

## SALVATION: Not Too Difficult, But Not EASY

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by Bill Crews

**G**od's plan of salvation is certainly not too difficult. It is available and accessible to all. God and Christ love all who are lost (John 3: 16). Jesus shed His blood for the sins of all (**Hebrews 2:9; 1 John 2:2**). Salvation is offered unto all (**Titus 2:11; Acts 2:39**). All are invited to come unto Christ (**Revelation 22:17; Matthew 11:28-30**). God and Christ wish none to perish, but would have all to be saved (and this involves coming to a knowledge of the truth and coming to repentance (**2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:3-4**).

For salvation God requires nothing unreasonable or impossible. That which God requires one to *understand*, he can *understand*. That which God requires one to *believe*, he can *believe*. That which God requires one to *do*, he can *do*. And that which God requires one to *be*, he can *be*. Certainly God does not require one to understand, believe, do or be what he cannot. The commandments of God are not grievous (either unreasonable or burdensome) (**1 John 5:3**), and no temptation is encountered that one cannot overcome (**1 Corinthians 10:13**). See also **Philippians 4:13** and **Romans 8:28, 31**). As we struggle to live as a Christian should, we still have access to forgiveness; we cannot live sinless lives, but we can always receive forgiveness (**Acts 8:22** and **1 John 1:9**).

**But none of the foregoing means that salvation is an easy matter.** It is not true that there are many ways to heaven (there is but one; see **Matthew 7:13-14**), that everyone who wants to be saved or thinks he is saved will be saved, that everyone who is sincere and honest will be saved, that everyone who is satisfied or whose conscience is clear will be saved, that one can fail to obey the commandments of God and be saved or that one can practice the works of the flesh (**Galatians 5:19-21**) and still be saved.

The New Testament does not teach the doctrine of **the impossibility of apostasy** ("once saved, always saved" or "once in grace, always in grace" – see **Galatians 5:4** on the latter). The whole tenor of the gospel is against it. Hardly a page can be read that does not show the fallacy of it. To enter the kingdom of heaven, one must **do** the will of the Father in heaven (**Matthew 7:21**), **endure** unto the end (**Matthew 10:22**), be **faithful** unto death (**Revelation 2:10**), **give the more diligence** to "*do these things*," that is add to his faith the seven things listed (**2 Peter 1:5-11**). After one has done all the things commanded him, he has no grounds for boasting, for he has but done that which is his duty to do (**Luke 17:10**). Only those who enter by "*the narrow gate*" and walk in "*the straitened way*" may pass into eternal life (**Matthew 7:13-14**).

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