

Accept versus Receive

Have we ACCEPTED or RECEIVED Jesus as our Savior?

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Some Definitions from Webster:

- Accept: To take (something offered)
- Receive: To get (something offered)

Some NAS (New American Standard) Bible verses which contain the words *Accept* and *Receive*:

Note: When something is accepted, the emphasis is on the person who is getting.

Accept appears in 40 verses; these are some:

1. ^{NAS} **Genesis 23:13** And he [Abraham] spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, "If you will only please listen to me; I will give the price of the field, accept [λαμβάνω – take] it [or take it] from me, that I may bury my dead there."
 - Abraham wanted them to *accept or take* the payment he was offering.
2. ^{NAS} **Job 2:10** But he [Job] said to her [his wife], "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept [δέχομαι – take] [or take] good from God and not accept adversity?"
 - God wants us to *accept or take* both good and adversity from Him.
3. ^{NAS} **Amos 5:12** For I know your transgressions are many and your sins are great, *You* who distress the righteous and accept [λαμβάνω – take] [or take] bribes...
 - The bribes were offered; then the people sinned by *accepting or taking* them.
4. ^{NAS} **1 Corinthians 2:14** But a natural man [a man who does not know Jesus as his Savior] does not accept [δέχομαι – take] [or take] the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.
 - Unbelievers have no ability of themselves to *accept or take* the things of the Spirit of God.

Note: When something is received, the emphasis is on the person who is offering.

Receive appears in 144 verses; these are some:

1. ^{NAS} **Deuteronomy 9:9** "When I went up to the mountain to receive [λαμβάνω – get] the tablets of stone..."
 - The LORD offered the tablets *and enabled Moses to receive* them.
2. ^{NAS} **Matthew 19:29** "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive [λαμβάνω – get] many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life."
 - God will offer *and enable us to receive* the promised blessings.
3. ^{NAS} **John 16:24** "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask, and you will receive [λαμβάνω – get], that your joy may be made full."
 - As believers we ask in faith, then *God enables us to receive* what we have requested.
4. ^{NAS} **Acts 1:8** "...but you shall receive [λαμβάνω – get] power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
 - The Lord offered the power *and enabled them to receive* it.
5. ^{NAS} **James 1:12** Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive [λαμβάνω – get] the crown of life, which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.
 - The Lord graciously offers the crown of life *and enables us to receive* it.

Ephesians 2:1-10: ♦Our huge problem, ♦God's amazing work, and ♦His will for His holy children:

Before God united us to Jesus:

1. We were spiritually dead: ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins...
2. We sinned and were not sorry: ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-- ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind...
3. We deserved Gods' wrath: ^{3b} ...and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Now, through Jesus – for all who know Him as Savior, we are spiritually alive and richly blessed:

4. God saved us through Jesus: ⁴ But **God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ--** by grace you have been saved—
5. We are members of Jesus' body: ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...
6. We will be blessed even more after Jesus returns: ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

God has saved us *by grace through faith*, not by our attending, giving, or serving:

7. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

God has a plan for all who are *sorry for their sins* and *trusting in Jesus as their Savior*:

8. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (ESV)

Therefore, as ones who believe in Jesus as our Savior, it's not that we accepted Him but, *instead*, by God's grace and gift of faith, we received Him! Since we were dead in our sins, God:

- Won the victory over sin, death, and the devil through Jesus (1 John 3:7-8).
- Enabled us to receive the gift of eternal life (John 6:44; 1 Corinthians 1:30a; Titus 3:5).
- Keeps us in Christ until our death or Jesus' return (Philippians 1:6; Acts 20:32).

NAS **John 1:12** But as many as received [λαμβάνω – got] Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, ¹³ **who were born** not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God**.

Therefore, we confess these words written by Martin Luther, which explain the third article of the Apostles' Creed: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.

In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.

On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.