

The Gospel Unashamed

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

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Calling on the Name of the Lord The Sinner's Prayer will leave you a sinner!

By Dr. Shane Capps



Christianity today can be summed up with two words, "Anything goes". What do I mean? Most of the denominational churches today, and even many within the Christian Church/Church of Christ, believe that all that is needed to be a Christian is to believe that Jesus is the Christ.

Many believe you do not have to be faithful to a church family. Many believe you do not have to have works of service. Many believe you can talk any way you want. Many believe you can live any way you want to live. They think it is okay to drink alcohol, dress like the world, and live to please the world. The idea of holiness is often considered

a thing of the past and is not spoken of today among believers.

When it comes to becoming a Christian, there are many plans that people say you can choose from.

You can choose **Plan A**: Having your baby sprinkled as an infant. This is a false plan! This is not a Biblical example because the Bible does not teach this.

Mark 16:16 says, "He who has **believed** and has been **baptized** shall be **saved**; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

Notice... To have a baby sprinkled is getting the Plan of Salvation out of order. Their order is baptized, saved, and believed.

Can a baby believe that Jesus is the Christ? No! Can a baby choose to be baptized? No! A baby has no need of salvation until he has sins to repent of.

You can choose **Plan B**: Coming down to the altar and praying Jesus into your heart. After this, if you want to be baptized you can. This also is a false plan! This is not Biblical because the Bible does not teach this.

Mark 16:16 says, "He who has **believed** and has been **baptized** shall be **saved**; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

Notice... To come to the altar and pray Jesus into your heart is getting the Plan of Salvation out of order. Their order is believed, saved, and baptized.

They believe this because they do not know how the Scriptures go together as we will see in a few moments.

You can choose **Plan C**: You can come to Christ by obeying the Gospel according to the New Testament Plan of Salvation. Yes, it is possible to come to Christ on His terms, or by how He said to come to Him. The whole book of Acts teaches this and gives us example after example.

The New Testament Plan of Salvation is simple. Faith will lead you to where you should be.

All Have Sinned: Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Also... **Romans 5:12, Romans 6:23**).

So, Jesus came: Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of Man has come to

seek and to save that which was lost.” (Also...**Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4**).

Because Jesus died on the cross, salvation is now offered in His name. Jesus is the one who set the terms, or the steps, by which we can now accept Him as Lord and Savior. We cannot make up our own plan; we have to follow His plan because He is the one who died for us.

Faith! Romans 10:17 says, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” (Not faith alone...**James 2:24**).

Faith will lead you to **repentance**. **Mark 1:15** says, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Also...**Luke 13:3, 5; 2 Corinthians 7:10**).

Then, we are called to **confess**. **Matthew 10:32** says, “Everyone, therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.” (Also...**Matthew 16:15-16**).

Then, we are to be **baptized**, which is the point at which we become saved. **Acts 2:38** says, “And Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” (Also...**Acts 8:30-40**).

The Lord has given us the plan to come to Him. The problem is man always wants to change God’s plan to fit what they want.

If you do not come to Christ as He has said, you will not have the promise of being saved.

Most of the denominational world believes that all you have to do is believe that Jesus is the Christ and say a sinner’s prayer, praying Jesus into your heart. They believe at that point you are saved. If you then want to be baptized, it is up to you, but you do not have to if you do not want to. Why? They believe that baptism does not have a part in the plan of salvation.

Their main scripture is **Romans 10:13**! But because they take this Scripture out of context, their whole plan of salvation is out of context.

The Sinner’s Prayer will leave you a sinner!

Here is why:

Romans 10:13 says, “for ‘Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.’”

Step 1...Notice

Who did Paul write the book of Romans to?

Romans 1:13 says, “And I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented thus far) in order that I might obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.”

Paul is writing to the church at Rome.

The theme of the book is... “The righteousness of God.” **Romans 1:17**

The church was made up of Gentile and Jewish Christians.

These two groups normally did not get along.

In chapter 1, Paul shows that all Gentiles are sinners. The Jews would have been saying, “You tell them Paul, that’s right, Gentiles are sinners.”

In chapter 2, Paul shows that all the Jews are sinners. The Gentiles would have been saying, “You tell them Paul, that’s right, Jews are sinners, that’s why God turned to us.”

In chapter 3, Paul shows that everyone, all men and all people, are sinners, lost without Christ Jesus.

Both the Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome would have gotten quiet!

Paul writes Scriptures like...

Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 5:8 says, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 6:23 says, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Because of the righteousness of God, He sent His Son for all mankind, Jew and Gentile alike, so that salvation is now offered to all. So, Paul wrote the book, or letter, of Romans to the church of Rome which was made up of Jewish and Gentile Christians.

Step 2...Notice

The Christians in Rome were already Christians who were part of the Lord's Church.

- They already believed in Jesus Christ.
- They had already confessed Him as Lord.
- They had already repented of their sins.
- Yes, they had already been baptized into Christ.

