

Scriptures and Doctrine :: "If you want to be born again, say these words..."

"If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by savannah, on: 2010/8/3 6:53

“If you want to be born again, say these words to the Lord in sincerity from your heart, right now:

Lord Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God. I am a sinner who deserves hell. Thank You for loving me and dying for my sins on the cross. I believe You rose from the dead and are living today. I want to turn from my sinful life right now. Please forgive me all my sins and give me a hatred for sin. I forgive everyone who has harmed me in any way. Come into my life Lord Jesus, and be the Lord of my life from today onwards. Make me a child of God right now.”

God’s Word says, “As many as received Christ, to them He gave the right to become the children of God” (John 1:12). The Lord Jesus says, I will never reject anyone who comes to Me” (John 6:37). ”

So you can be certain that He has accepted you.

Then you can thank Him saying, “Thank you Lord Jesus, for forgiving me and receiving me. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit and give me power to live for You. I want to please You alone from today onwards.”

Is the above Biblical?

Would this be good to place on one's website?

Any thoughts?

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by RainMan, on: 2010/8/3 7:24

I remember saying a similar prayer a while back myself. What was even worse was after that I was asked if I wanted the Holy Spirit (obviously rhetorical as you are expected to say yes) and then some guy prayed for me and tells me to start speaking in tongues. I didn't have a clue what was going on just that this bloke kept on yelling at me and my wife "common let it out, speak" after a very long time I was speaking in tongues but something in me told me that something was wrong I could speak in tongues had other gifts but I was being led away from Christ not to Him I was more selfish than selfless. Whatever was the source of these gifts were I don't know I just felt a deep cry in me for Jesus and a baptism of the Holy Spirit as I didn't think any of the gifts were authentic. Later I doubted whether any of the Gifts manifested in that church was authentic either it pointed to self more than Jesus.

Anyway I thank God that He took me in the messed up horrible state the church had left me and cleaned and fixed me up (He still works on me daily). Now I don't question who lives within me anymore just always want more of the same (like the song says fill me till I want no more).

Can one be saved and filled with the spirit and not be totally in love with Jesus?

Prayers like the one you mentioned have been said by millions and led millions like myself into a false security. When God does a genuine work it is lasting. But when we try to do God's work with psychosomatic induced emotionalism and mind control we produce believers with no real root within themselves that will only wither away

my 2c

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/8/3 7:24

Living this prayer is more biblical than the actual prayer, my only problem with the sinner's prayer is it doesn't necessarily lead to repentance or relationship with Christ Jesus which is really what saves us not this prayer. I would also be leary of putting it on a website because discipleship or making sure people understand what a relationship with the Lord is all about is near impossible. Many will pray this prayer and it all ends there, the person tries a live a good life for Jesus in their own strength and power and then are placed under heavy condemnation when it doesn't work because they aren't quite sure what a relationship with the Lord is about.

Jesus never gives us the sinner's prayer for leading people to Christ but simply says Follow Me. I believe with Christ and having a relationship Action Speak Louder than words by far, and many pray this prayer to be "saved from hell" while not realizing our salvation isn't from hell but from sin that is killing us daily.

I apologize if my words seem strong or harsh but I lived 21 years of hypocrisy because of the sinner's prayer. I will say that if one doesn't stop with the sinner's prayer and continues in a relationship with the Lord by follow Christ Jesus, then there is no harm done, But for most I know these are just magical words that save them from hell. If I had a website I wouldn't put this on there for fear of leading others down a bunny trail of sin as I was. I would however put contact information for those interested in having a relationship with the Lord that they could contact me and I can counsel them with the help of the Holy Spirit. :)

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by learn (), on: 2010/8/3 10:00

Hope the below helps.

Paul Washer says this is the type of prayer that leads people to hell.

Leonard Ravenhill also mentioned that these words will not save people as there is no genuine repentance/brokenness. He said something like these words take shorter than a car wash, less than 5 minutes and are we really going to be saved, to know God in such a short time.

John MacArthur mentioned that this confession is worth nothing.

The point that all these preachers (and I agree with them) are trying to make is that being born again/saved is a supernatural work of God and is not made by some human manipulation such as mouthing some words. The proof as others have mentioned are the many people that have said these words and are not saved, do not follow God, do not have an understanding of sin or repentance. Also, how many people have said this prayer or a variation of it many times and still know they are not saved. How many times have we ourselves when we are in doubt of our salvation in our walk with God, start praying this prayer again and know deep down that it doesn't mean that by saying such things, we are automatically saved. Plenty.

