

RELIGION OR SALVATION  
By Dr Hal Webb Evangelist

*There is a way that seemeth right unto man but the end thereof are the ways of death,"*  
Proverbs 14:12

*"Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me,"* John 14:6.

Have you ever been asked the question, "How do you know your faith is right"? With so many religions around, the choice of the right one becomes a crucial, life-affecting decision of great importance. Society today, seems to go shopping in the mall of religion as if any choice will do. This is deadly, for they cannot all be right. Something better stands out above them all and that is Salvation, made possible by one's relationship to Christ. A careful comparison seems to make sense. Lets do it!

First...All RELIGIONS are man made "take offs" from what God did for man as the Bible records. They tend to be based on works and man's self conceived ideas of his own goodness. Such persons establish their faith based on years of different opinions and religious practices. The study of these religions will bring nothing but confusion for they are based on man's ideas and not the plain pronouncements of the Word of God. SALVATION (true Christianity) is founded on one God, standing above all the gods that religions offer. Study I Cor. 8:4-6. The opinions of men and their practices can never supersede the truth of God which presents only one way man must believe. Conjecture can never replace, "Thus saith the Lord".

Second...All RELIGIONS are based on something the follower must do to be accepted of God. SALVATION is based on the one time finished work of Christ on the cross.

Religionists say do, do, do while genuine Christianity cries from the ages done, done, done. Millions parade their human works and proudly demonstrate misplaced faith in the flawed works of man. Those who are truly born again have accepted the Bible truth that works don't save. Ephesians 2:8-9 deals a fatal blow to the man made hopes of religionists. A great old song proclaims correctly, "Nothing in my hand I bring, only to Thy cross I cling."

Third...RELIGIONS all are confused on the puzzle of "who Jesus was". He was not a great teacher, a martyr, a good man, our example, or even a son of God. He was the only Son of God sent on a soul saving mission on behalf of all mankind. He alone is the only and true way of salvation....John 14:6. He, without sin took the place of all truly saved people, for "*He was made to be sin for us....*" II Cor. 5:21. Those who accept His SALVATION have found the only way of redemption acceptable unto God.

Fourth...RELIGION is wrong for it provides no sure cure for the curse of sin. They seek to rename it, cover it up, often ignore it, or offer something they hope will help lessen it's effects. SALVATION approaches sin in the eyes of God who alone understands it and has dealt with it many years ago. He establishes the fact of all mans sin.....Rom. 3:23, warns that none are righteous.....Rom. 3:10 and establishes how man became sinners.....Rom. 5:12. He further points to sin's penalty...Rom.6:23 (1st. part) reveals what He did about it....Rom.5:8 and the gift explained and offered....Rom. 6:23 (last part). He then offers not a religion, but salvation to all who will truly believe.

Fifth.....RELIGIONS all have revered leaders who have died and passed off the scene. But SALVATION features the only living Saviour who not only died but rose again into heaven and is coming again. The Bible pictures every detail of His life, His death, His resurrection and His soon return. He is forever alive and gives new life to all who believe....I John

5:11-12. History itself, aside from the Bible, gives testimony to the life of Jesus. Our calendar date reminds us daily of His birth. Christ lives in the lives of all who receive Him.....John 5:24.

Sixth....No RELIGION guarantees for sure life after death. No false religion can offer a sure home of heaven. The Jewish religion, based on keeping the law, has no hope of heaven. Not one Catholic dogma guarantees it. Allah and Mohammed followers have no shred of hope for eternity. You can quickly spot a false religion for it will not offer any sure hope of heaven. True SALVATION is so very different. In John 14:1-2 Jesus promised He would go prepare a place and return for true believers. Then He promised to rapture us to Him to live in heaven forever. Religions cannot offer the sure hope that true faith in Christ brings.

Seventh....RELIGION dies at the grave and lacks the comfort of SALVATION; written by the testimonies of millions of true believers, who were truly sustained on earth and ready for heaven. Written books of the ages give clear testimony of the faith of those saved by the grace of God. The catacombs were filled with thousands who chose death rather than to renounce their faith in Christ. The early Catholic church killed thousands who refused to follow their religion. Hebrews 11 is a roll call of heroes, who believed in Christ alone and died in their faith. Those who have SALVATION are "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is within," I Pet. 3:15.

Eighth....RELIGION restricts, offers many unproven theories of man's religious opinion, based on human thought rather than divine inspiration. Only SALVATION offers a way of belief that results in the complete, genuine, change of a believer. Faith, personally based in Christ, can set drug users free, recover drunkards, even cleanse the thoughts and actions of the immoral. Christ within can reestablish

families, change gangsters into law abiding citizens, return delinquents to their families, purge welfare rolls and make communities livable. True born again believers will live Godly lives and care for themselves and their children. Saved people are known for their love for all men.

Ninth.... RELIGION seeks to be broad minded and accept the religious concepts of all the faiths. A salad bar mentality offering something to everyone, based on their own desire, is far from true faith. True faith is SALVATION, made one way available through the death of God's Son. True peace is only found in a personal acceptance of Christ. The only time our world has been truly at peace is when it truly honored God. Mankind will never have peace, until they accept the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

Tenth.... RELIGION has come and gone like the tide on a rocky shore. SALVATION is the anchor of the soul and when we study prophecy, SALVATION is the only one that never changes. The Bible unerringly has recorded all past events with great accuracy. It is special book that has accurately reported all past historical events. It pictures future events from the mind of God who has already been there. It proceeds to point every willing soul to SALVATION in fact Acts 4:12 states "*Neither is there salvation in any other for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.*"

In conclusion, it is best to choose a sure thing. God's SALVATION is always better than the theories of man's RELIGION. Life is too short and eternity is forever. One needs to choose carefully for there will be no turning back. Your personal relationship with God is awaiting your experience through prayer and acceptance of Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Do it now! **Be sure you're trusting Christ and Him alone.**