

"You and Your Beliefs"—The Doctrine of Salvation (Soteriology)—part 2

The God of the Bible is a God who saves! We are here tonight because He saves helpless, hopeless men and women, boys and girls, just like us.

To appreciate what it means to be saved we must often stop and consider what it was like (and would still be like apart from grace) to be *lost*...

Discuss: What was true of you when God saved you? Describe both from personal observation and biblical observation...

Perhaps the greatest doctrine in all of the Bible is this grand theme of SALVATION.

What is Salvation? We're spending two weeks to take a survey of the doctrine of salvation (and certainly, that's all you can do in two brief studies, a *survey*!).

Review: In our last study...

We considered that the Bible speaks of three aspects of salvation, three tenses...

I. **Past** Tense Salvation: We were Saved from the **Penalty** of Sin.

Key Verses: Eph 2:8; Lk 7:50; I Cor 1:18; II Tim 1:9

II. **Present** Tense Salvation: We are being Saved from the **Power** of Sin.

Key Verses: Ph 2:12-13; II Th 2:13; II Cor 3:18

III. **Future** Tense Salvation: We will be Saved from the **Presence** of Sin.

Key Verses: I Pt 1:5; Rom 8:23; Rom 13:11; I Jn 3:2

This evening we want to delve deeper. When we say that a person is "saved," what does that mean? What's involved in God's work of salvation? What are the ingredients of salvation?

In this study we're going to examine various terms relating to salvation: Redemption, Regeneration, Substitution, Calling, Atonement, Justification, Sanctification, Glorification, and others.

Tonight: Key Terms Relating to Salvation

Salvation is the work of God whereby He restores sinful mankind to Himself. That leads to a question. What specifically does God do for the person He saves?

I. God's Provision in Salvation

God has provided...

Atonement

A holy God cannot tolerate sin. His righteous character prohibits sin in His presence. Since Adam sinned, mankind had a severe problem. The presence of sin cut off man from God. But God provided an atonement.

Atonement is an Anglo-Saxon word. It comes from two words 'at' and 'onement' and means "made at one." It refers to the provision God made to restore sinful mankind to Himself, i.e. reconciliation. It comes from the Hebrew word *kaphar*.

What was that provision?

Lev 17:11 "...it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul..."

Blood makes an atonement, a covering for sin. The blood of bulls and goats was a temporary covering, utilized by God for many centuries, until... Calvary .

Rom 5:6 "But when we were w/o strength, Christ died for the ungodly."

Rom 5:11 "...by whom we have received the atonement." (KJV)

Related terms:

"forgiveness"=God pardons us, and removes the penalty of sin (Ps 103:3, 12)

"reconciliation"=God restores alienated sinners to Himself (II Cor 5:18)

"redemption"=God bought us out of the marketplace of sin (I Pt 1:18-19)

"propitiation"=God satisfied the demands of His holiness with the payment of His Holy Son (Rom 3:25; I Jn 2:2).

Key: God takes the initiative in all of these. Not man. God makes the atonement. God forgives. God reconciles. God made the propitiation. God redeems. Wesley's hymn says it well in verse 4 of "And Can It Be":

"No condemnation now I dread; Jesus and all in Him is mine. Alive in Him my living head and clothed with righteousness divine. Bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown through Christ my own."

What does the Bible say is the means by which this salvation becomes realized in our lives? Our next word...

Calling

1 Cor 1:9 "God is faithful by whom ye were CALLED unto the fellowship of His Son"

1 Cor 1:2 "Unto the church...called to be saints..."

Through the activity of the Holy Spirit, God "calls" an individual, convicting and persuading him of his need to trust in Jesus Christ. When that happens, the Spirit makes the truth of the gospel clear to the person.

Two aspects of God's call in Scripture...

1. General Call

Matt 9:13 "...I am come to call sinners to repentance."

2. Effective Call

Rom 1:6 "ye are the called of Christ."

Rom 8:28 "...to them who are the called acc. to His purpose."

Rom 8:30 "Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called..." (I Pt 1:15)

Jesus made this distinction...

Matt 22:14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

Does God call all men to believe in Christ? Yes!

Acts 2:21 "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Shall everyone that believes in Christ be saved? Yes!

John 3:16 "...whosoever believes..."

Who is it that will call on and believe in Christ?

John 6:65 "...No man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

Discuss: Why is it important that we distinguish the two senses of "call" in the Bible?

Regeneration

What is regeneration? lit. means "born over again"

= the work of the Holy Spirit in which He gives new life to a person formerly dead in sins. When the Holy Spirit regenerates a person, He transforms the individual. He gives the individual a new heart, and places him in the family of God.

When does regeneration occur? The moment the Holy Spirit produces new life in a person and unites that once dead sinner with Christ.

John 3:7 "Ye must be born again."

Rom 8:16 "The Spirit Himself bears witness...that we are the children of God."

1 Pet 1:23 "Being born again...by the word of God."

All men need an INWARD TRANSFORMATION. That happens in regeneration.