There are certainly times when saying this type of prayer does result in a person truly saved. But to imply or say that people are certainly saved by saying these words is false. There has to be a genuine work by the Holy Spirit and this at times can be witnessed by some brokenness in people during this prayer but the real proof is a changed life after they are saved.

If you are really in doubt, I would suggest you see Paul Washer's sermons in youtube. Paul Washer love to touch on this subject.

Below is a clip from Paul Washer on this.

Is a person saved once they say the sinners prayer ?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JBTSGDn2bt0&feature=related>

I was trying to google for a Paul Washer clip that addresses this and I found this by another preacher ie The Prayer that Damns Many to Hell by James Malachi Jennings

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(have not seen this video before though so not sure what it says here)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXYu6x9ywLU&feature=PlayList&p=BE9AD515793ED313&playnext=1&index=6>

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by believingGod, on: 2010/8/3 10:15

We need to ask ourselves: If we cannot find this methodology used in the Bible, then where did it come from?

Re: - posted by learn (), on: 2010/8/3 10:22

BelievingGod, see the videos I posted and you shall have your answer.

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by enid, on: 2010/8/3 10:23

I think the nearest we come to a sinner's prayer in the Bible is in Luke 18v13, '...God be merciful to me a sinner.'

As it is, this was no vain mantra, or hail mary, uttered out parrot fashion.

It was a sinner who knew he needed the mercy of God, and why. And if God could or would not be merciful to him, then all was lost.

God bless.

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2010/8/3 11:07

no doubt such a prayer saved many souls, i am sure of that, i am also sure such a prayer deceived millions in our world believing they are saved. Myself was saved from something similar.... but not in a church meeting or altar call, but through a telephone call, but i had reached the point where the only way for me was to either die or be saved, the "master artist" had for some long time been painting a portrait of repentance, in every detail and aspect of my life, and when he works it is not like with computers you can use the edit button, no the Lord paints a perfect picture of repentance for us, and when the time comes for the finishing touch it may be a prayer like that is what is needed to open the kingdom of God for us, but if that picture has not been drawn and human manipulative methods are used to "push" people to do this and no picture or work of God has been done, its a counterfeit picture....

so we need to know something about the people we ask to pray this, do we know they are very close to the kingdom we might lead them in such a prayer, but if we by the spirit get a sense they are far away we might need to sit down for three or four hours leading them through scriptures, show them they are guilty sinners, verse to verse show them and when they KNOW they are sinners and without hope we can show them what God has done.

It all depends on one thing, if we are anointed by the Lord and his spirit leads us, i am sure sometimes one word can be an instrument to save someone, sometimes years of "work" , sometimes may be a sinners prayer and altar call.... anyhow, i think we need to most important be filled with the spirit and lead by him and we will do right.

Re: - posted by Axe1338, on: 2010/8/3 11:24

I believe the best treatment of this answer is found in John chapter 3, Jesus' discourse with Nicodemus.

Nicodemus asked how he can be born again, Jesus later replied "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

Jesus didn't tell him repeat this prayer and you will be saved, His words are clear: Nicodemus, salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit; it is effectual at His time.

Hope this helps...

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by learn (), on: 2010/8/3 12:11

Savannah,

I think that it would be better to put something along these lines. This is just a very rough copy.

The evidence that we are saved is when we desire Him, when we learn to walk in obedience to His will, when we have a relationship with Him, when we love reading His words, when we love to pray etc. The bible states that we know that we are saved when we have the fruits of the spirit and when the Spirit witness to our spirit.

Does this mean all this comes immediately--no. There are times when certain fruits eg: longsuffering will exhibit faster than the others, while some will take much longer. There are times, certain of our faults eg: taking drugs will vanish immediately while others will disappear through much struggle.

Read the bible diligently to show yourself approve of God, to know God, to know God's will and to know whether one is really saved. The bible mentioned that 'my people perish because of lack of knowledge'--that's a clear warning here. Being saved is not a bandaid where by some magic words we are automatically saved. Being saved is continuously walking with God.

While at times, people by saying a prayer do indeed get saved and start exhibiting a changed life, there are times too that people can say a prayer and not be saved yet. Why is that so? That's because human manipulations and/or certain words do not save us. Saving us is a supernatural work of God. So don't try to do a bandaid stuff on getting God to save you. It doesn't work that way.