Romans 6:1-4 says, "1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? (*This shows they had repented of their sins.*) 3 or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

Just looking at this Scripture for example, why were they baptized?

- They were baptized to get into Christ.
- They were baptized into His death and burial. Why? Before we are baptized, we are not Christians. We are sinners. When we repent, we are putting to death the old self. When we are baptized, we bury the old self.
- They were baptized into His resurrection. The old self is dead to its sins. The old self is buried. The new self is raised up to live for Jesus Christ.

- They were baptized so that they could now walk in the newness of life. What is the new life? The Christian life is the new life. How do we get into the new life? One must be baptized.

So, Paul is writing to the church of Rome who were Christians that had been baptized into Christ. Also notice **Romans 6:1-4** comes before **Romans 10:13**.

Step 3...Notice

The Christians in Rome were already Christians who were part of the Lord's Church.

Romans 10:13 is not "How to get Saved" but "Who can be saved?"

The book of Romans was written to a specific church. They were already saved because they had been baptized and were Christians within the Church. The key is that they needed to **continue** in their Christian Walk not as Jewish Christians or Gentile Christians, but as Christians.

Chapter 10 is the climax of the book. It shows that a Christian must **continue** in their Christian walk.

Romans 10:9 says, "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."

This is not something we do once! This is something we **continue** doing every day. We as Christians **continue** believing in Jesus. We as Christians **continue** confessing Jesus. We as Christians **continue** repenting of our sins daily. We do this because we are in Christ when we were baptized into Christ.

Romans 10:10 says, "for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he **confesses** resulting in salvation."

The idea here in the Greek is not when we **became** a Christian, but we **continue** doing this as a Christian. Confess should be confessing. We **continue** daily confessing Jesus as our Lord. What is the result of that? Salvation! **Romans 10:11**

Romans 10:12 says, "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him."

The church at Rome was made up of Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. Paul is teaching them they can have unity and just be Christians. There is no distinction in the eyes of God. God does not see whether a Christian is a Jew or a Gentile. The Lord just sees His children as His.

This text says, "for all who call upon Him" (**Romans 10:12**). That is not how to be saved, but it is who can be saved. If a Christian continues to call upon the name of the Lord, they will be saved. Verse 13 is the point of that fact.

Romans 10:13 says, "for 'Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

Romans 10:13 is not "How to get Saved?" but "Who can be saved?"

If I as a Christian continue to call upon the Lord in my daily life, I will be saved.

Step 4...Notice

What kind of Scripture is **Romans 10:13**?

You are probably thinking, "What do you mean?", "It is a Scripture.", "It is a verse in the book of Romans.", "It is something God said." I would say you are right, but it is also one more thing.

Romans 10:13 is from an Old Testament passage. It can also be found in another place in the New Testament which may shock you when you find out where it is.

Romans 10:13 is a passage from **Joel 2:32**.

Joel 2:32 says, "And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, As the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls."

This text is a promise of salvation! Through Jesus all men would have the promise of salvation (**Joel 2:32**) and the promise of His Holy Spirit (**Joel 2:28-29**).

So, **Romans 10:13** is not how to be saved, but who can be saved.

I will prove this by looking at the other place this scripture is found.

Ready?

Acts 2:21 says, "And it shall be, that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

When Peter was preaching the first sermon on the Day of Pentecost, nobody in the crowd thought: "that's how you become saved." No one came down to the altar to be saved. **Joel 2:32**, **Acts 2:21**, and **Romans 10:13** (the same scripture) are not how to be saved, but who can be saved.

At the end of the sermon, the people asked how to be saved.

Acts 2:36-38 says, "36 'Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ- this Jesus whom you crucified.' 37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' 38 And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

When the crowd heard **Acts 2:21**, or **Romans 10:13**, they knew it was from **Joel 2:32**. They also knew it was not about how to become saved, but about who can be saved. They knew they wanted to be saved so they asked Peter and the apostles how to do that. Peter told them the New Testament Plan of Salvation.

If you do believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God you are to...

- Repent of your sins.
- Be baptized into the name of Jesus.

Why? So that you would receive the forgiveness of your sins and the gift of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Step 5...Notice

The denominational world does not know how to put the books of Acts and Romans together. That is the difference between the denominational world and the Christian Church/Church of Christ.

Acts:

- It is a book of methods.
- It tells how the Church started.
- It shows how the Church lived its life.
- It shows how the Church evangelized.
- It shows how people are saved.

Romans:

- It is a book of theology.
- It is a book that shows why we are saved.
- It is a book that shows who can be saved.

The book of Acts shows us how to become saved while the book of Romans shows us why we are saved.

So, it is clear to see that...The Sinner's Prayer will leave you a sinner! By churches using **Romans 10:13** as their plan of salvation, they miss the mark.

Let me leave you with one more thing to think about. When it comes to the plan of salvation, or becoming a Christian, we are to call upon the name of the Lord.

How?

Acts 22:16 says "And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name."

After we are a Christian, we are to continue to call upon the name of the Lord. **Romans 10:13**

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