

# Questions People Ask-03 Questions and Answers

by William MacDonald

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*The gospel is a free gift of God's grace, but it is not cheap. The Lord Jesus Christ paid a tremendous price to redeem us, and it is the power of Christ that keeps us.*

**Duration:** 34:48

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Romans 5:8, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:7, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 Timothy 1:15

**Topics:** "Question Answer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares the transformational story of a man who was once involved in criminal activities and addiction but is now preaching the word of God in Brazil. The speaker emphasizes that when a person accepts Christ, they become a new creation and their life is revolutionized. The speaker also addresses the question of whether the gospel is too cheap, stating that salvation is a free gift from God but must be accepted. The sermon concludes by affirming that the gospel is easy and free, but it was only through the sacrificial death of Jesus that salvation became available to all.

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## Transcript

This morning we'd like to continue our little study on the subject questions people ask. We've been taking up a series of questions that inevitably arise when the subject of the soul salvation is brought up. And we really trust that some of these questions will be helpful to those who are in the audience.

I've often heard this, as we tell men and women that salvation is by grace, through faith, apart from work, they say, isn't the gospel too easy? Isn't the gospel too cheap? So we want to face that bravely this morning. Isn't the gospel too easy? Well, that's an interesting thing that that objection would be raised to the gospel. The gospel is easy in one sense.

You simply come as a guilty sinner and receive the Lord Jesus Christ, crowning him as Lord of your life. It is easy in a sense. But just think of the other side of it.

Supposing God had designed the plan of salvation in any other way. Just think of the yells that would have come from all over the world. It's too hard.

In other words, the gospel that God designed, salvation by grace through faith, salvation as a gift, is the only way the gospel could be designed where it would be open to everyone. For instance, let me say, supposing God said, look, give \$500 to the church and you'll be saved. You've eliminated millions of people from the possibility of salvation.

Millions. Supposing God had said, well, climb 20 stairs on your knees and you'll be saved. Eliminate an awful lot of people.

Some people don't have knees and other people have arthritis and they couldn't climb 20 stairs on their knees. You can't think of anything like that that wouldn't eliminate thousands, if not millions of people. The only way that God could have ever designed salvation so that it would be available to everyone is to give it as a free gift.

The only way. But the gift must be accepted. The fact that it's available as a free gift doesn't save everybody.

The gift must be accepted. The other part of the question is, isn't the gospel too cheap? And I confess to you this morning that I have never liked the use of the word cheap in connection with God's way of salvation. It just rubs me the wrong way.

I know what people mean when they say that, but I don't like it just the same, because cheap sometimes has the connotation of worthless. And if there's anything that isn't worthless, it's God's wonderful salvation. A better word would be free, because the gospel is free.

Isaiah found out the invitation, O everyone that thirsts, come to the waters, and he that has no money, come buy and eat. Yes, come buy without money and without price. The gospel is a free gift of God's grace, salvation, a free gift of God's grace.

But it wasn't cheap to the Lord Jesus Christ to provide it. It was tremendously costly. And in order to get a picture of that, I would like to use a little sanctified imagination this morning and picture to you what might have happened in eternity.

It didn't, but what might have happened in eternity past. Before the universe was ever created, when there was God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. And one day God the Father and God the Son sit down in a conference.

And the Father says to the Son, I have had a secret purpose for you from all eternity. That secret purpose is I want a bride for you. I want to gather out from a world that I'm going to make a bride for my son.

And someday you'll call that bride the riches of your inheritance in the saints. Interesting, isn't it? Actually, this was a secret that God had in his mind from all eternity. The church, the bride of Christ.

But then the Father tells what that bride is going to be like. Lovely? No, not lovely. Beautiful? No, not beautiful.

Actually, this bride is going to be blind. Blind to the glories of God. The glories of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Are you interested? This bride is not only going to be blind, this bride is going to be deaf as well. Deaf to the voice of God. Deaf to the invitation of the gospel.

Deaf to the word of God. And this bride is not only going to be blind and deaf, this bride is going to be dumb as well. Her lips will be sealed as far as worship for the Lord God of the universe is concerned.