Rather, seek to know Him, His words, obey Him. When you do that, you do not have to worry what type of words you need to mouth to be saved. God will save you and He will guide you on what you need to pray if any.

Remember, God is no fool. A person will know that you do not love him/her (even though you may mouth the most perfect love speech) because she is able to see your actions. What more of God who knows everything.

Edit to include:

I don't agree with everything on Campus Crusade, but I do like 1 thing which may be good to attach. In their booklets before coming to Christ, there's 2 pictures ie 1 picture where you are sitting on the throne and the next picture is where Christ is sitting on the throne and directing your life. I know that in several of the sinners prayer, there are words stating this is I repent, turn from your sins, let God be Lord and Saviour--but sometimes, words do not impact us so greatly as the visual. The visual that Campus Crusade used is very good and will get people to think whether they will let God direct every part of their life before simply mouthing off a sinners prayer.

I'm not totally opposed to putting words such as 'If you confess with your mouth that' but the thing is we need to be clear that mouthing such words do not automatically mean we are saved. The evidence that we are saved is walking continuously with Him, the fruits of the spirit and witness of the spirit. That's something that people need to understand.

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by osandoval, on: 2010/8/3 12:56

Savannah, I would urge any Christian brother or sister NOT to use this method in their evangelism! It does more harm than good. Sometimes some people get saved through this, but far more are deceived and damned through it. They think that salvation is gained through this "formula", and they do not consider their sin and depravity and the desperate need to repent in full surrender to Jesus. No where in the entire Bible do we have any examples of this method being used. The Bible commands us to preach repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus, the apostles and disciples all urged people to repent and believe the gospel. It is much more biblical to do likewise, and to endeavor to explain what that means or looks like in terms of a change of heart and life, not what to say with ones mouth. Blessings.

Oracio

Re: - posted by learn (), on: 2010/8/3 16:04

I was going watching some videos and came across this. I think it will be good for new converts.

Don't Expect a Perfect Repentance - Paul Washer
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzMld-VgdAM>

Re: - posted by intrcssr83 (), on: 2010/8/3 18:59

If you want some historical background as to where the Sinner's prayer came from, try this video:

"The Graham formula":
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oi5PR96Efs>

In short, the lineage can be traced back to:
Charles Finney > Billy Sunday > Billy Graham

If anything, the underlying premise I notice both within the methodology as well as the theology held by those who advocate it is that *Man, of his own choice and power, has within himself the ability to initiate his own salvation*. That is, within the Order of Salvation, the first step is not with the Holy spirit regenerating an individual to become born again as is the case with the aforementioned John 3, but rather our free-will choice compels the providence of God to move in favor of the one reciting the prayer.

Let me be upfront in saying that I do hold to a Reformed/Calvinistic soteriology, though I attend a church that is an AoG offshoot where the predominant view is the opposite Wesleyan/Arminian/Semi-Pelagian viewpoint. I recently had a debate with a brother who held to the latter and simply refused to believe in the idea of God being the initiator of salvation and that man was totally depraved to the point of not being able to seek God unassisted. In short, this person was boasting that because of all the "salvations" he had led people to, his theology had to be right (despite the obvious backslide rate evident to all). I tried to reason with him as to whether he saw "saving Faith as a WORK or a GRACE."

This person simply refused to answer. I probed a bit deeper by taking his view to its logical conclusion: "If you honestly believe that saving faith is something that man initiates from his own choice and free-will, then is any means - emotionalism, peer-pressure, coercion, promises of prosperity, even 'hell-fire preaching' - of bringing a person to that point of decision justifiable?" Predictably, no answer.

So the underlying problem is not just one of methodology; it's worldview issue.

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/8/3 19:38

I have had periods when I wrestled with this very question. On the one hand I have seen people marvelously born again when they repeated a prayer such as this, and on the other hand I have seen countless people repeat such a prayer and continue to live with no fruit of rebirth evident in their lives. I would have to say that the prayer is Biblical. The determining factor is the unseen heart of the person praying that prayer.

I have always had a fundamental problem with the prayers for salvation en masse so to speak where tens or ten thousands of people are led in a prayer for this reason. Many may think they are OK because they repeated words without understanding and without rebirth. But I cannot deny that many are born again in that manner. I think it better, however, to go and make disciples. It seems to me superior to lead people personally to a saving knowledge of Christ. But what of evangelists who cannot do that because of the constraints of time and personnel? I guess there is a certain trusting in God that He can deal with people and sort it out much better than we ever can.

