

# Understanding Salvation

Explore Your Faith Teaching Series - Explo-18 ©  
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## OUTLINE

### Introduction

Even non-Christian religions have a sense right and wrong and of consequential rewards or punishment in the 'after life'.

Thus, they recognize in their hearts (albeit inadvertently) the truth that 'all have sinned' (Rom.3:23).

Every sinner therefore needs deliverance from this predicament.

Though other religions have devised their own ways of dealing with this problem, only Christianity offers an efficacious one!

It does so by providing a saviour, in the person of God's own son. In this study, we explore the general and specific meanings of **salvation**.

The study examines *what biblical salvation means, what it encompasses, how salvation comes to the sinner, how it is applied to the sinner, and its result.*

It is an edifying study.

The Bible tells us that every man is in need of Salvation. The need for salvation (man's hopelessness; total depravity, therefore nothing man can do to restore the relationship with God; this is the terrible consequence of our being 'in Adam' and compounded by our own sinfulness.)

An overview of salvation:

General understanding of the term 'salvation' (religious /secular /cultic);

Specific meaning of the term 'salvation' for the Christian (an all-inclusive term);

Whom 'salvation' belongs to and who its beneficiaries are (*think spot: what about unbelievers?*);

A foundational understanding of the *process* of salvation (were saved/are being saved/will be saved).

### Salvation Defined

**Firstly**, in essence we can say that salvation is the act of God in history in the person of Jesus Christ whereby man was saved from the condemnation of sin. **Salvation came to us through the death** (shed blood) **of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection. This is the focus of God's salvation** (though the aspects of his birth, life, and ministry are not unimportant).

**Secondly**, salvation is both moral and spiritual

From sin & guilt (Rom. 5: 1; Heb 10.22)

From death (1 Pe. 1: 3-5; 1Cor. 15: 51-56)

From judgement (Rom. 5: 9; Heb 9: 28)

From the law & its curse (Gal. 3: 13)

**Thirdly**, salvation has eternal implications

**It is important to understand at this stage that the work of Christ was that of redemption; salvation is the application of this finished redemptive work to the sinner.**

Thus, the one who is saved is said to be have been redeemed or vice versa. I remember it simplistically in this way:-

**Atonement** (reconciliation with God) was **the purpose**

**Redemption** was **the means**

**Salvation** was **the result**

**And all of this is of God** (now do you understand how god's justice, mercy and love are satisfied fully and without compromise?)

**How salvation comes to sinners** (the application of the work of redemption)

## 1. The operation of the Holy Spirit in our lives:

a. Through **calling** (Matt. 28: 19; 22:14; Acts 13:46; 1 Jn. 5: 10). This is the Holy Spirit's Work of illumination, enabling response.

There is a **general calling** to salvation an invitation extended to all persons (Matt. 11:28). When Jesus said "many are called but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14) he was probably referring to this general calling.

But there is also an **effectual or special calling**. This means that God works in a particularly effective way with the elect, enabling them to respond in repentance and faith, **and rendering it certain that they will!** (Acts 9: 1-19 - Saul's conversion and Acts 16: 14, a quieter but nevertheless persuasive form in Lydia's conversion)

b. Through **conversion** (repentance and faith involved) (Acts 17:30; Jn. 3:16; 6:40). This occurs through our response to God's offer. Repentance is regarded as the negative aspect of conversion (the abandonment or repudiation of sin) while faith is the positive aspect (the laying hold upon the promises and work of Christ). But the two are inseparable in conversion.

c. Through **regeneration** (Jn.3: 3, 7; 1 Pe. 1: 23). This is God's doing. It is his transformation of individual believers. It is on the other side of conversion.

*Note: all of these relate to a process of renewal relating to the condition of the sinner*

## 2. The application of the verdict of 'not guilty'

- a) It applies to the state (status, position, or standing) of the believer
- b) It takes place outside the sinner in the tribunal of God; it is a legal act; a pardon
- c) It is complete at once and for all time
- d) It removes the guilt of sin; it involves forgiveness of sin; **is applied to all sin; past, present & future** (Rom. 5: 21; 8:1; Heb. 10: 14)
- e) It is called "**justification**" (the legal i.e., forensic, act of God by which he declares the sinner righteous on the basis of the perfect righteousness of Christ)
- f) It is available only through faith in **Christ's work** on the cross (Gal. 2:16; Rom. 4: 5), not through any righteousness of our own. However, while it is faith that leads to justification, justification must and will invariably produce good works.
- g) It results in adoption (family rights) and becoming heirs of the kingdom (Rom. 8:17; 1 Pe 1:4)  
*note: this is **legal sonship** as distinct from moral sonship through regeneration and sanctification)*

## 3. The beginning of sanctification

- a) It is a recreative act; it has to do with the *inner life* of the man; it is a lengthy process and never reaches perfection in this life (1 Thess. 5:23; Rom. 7:18; Phil. 3:12)
- b) It takes place by the enabling of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of the whole nature in the image of god - mortification of old man & quickening of new man (Rom. 6:6; & Col. 3: 10)
- c) The believer can and must cooperate in it by diligent use of the means God places at his disposal - 'perseverance' is the term used to describe the way in which the work begun in the heart is continued and brought to perfection (2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14)
- d) Sanctification leads to a life of good works (not to be confused with the good works done by the unregenerate person) (1 Cor. 10: 31; 1 Sam. 15: 22)

## Summary

1. Jesus died for us (**'by Christ'**)
2. We are a new creation (**'in Christ'**)
3. We have entered into God's blessing (**'through Christ'**)