She's going to be lame and paralyzed in her natural condition, unable to serve God in the way that she was originally intended. Beautiful clothing? No, filthy garments. As Isaiah said, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

Not a very attractive bride, would you say? Unbathed. We don't want to dwell on that, but the scripture says it just the same. Bloodshot eyes and stringy hair.

A bride who is unlovely and unloved. And not only that, but unfaithful. This bride spends her life going after other lovers.

Lovers like sex. Lovers like materialism. Lovers like pleasure and status.

This bride is going to be spiritually dead. That is dead as far as God is concerned. Lifeless.

Very much alive in other ways. But as far as communion with God, as far as fellowship with God is concerned, absolutely dead. The bride is going to be ungodly.

And as if that is enough, she's going to be an enemy of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. Her fist is going to be clenched in the face of God. Aimless, hopeless, no sense of need, and yet no peace and no rest.

Not a very attractive picture, is it? Yet it was all true. And then the father says to the son, now, in order to get this bride, an enormous price has to be paid. You're going to have to go down to the earth, and you're going to have to pay a debt you don't owe.

For a bride that owes a debt she cannot pay. You're going to have to go down to the earth, and like a shepherd, you're going to have to search for that lost sheep. And so, in time, that's exactly what happened.

Over 1900 years ago, the Lord Jesus came down searching for that bride. He searched in Bethlehem, but he didn't find her. He searched in Nazareth, but she wasn't there.

He went to Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Tyre, but he didn't find her. Eventually, his footsteps brought him to Jerusalem, and finally to Calvary, but he found her there. In a very real sense, he found her there.

He had said to the father, Lo, I come in the volume, the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will. Oh, my God.

There at Calvary, he shed his blood to purchase that bride. You wouldn't have done it. I wouldn't have done it, but Jesus did it.

He died a most horrendous death, suffered all the judgment of God against the sins of that woman, in order to win a bride for himself. Those of us who were saved here this morning are members of that bride. Somebody was showing a church building to a visitor one day and said, This church building is made from scrap marble brought out of the quarry.

That's what the bride of Christ is, made of scrap material. There's no Cinderella story like that. You know the price that he paid, how they took him outside the city of Jerusalem one day and made him carry that

cross up to the place of execution, how they laid that cross down on the ground and made him lie upon it, stretch out his hands and pierce them with nails, fixing them to the wood, going down to his crossed feet and driving the nails through that, and then lifting up that cross and dropping it with a shudder into the hole in the ground, so he could say, All my bones are out of joint.

I am poured out like water. Dear friends, he went through it all for you and for me. Please don't say our salvation is too cheap.

Now he offers salvation as a free gift to all who will come and acknowledge their lost condition and receive him as their only hope for heaven. And it's wonderful that he isn't even through with the bride right now. There never was a Cinderella story like this.

There never was a story from rags to riches like this. And now he's working on that bride, the process of sanctification. He's putting the bride at the present time through a course in beauty culture.

And I'm not talking about physical beauty either. Spiritual beauty culture. And one day he's going to present that bride to himself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

I'll tell you, that's wonderful. Without anything spiritual that would compare physically to a wart or a mole or a pimple or any such thing. And if it's so, I shall be like thy son.

Is this the grace that he for me has won, father of glory, thought beyond all thought in glory to his own blessed likeness brought. And that conference in a bygone eternity will not have been fulfilled till one day Christ is in heaven with all his bride, all the members of his bride there at his feet, worshiping him, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. The gospel chief knows gospel as a chief.

None of the ransomed ever knew how deep were the waters crossed or how dark was the night the Lord passed through where he found the sheep. We sometimes sing the depths of all thy suffering no heart could ever conceive. Cup of wrath or flowing for us thou didst receive and all of God forsaken on the accursed stream with joy and sorrow mingled.

We now remember thee. The gospel is easy. Yes, Jesus.

The gospel is free. Yes, it's free. The gospel isn't cheap.

And I say again, only the Lord Jesus would have ever done it. He wouldn't give your son to die for a drunkard. He did more than that.