I believe that if the website explains to a person what it means to be born again and then shows them how they can pray to be born again, then I would be all for it.

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." , on: 2010/8/3 20:36

"If a man believes with his heart and confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus; the same shall be saved."

There are no formulas, it is God's grace, and His alone that brings Himself to inhabit a man or woman. The key here is believing with his heart. Only God sees that, and only God can make a person born again. Then; the journey begins; a walk of faith with God, with salvation being given to those who endure to the end, who learn of Him.

The Bible speaks of falling away, and of apostasy, and of enduring unto the end.

"Is the above Biblical"

Yes, it is Biblical, but if it just spoken, and not with saving faith, it is just a chain of religious words that are primarily symbolic.

Some say 98% of Billy Grahams converts were not walking with God, or had false conversions; proven by contact within one year after "being saved"; IE, coming forward. They repeated a similar prayer, and came up by the groves; and sadly, went back to their seats just as they were.

I'm glad you brought this up. It needs to be considered . We need, and must have reality in our fellowships. We need fellowships full of love and His holy Spirit, where men are convicted of sinfulness, and those that God added to the church are being fed and protected as they grow up into Christ.

This is where we are heading.

"THE BRIDE HAS MADE HERSELF READY."

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by savannah, on: 2010/8/3 23:45

Thanks so much to all who contributed to this thread thus far with their reply.

You may or may not have noticed the quotation marks in my original post. The reason for the quotation marks being that it is a quote taken from a website.

The website it was taken from is the website of the speaker of the present featured sermon here on sermonindex.

The article it was taken from is entitled, "A Clear Gospel Message."

Also at the bottom of the website is the following:

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Again, I thank you all for your contribution to this thread by replying as you have. It is much appreciated.

"Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came, and said to him, Why speakest thou to them in parables? He answered and said to them, Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.

Therefore I speak to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and s

seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is become gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." (Matthew 13:9-16)

"And he said to them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was alone, they that were about him, with the twelve, asked of him the parable. And he said to them, To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but to them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." (Mark 4:9-12)

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by TheophilusMD (), on: 2010/8/4 1:37

I think the whole article needs to be quoted here to give the context to the portion extracted from it.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/4 2:41

hi, if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart thou shall be saved....nothing that you can brag on has anything to do with getting you saved...if the Holy Spirit does not birth you from above you are not saved no matter what formulae you follow.jimp

Re: "If you want to be born again, say these words..." - posted by philologos (), on: 2010/8/4 3:34

I was provoked by this kind of 'prayer' some years ago and wrote this article on the topic...

http://mp3.biblebase.com/download_118.html

it is entitled "Receiving Christ".

Re: - posted by believingGod, on: 2010/8/4 10:35

Ron,

This article was inspiring and timely for this discussion. Prayerfully, I will meditate on the Scriptures mentioned, as it reveals even more of the Glory of God and His work of salvation.

Very few pastors I have heard mention the verses after John 3:16. This was something my Bible study group dived into awhile ago.

Thank you for this exposition of the Word.

God Bless you.

Re: - posted by osandoval, on: 2010/8/4 13:44

The most common objection proposed by proponents of this method goes something like this:

"Well, what if the person being led to the Lord has never prayed before or does not know how to pray?"

But if someone is truly repentant a prayer from the heart will flow naturally, without anyone needing to lead them in it. It will just come out. And the prayer will vary from person to person. Some may cry out a simple, "God be merciful to me the sinner", while others may go into more detail and confess specific sins.

I can say from my own testimony that when I came to Christ I did not "know how to pray". I did not grow up in church. But at that moment I just cried out for His forgiveness as best as I knew how from my heart, and He heard my cry, praise b

e to God!!!

From past evangelism I've done, I found that it is pretty easy to lead someone in this type of "sinners prayer". I used to do it quite often with hardly any complication. But when I did follow up I could not find one single soul who had a desire to follow Christ. It is one of those things that haunts me to this very day, because I know that most, if not all those souls I led in this prayer were encouraged in a false hope. We do not need this method.

Many say that the fact that some people get saved through it justifies the use of it. But that's like justifying Benny Hinn's or other heretical ministries, just because some do get saved through them.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2010/8/5 12:59

believingGod

Thank you, I am glad it was useful to you...

You might like to listen to this... it is called "are you qualified?"

