

BIBLE DOCTRINE SURVEY

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Wellington, OH

SESSION 8

SOTERIOLOGY:

The Doctrine Of Salvation

This doctrinal study was prepared by Pastor Tom Alexander for use in a Bible Doctrine Survey class at Berea Baptist Bible School in Berea, Ohio, and reflects his personal doctrinal beliefs.

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SESSION 8 - SOTERIOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF SOTERIOLOGY

A. The Doctrine Of Salvation Is Crucial To Every Person's Eternal Destiny.

1. Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation - Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12; 10:43; I Tim 2:5
2. Those who do not believe in Jesus are under God's wrath and condemned to Hell - Jn 3:18, 36; Rev 20:11-15

B. Paul Pronounces A Strong Curse Against Anyone Who Preaches Another Gospel - Gal 1:6-9

1. "Another gospel" in verse 6 is "another of a different kind."
 - * The Galatians were being pulled away from the gospel of God's grace to another (different) gospel which mixed works and grace.
2. The seemingly contradictory statement, "Which is not another," in verse 7, means that this false gospel is not "another of the same kind." Different Greek words are used in verses 6 and 7. Paul states that this new gospel is a perversion of the truth.
3. Anyone who preaches a different gospel from Paul's should be "accursed" - 1:8-9
 - * This word means "doomed to destruction."
 - * Notice Paul's application of the curse - It should apply to even Paul himself, if he started preaching a different gospel; and it should apply to an "angel from heaven" who preached a different gospel. (Reminder: Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormons, reportedly received instructions from Moroni, a supposed angel!)
 - * See also, II Cor 11:1-4, 13-15 - Satanic deceivers can look like "ministers of righteousness." Their goal is to corrupt the true gospel by preaching another Jesus and another gospel.

II. FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

- A. Salvation Is Provided Because Of God's Grace - Eph 2:8-9; Titus 2:11**
- B. Salvation Is Provided On The Basis Of The Blood Of Christ - I Pet 1:18-19**
- C. Salvation Was A Part Of God's Plan Before Creation - Acts 2:22-24; I Pet 1:20**
- D. The Salvation Of An Individual Begins With God - Jn 6:37-44, 65**

III. SALVATION: GOD'S SOLUTION TO MAN'S CONDITION

- * *NOTE: The doctrine of salvation is extremely important and involves many facets. It is sometimes difficult to decide how to organize this material. Some have tried logical or chronological arrangements. I have chosen the following method, because it relates salvation directly to its benefits for us.*

* In our study on Anthropology and Hamartiology we detailed lost man's condition with respect to sin, Satan, God, spiritual capacities, and salvation. For each statement of man's condition God has provided a solution. We will approach our study of Soteriology from this perspective, explaining the great doctrines of salvation as they relate to God's solution for man's condition.

A. With Respect To Sin

* *Review summary of man's condition with respect to sin: Man is a sinner by nature. He is a slave to sin and cannot free himself from its power.*

1. Man's sin is dealt with through Christ's forgiveness and imputed righteousness.

a. **FORGIVENESS (Remission)** - Literally, to "send away" our sins; To dismiss the penalty against us, to pardon us, on the basis of the blood of Christ. - Mt 26:28; Acts 10:43; Rom 3:25; Eph 1:7

* There are two other Greek words in the New Testament that refer to forgiveness.

~ One literally means "to set free," and refers to releasing the believer from the debt of sin.

