

Jesus Only and Hell

Bible study: Is Jesus truly the only way to God?

This Bible study is based on the book: Is Jesus the only way to God?

Must you hear the gospel to be saved? By John Piper.

3 Questions:

1) Was Jesus Christ perfect life, death, and resurrection necessary for anyone to receive salvation?

2) Do we actually have to believe in Jesus Christ to be saved? Or could we be saved by Jesus without hearing the gospel?

3) Is hell eternal? Will people suffer eternal destruction if they don't receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord?

The answer to first question: *1) Was Jesus Christ perfect life, death, and resurrection necessary for anyone to receive salvation?*

-- Salvation is found in no one else but by Jesus Christ."..let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:10-12 NKJV).

-- No one comes to the Father except through Jesus. John 14:6 " Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6 NKJV).

-- 1 Timothy 2:5,6 "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (I Timothy 2:5, 6 NKJV).

-- He who does not have the Son does not have eternal life. "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life" (I John 5:11, 12 NKJV).

-- Hebrews 9:14 – "For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who

through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” (Hebrews 9:13-14 ESV).

--Hebrews 9:22--"without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins." Jesus' blood was shed when He hung on the cross 2000 years ago at Golgotha. He was the Lamb that took away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

--Hebrews 9:28--"Jesus appeared once to bear the sins of many." Jesus Christ made atonement for our sins. "He bore our sins in his body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).

-- 2 Corinthians 5:21--"Jesus became sin for us so that we can become the righteousness of God in Him." No one else was punished in our place as our substitute for sin.

-- 1 Corinthians 1:30,31--"God has made Him (Christ) unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." No one else.

-- Christ is our High Priest. He alone. "Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself” (Hebrews 7:25-27 NKJV).

-- Romans 6:23--" the gift of God is eternal life through **Jesus Christ**." Eternal life is in Jesus Christ.

-- Our justification is in the righteousness, atoning sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ. "It (God's righteousness) shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification” (Romans 4:24, 25 NKJV; Romans 1:17,18).

Conclusion: Jesus became an offering for sin for believers. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Jesus obtained and fulfilled righteousness by a sinless life, bore the wrath of God, satisfied His justice (1 John 2:2; Romans 3:24-26) and tasted death on a cross as our

substitute. Because He was sinless (Hebrews 4:14-16; 2 Corinthians 5:21) He was able to take our sins away. No one else was sinless as a human being. Jesus was and is God (John 1:11;14; Romans 9:5). Therefore we need his substitutionary life and death on the cross and Resurrection from the dead, and we need Him to mediate our salvation as our Advocate and High Priest from heaven. Therefore Jesus Christ's perfect life, death, and resurrection were necessary for anyone to receive forgiveness of sins, justification, redemption and salvation (Ephesians 1:7).

The answer to the second question: 2) *Do we actually have to believe in Jesus Christ to be saved? Or could we be saved by Jesus without hearing the gospel?*

2) –The Story of Cornelius in Acts 10 helps us to understand how people who never heard the gospel can come to saving faith. Cornelius and those with him had to listen to the gospel before the Holy Spirit came upon them and believed. Even though he was a righteous man that didn't mean he was already a child of God. He had to hear the gospel. Only after he and the company that was with him heard the gospel and believed the gospel did the Holy Spirit baptize them into God (Acts 10:44,45).

-- Faith comes by hearing the gospel. How should they believe if they have not heard? For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!” So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:13-15, 17 NKJV).

--"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but **now** commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.” (Acts 17:30, 31 NKJV) Before Jesus came and bore the wrath of God the Great Commission couldn't be given, but after Jesus came and paid for believers' sins and rose from the dead, the Great

Commission could not, not be given. After the work of Jesus on earth, there has begun a new (era) dispensation. From then on (when Jesus ascended to heaven) Jesus Christ Mediates salvation for all those who make their **conscious focus**: Jesus Christ, his finished work and resurrection from the dead. That doesn't mean Christ Jesus didn't mediate salvation before He came to earth. The difference is the conscious focus was not Jesus Christ, but the promises about Jesus Christ and what He would do to accomplish salvation. People who were saved before Jesus Christ arrived in the flesh were saved by believing in the promises of the coming Messiah.