Another question that comes up when people are faced with the whole question of their soul salvation is this. How can I tell if I have believed in the right way? That is, if I have enough faith or if I have the right kind of faith. And I'd like to answer that by saying that faith is not the Savior.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Savior. And perhaps we shouldn't be too occupied with our faith as much as with the object of our faith. How do I know if I've had the right kind of faith? If you have taken the position of a guilty sinner.

Acknowledge that before God. Believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for your sins on the cross of health and by a definite act of faith received him. Then you have the right kind of faith.

I think, of course, people, when they ask that question, they're thinking about intellectual faith. There is such a thing. And an intellectual faith isn't enough.

There are some of us in the room today, and from the time of our childhood, we've known the facts of the gospel and believe them. I can't think of a time in my life when I didn't believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died on Calvary's cross for the sins of the world, and that salvation was by faith. And I knew that intellectually.

But there was a commitment to be made, wasn't there? There was a line to be crossed. There was a time came when I had to say yes to the Son of God. I receive you as my Lord and my Savior.

You can believe the facts without receiving the person. That is true faith when you receive the person. It's not intellectual assent to certain facts, but it's wholehearted trust in a person.

And it's not the amount of faith that you have, but it's the object of your faith. A child can be saved. That child might have very limited knowledge and not very deep faith, either.

And yet, if he or she trusts only in Jesus for the soul's salvation, that's all that it takes. One woman in the Bible, all she did was touch the hem of Christ's garment. She was made whole like that, healed just like that.

It was the touch of faith. True faith lays hold of Christ. I think that's the easiest way to put it.

True faith lays hold of Christ. Christ is all my hope. In my hand, no price I bring.

Simply to thy cross I cling. Could my tears forever flow? Could my zeal no respite? No, all for sin could not atone. Thou must save, and thou alone.

That's the language of faith, isn't it? Disclaiming all the hope, any hope that I can earn salvation, or any hope that I can deserve salvation, and clinging only to Christ and his crosswork. That is saving faith. Here's another question.

You say you don't have to do anything to be saved, though all you have to do is believe. Isn't that a contradiction? Well, it does sound like a contradiction, doesn't it? It sounds like double talk, but it isn't. Let me explain.

When we say you don't have to do anything to be saved, we mean you don't have to do anything meritorious. There's nothing you have to do to deserve salvation. There's nothing you have to do to earn salvation.

That's what we mean. All you have to do is believe. Believing isn't meritorious.

You don't earn brownie points by believing on Jesus. You're foolish not to believe on him. He's the most trustworthy person in the universe.

You can never believe on him and never be disappointed. His word is true. He cannot lie.

He cannot be mistaken. He cannot deceive. There's no risk in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

No risk at all. So, believing in Christ is the most sane, rational, sensible thing that a person can possibly do. But it's not meritorious.

I can't pat myself on the back because I believe in Jesus. I can't boast because I believe in Jesus. What is more reasonable than that a person should believe his creator? Would you tell me? Nothing more reasonable than a person should believe his creator.

So, you don't earn heaven by doing something or by earning it. Simply receive heaven as a free gift by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Here's another question, and I really think a lot of people have this and have it sincerely and genuinely.

How will I know that I'll be able to hold on after I'm saved? I think I had that problem, too. In other words, before I'm saved, I realize my own weakness. I realize the power of temptation in my life.

I realize how sinful I am. And then you think of trusting the Lord, and you think, I never would be able to hold out. How can I know that I'll be able to hold out after I'm saved? Well, the answer is this.

In your own strength, you won't be able to hold out. I hope that will come as a comfort to you. In your own strength, you won't be able to hold out.

You are no more capable, and neither am I, of living the Christian life after we're saved than we are of being saved or saving ourselves in the first place. It's the power of Christ that saves us, and it's the power of Christ that keeps us after we're saved. Paul, writing to the Philippians, reminded them that he who has done a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus is not only the savior of the soul, but he's the keeper of the soul as well. So Paul could say with confidence, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. That's a wonderful comfort.

And then in Jude 24, I never get over the wonder of this verse. It says, Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. That's wonderful.

Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. So if you trust the Lord Jesus to save your soul, trust him to keep you as well. And he's well able to do it, and never has lost a case yet.

Somebody else might say to me, if all you have to do is believe, well, doesn't that mean you can go out and do anything you want? And from the human standpoint, there seems to be a little bit of logic in that, doesn't there? All you have to do is believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. What's to stop you from going out and doing? And people who ask that question, it's rather interesting. They think that when a person is saved, that immediately he wants to get an assault rifle and go out and stand behind a lamppost and shoot everybody in sight.

You know, in a sense, when you are saved, you can do anything you like, because God changes your likes. When you trust the Lord Jesus as Savior, you become a new person in Christ Jesus. Old things pass away.

Behold, all things become new. You do what you want to do, because what you want to do is what Christ wants you to do. That's the logic of it.

But one of the real evidences of the new birth is a hatred for sin and a love for holiness. That makes all the difference in the world. In other words, salvation isn't just an intellectual matter.

It affects the whole being. When God saves us, he saves our souls, he saves our spirits, he saves our emotions, he saves our minds, he saves our desires as well. And we have new aspirations to be like the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as we go on day by day in the Word of God, in prayer, in service of the Lord, the Holy Spirit begins to work this marvelous change in our lives. And this is really one of the great thrills to me, of being in the Christian Fellowship, to look around and see people. I see young people these days, and their lives are all messed up in drugs, in crack, in liquor, in sex.

Unspeakable, really. Then they come together, they come and have a face-to-face meeting with the Lord Jesus, and their life is absolutely revolutionized. I told you about one of my young friends.

That was exactly the case with him. Before he was saved, he was in trouble with the law, he was stealing, breaking, entering, he was on drugs, he was on alcohol, and he was ramming around on a motorcycle with the word hell bound on it. Today, he's down in Brazil preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Yeah, it's wonderful, isn't it? He's doing exactly what he wants to do. That's sharing Christ with the people of Brazil. Because when God saved him, he changed him.

And it's really thrilling to see that change in a human life. It's one of the great proofs of the inspiration of the scriptures, isn't it? The reality of Christianity. It's been often said, the gospel doesn't put a new suit on a man, he puts a new man in the suit.

That's right. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he's a new creation. All things are passed away.

Behold, all things are become new. So, don't get the idea that when a person is saved, the first thing he wants to do is go out and sin. He's held by stronger chains than the chains of the law, and that's the chains of love.

And it's love to the Savior that makes us want to live a holy life. When I think of what my sins cost the Lord Jesus Christ at the cross of Calvary, I don't want to go on in those sins. They're repulsive to me.

I tell you, that bridge was erected at too great a cost than for me to go back over it lightly. Think of that. When God saves you, puts new desires in you, new wants in you, that you want to live a life that is well pleasing to him.

I think we'll just stop there this morning, because the next one is a very important question, and it deserves more time than we can give it this morning. But I would like to say, maybe these questions have aroused some questions in your mind. Maybe you're not a Christian here this morning.

You'd like to get some things squared away. I would invite you to just stay behind afterwards and let us talk to you and see if we can help you. Maybe God is tugging at your heart.

Maybe you sense the Holy Spirit knocking at the door of your heart and you know you should be saved. This would be a good time, wouldn't it? Come down after the meeting and let us talk to you, see if we can help you from the word of God. Shall we pray? Father, we've been reminded this morning of that tremendous stoop of the Lord Jesus, how he who was infinitely rich became poor, that his bride, through

his poverty, might be made rich.

Think of the tremendous stoop to Calvary, the price he paid for one so unworthy. We see ourselves there. We do thank you for each one today who has come and received his salvation as a free gift, trusting him alone for heaven.

We do pray for any here who are being spoken to by the Spirit of God this morning through the word of God. We pray that they will not treat this lightly, but before God will confess their sinnership and in faith receive the Lord Jesus who died for them and rose again. We pray again this morning for those who are in sickness and in sorrow.

Think of Bob and Hilda back east just now and pray that you'll give them some opportunities to speak a word in season to those who are sorrowing at this time. We ask it as we commit ourselves to you in the Savior's worthy name. Amen.

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