~ The other word is based on the root word for "grace" and means "to show oneself gracious" or "to give graciously." Forgiveness is seen as a gracious gift from God. - Col 2:13

b. **IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS** - Christ took my sin, placing it upon Himself, and gave me His righteousness. Imputation involves a banking concept - my debts (sins) are placed on (imputed to) His account; His assets (righteousness) are placed in (imputed to) my account. - Isa 53:6; Rom 3:22, 26; II Cor 5:21; Php 3:9

2. Man's birth in sin is dealt with through regeneration (new birth).

* **REGENERATION** - The ministry of the Holy Spirit whereby He gives new life to the believing sinner. It is the begetting of eternal, spiritual life - the life of Christ - within the person who places his faith in Christ. The believing sinner is "born again," or born from above. God imparts a new nature (His divine nature) through spiritual birth. - Jn 1:12-13; Jn 3:3-7; Col 2:13; Titus 3:5; Jas 1:18; I Pet 1:23

3. Man's condition as a child of disobedience is dealt with through adoption as a child of God.

* **ADOPTION** - Placing the believer into the family of God with all the legal rights of an adult son. - Rom 8:14-17; Eph 1:5; Gal 4:4-5

4. Sin's dominion and power and man's slavery to it are broken through Christ's redemption. Man is now dead to sin and free from the power of sin.

a. **REDEMPTION** - To pay a ransom price to buy and remove the believer from the slave market of sin, effecting a full release. The price that was paid was the blood of Christ. - I Cor 6:19-20; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; Heb 9:12; I Pet 1:18-19

b. **DEAD TO SIN** - The Christian, because of his standing "in Christ," is united with Christ in His crucifixion. We were "crucified with Christ" (Gal 2:20) and therefore we are dead to sin. We must now "reckon" ourselves to be dead to sin in our daily lives. - I Pet 2:24; Rom 6:1-2, 11-12; Col 3:1-3

c. **FREE FROM THE POWER OF SIN** - Since the Christian is dead to sin, he has been freed from the power of sin. Before salvation we had no choice - we were enslaved to sin. Following salvation we are free not to sin. - Rom 6:6-7; I Cor 10:13

B. With Respect To Satan

** Review summary of man's condition with respect to Satan: Man is a child of Satan. He is a prisoner to Satan's desires.*

1. Man's condition as a child of the Devil is dealt with through regeneration (the new birth) and the adoption as a son of God - See notes under A2 and A3.
2. Man was delivered from Satan's captivity and power by redemption, and has been made part of Christ's kingdom.
 - a. Redemption - See notes under A4.
 - b. DELIVERANCE TO CHRIST'S KINGDOM - Christians have been delivered from Satan's power and kingdom and have instead been made a part of Christ's kingdom. Satan is no longer our master; Christ is! - Lk 4:18; Acts 26:18; Col 1:13

C. With Respect To God

** Review summary of man's condition with respect to God: Man without Christ defiantly seeks his own way as an enemy of God. He stands guilty and condemned before God and is under God's wrath.*

1. Man's independence is dealt with through the provision of a Shepherd. - I Pet 2:25; Php 2:13
2. Man's guilt is dealt with through justification.

** JUSTIFICATION - A judicial act declaring the believing sinner "not guilty" of sin on the basis of Christ's death. He is further declared to be righteous based on the imputation of Christ's righteousness to his account. - Rom 3:24; Rom 4:1-5; Rom 5:1, 9; Titus 3:7*
3. Man's condemnation is gone due to Christ's substitution.
 - a. SUBSTITUTION - Christ died in my place! He paid the penalty for my sin so I would not have to. - Jn 10:11; II Cor 5:21; I Pet 3:18
 - b. NO CONDEMNATION IN CHRIST - Since the believer is now "in Christ," there is no longer any possibility that he could come into condemnation in any form. - Jn 3:18; Jn 5:24; Rom 8:1, 33-34
4. God's wrath is satisfied through Christ's propitiation.

** PROPITIATION - This term means "to appease; to satisfy." Jesus Christ completely and eternally satisfied God's holy wrath because of sin. It is important to note that God is the One Who is propitiated. - Rom 3:25; I Jn 2:2; I Jn 4:10; Rom 5:9*
5. Man's enmity with God is changed to friendship through reconciliation. Peace is established.
 - a. RECONCILIATION - The root meaning of the word is "to change." In relation to salvation, it has the meaning of changing man's relationship to God. Man is changed from being God's enemy to a position where he can be God's friend. It is important to note that man is the one who is reconciled. - Rom 5:10; II Cor 5:18-20; Eph 2:14-16; Col 1:20-22
 - b. PEACE - Because God has been propitiated and man has been reconciled, the Christian now enjoys peace with God through Christ. - Rom 5:1; Eph 2:14-16; Col 1:20-22

