

Purpose of Our Study

Our goal in these notes is to provide an outline of the doctrine of Christian salvation.

Through Jesus Christ Alone, By Grace Alone, Through Faith Alone

The salvation of sinners is available only through Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, who is the only Savior of men¹ by virtue of His shed blood,² i.e. His substitutionary death for sinners.³

Salvation is completely dependent on the grace of God,⁴ is a free gift of God⁵ that man cannot earn or merit in any way,⁶ is applied by the work of the Holy Spirit using the instrumentality of the Word of God,⁷ and is appropriated in this age by conscious repentance⁸ and faith⁹ in the resurrected Son of God.¹⁰ Repentance is a vital part of believing.¹¹ True Christian faith may be further described as that faith which is submissive¹² and obedient,¹³ including a fundamental shift in one's intellect, emotion, and will away from sin and toward Christ.¹⁴

No other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer, faithful service, moral reform, conformity to a law code, or any so-called "sacraments" are to be added to or taken instead of belief as a condition of salvation.¹⁵

Results of Salvation

In the present age, salvation includes that the believer is called,¹⁶ regenerated,¹⁷ Spirit-baptized into union with Christ and into the body of Christ,¹⁸ justified,¹⁹ forgiven his sin,²⁰ restored to favor with God through Christ's righteousness,²¹ adopted,²² sanctified,²³ and glorified.²⁴ When an unrege-

¹ John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5

² Lev. 17:11; Matt. 26:28; Acts 20:28; Rom. 3:25; 5:8-10; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:14-15, 22; 1 Peter 1:18-19

³ Isa. 53:4-6, 8, 11-12; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:20; 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24

⁴ John 6:65; Acts 15:11; Rom. 4:16; 5:15; Eph. 2:8; Titus 2:11

⁵ Rom. 5:15-17; 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9

⁶ Rom. 5:6; Eph. 2:9; Titus 3:5

⁷ John 16:8-11; Eph. 5:26; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23

⁸ Acts 3:19; 20:21; 26:20

⁹ Acts 20:21; Rom. 4:5, 16; Eph. 2:8-9

¹⁰ John 11:27; 20:31; Acts 8:37; 16:31; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 John 5:13

¹¹ 1 Thess. 1:9; Heb. 6:1

¹² Prov. 1:7

¹³ John 3:36; Acts 6:7; 17:30

¹⁴ 1 Cor. 15:3-4; James 2:19; John 7:17; Matt. 13:23; 1 Thess. 1:9

¹⁵ John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 6:29; Rom. 1:16, 17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; Gal. 3:22

¹⁶ John 5:25; Rom. 8:28, 30; 1 Cor. 1:9, 24; 2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 1:9

¹⁷ John 1:13; 5:25; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3, 23

¹⁸ Rom. 6:3-10; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27-28; Col. 2:11-12

¹⁹ Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:28; 4:1-8, 25; 5:1, 9, 18-19; Gal. 2:16-17; 3:24; Titus 3:7

²⁰ Acts 10:43; Eph. 1:7; 4:32; Col. 1:14; 2:13; 1 John 2:12

²¹ 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21

²² Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5

²³ 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; Heb. 10:10, 14

nerate person exercises faith in Christ he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life,²⁵ and from the old creation into the new.²⁶ Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings²⁷ and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing²⁸ and complete in Christ,²⁹ and must not seek a so-called “second blessing,” or a “second work of grace.”

Eternal Security

The salvation God provides is eternally secure. This security is based upon His eternal purpose,³⁰ His nature and promises,³¹ the nature of the new birth itself,³² the finished work of Christ,³³ the intercessory work of Christ,³⁴ the sealing and earnest (down payment) ministries of the Holy Spirit,³⁵ the fact that salvation is a gift,³⁶ and upon the permanent and unilateral nature of God’s works listed above in the section on Results of Salvation. This eternal security guarantees the final salvation of every true believer.³⁷

Perseverance

The genuine believer, based on God’s work in him³⁸ and his responsible participation,³⁹ will continue in the faith and Christian life until he meets the Lord, this continuation demonstrating the fruit of salvation in his life.⁴⁰ Particularly, this will be evidenced in the believer’s continuance in personal faith, in sound doctrine, and in good works.⁴¹ God does not overlook the sin of His children, and He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them⁴² and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, Who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory⁴³ and conformed to the image of His Son.⁴⁴

²⁴ Rom. 8:30

²⁵ John 5:24

²⁶ 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Col. 3:9-10

²⁷ Col. 1:10; 2 Peter 3:18

²⁸ 1 Cor. 3:21; Eph. 1:3; 2 Peter 1:3

²⁹ Col. 2:10

³⁰ Eph. 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9

³¹ Rom. 11:29; Heb. 6:17-18

³² John 3:3-4

³³ John 19:30; 1 John 2:2

³⁴ Heb. 7:25

³⁵ Eph. 1:13-14; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5

³⁶ Eph. 2:8-9

³⁷ John 5:24; 6:39; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:29-30, 35-39; 1 Cor. 1:8-9

³⁸ Php. 1:6; 2:13

³⁹ Php. 2:12

⁴⁰ 1 Cor. 15:2; Col. 1:23; Heb. 3:14; 1 John 2:19; 5:14

⁴¹ Jude 21; Col. 1:22-23; Eph. 2:10

⁴² Heb. 12:5-11

⁴³ John 17:11; Jude 24

⁴⁴ Rom. 8:29

Assurance

It is the privilege of all who are born again to be assured of their salvation from the day they take Him to be their Savior,⁴⁵ and that this assurance is not founded upon their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God regarding the finished work of Christ, and His work in them as revealed in the Word.⁴⁶ Assurance is a subjective experience mediated primarily through the word of God. It is also mediated through the internal testifying work of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁷ Finally, it can be enhanced or undermined depending on the believer's "walk," i.e. perseverance at any given point of time.⁴⁸

Wrong Views

We must reject any view that suggests there are alternate ways to salvation, including:

1. The view that a man's response to whatever truth he has is sufficient before God to result in salvation
2. The view that salvation is possible apart from the proclamation and understanding of the written Word of God.⁴⁹
3. The view of repentance that says that repentance only has to do with one's view of Christ and does not have to do with one's sin in general
4. The view that says saving faith comprehends only the *facts* of the gospel with no commitment or emotional acceptance.
5. The view that true saving faith can be held *at one time* but *later* denied by a true believer.
6. The view that "unconscious faith" is saving.

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⁴⁵ Luke 10:20; 1 John 5:13 (within context of 1 John); 2 Cor. 5:1, 6-8; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:22

⁴⁶ Php. 1:6; Php. 2:13

⁴⁷ Rom. 8:14-17

⁴⁸ Psalm 51:12

⁴⁹ Rom. 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23