Someone have asked, now does it mean you **have** to hear the gospel to be saved, can't you just read the gospel in the Bible and believe and be saved? My answer is that when a person reads the gospel in the Bible or in a book that explains the gospel it is a kind of hearing. You hear it with your spiritual ears, so to speak. I believe therefore that a person can be saved if he trusts in Jesus Christ and the promises of the Bible by simply reading and internalizing the promises of God in the Bible.

The question has been asked what will happen if people don't ever hear the gospel or read it in the New Testament or in some gospel tract or gospel booklet (which can be classified as a "hearing of the mind). Can such people speak saved? I believe we have no warrant from the New Testament to assume people can be eternally saved without hearing the gospel or knowing the gospel by reading it and subsequently putting their conscious focus and faith in the Savior, Jesus Christ.

-- Jesus commanded: Mark 16:15-" Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." My question is: Why should we preach the gospel to everyone if it is not necessary to believe in it?

-- 1 Peter 1:23-25 states: "We are born again not by corruptible seed by incorruptible seed, by the word of God that lives forever... And this word is the gospel that was preached to you." No one gets born again without hearing and believing the gospel. If you are not born of the Holy Spirit, you will not see the kingdom of God. See John 3:3.

-- The letter to the Galatians is clear how people receive the Spirit of God. The apostle Paul said "This only I want to hear from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the work of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

...Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” Therefore know that only those who are of faith are the sons of Abraham...So those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.” (Galatians 3:2,5,6,7,9). Only those who have faith in Christ have salvation. Nobody is saved incognito, without having faith. Without conscious faith-focus on Jesus Christ, there is no supply of the indwelling Holy Spirit. And without the Holy Spirit, you are not a child of God. As the Bible says: “unless you are born-again, from above, from the Holy Spirit, you will not see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of Spirit is spirit (John 3:3-8).

Conclusion: It is necessary to hear and believe in the gospel to be saved therefore God's command to preach the gospel to every creature and to make disciples of all ethnic groups. Redemptive analogies in different cultures in the world don't function like prophecies in the Old Testament but can be used by missionaries to bring the gospel in terms that the people of different cultures can understand the gospel e.g. (The books of Don Richardson “Peace Child” and “Eternity in their hearts” documents how God used various missionaries to use redemptive analogies to make the gospel understandable in primitive cultures). We cannot, however, conclude that those primitive cultures were saved from their sins before they heard the gospel. To say that would mean it would be unnecessary for Christians to bring the gospel to those who never heard it. The danger to say that redemptive analogies function like Old Testament prophecies may not necessitate us bringing the gospel to people because if they do serve like that, they can just fix their focus on the analogy which can also be enough to save them although they don't know that the analogy points to Jesus.

We have no reason to believe, no warrant from the New Testament that if God wants someone to be saved or wanted someone to be saved after Jesus went to heaven, He didn't do a Peter/Cornelius thing for them (See Acts 10). If God wants someone to be saved today, the gospel message will reach him by a servant of God in one way or another. This can happen through radio broadcasts, the Internet, reading gospel tracts or Bibles or hearing from someone else. The conscious focus of all who

are saved from their sins is believing in Jesus Christ as Savior, Lord, and Righteousness.

3) Clarification of Hebrew and Greek words:

Hebrew:

Olâm: eternity, always.

Greek:

Aionios: eternal, everlasting, forever.

Aidios: eternal, everlasting.

3) The answer to the third question: *Is hell eternal? Will people suffer eternal destruction if they don't receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord?*

—Isaiah tells of what some people will experience: “The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness has surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting (Hebrew: olâm) burnings?” (Isaiah 33:14). It is clear in this passage that some people will suffer everlasting burnings or torment. In other words, hell is eternal.

-- Isaiah 66:23,24 reveals the following of the ones who were in rebellion against God: “All flesh shall come and worship before Me,” says the Lord. “And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.” The fact that the worm does not die and that the fire is not quench indicates that the punishment God-haters will suffer will be eternal.

-- Matthew 25:31-46 reveals the following: --"And these will go away into everlasting (Greek: aionios) punishment, but the righteous into eternal (Greek: aionios) life.” (Matthew 25:46 NKJV) Eternal life and punishment are contrasted. Both are eternal.--No annihilation of a person will take place (Heresy of Seven Day Adventists).

