," when he penned these words. It is more likely that he was concerned with having influence over people. No greater influence can be exercised, than for a righteous person to bring a sinner---influence one—to come to Christ.

<sup>2</sup> This explanation can be valuable in bring the prospect to an understanding of why he or she is in need of salvation. But, make it brief, without any more detail than, 1) is necessary, and 2) can be grasped by the prospect.

3 Inquire as to whether the sinner is aware of this latter fact. Use Hebrews 4:15 and I Peter 2: 22 to prove and explain that Christ is totally without sin, if he has any questions concerning it.