Conversion

Conversion is closely related to regeneration. Regeneration is what happens inside a person. Conversion is the visible transformation of an individual's life. When a person experiences conversion, he turns from his former pattern of self-centered living to a life of commitment to Jesus Christ. Conversion is demonstrated by a person's lifestyle, fruit, and good works (Eph 2:10).

To convert is to *turn from* something and to *turn to* something. If I converted from being a Buckeyes' fan, it would mean I stopped rooting for OSU and started rooting for (Michigan ?!)...

What's involved in the conversion of a sinner?

See: 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 "...for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how *you turned to God from idols* to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath."

What happens the moment God saves us? See Romans 8:30... "And those he **predestined**, he also **called**; those he called, he also **justified**; those he justified, he also **glorified**."

Justification

What is justification? A popular definition is, "Just as if I'd never sinned." That's good, but there's more involved than that (actually that's only *half* of the truth).

Justification is... = the legal act of God in which the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed (given) to the sinner. When God does this, He declares the "sinner" to be completely righteous and acceptable before Him.

Rom 3:23 "For all have sinned...,"

Notice verse 23 ends in a comma. How many know verse 24?

Rom 3:24 "Being justified freely...through the redemption in Christ."

E.g.—illustration of garment change... According to Isaiah 64:6, we enter this world as sinners wearing filthy garments. According to Isaiah 61:10, if we know Christ we have received a robe of righteousness.

Sanctification

=the work of God in which He declares that a person is holy in character, and becomes progressively set apart from sin and for use in God's service.

All Christians have been sanctified, at the moment of regeneration. But all Christians are likewise being sanctified. We are being set apart daily from sin unto Christ. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to transform us into the image of Christ.

See...

2 Thessalonians 2:13 "But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved *through the sanctifying work of the Spirit* and through belief in the truth."

1 Corinthians 6:11 "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, *you were sanctified*, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."

Glorification

=the ultimate work of God in which the believer is eternally transformed into the likeness of the Son, never to be marked by sin again.

When does glorification take place? In a very real sense, it already has in God's eyes (Rom 8:30). In terms of our experiences, it will occur when Christ returns (1 John 3:2).

Perseverance

=the practical outworking of the believer's legal standing

God perseveres for the believer. He protects the child of God so that he will remain faithful in his commitment to Christ throughout his life.

Phil 1:6 "He who began a good work in you will perform it..."

John 10:28 "...no one can snatch them out of My hand..."

God declares that we are eternally secure as His child. But know this... God expects the believer to persevere. Perseverance goes two ways... John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice...and they follow Me."

Application: Once in awhile someone will come up to me and say, "Hey Pastor, I got saved last week at church!" What does the person mean? Is it appropriate to conclude that a person "got saved" just because they prayed the sinner's prayer? What danger, if any, might be involved in using that statement? This is not merely semantics. Salvation is God's work. God saves. I can claim to be saved all I want, but the fact is, either God has saved me or He

hasn't. What are the conditions of His saving work? The Bible tells us...

Thus far we have primarily looked at salvation from God's perspective. We have seen what God does in our salvation. What does the Bible teach about man's role in salvation?

II. Man's Response to God's Provision of Salvation

Discuss: What are the conditions of salvation? What does the Bible say people must do if they are to be saved? Two conditions:

1. Repentance

What is repentance?

Matt 3:1-2 "...Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"

Luke 13:3 "I tell you...except you all repent, you shall all likewise perish."

Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said, Repent and be baptized...in the name of Christ..."

Repentance may involve emotion, but is not primarily an emotion. It's a choice whereby I admit my sinfulness in light of God's holiness, and choose to turn from my sin, unto Christ.

It's worth noting that repentance is a gift of God. See...

Acts 5:31 "God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior *that he might give repentance* and forgiveness of sins to Israel ."

2. Faith

John 1:12 "But as many as...believed on his name."

Heb 11:6 "But w/o faith, it is impossible to please God...must believe that He is..."

Rom 10:9, 10 "That if thou shalt confess...and believe...shalt be saved."

Rom 10:17 "So then, faith comes by hearing..."

Faith, too, is a gift from God. Yes, we are responsible to believe/to exercise faith in Christ and His redemptive work, but this life-giving faith is a response that God in His grace provides. See: Eph 2:8-9

Application Questions:

1. What does the fact that the Bible uses so many different words to describe what's involved in salvation teach us about God?

2. What happens if we develop a narrow view of salvation (in which we focus only on a few terms/verses that address our salvation rather than seeing the whole package)?

3. Think of something who has not experienced God's salvation. What can you do to help them?

[\[1\]](#) These unedited notes were prepared for use in a Wednesday evening, discussion-oriented Bible study at Wheelersburg Baptist Church in Wheelersburg , Ohio . Although the notes are in draft form, I trust the seed thoughts contained will be used by our gracious God for your edification. –Pastor Brad Brandt