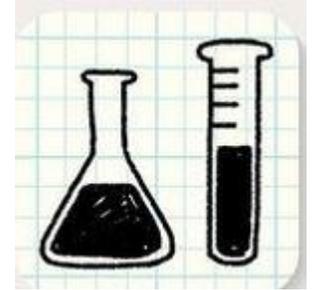


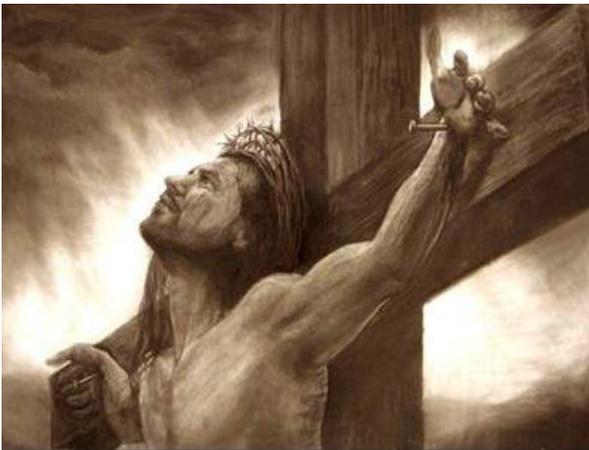
## Cause and Effect

Cause and effect makes sense in the classroom, science lab and the workplace. A student who studies for a test expects to do well because of his effort. A chemistry student knows when mixing chemicals “if I do this, this will happen.” An employee who works diligently and consistently goes the extra mile expects to be rewarded in their paycheck and promotions. We have been conditioned that we can earn success through commitment and effort. It is the “American way.”



How is it with seeking salvation? Does diligent effort guarantee salvation? Can we be saved merely because we believe? Mark 16:16 says, *Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.* We believe because we have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Let’s look at some other related questions. Can we be saved merely if we repent of our sins? Can we be right with God because of obedience, dedication and hard work?

All are important questions, but not the defining statement. The reality is being saved is not based on human goodness but redemption. When we make assumptions based on being sorry for our sins we are making salvation about us. Salvation is not based on human logic, scientific principles or effort but on what Jesus did for us before we were even born. Our salvation is only because of the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Without Jesus dying on the cross for our sins, salvation would not even be possible. It is what Jesus did for us. We didn’t do it.



Believing and repentance are important. Sinful people can be changed not through repentance or belief but only through the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ. Repentance is a sign that we realize what Jesus has done for us. “When we turn to God and by belief, accept what God reveals the miraculous atonement by the Cross of Christ instantly places me into a right relationship with God,” said Oswald Chambers. Therefore, we are justified by God’s Grace and not our own actions. “I stand justified, not because I am sorry for my sin, or because I have repented, but because of what Jesus has done,” said Chambers. Chambers also said, “God cannot deliver me while my interest is merely in my own character. Personal holiness is an effect of redemption, not the cause of it.”

We need to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Believing in Him is not enough. Many people believe there is a God, but that doesn’t make Him *their* God. Secondly, perfect obedience is not possible because we are human. We need the forgiveness of our sins to be right with God. *and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him (Hebrews 5:9).*

We need to believe. We need to be obedient to His Word. We need to repent of our sins. Most important of all is that we do this in honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for us. Jesus did it, not us.

From the cross Jesus said, *“It is finished (John 19:30).* While, for us, there may still be work to do and tests to take, Jesus’ work for our salvation is complete.

**The Bible says:** *For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! (Romans 5:10).*

**Prayer:** Dear Lord. It is easy to say we are sorry for our sins. It is easy to say that we believe in God. We pray that we will fix our eyes on Jesus and not on our feeble attempts to act holy. We thank you for the sacrificial death of Your Son, Jesus Christ. It is only because of His death and resurrection that we can be saved. Amen.