

IV. Concerning the Way of Salvation

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God; who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen from the dead he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

Short Review:

- ❖ The Godhead is composed of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost
 1. What are the principle duties of each?
 - a. The Father?* He is the creative mind of the worlds, seen & unseen is the offended party, for WE BROKE HIS LAW. He is the Lawgiver. He devised the scheme of redemption, the predestined plan of salvation.
 - b. The Son?* He became the substitutionary atonement for the sins of mankind. Through Christ, we have the forgiveness of sins. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. He became the perfect sin sacrifice, this God-man, bridging the gap between God & mankind.
 - c. The Holy Ghost?* He is active in the hearts of believers. He is our direct line of communication with God. He testifies of Christ, thereby, condemning the lost, and blessing the saved. He teaches us, leads us, & guides us as Jesus Christ would if he were here today. He is the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

- ❖ Sin has separated mankind from this God.
 1. Romans 5:15-19

What is Salvation? Why must we be Saved?

- ❖ So, how is it that we become reconciled? How does man come into harmony once again with God?
 1. What is Salvation?

It is deliverance from sin, death, and eternal punishment.
John 5:24
 2. We note that all have sinned by their own volition. The punishment for sin is death (Rom 6:23). As it stands, a person that denounces sin's reality or exercises unbelief in Christ is doomed to Hell (Rev 21:8)
 3. Therefore, the term 'salvation,' means to be saved from an eminent doom that is spiritually fixed for those who CHOOSE to live a life devoted to sinful pleasures & selfish ambitions.

Legal Ramifications of Sin

- ❖ It must be understood that sin carries with it severe legal ramifications:
 1. The Legal system was instituted by God: Isa 33:22
 2. All laws require some punishment upon breaking: James 1:25
 3. We realize that ALL HAVE SINNED: Romans 3:10-12
 4. Therefore, we are guilty before God, for it is his law: Rom 7:9-12

Introductory Terms

1. *Atonement*: expiation, satisfaction, or reparation for injury. Reconciliation or agreement.
2. *Expiation*: to make amends for, to atone.
3. *Propitiation*: an expiatory victim, an appeasement, Greek word is 'hilasterion' which is translated, 'mercy seat' in Heb 9:5. This indicates that Christ more than met the demands of God by being the atonement.
4. *Regeneration*: new birth, reproduction, renewal, or recreation. (VII)
5. *Justification*: the **act of declaring** or accounting a person just or righteous. (V)
6. *Sanctification*: to purify, the process of being restored to the image of God. (X)
7. *Repentance*: a reformation of mind and heart, an after-thought. (VIII)
8. *Faith*: a pious belief, deeper than the standard definition of today.
9. *Grace*: undeserved, unmerited favor of God.
10. *Soteriology*: the study of salvation.

God's Predestined Plan of Salvation

- ❖ It has already been observed that mankind stands guilty before a Holy God. However, God in his mercy and nonpareil love for mankind devised a plan of redemption. We thus observe:
 1. First mention Salvation: Gen 3:15/ Gen 4:26b.
 2. Plan was 'Predestined,' or determined before existence: Rev 13:8/ Acts 2:22-23
 3. It is wholly of 'Grace:' Eph 2:8/ 1 John 4:10/ Acts 15:11
 4. Jesus Christ being Sinless, Holy, Righteous, & Perfect... John 1:29/ 1 Pet 2:21-22
 5. ...became the only acceptable sacrifice made 'God-ward,' to atone for the sins of everyman, everywhere, that ever lived: John 3:16/ 1 John 4:10/ 1 Pet 1:18-21/ 1 Cor 15:1-3/ 1 John 2:2/ Matt 20:28/ 1 Pet 3:18
 6. His death was in accordance with the Jewish Sacrificial system instituted by God: Ex 30:10/ Lev 23:27-32
 7. The sacrifices made in Old Testament times were all types of the coming Christ, the Messiah who abolished the sacrificial system being the antitype: Heb 9:12-17/ Heb 9:25-26/ Heb 10:17-20/ Heb 9:22
 8. He has further sealed our salvation by his resurrection, becoming our mediator between us and Jehovah God: Col 1:20-22/ Heb 4:14-16

9. Our salvation is yet to be completed, to be entirely secured at the resurrection: Phil 3:20-21

God's Part & Man's Part in Salvation:

- ❖ It is here where many different denominations & beliefs begin to diverge into separate religious institutions. Many that hold a claim to 'Christianity' are in agreement of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, his atonement made on the cross, and his redeeming blood. In other words, most will agree on the satisfactory plan of redemption God made through Christ Jesus. However, divergence occurs when understanding and studying MAN'S ROLE in salvation.

Where Do We Begin?