D. With Respect To Spiritual Capacities

** Review summary of man's condition with respect to spiritual capacities: Man is spiritually dead, blinded by Satanic darkness so he cannot understand spiritual truths. He is inwardly wicked and cannot trust his defiled conscience for guidance.*

1. Man's condition of spiritual death is overcome through regeneration (the new birth).
 - * See notes on regeneration under A2.
2. Man's spiritual blindness is overcome through God's spiritual light.
 - a. Jesus came to provide supernatural spiritual light that would result in salvation for those who believe - Lk 4:18; Jn 1:4-5; 8:12
 - b. The Holy Spirit opens the spiritual eyes of unbelievers so they can see the light - Compare II Cor 4:3-4 with II Cor 4:6
3. Man's incapability of receiving spiritual truth is dealt with through the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - * CONVICTING MINISTRY - The Holy Spirit convinces the sinner of his sin and lostness and need of a Savior. - Jn 16:8-11
4. Man's inner condition of a deceitful heart, inward defilement, and a defiled conscience are dealt with through man becoming a new creation, holy and complete in Christ.
 - a. NEW CREATION - Through regeneration man has received a new spiritual life. He is a new creation with a new heart, a new spirit, new desires, and new joys. This new life is the life of Christ within him. It is lived through the power of the Holy Spirit - II Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20; Gal 5:16
 - b. HOLY - The Christian has been positionally set apart and separated unto God. - Col 1:21-22; I Pet 2:5, 9
 - c. COMPLETE IN CHRIST - At salvation the Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into the body of Christ. The Christian is now "in Christ," or united with Him. This position in Christ provides every spiritual blessing as well as all that the Christian needs to live a life pleasing to God on earth and to enjoy all the blessings of God's presence in eternity.

E. With Respect To Salvation

** Review summary of man's condition with respect to salvation: Man is lost, with no hope of ever pleasing God. Any good works he may try to do are utterly worthless in God's eyes. He refuses to seek God, even though God has made spiritual light available to him. This makes him without excuse before God's judgment.*

1. Man's lostness is dealt with through the saving and keeping power of Christ.
 - a. SAVING - Jesus Christ came to earth with the primary purpose of providing salvation - deliverance from the penalty and power of sin. - Mt 18:11; Lk 19:10
 - b. KEEPING - The literal meaning of this word is "to guard; to keep watch." Jesus Christ keeps, or protects, those He saves.
2. Man's inability to please God is changed in salvation. The Christian is now accepted in the beloved. - Eph 1:6; I Pet 2:5

3. Man's hopelessness is replaced by the blessed hope in Christ.
 - * **BLESSED HOPE** - In Christ we have the confident assurance of Christ's return to take us to live with Him eternally in heaven. - Rom 15:4, 13; Col 1:5; I Tim 1:1; Titus 2:13; Heb 6:18-19
4. The worthless nature of man's good works is dealt with through God's grace and mercy.
 - a. **GRACE** - The unmerited favor of God, giving man blessings that he does not deserve. - Eph 2:8-10; Rom 4:4-5; II Tim 1:9
 - b. **MERCY** - The sympathy of God whereby He does not give man the judgment that he does deserve - Titus 3:5
5. The fact that natural man does not seek God is overcome through God's election and call.
 - a. **ELECTION** - The New Testament is clear that those who are saved have been chosen by God before the creation of the world. The theological debate concerning this doctrine involves the *basis* of election - was it unconditional (based solely on God's sovereign choice), or was it based on God's foreknowledge of how an individual would respond to the gospel? - Jn 15:16, 19; Eph 1:4; II Thess 2:13; I Pet 1:2
 - b. **CALL** - God's call is God's invitation to salvation. There are two aspects of this call:
 - * There is a general, or universal, call (invitation) to salvation that goes out to all men. - Mt 11:28-30; Jn 7:37-38; Jn 6:37; Rev 22:17; Mt 22:14
 - * There is a special, or efficacious, call to salvation that results in the salvation of the elect. - Rom 8:30; I Cor 1:9; I Thess 2:12; I Thess 5:24; II Tim 1:9
6. Man's condition of being without excuse is not changed. In salvation not excuse is needed; without salvation no excuse is accepted.

