

DOES THE BIBLE TEACH THE SINNER'S PRAYER?

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I recently read a tract that included what is known as the "Sinner's Prayer." Here it is...

Dear Jesus, I know that I'm a sinner. If I died now in my sin, I would go to hell. Right now, by faith, I am trusting You as my personal Savior and my only hope for heaven. Thank you for dying on the cross for me and for saving me from an eternity in hell, in Jesus name. Amen

There are other similar versions of this prayer that say the same basic thing. The idea is that upon saying this prayer, God will save you from your sins. The tract tells the reader that if he really meant it when he said the prayer, he can be "100% sure" he is going to heaven. That is quite a claim! We are commanded to "test all things" (1 Thess. 5:21). Let's put to the test this popular teaching of reciting the sinner's prayer for salvation.

1) **Bible Command?** One will look in vain to find one alien sinner commanded to pray a prayer in order to be saved. It is just not there. There are certain things that non-Christians are commanded to do to be saved: *Believe* (Acts 16:31), *Repent* (Acts 17:30), *Confess* (Rom. 10:9), and be *Baptized* (Acts 22:16). Why do some add to God's word when He has taught all that we need to know and do?

2) **Bible Example?** Again, one will look in vain to find even one example where an alien sinner recited a "sinner's prayer" in order to be saved. It never happened under the teaching of the apostles of Christ. On the other hand, you can find examples of sinners believing, repenting, and being baptized (Acts 2:38-41; 8:35-38; 16:30-33; 18:8).

3) **Bible Implication?** One website explains,

Regarding the location of the Sinner's Prayer in the Bible? Well, there isn't one mentioned; it is only implied. The basis of the Sinner's Prayer comes from Romans 10:9-10. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
(<http://www.salvationprayer.info/prayer.html>)

Honesty demanded that they admit there is no "Sinner's Prayer" in the Bible, but they claim it is implied in Romans 10:9-10. But, there is no prayer implied anywhere in these verses; that has to be read into it. What we do learn is that belief and confession are part of the plan of salvation, just as repentance and baptism are part of the plan of salvation.

Reciting a "sinner's prayer" is a doctrine of men, not of God. It is not a part of God's plan of salvation, and, in fact, is a way many get around the command to be baptized to be saved. How sad, and how deceptive! Follow the Bible plan of salvation and only then you will be 100% sure you have been forgiven of your sins.