

Thirteen Re-definitions of Salvation

We Christians are nitpicking over carpet colors, building additions, names, and budgets when people are going to Hell (many who claim to be Christians who sit in our church). A.W. Tozer said, *"It is my opinion that tens of thousands of people, if not millions, have been brought to some kind of religious experience by accepting Christ, and they have not been saved."* D. James Kennedy said, *"The vast majority of people who are members of churches in America today are not Christians. I say that without the slightest contradiction."*

Friend, we argue over so many petty things. May I suggest we have lost sight of the most important debate of all, "What is salvation?" My theology teaching that salvation happens when a man repents and places his trust in Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). Many churches today won't talk about sin, hell, judgment, repentance etc... we have become a culture of "Catch-Phrases, Slogans, and Cliches," in witnessing to others, rather than reading and preaching God's Word. The Bible doesn't call us to use catch phrases but it does call us to preach (Mark 16:15). We would like to present thirteen ways that the modern church has redefined how a person becomes a true convert, and often these redefinition's become the catch-phrase of the day.

1) Make Jesus Your Lord and Savior.

We cannot make Jesus our Lord and Savior, He is our Lord and Savior. We are living in rebellion to Him and He commands us to repent and trust Him.

2) Ask Jesus Into Your Heart.

Does Jesus come into our hearts? Yes He does. The question is, "How does He get in there?" It is not by simply asking Him in; it is by repentance and faith.

3) Just Believe In Jesus.

The Bible teaches that even the demons believe and tremble. We must repent and trust in Him.

4) You Have a God-shaped Hole In Your Heart And Only Jesus Can Fill It.

We have far more than a hole that needs to be filled so we can feel complete; we have a wretched, deceitful, sinful heart that needs cleansing. Repentance and faith applies the blood of the lamb for that cleansing.

5) Accept Jesus.

Whoa! We need to accept Jesus? This is entirely back-words. We need Jesus to accept us – and He will, if we repent and trust in Him alone.

6) Make A Decision For Jesus.

Decisional regeneration puts man in the driver's seat of salvation. When we repent and trust, Jesus decides to save us. That puts Him in the drivers seat...where He demands.

7) It Is Easy to Believe.

While the formula of repentance and faith sounds simple, a complete surrendering of self in repentance is anything but easy.

8) God Loves You And Has A Wonderful Plan For Your Life.

The only promises for those who are saved are trials, temptations, and persecution. If that is how you define a wonderful life, fine. Otherwise we must command all men everywhere to repent and trust.

9) Come To Jesus Just As You Are.

We should come to Jesus just as the sinners we are, but He also expects a broken heart and contrite spirit demonstrated in repentance and faith.

10) Come To Jesus And You Will Receive Forgiveness Of Sins And _____ (fill in the blank with money, health, healed marriage, etc...)

Jesus didn't promise healed marriages; in fact He promised broken homes because we would divide when one member repents and trusts.

11) Come To Jesus And Experience Love, Joy, Peace.

Do we get the fruit of the Spirit upon conversion? Yes. But if we come seeking the gifts and not the giver, we will receive neither. Instead of preaching Christ will improve our life, we should be warning of impending judgement. Instead, we must repent and trust.

12) Jesus Is The Missing Piece.

Um, no, the God of the Universe is not the missing piece, He demands that He is the center of our lives when we repent and trust.

13) Jesus Is Better Than Fame And Fortune.

That is an understatement, and frankly, it is insulting. Saying Jesus is better than money is like saying that a steak dinner is better than eating a dung hill. He defies comparison and we trivialize the Son of God. Instead, we should be pleading with all men everywhere to repent and trust in Him alone.

What would happen if I showed up to your door with a can of grapefruit juice and a roll of paper towels and offered to change your oil? You would say, "No thanks!"

You wouldn't let someone mess with your car using the wrong method, why do we allow the Gospel to be presented wrongly? Would you let a doctor operate on your child who was "sort of" accurate? Isn't the salvation of men more important than an appendix?

We beg of you to consider how you share the Gospel. Let me ask you a question... Is it possible that we have so many backsliders today because they never slid forward in the first place? Is it because they were never told to repent and trust? If we are willing to debate the words "Baptist" vs "Non-denominational," shouldn't we be more concerned about an issue that has eternal consequences?