<http://bit.ly/9gbfVd>

It is a message I preached a couple of years ago in Canada on Colossians. Colossians has the famous 'as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord..' and in this message I try to explain how we are to understand what that phrase meant to Paul.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/8/5 13:09

"Thanks so much to all who contributed to this thread thus far with their reply.

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The website it was taken from is the website of the speaker of the present featured sermon here on sermonindex.

The article it was taken from is entitled, "A Clear Gospel Message."

Also at the bottom of the website is the following:"

I have read the article that you are talking about and I have to say that its a solid article up until I got to this part of the article that you quoted or atleast I disagree with the use of the Sinner's Prayer, and out of all the thing that I have seen from brother Zac Poonen I have agreed with everything except this. I do know that Brother Zac and his ministry has one of the best discipleship programs that I have seen.

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2010/8/6 20:20

1 John 5:11-13 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

This prerequisite of believing is God has given eternal life and this life in His Son. So rest assured that to believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that God has already given eternal Life to those that believe, lest they could not believe. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

By that record we can now rest assured that we have eternal life and may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Most people don't see this prerequisite to believing. They think it all up to them. Then they can be saved. It is all up to

God. Now I believe. This is our prayer for the unsaved, Father give the Son to those that don't believe that they may become the son's of God and believe.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Who are the whosoever? Those that have been give the Son that they might believe.

John 3:17-21 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

"He that has the Son hath life".

How? Galatians 2:16-21 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2010/8/7 2:16

Christinyou on 2010/8/6 22:20:38 writes...

"This prerequisite of believing is God has given eternal life and this life in His Son. So rest assured that to believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that God has already given eternal Life to those that believe, lest they could not believe. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

By that record we can now rest assured that we have eternal life and may believe on the name of the Son of God."

Is this essentially the Calvinist position that you are taking, that regeneration is a prerequisite to faith?

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2010/8/7 3:35

Never studied Calvin, never use any of His work, except a quote or two when it aligns with scripture. Calvin is not the Word of God. That is what I study most. I don't believe in Calvinism because I Don't really know what it is.

I have one mentor, He is the head of Christ life fellowship.

Warren Litzman, even then he must align with scripture or the Word takes me to another place of truth,

I do believe God must give Christ and Grace to the believer before he can believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Christ revealed Himself to Paul and Paul states this very plainly, that he is in Christ and Christ is in Him. Three years of revelation direct from Christ now gives us the truth of Christ in the believer. Christ cannot be with us to believe like Thomas, but blessed are those that believe and have not seen. That belief must come from somewhere, I believe it comes from God the Father when He births His Son in us, The Incorruptable Seed Himself. That gives us the assurance that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. John 5:11 12, and many other places, to believe in Christ is supernatural because He is not standing before us. Jesus knocked Paul of his horse, in a loud voice said, "Paul, Paul", blinded Him, told him who he was going to be and what he was going to do and then studied with him three years. No wonder Paul calls it "My Gospel". Special for him that we might know the special calling of Jesus also and being placed in the believer as God elects all those that are his. John 6:44-45 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise

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se him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

Joh 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

I believe Jesus never will loose any the Father gives Him.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2010/8/7 6:49

Quote:
-----From past evangelism I've done, I found that it is pretty easy to lead someone in this type of "sinners prayer". I used to do it quite often with hardly any complication. But when I did follow up I could not find one single soul who had a desire to follow Christ. It is one of those things that haunts me to this very day, because I know that most, if not all those souls I led in this prayer were encouraged in a false hope. We do not need this method.

I can agree brother, but brother do you think another "method" would have helped? we can not by any formula or prayer or any other "human" method convert people, no matter the method if they were not genuinely born again they would not have been with another method either, I think the problem goes deeper, I suspect we are trying to get a harvest without having sowed anything.

A great sermon or at least I think so, and a scriptural one as I understand scriptures and many many good advice how to lead someone to Christ is this one; helps in soul winning by Gerhart Du Toit <http://media.sermonindex.net/4/SID4131.mp3>

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2010/8/7 7:57

Christinyou on 2010/8/7 5:35:21 writes:
"Christ revealed Himself to Paul and Paul states this very plainly, that he is in Christ and Christ is in Him."

Christ revealed himself TO Paul before he revealed himself IN Paul

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/8/7 9:16

Quote:
-----I do believe God must give Christ and Grace to the believer before he can believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Phillip: If I said that the Holy Spirit must reveal to us the truth of who Christ is and what He has done (some old timers called it enlightenment), and that the faith that we place in Christ for our salvation are both things given us of God, would I be saying what you are trying to say?

