Solomon’s temple, and who wrote many of the Psalms that today still touch many hearts. One Psalm, written by David, places our attention appropriately upon the secret of his success as a man of God. It is not found in the Book of Psalms. It is a song he wrote as he neared the end of his life and is now recorded in II Samuel 22. Verse 36 places everything into perfect perspective. *Thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness has made me great.* Our relationship with our Lord is based upon his gift of salvation. It is the foundation block that everything else stands upon. David also understood that nothing in his own self was of any lasting value. The gentleness of God, His bending down towards man in love, His tender care for us, His compassion delicately touching our lives—that is what makes anyone great. The understanding of that truth may allow any of us to develop into men and women *after God’s own heart.*

**The Thief On The Cross**

God describes Salvation as the most difficult thing that He has ever done. Creating the vast expanse of the universe, with all of it’s billions and billions of stars, each different and unique, was a simple thing for Him. In Genesis, He gives it but a casual mention, and in Psalms, describes it as “finger work”. Yet when the topic of His Salvation is considered, the phrase found in Isaiah is telling—“the strong arm of the Lord has worked Salvation for Him.” Finger work versus a strong arm is quite a comparison.

Our Salvation is a tremendously complicated thing. There are so many things that God does on His side of the equation. He sanctifies us, He justifies us, He adopts us, He forgives us…and I could go on and on. But on our side of the equation, we simply need to accept Him as our personal Savior. We do not earn or deserve our standing with an almighty God. It is His work and His alone that grants us grace and mercy and the promise of Heaven and a relationship with Him while we are here on earth.

So what happened that day? 1. The man on the cross recognized that he was a sinner. 2. He recognized that he could not help himself. 3 He knew he was condemned to die. 4. He recognized Jesus as being totally innocent. 5. He recognized Jesus is God. 6. He saw Jesus as someone close to him who he could identify with. 7. He knew that Jesus could make a difference in his life. 8. He called out to Jesus in the only way he knew how. 9. Jesus lovingly responded. 10. And gave him confirmation that his life was now different than it had been previously.

And that’s how you become a Christian!

**David**

David was indeed *a man after God’s own heart.*

The Bible records the faults as well as the failures of men and women. It is easy to focus upon those blemishes. On a large white canvas, a black smudge is easily seen and gathers attention. That dark spot becomes the focus of consideration instead of the vast white areas that are unscathed by discoloration. David made an enormous mistake with Bathsheba. He compounded that sin by murdering her husband—a man whom David had known and considered a friend for many years. Nathan, the prophet, confronted David openly. Nathan put his life on the line when he challenged David. The king could have had him executed right then and there. Instead, David immediately admitted his guilt and asked for forgiveness from God. In Psalms we are given a first-hand look into the private thoughts of this man as he dealt with this issue. His instant humility and heart condition are traits God desires in all. He was *a man after God’s own heart.*

Few families have suffered as much heartache as did David’s. Partly as punishment by God for David’s behavior and sin, and partly because of poor parenting skills, this was a dysfunctional family with a capitol “D”. Within the confines of his immediate family David witnessed disrespect, the untimely deaths of four of his children, incestuous rape, a political coup to take over his throne, and murder. Through all the sorrow, the Bible reminds us of the fact that David never lost sight of his God and the strength that can be found in a personal relationship with Him. *A man after God’s own heart.*

To understand the heart of David is difficult from our vantage point. We see a boy with his sheep, a young man challenging giants, and a man with huge mistakes as well as huge successes in his life. Remember it was David who brought the nation together, who planned and financed

Little Rock

Ark

and

Saw

![A close up of a rock

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A picture containing container, sitting

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A close up of a tool

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A screenshot of a cell phone

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