IV. THE CONDITION FOR SALVATION: SAVING FAITH

** We have seen that, apart from Christ, man is hopelessly lost, with no ability or desire to save himself. He is condemned to an eternity in Hell, apart from God. We have also seen that God has provided a solution to every aspect of man's lost condition through the blood of Christ. God's provision is offered to every man. It becomes an individual's possession by the means of faith.*

A. Saving Faith Must Have The Proper Object

1. False objects:
 - a. My Sincerity - "It doesn't matter what you believe, as long as you're sincere." - Acts 4:12
 - b. My Works - "Do enough good to outweigh the bad." - Eph 2:8-9; Gal 2:16
 - c. My Church - I Tim 2:5-6
 - d. Religious Activity (Church membership, baptism, communion, confession, etc.) - Jn 14:6
 - e. Jesus Christ Plus . . . Anything! - Gal 1:6-9
 - f. A "Plan" Of Salvation
 - * Salvation is not based on faith in a plan, but faith in a Person. It is not based on faith in a truth about Christ, but faith in Christ Himself!

2. The only true object of saving faith is Jesus Christ.

* NOTE: It is important to be sure that the object of faith is the true Christ. Cults, etc. claim to believe in Christ, but the “Christ” they worship is not the Christ of the Bible!

a. Jesus Christ is God - Jn 1:1; Jn 10:30; Col 2:9

b. Jesus Christ became a man and lived a sinless life - Jn 1:14; Php 2:6-8; I Tim 3:16; Heb 4:15

c. Jesus Christ died as my substitute - II Cor 5:21; I Pet 3:18

B. Saving Faith Involves Biblical Repentance

1. Definition

* Repentance is a change of mind.

* Repentance is included in saving faith. It is not a separate condition to salvation.

2. The objects of repentance - About what must man change his mind?

a. A wrong concept of God - Acts 20:21

b. A wrong concept of Christ - Acts 2:38

c. A wrong concept of works - Heb 6:1; Eph 2:8-9

d. A wrong concept of sin - Lk 5:32; Rev 9:21; Rom 3:9-18

C. Saving Faith Is More Than Mental Assent

1. There must be knowledge of the truths of Christ and the gospel - Rom 10:14

* There are certain truths that a person must know and believe to be true before he can be saved.

2. There must be mental assent that accepts these concepts as true.

* Mental assent to the truths of the gospel is necessary, but not sufficient. - Jas 2:19

3. There must be trust in and commitment to Jesus Christ for salvation - Jn 20:30-31; Jn 3:36; Acts 16:31

* Saving faith involves a reliance on a Person (Christ). An individual must commit his life to Christ. He must trust Christ, and Christ alone, for his eternal destiny.

* Charles C. Ryrie - “Faith means confidence, trust, to hold something as true. . . to have faith in Christ unto salvation means to have confidence that He can remove the guilt of sin and grant eternal life.” (*Basic Theology*, Victor Books, 1986, pg. 326)

D. Saving Faith Is A Gift From God

1. Saving faith is not a work for which man can take credit - Eph 2:8-9; Mt 16:17; Jn 1:12-13; Acts 14:27; Acts 16:14

2. Saving faith is given as a result of hearing the Word of God - Rom 10:17

E. Saving Faith Will Result In A Change Of Life

1. When a person gets saved, he becomes a new person - II Cor 5:17

* This involves an inward change in his heart and motives.

2. The result of salvation will be a life patterning good works - Eph 2:10; Jas 2:14-26
 - * This involves an outward change in his life and actions.