Re: - posted by osandoval, on: 2010/8/7 11:41

hmmhmm wrote:

Quote:
-----I can agree brother, but brother do you think another "method" would have helped? we can not by any formula or prayer or any other "human" method convert people, no matter the method if they were not genuinely born again they would not have been with another method either, I think the problem goes deeper, I suspect we are trying to get a harvest without having sowed anything.

Yes, I agree its not just the method, but also the message being presented, and the right heart with which you present it.

Yet even with the right message and heart we will do more harm than good if we impliment this unscriptural method at the end. The concern I have is that multitudes are lured into deeper sleep through this method. I believe we will be safest when we endeavor to stick closest to the biblical message and the patterns we see in Scripture in presenting that message. In other words, when we endeavor to do things the way Jesus, the prophets and apostles did when preaching the gospel.

Thanks for sharing the link. I'll have to check it out when I get some time.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2010/8/7 12:19

A Seed must be sown in good ground before it can die and produce fruit. The ground is prepared and the Seed sown by the owner of the Seed. "Husbandman"?

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2010/8/7 12:32

Christian wrote;

no doubt such a prayer saved many souls, i am sure of that, i am also sure such a prayer deceived millions in our world believing they are saved. Myself was saved from something similar.... but not in a church meeting or altar call, but through a telephone call, but i had reached the point where the only way for me was to either die or be saved, the "master artist" had for some long time been painting a portrait of repentance, in every detail and aspect of my life, and when he works it is not like with computers you can use the edit button, no the Lord paints a perfect picture of repentance for us, and when the time comes for the finishing touch it may be a prayer like that is what is needed to open the kingdom of God for us, but if that picture has not been drawn and human manipulative methods are used to "push" people to do this and no picture or work of God has been done, its a counterfeit picture....

so we need to know something about the people we ask to pray this, do we know they are very close to the kingdom we might lead them in such a prayer, but if we by the spirit get a sense they are far away we might need to sit down for three or four hours leading them through scriptures, show them they are guilty sinners, verse to verse to verse show them and when they KNOW they are sinners and without hope we can show them what God has done.

It all depends on one thing, if we are anointed by the Lord and his spirit leads us, i am sure sometimes one word can be an instrument to save someone, sometimes years of "work" , sometimes may be a sinners prayer and altar call.... anyhow, i think we need to most important be filled with the spirit and lead by him and we will do right.

Amen and amen brother...well spoken!

Re: - posted by Yeshuasboy (), on: 2010/8/7 16:09

I've always thought more on the lines of Charles Finney's "Directions To Sinners", lecture 18 in his "Lectures On Revivals Of Religion." I can't post URLs with my cell, but it's link is <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/finney/revivals.iii.xviii.html> You'll be surprised of how he instructs sinners if you've never read his works!

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2010/8/7 20:35

Quote:

""Phillip: If I said that the Holy Spirit must reveal to us the truth of who Christ is and what He has done (some old timers called it enlightenment), and that the faith that we place in Christ for our salvation are both things given us of God, would I be saying what you are trying to say?""

Close, What is being born again? Must we not be born again so we can see the things of the Kingdom of God? How are we born again? By the Christ Seed from the Father, or we cannot call Him Father. Now that we are born again the Holy Spirit can do what He was sent to do.

John 14:6-7 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

Scriptures and Doctrine :: "If you want to be born again, say these words..."

John 14:16-17 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

For their to be another Comforter there must be a first One.

John 14:18-20 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

We don't need the Holy Spirit to manifest Jesus to us, He will do that Himself.

John 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

The Holy Spirit will teach us all things that Jesus said, says and will say. But Christ Must be Present before The Holy Spirit can teach us what He is saying that we might understand all things of God.

John 14:26-29 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

He has gone away and come again in the Life giving Spirit of the incorruptable Seed of the Father, which is "Christ in you the Hope of Glory". Then and only then can we have the mind of Christ that we are to renew our minds to, by the Holy Spirit teaching of Christ Himself and all that He is to the believer.

Christ has told us even before it comes to pass, It is He that is birthed in us and it is His Rest that He leaves us, it is the promise of Rest that God says in Christ we will enter. "My Peace I leave you"

In Christ: Phillip

Re: Z.P. - posted by savannah, on: 2010/8/9 0:07

Thank you all for posting on this thread.

