

What it means ... “to be saved”?
TO RECOGNISE THE HOLINESS OF GOD

What does it actually mean ... to be a Christian? How do you become a Christian? Can you be a Christian and do what you like? What does it actually mean ... to be a Christian? What does it mean ‘to be saved’?

You know, it’s not as straightforward a question as you might think, ... what does it actually mean to be a Christian? People have their own ideas/thoughts. I often find myself in company where I have got to explain what kind of a Christian I am ... for you see, there are so many different types. For example, you can be ...

- * a ‘liberal’ Christian ... and you feel you have the liberty/freedom to interpret how you ought to live. It won’t cause you any problem going out to the club or to the pub. And it won’t cause you any problem setting aside God’s Word because you can interpret it *liberally* in any way that suits you.
- * You can be a ‘sacerdotal’ Christian, where you depend on all the candles and saints and written prayers and all the formalities.
- * Or you could be what every good theological student is ... because it sounds neat and 21st century polite ... a ‘conservative evangelical’ ... and that’s a beautiful label, - that’s a nice label.
- * But if I’ve got to have a label I explain myself now as just being an old-fashioned fundamentalist. I believe in the Bible as God’s holy, unique, inspired, infallible Word. I believe in the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary as the *only* means of salvation for the sinner. And I believe in the holiness and uniqueness of our God.
- * Indeed the Bible is very clear as to what a Christian is. The term has been around for two thousand years ... since it was first used in Antioch.
- * That small group in that town *stood out* for it was noted they were followers of Christ.
- * What does it actually mean then *to be a Christian*? What does it mean ‘to be saved’?
- * We’ll take a few weeks to look at this, but here is where we are going this morning ... to become a Christian is **TO RECOGNISE THE HOLINESS OF GOD.**

HE IS SEPARATE

- * That is what holiness means. God is unique; He's different; **He's separate** from all the rest. There is none other like Him. There is no comparison.
- * Throughout history people have tried to understand God and in their attempts to understand Him they began to imagine what He was like.
- * They formed their own ideas of Him, [Ps. 115: 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. 5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: 6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: 7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. 8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.](#)
- * That's why people built idols because they had something inside them that told them hankered after their own ideas of Who God is.
- * But the problem was ... they kept looking in all the wrong places to find Him.
- * And the problem is still the same today. No matter where you go, - whatever country, whatever language, whatever colour of the skin, whatever ... - people are still trying to find out about God but many are looking in all the wrong places.
- * Because you see, **God is separate**, He cannot be found in all the places many people go looking for Him.
- * You see, every person has something inside that craves after an understanding of God, and they go looking for Him in some great cathedral building with all the statues and fancy ornateness.
- * They bow down in front of an idol that has been given a religious name ... but He is not to be found there. *Nothing ever made by the hands of God's creation is fit to be worshipped as the Creator is to be worshipped.*
- * **God is separate** from all that. He is not to be included in His creation.
- * There is none like Him, - there is none that even comes close to being like Him.
- * He is eternal, [Ps. 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.](#)

- * He is the Creator, Gen. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
- * He is the Destroyer, Gen. 18:20; 19:24, 25: And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous....Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.
- * He's the Provider, Ps. 104:27 These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.
- * He is the Listener, Psalm 94:9, 10: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?"
- * He loves, Jn. 3:16.
- * From its very beginning, He has been intimately involved in that which He has created ... and yet He also remains separate from it. ... and it is important to realise that, for something else God is ...

HE IS SINLESS

- * It is so difficult to understand the character of God, and that is why the only way we can understand it and take it all in is simply by faith.
- * I can set before you what the Bible says about the character of God but at 'the end of the day' the only means by which you can accept it is through simple child-like faith.
- * God is far greater than we could ever imagine for **He is sinless**.
- * I have never met anyone who is sinless, have you? No, you haven't, *never!* The Bible says, Rom. 3:10 There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 ... there is none that seeketh after God.
- * But God, He alone is sinless. He alone is perfect. He never says one thing and does another. He never breaks His word. He never deceives. He never steals. He never contradicts His law.
- * He is consistent. He never changes. He is always the same and His Word remains the same.
- * The Saviour taught us to pray, "Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us". Yet God never sinned. He never sins. It's impossible.
- * Yes, even when His Son came into this world the Bible tells us that He **was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**

- * When He met the prostitutes, He never sinned, He never followed after them.
- * When He met the tax collectors He never wanted to be like them.
- * When He met the Pharisees He never curried their favour.
- * When He stood before Pilate He stood as a man who *never* sinned. ... the sinless Son of God.
- * Yes, that which we find natural to Him it is an impossibility.
- * You see, I have never met anyone who is not a sinner ... but God, He is sinless.
- * **God is separate, God is sinless**, and something else that makes God unique is this ...

HE IS SOVEREIGN

- * More and more, humanity thinks that he has everything under control.
- * He has become cleverer and cleverer. He has been able to fly away off to the moon and even much further.
- * The machines he is creating 'blow our minds', they are so fantastic.
- * ... And yet man is so lacking,
 - * He hasn't been able to stop the aging process,
 - * He hasn't been able to stop himself from dying,
 - * He's not able to stop the floods in Czechoslovakia or the volcanoes from erupting.
 - * He can't stop the earthquakes or reverse the process in global warming.
- * The cleverest of them is no match for our Sovereign God.
- * My God is separate from all His creation and yet He is intimately involved.
- * He's sinless, and yet He loves the sinner.
- * How can we ever come to understand Him? How is He able to be and do all the things He claims? ... because He is Sovereign.
- * Nothing happens without His permission. Nothing happens outwith His express will.
- * Why does a good God allow terrible things to happen? ... So that through the terrible things His goodness might show!
- * He knows the number of hairs on my head, He knows the birds that fall from the sky, even in eternity He knew my name.

- * He is God and besides Him there is none other. He is the Sovereign, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing, all-present God.
- * I don't need to fully understand Him to believe that He is. *I know that He is!*

CONCLUSION.

- * You see, this is what *the holiness of God* is all about ... and indeed much, much more.
- * God is holy because **He is separate** - He has never been tainted by sin.
 - * He is holy because He has never allowed Himself to be compared with any of man's creations.
 - * He is holy because of Who He is, - He is God, never to be mocked, never to be imitated, never to be created in the image of man and worshipped as an idol.
- * God is holy because **He is separate** ... and He is holy too because **He is sinless**.
 - * You and I can never understand what it is like to be without sin.
 - * Sin has scarred us. It constantly reminds us of the battle going on inside ... but God is sinless.
 - * He has never sinned, and yet He took my sin and He placed it upon the perfect body of His precious Son as He hung upon the cross of Calvary.
 - * He Who never sinned died for the sinner.
- * God is holy because **He is separate** and because **He is sinless**, He is holy too because **He is Sovereign**.
- * He is the ultimate in that which is perfect, and – do you know! – what it means to be a Christian/to be saved is to see God as the Bible presents Him,
 - * ... not as the world draws the picture of Him,
 - * ... not as you think you might want Him to be,
 - * ... *but how the Bible presents Him.*
- * To be saved, your eyes must be opened up to a right understanding of Who God is.
 - * You need to see His holiness, and when you see the beauty of His holiness you begin to see another picture emerging ... and in the Lord's will, we shall look at that next Sunday morning.