



Responding to SALVATION 2

Responding To God's Salvation

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Introduction

In the first lesson, *Understanding Salvation*, we explored God's plan of rescue woven throughout the story of Scripture. Salvation, as the Bible tells it, is not merely about personal forgiveness or a ticket to heaven, it's about God restoring His creation and reconciling all things in Him.

In this lesson, we turn to our response. How do we participate in God's saving work? What does it mean to respond faithfully to the message of Jesus?

The Scriptures often describe salvation as an invitation, one that calls for a personal and faithful response. From hearing the good news to walking in newness of life, each response flows from what God has already done in Christ.

Hearing the Good News

The story begins with hearing. The apostle Paul wrote, **“Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.”**¹ The good news is that through Jesus, God has acted to redeem and restore His creation.

In the ancient world, **“good news”** (*euangelion*)² referred to the public announcement of a great victory or the reign of a new king.² When the apostles proclaimed the gospel, they weren’t offering good advice but announcing that Jesus is Lord, the true King who has conquered sin and death.

To “hear” this message in the biblical sense is not just to listen, but to understand and allow it to reshape your life. Hearing is the first step toward faith.

Believing the Message

Hearing leads to believing. Faith (*pistis*) in Scripture carries the sense of trust and confidence.³ It’s not mere intellectual agreement or assent, but a relational trust in God’s faithfulness revealed in Jesus.

When the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas, **“What must I do to be saved?”** they replied, **“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”**⁴ Belief here is an act of allegiance. It’s saying “yes” to the reign of Christ and entrusting your life to His rule.

Repentance: Turning Toward Life

If faith is allegiance, repentance (*metanoeō*) is realignment. The word literally means a “change of mind,”⁵ but it implies a complete reorientation of life.

Peter’s call in Acts 2:38, **“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins,”** is not about performing a ritual, but turning from old loyalties and aligning oneself with the Messiah.⁶ Repentance is both sorrow for sin and hope for renewal.

It’s the act of stepping away from the kingdom of darkness and walking into the light of God’s new creation.

Confessing Christ

Confession is the public acknowledgment of our allegiance. Paul wrote, **“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”**⁷

Salvation as an Invitation

John 7:37–38 (NIV)

“On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.’”

Revelation 3:20 (NIV)

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”

Revelation 22:17 (NIV)

“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come!’ Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.”

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In the Roman world, this confession was dangerous. To say “Jesus is Lord” was to say “Caesar is not.” It was a declaration of ultimate loyalty to the risen King. Confession still carries that weight today, it’s the public witness that Jesus is Lord and rules over your life.

Baptism: Dying and Rising with Christ

Baptism is the defining moment of transformation. Through it, we participate in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Paul described it vividly:

“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”⁸

Baptism is not merely symbolic; it’s covenantal. It marks entry into the new community of God’s people, the family of the risen Messiah. It is the visible expression of faith and repentance, where we are joined to Christ and begin a new life in His Spirit.

Living Faithfully

Salvation doesn’t end at baptism, it begins there. Throughout the New Testament, believers are called to live out the salvation they have received.

Paul urged the Philippians, **“Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.”⁹**

Faithfulness (*pistis*) is an ongoing trust expressed through obedience. It’s not about earning salvation but embodying it, living as citizens of God’s kingdom in the midst of a broken world.

Crossing The Context

God’s salvation is a gift, and a calling. It begins with His grace, Jesus, and continues through our faithful response. We hear, believe, repent, confess, are baptized, and live faithfully, not as isolated steps, but as a response to the saving work of God in Christ Jesus.

To respond to salvation is to enter the story, to join the ongoing work of God’s renewal in the world, and to participate in His kingdom being united with Christ.

Endnotes:

1. Romans 10:17, New International Version (NIV).
2. See “euangelion” in Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, and Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 269.
3. Blue Letter Bible. “Pistis (πίστις) — Strong’s Greek Lexicon (G4102).” *Blue Letter Bible*. Accessed October 2025. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g4102/kjv/tr/0-1/>
4. Acts 16:30–31, NIV.
5. Blue Letter Bible. “Metanoō (μετανοέω) — Strong’s Greek Lexicon (G3340).” *Blue Letter Bible*. Accessed October 2025. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g3340/kjv/tr/0-1/>
6. Acts 2:38, NIV.
7. Romans 10:9, NIV.
8. Romans 6:4, NIV.
9. Philippians 2:12–13, NIV.
10. Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from *The Holy Bible, New International Version®*, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.