

The Sinners Christ Jesus Came to Save

1 Timothy 1:15

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

Every one of us is a sinner, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15). But He came to save only *certain* sinners, not *all* sinners.

I. Consider first some sinners Christ Jesus did not come to save.

1. Christ Jesus did not come to save *denying* sinners. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ... If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us” (1 John 1:8, 10). If you are such a denying sinner, Christ Jesus did not come to save you.

2. Christ Jesus did not come to save *partial* sinners. These might say, “I admit that I do sinful deeds. But I also do deeds that I am certain God will consider to be good.” If you are such a partial sinner, Christ Jesus did not come to save you.

3. Christ Jesus did not come to save *part-time* sinners. These act like saints on Sunday or Sabbath or Holy Days, but prove themselves to sinners on other days. If you are such a part-time sinner, Christ Jesus did not come to save you.

4. Christ Jesus did not come to save “*freewill*” sinners. These deny the bondage of their will to Satan (John 8:44; cp. Ephesians 2:1-3) and to sin (John 8:34). If you deny your spiritual bondage and claim that you have “freewill”, you do not need Christ Jesus to set you free (John 8:31ff), and He did not come to save you.

5. Christ Jesus did not come to save *capable* sinners. Here is the “freewill” sinner when he says he has the ability to come to God for salvation. If you claim such an ability, you deny Christ Jesus (John 6:44, 65), and there was no need for Him to come to you and bring you to God.

6. Christ Jesus did not come to save *self-righteous* sinners. These were epitomized by the Pharisees in Jesus’ days on earth. They “trusted in themselves that they were righteous” (Luke 18:9). They boasted of keeping God’s law and of all their justifying works

(as in Luke 18:11f). But Jesus says of such people, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Mark 2:17).

7. Christ Jesus did not come to save *holier-than-thou* sinners. These say to others, “I am holier than you” (Isaiah 65:5). But God says of them, “These are smoke in My nostrils, a fire that burns all the day” (ibid). If you believe that you have made yourself to be holier than someone else, Christ Jesus did not come to save you.

II. Consider now the sinners Christ Jesus did indeed come to save.

1. Christ Jesus came to save *confessing* sinners. These say to Him, “Jehovah, be merciful to me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against You” (Psalm 41:4).

2. Christ Jesus came to save *complete* sinners. These confess “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells” (Romans 7:18).

3. Christ Jesus came to save *full-time* sinners. These confess that they were sinners from the moment of their conception, and were born estranged from God, and have been iniquitous and liars ever since, and are sinners in all their deeds and words and even thoughts (Psalm 51:5 & 58:3 & Genesis 6:5).

4. Christ Jesus came to save the *worst* sinners. These confess, “Christ Jesus came to save sinners, of whom I am *chief*” (1 Timothy 1:15).

5. Christ Jesus came to save the *epitome* of sinners. These plead, “God, be merciful to me *the* sinner!” (Luke 18:13).

6. Christ Jesus came to save *unholy and unrighteous* sinners. These confess that “we have sinned – in these ways we continue; and we need to be saved. ... we are all like an unclean thing [unholy spiritual lepers], and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags [menstruous cloths]” (Isaiah 64:6).

7. Christ Jesus came to save *helpless and mercy-seeking* sinners. These say to Him, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean” (Luke 5:12).

Are you one of the sinners Christ Jesus came to save?

– Daniel E. Parks (May 15, 2016; #946)