From reading all the replies, the unanimous judgement you all gave concerning the quoted words in question being used is at the least a bad method and at the worst downright deceptive and perhaps heretical.

15 years ago I ignorantly was in favor of such and used the method myself. Thanks be to God I now see its detrimental effects, and also that I see it as being Biblically unwarrantable in written or verbal form. Although I realize God has used such positively, I'd have to say that He used it in spite of it, as He does so many other fleshly attempts of men to help God (I'm speaking foolishly now!) save more people.

If I were guilty of using and promoting this method in written or verbal form, I'd be grateful if a fellow believer lovingly approached me and brought this to my attention and instructed me in the way of His Spirit.

I think some here on S.I. would be more than willing to do so for me if they were aware of my ignorant yet erroneous presentation of Gospel Truth to unbelievers on the broad way to hell.

Would any here on S.I. be willing to lovingly confront Zac Poonen on his error in doing so before us all, as it is in the public domain (his website). Unless of course we see no error or harm in such a presentation. Also, the fact that his sermons are often featured here on S.I. and his name a common one among most who frequent this website.

For the consideration of all to ponder,

"To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen." (Romans 16:27)

IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE, GOD ONLY WISE

<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/i/i/iigowise.htm>

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most bless'd, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great Name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish—but naught changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
But of all Thy rich graces this grace, Lord, impart
Take the veil from our faces, the vile from our heart.

All laud we would render; O help us to see
Â'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee,
And so let Thy glory, Almighty, impart,
Through Christ in His story, Thy Christ to the heart.

TO GOD THE ONLY WISE

<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/t/o/togonlyw.htm>

To God the only wise,
Our Savior and our King,
Let all the saints below the skies
Their humble praises bring.

Â'Tis His almighty love,
His counsel, and His care,
Preserves us safe from sin and death,
And every hurtful snare.

He will present our souls,
Unblemished and complete,
Before the glory of His face,
With joys divinely great.

Then all the chosen seed
Shall meet around the throne,
Shall bless the conduct of His grace,
And make His wonders known.

To our Redeemer, God,
Wisdom and power belongs,
Immortal crowns of majesty,
And everlasting songs.

Thanks again to all readers and posters

Scriptures and Doctrine :: "If you want to be born again, say these words..."

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."
(1 Timothy 1:17)

Re: - posted by learn (), on: 2010/8/9 8:53

Savannah, I just want to highlight something.

Zac Poonen is from India. In many of the 3rd world countries or the persecuted countries, bibles are hard to get and can be illegal. For example, in Saudi Arabia, no bibles are allowed. If you are an outsider working there, you will have to leave your bible with the government and only can collect them back when you leave the country (I'm not sure whether these rules still apply now). Also, there's a lot of persecution going around and gatherings for Christians are illegal etc. Many of them may also be unable to understand if we talk 'too academically' as they may be uneducated etc due to poverty. As a result, God may use a simple saying of words such as have been put up by Zac Poonen to convert them (be it on the website or person to person. However, it doesn't mean that just because they are from the persecuted countries, anybody that say those words are saved.

While I believe its good and does no harm to highlight the concern to Zac Poonen or others, the modifications that are needed may be just including more explanations such as guidelines/tests on determining whether one is truly saved, don't expect instant perfect fruit and what needs to be done if one after saying those words still do not feel they are saved yet. (I'm just giving an example).

So, do take this part into consideration when writing to Zac Poonen.

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2010/8/9 16:06

In India many have never even heard the name Jesus once, if you showed them a bible they could not read it, so brothers Poonen's approach to present the gospel so everybody can understand it is appreciated, and although I agree the concern you share, yet sometimes it may be ok considering that I just thought about it, how would I write or tell someone to pray? how would I word it if someone asked me -how do I pray? I would say the words are not the important, as long as your heart is right, but some utterance towards what we "want" is not wrong, we made it a formula that will work only you utter the words, we know it is not so. but brother Zac is a very humble man, and if you write him prayerfully he maybe will respond, I know he "skips" the ones that is about "debate" and "arguments" he shares in one of his messages, but the ones who struggling and looking for help he reply as his time allows, so I think if you write him and share your concern and thoughts in a humble and loving way I am sure he would get back to you.

Re: , on: 2010/8/9 19:09

Are the words of someone else from the sincerity of your own heart?