1. Acts 16:27- 33- What must I do to be saved?
Principally, & primarily when this question, or doctrine arises within New Testament theology, there are a few words that have reoccurring roles. We observe:
 1. Believe: 'pistyoo-o'- to have faith
 2. Faith: 'pistis'- persuasion, to believe, credence
 3. Repent: 'metanoeho'- to change the mind
 4. Baptize: 'baptidzo'- to overwhelm, to immerse, fully wet
2. Depending on how we define the above the terms, will, inevitably, lead one to their doctrine of salvation. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that the above terms not be interpreted by man, but rather, the Holy Spirit showing us by the word of God, how Jesus, the apostles, & the early church defined these terms.

❖ Steps toward Heaven: How One is Truly Saved:

1. Conviction & knowledge of Sin & its separating effects of Man & God:

II Cor 7:8-10- 'Godly Sorrow'- We should note that this USED IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CONTEXT! The Corinthian Church (saved, baptized believers) was made sorry by God, through Paul's first letter. However, they were made sorry for the same reason a 'sinner' is made sorrow by God working through the WORD OF GOD (faith cometh by hearing, & hearing by the word of God). They were made sorry because of sin!

John 6:44-47-What does this mean? How does the Father draw men to Jesus Christ? Note Barnes Commentary: 'In the conversion of the sinner God enlightens the mind, he inclines the will, and he influences the soul by motives, by just views of his law, by his love, his commands, and his threatenings; by a desire of happiness, and a consciousness of danger; by the Holy Spirit applying truth to the mind, and urging him to yield himself to the Saviour.'

Gen 3:7-11- Who told them they were naked? The Spirit of God! They realized they had done wrong, they realized they had sinned, they understood they had transgressed God's law, they knew they were separated from God. Thus, the Holy Spirit still reveals to mankind that they are lost & separated from God & yet in their sins. This realization ultimately causes godly sorrow that works repentance. Without this drawing, this conviction, this spiritual anguish, man cannot come to the Savior! Which is why we

are to fulfill the Great Commission (faith cometh by hearing & hearing by the word of God!)

James 4:6-10- Here we note John Gill's Commentary: '...afflicting the soul is meant, an inward mourning and weeping over the plague of the heart, the impurity of nature, and the various sins of life; after a godly sort, and because contrary to a God of infinite love and grace; in an evangelical way, looking to Jesus, and being affected with the pardoning grace and love of God in Christ.'

Thus, we conclude point 1 with the realization that there must be spiritual discontentment of the soul as a byproduct of understanding Sin's separating power on mankind. There simply must be a longing for communion & harmony with God! Without this, it is impossible for man to proceed to point 2, which is repentance. Why this conclusion? We observe now, that one cannot repent in the absence of godly sorrow.

2. Repentance towards God:

Matt 4:17, Matt 3:2, Acts 2:38, Acts 17:30: Here we note Jesus, John the Baptist, Peter, & Paul exhorting people to 'Repent.' Of course, this is a common thread throughout the Bible. The word occurs in only two forms: 1. God repents, or is sorrowful, on occasions of man's actions: i.e. Gen 6:6. & # 2. Man is commanded to repent over their sins, which have separated man & God. It is the latter definition that demands our attention.

Why are we commanded to repent? Romans 8:6-7. The Carnal mind (our physical, natural makeup) is against the nature of God. We are accustomed to breaking his laws & commandments, usually finding sinful pleasure in doing so. Therefore, 'repentance' (a CHANGE OF MIND) cannot occur solely on man's part. If our carnal mind is enmity against God, how can man change it? By & through the work of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we must acknowledge that godly sorrow (part 1) affects the Spirit & Mind of man beginning the process of true, eternal change.

*** Side Note*** If man eliminates the work of the Holy Spirit in drawing mankind to Christ, then it is here, where we may establish easy-believism, in the sense of simply making a decision to mentally, verbally acknowledge Christ as Lord. For to 'repent' is to change one's mind, an afterthought. However, if our minds are against the nature of God due to our inherit sin nature, then it is impossible to change in & of ourselves: God must be present in any change that occurs in man.

Matt 12:41- The people of Nineveh repented. How did they repent? Jonah 3:5-10. Special emphasis on verse 10. God saw the people were earnestly sorry, they were willfully choosing to put away the evilness of the carnal mind by the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. Because of their 'sorrow', they were moved to publicly display their spiritual anguish in symbolic form (something we are not required to do). So, sorrowness, heaviness of heart, anguish, & repentance go hand in hand. In other words, the contrite condition of our hearts will cause us to want to change into the image of God.

B.H. Carroll states... '(Repentance) is a staple of preaching in both testaments. It is of universal obligation. It is a first principle of the gospel. It is fundamental and vital, being prerequisite to salvation. It is to personal religion what the clearing and breaking up of new ground is to a harvest, what the foundation is to a house, what the grading is to a

highway, what the initial point is to a survey. It is the boundary between the covenants. It is the killing, which precedes the making alive. It is the conviction of sickness which turns the sick man to the physician.'