F. Saving Faith Will Persevere - Lk 22:31-32; I Jn 2:18-19

- * Saving faith will not fail.

V. THE PERMANENCE OF SALVATION: ETERNAL SECURITY

A. Answers That Are Given To The Question, “Can A ‘Saved’ Person Ever Be Lost?”

1. YES - Because of some sin or apostasy - Heb 6:4-6
 - * This answer is wrong. The remainder of this section will provide the Scriptural support.
2. NO - Maybe he was never saved to begin with - I Jn 2:18-19
3. NO - Maybe he is simply out of fellowship with God - Heb 12:5-8; I Jn 5:16-17
 - * A true Christian still commits sin and struggles with doubt. The results of sin and doubt are a loss of fellowship, not a loss of relationship.

B. The Core Issue Is The Nature Of Salvation

1. What part does God play?
 - * If salvation is all of God, then our security is all of God, too!
 2. What part does man play?
 - * If salvation rests in part on man, then our security is dependent on what we do, too!
- * The answer: Salvation is all of God! He fully provided it; He initiates it; He accomplishes it in the individual's life. Man's part is limited to receiving the free gift of salvation by faith. Once that gift is received, it cannot be rejected (see Scriptures below).

C. Key New Testament Scriptures Supporting The Eternal Security Of The Believer

1. Jn 5:24 - Three times, and in three tenses, Jesus states that our salvation is eternal
 - a. Present - I have eternal life now. (If I could lose it, it's not eternal!)
 - b. Future - I will never be condemned (judged).
 - c. Past - I am no longer in the sphere of the dead, but the sphere of the living.
 - * “Is passed” = “has passed” (perfect tense - a completed action with a continuing result)
2. Jn 6:37-40
 - * Vs. 39 - Christ will not (cannot) lose those the Father gives Him. God's will (plan) is that Christ would lose nothing!
 - * Vs. 39, 40 - Christ will resurrect *all* those that the Father has given Him
 - * Vs. 40 - Christ promises everlasting life
3. Jn 10:27-30 - Three times Jesus states that our salvation is eternal:
 - a. Vs. 28 - Christ's gift is eternal life now - Present tense
 - b. Vs. 28 - Christ guarantees that His sheep can never perish - Future tense

- c. Vs. 28 - No one can remove Christ's sheep from His protective care (not self; not man; not Satan!)
 - * Vs. 29 - God is greater than all, and gives the same guarantee. Remember, God is the greatest power in the universe!
4. Jn 14:16-17
 - * The Holy Spirit is with us forever. If we lost our salvation, would the Holy Spirit go to Hell with us?
 - * "You" is plural throughout - "all of you!"
5. Jn 17:11, 15, 24 - These verses come from Christ's High Priestly Prayer, when Jesus prayed for all of us. Remember, Christ's prayers are always answered!
 - * Vs. 11, 15 - "Keep them" = Guard; Protect
 - * Vs. 24 - Christ prays that all believers will join Him in Heaven
6. Rom 5:6-10
 - * Vs. 9 - Now that we have been justified, we will be saved from wrath through Him.
 - * Vs. 10 - Christ's death reconciled us to God; His life keeps us (assures our ultimate salvation).
7. Rom 8:1 - There is no condemnation in Christ
8. Rom 8:15-17 - We are adopted into God's family. We have become heirs awaiting our inheritance.
9. Rom 8:28-30 - Those who get saved are predestinated to be like Christ. They are seen as having already been glorified. Everything works together for their good.
10. Rom 8:31-39 - Nothing (no one) can condemn us to God or separate us from His love.
11. Eph 1:13-14 - The Holy spirit is our seal (guarantee of God's ownership) and the earnest (down payment) of our eternal inheritance.
12. Php 1:6 - This promise states that God, Who began our salvation, will bring it to completion.
13. I Thess 5:23-24 - The One Who called us will preserve us blameless until Christ returns!
Notice: Christ will do it; we don't have to!
14. Heb 6:16-20
 - * God gave an oath to His heirs that His promises (including the promise of salvation) would not change.