

Case Studies

Is anyone at liberty to change the biblical terms on which God grants us salvation? If not, where does the "sign-on-the-dotted-line" method come from that is often used today to "save" people – men, women, and children? Here are two examples of this kind of "salvation", quoted from popular religious tracts. Both appeal to people to "be saved" with a word of assent and the stroke of a pen.

Read the appeals and answer the questions that follow.

Just Sign on the Dotted Line? A Case Study in Conversion

Appeal #1 in an evangelical publication

"If you have never definitely accepted God's gift of salvation and eternal life, will you do it now? Read the prayer printed below. If you believe it without reservation and want Jesus Christ to be your Saviour, sign your name in the space provided:

"I know that I am a sinner who deserves to go to Hell. I know that I cannot save myself. I believe that God, in the person of Jesus Christ, suffered and died as my substitute on the cross of Calvary. Because the punishment I deserve is fully satisfied, I am now asking for and receiving forgiveness of my sins. I believe that Jesus rose from the dead and I want Him to come into my heart now and to be my Saviour, Lord and Master.

Signed:

"Now that you have been saved Satan will try to make you doubt. Your own feelings will change from day-to-day. God's Word, however, never changes. He promises:

Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (Romans 10:13; John 6:37)

"Now that you have accepted God's gift of salvation, you need to tell others. Now that Jesus Christ has saved you, go to work in His strength."

Appeal #2 from literature left on the door by a "Bible Church"

"If you have not yet received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, we encourage you to do so now in the quietness of your heart. We invite you to sign your name below as a testimony of your decision and to write the address below for helpful Christian literature."

Name:

Address:

Midtown Bible Church
No. 1 Broadway
Hometown, Anywhere
Be sure to follow us on our Social Media Sites

Questions

- 1 – Did the apostle Peter use the “sign-on-the-dotted-line” method of salvation with the Jews on the day of Pentecost? See Acts 2:37-41.

If not, what did he do differently? Do you think the differences are important? Please explain.

- 2 – Did Paul and Silas use the “sign-on-the-dotted-line” method of salvation with the jailer at Philippi? See Acts 16:27-33.

If not, what did the apostles do differently? Do you think the differences are important? Please explain.

- 3 – It is common today for evangelical Bible churches to claim that baptism (i.e., baptism of enlightened believers by immersion) is a form of work. Since we cannot save ourselves by any work we do (Ephesians 2:8-9), they maintain that baptism is not essential for salvation.

What is wrong with this logic? And isn't signing on the dotted line – *or doing anything!* – a form of work?

How is baptism different from signing on the dotted line?

How many examples can you find in the book of Acts in which the apostles baptized believing men and woman? Can you find any examples of conversion in the book of Acts that did not involve baptism into Jesus Christ?