Scriptural references: Luke 18:10-14 (Repentance is humiliating in nature). Isa 55:6-7 (Repentance is forsaking self). II Chronicles 7:14 (Repentance is turning from sinful wants, to seeking God's will). Heb 6:1 (it is foundational to salvation & Christianity).

Concluding point 2, we have determined that the doctrine of repentance is a preparatory work of salvation. It is the spiritual destruction of self, aided by the Holy Spirit. It is a desire to be brought back into communion with God. (...if you hear the voice of God, harden not your heart). It is a relinquish of sovereign power over one's life, and a tender heart toward God's voice.

3. Exercising Faith or Belief in Jesus Christ: Regeneration & Faith: Inseparable Graces

Regeneration:

After one experiences godly sorrow & the crushing hand of God upon their soul, once they fall upon some alter some where (an alter can be spiritually made anywhere) and pour out their heart, confessing their sins with all earnestness, then they have but one step left in coming to Christ for the peace that passes all understanding: exercising genuine faith!

John 3:1-8- Unless a man be 'born again' he cannot see the kingdom of God. Born again is literally 'born from above' or regenerated. What does this mean? Scriptures teach that once a person is saved from the wicked state he comes from, a natural, spiritual change occurs to the degree that he becomes 'as good as new.' All sins, mistakes, & transgressions of the past are completely wiped away, and he becomes one with Jesus Christ. This change is recorded, thus: John 3:3, John 3:5, John 1:13, Eph 2:10, Eph 2:5, 2 Cor 5:17, Col 3:10, Romans 6:11, etc. If man's mind is enmity against God, then he is incapable of saving himself. When God saves our soul in a single moment of time, we become literally new creations, dwelling within the same mortal cage, & now fighting against the immorality of the mind. In other words, God's Spirit now dwells within us: 1 Cor 3:16-17.

'...Regeneration is a spiritual change. I call it a spiritual change, not only because it is produced by the Spirit of God, as will be shown, but because it takes place in the spirit of the subject. The heart is the theatre of the operation, and the change is in the disposition of the heart. This disposition, I suppose, lies below or back of the affections and the will, controlling the exercise of the affections and the choice of the will. That is to say the affections love as they do, and the will chooses as it does, because of the state of the heart...Regeneration involves the illumination of the understanding, the consecration of the affections, and the rectification of the will.' - J. M. Pendleton (258-259). Eph 5:8/ Matt 15:18-19

Regeneration is a recreation in the heart of Man. Once we are born into this world we inherit our parent's traits (including sin), when we become born of God we are adopted into the family of God (Romans 8:14-17), thereby taking on the traits of God! 2 Cor 5:17-18. Therefore, many unregenerate people do not understand that once a man is changed from the inside out, he is simply changed! 1 Cor 1:17-19

Faith:

What is Faith? Heb 11:1. Faith is the door you must open for God to experience regeneration. However, it is clear from Scripture that faith & belief can be easily undermined by a psychological acknowledgement of Christ: James 2:14-19/ Matt 7:21-23/ Luke 8:13/ Heb 10:39. So, we determine, that mental acceptance of the truth is unfit for eternal life. There is a rich, deep, genuine, heart-felt faith that must occur on the believer's part in order to be regenerated.

We have noted that Faith & Belief derive from the same the Greek word. Thus we are exhorted time and again to believe or have faith in Christ Jesus: John 3:14-18, John 6:35, John 11:25-26, Acts 17:30, Acts 20:21, etc. The sin of unbelief is the only thing that will keep a man away from God: John 3:18

'Christ by his obedience and death has satisfied the claims of the law, so that the Lawgiver (God the Father) can consistently pardon sinners who by faith receive Christ as the Savior. Indeed, it is God the Lawgiver who offers his Son to guilty men as the only Savior, and faith is the heart's response to that offer. In other words, the believer accepts the offer, (and) accepts Christ...' J. M. Pendleton (272). I must add that one cannot 'accept Christ' void of godly sorrow, repentance, and faith. The acceptance of Christ must take place in the heart in the desire the Father will accept us!

Heb 11:6/ Eph 2:8-9/ Matt 28:19-20/Romans 10:17/ Romans 10:8-10- It is evidently clear that man's salvation culminates at a single in point in time: when he exercises genuine faith in Christ Jesus & repents toward God! It is at that moment one is justified, as we will discuss later. Salvation is not a process to the extent that it is obtained by a series of events either by God or Man. Salvation is the turning darkness into light, goats into sheep, wicked into righteous, & sons of the devil into Sons of God! We will study sanctification (which *is* a process) and the growth that takes place as our renewed Spirit wars with our old mind (flesh).

❖ ***Summary of the Salvation Plan:***

Acts 20:21- Mankind is to repent toward the Father (the Lawgiver) and have faith in Christ Jesus (the Atonement). These things happen simultaneously after the hearing of God's word, as prompted by the Holy Ghost, & upon recognition of the salvation plan!