-- 2 Thessalonians 1:7 reveals the following: "...in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting (Greek: *aionios*) destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (II Thessalonians 1:8, 9 NKJV). The words eternal destruction is used for those who do not believe in the gospel. Eternal destruction will be the result. No extinction of a human life will happen. Destruction will occur not annihilation. No obliteration of a life will take place.

--Read Mark 9:43-46, "If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall **never** be quenched— where 'Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.' And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.' (Mark 9:43-46 NKJV) Jesus describes hell as a place where the fire is not quenched, and the worm does not die, more than once. "If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire" (Matthew 18:8-9 NKJV). The eternality of hell-fire signifies the eternality of the soul. What is the sense to say hell is eternal if those who go there wouldn't spend eternity there?

-- Jude tells us what the ungodly are suffering right now: "And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in **eternal** (Greek: *aionios*) chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day – just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of **eternal** (Greek: *aionios*) fire" (Jude 6,7 ESV)

--Revelation 14:11 reveals-- "the smoke of their (unbelievers) torment ascends forever and ever." In the Greek, this is the strongest expression

for eternity imaginable. The same fate is reserved for Satan and the false prophet and the beast. "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever (Greek: aionios) and ever" (Revelation 20:10 NKJV).

--Ecclesiastes 3:11-- "He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, He has put **eternity** (Hebrew: olâm) in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end" (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NKJV). God has put eternity into human beings hearts. People have been made to live forever. Mankind has been made in the image of God. They will, therefore, live forever, either in hell or heaven.

--Daniel 12:2,3, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to **everlasting** (Hebrew: olâm) life, and some to shame and **everlasting** (Hebrew: olâm) contempt..." The people who will rise will both be raised to an eternal existence, with God or without the glory of God.

-- Hebrews 6 reveals that the foundation of Christian doctrine is the following: "Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying the foundation of repentance and of faith toward God, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and **eternal** (Greek: aionios) judgement." Eternal judgment is mentioned here as a basic teaching of the Christian faith.

-- Hebrews 9:27-- "Man is appointed to die once and then the judgment"-

No reincarnation is mentioned in the Bible, where people supposedly get another chance to be saved.

No Purgatory is mentioned in the Bible, where people get supposedly purified before they go to heaven.

No universalism is mentioned in the Bible where all people supposedly will eventually be saved and go to heaven. Man is appointed to die once, not twice or multiple times. Purgatory and universalism are Unbiblical. People will not be punished for a while or for a long time

and then be reunited with God. This teaching is foreign to Scripture and unbiblical.

--Jesus said the following of Judas Iscariot: "The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been good for that man if he had never been born." (Mark 14:21). If people just die and go extinct or get annihilated after some time, then it would not have been bad to die, also for Judas. But Jesus said it would have been better for him to have never been born, because Judas will suffer eternal punishment. That is why it would have been better for him never to have been born!

Conclusion: The great preachers and evangelist over the centuries, like Paul the Apostle, John Calvin, Martin Luther, George Whitefield, Charles Spurgeon, Jonathan Edwards, D.L Moody, Martin Lloyd-Jones, etc. all believed in an eternity in heaven or hell for the human soul. Hell is eternal and is reserved for those who reject God and Jesus Christ. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ (Romans 6:23). See also John 3:16. Whoever believes in God's Son Jesus will not perish but have eternal life. Those who do not believe, the wrath of God **abides** on them (John 3:36). Another reason why hell will be eternal is because people who sin and rebel against God rebel and sin against an Infinite Valuable and Worthy Being. If you defame, blaspheme, dishonor and despise the Creator of the Universe and the Redeemer of Mankind and show no remorse or contrition for your sins, and continue to despise His love and offer of salvation in Christ, you deserve an infinite worthy punishment. People who go to hell deserve to go to hell, because they despised and rejected and blasphemed an infinite worthy and majestic Sovereign. Therefore their punishment would be eternally just, worthy and severe. Therefore, confess your sins (1 John 1:9), repent of your sins (Mark 1:15) and trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation and God the Holy Spirit will come and live inside of you and make His home within you (John 14:23). Jesus is the only way to receive forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7) an eternal inheritance in heaven (1 Peter 1:3-9), his righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21), eternal life (John 3:16), escape the horrors of hell and be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).