

Handwritten: Pastor's Copy

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

The Bible uses many different terms to express the meaning of salvation, such as the new birth, regeneration, redemption, adoption, etc. Salvation is like a room with many windows. From the outside each window presents a different view of the room; it is always the same room but from a different viewpoint. Likewise the new birth presents salvation from one point of view, redemption presents it from another point of view, etc.

I. THE NATURE OF SALVATION

Definition of the word salvation: In the Old Testament it means to be wide or spacious, to be safe, to be at ease. The opposite means to be fenced in or confined. Therefore, salvation in the Old Testament means deliverance from any problem or difficulty. To need salvation one must be in danger, imprisoned, or besieged, and, to be a saviour, one must be sufficiently strong. In the New Testament the word means to be healthy, or to rescue from danger, escape from death. The word occurs 150 times in the New Testament. One hundred of these involves the verbal form. Salvation, therefore, is not primarily a gift or a possession, it is an activity which God performs with and through you -- an experience.

1. We Are Saved. This is the past relationship. Salvation is a definite act that took place in the past. That act of accepting Christ initiated us into the Christian life.

a Definite Time - MAY NOT WHEN + WHERE
Scriptures: John 3:17; Acts 16:31; I Cor. 1:21

2. We Are Being Saved. Salvation is a process and has present implications. The past act effects the present conduct. The past act was only the beginning of a long journey known as the Christian life, only the first chapter in the book. God not only saved us but He keeps on saving us; He sustains us day by day. God is continually working in our lives to develop a Christ-like personality. The Bible calls this sanctification.

3 TENSES IN GK
Scripture: Philippians 1:6; I Corinthians 1:18 "being saved" (literal translation); I Corinthians 2:15 "being saved" (literal translation). Ephesians 2:8 "by grace have you been saved completely in past time, with the present result that you are in a state of salvation which persists through present time." (literal translation).

Thus God not only saves us but He keeps on saving us. The continuance is as much God's work as the beginning was.

3. We Shall Be Saved. Although God has truly saved us, our salvation is not yet complete, we do not yet possess in its fullness all that God means for us to have. We are hindered in our worship and service by our own fleshy weaknesses and by the tempting power of Satan. The Bible lays great stress on the fact that some day God will give us final deliverance, when we shall see Christ face to face and be like Him, changed in the twinkling of an eye. As Christians who possess this hope of ultimate victory in Christ we are to look forward with great expectation to that day.

Scripture: Romans 13:11; Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:14; Ephesians 4:30; I Peter 1:5; Philippians 1:6, I John 3:1-3.

→ These three terms of the Christian life, past, present, and future, are bound together. They are like a single thread that moves through a piece of cloth. The thread may change color but it is always the same thread. If you have been saved,

you are being saved, and will be saved. You can't have one without the other two. If God has saved you initially, He will keep you saved, and save you ultimately.

II. WHAT GOD DOES FOR US IN SALVATION

1. God Forgives Our Sins. God takes our sins away; He covers them so they are no longer seen; He sends them away from us, separating the sin and the sinner. In forgiveness God removes that which was a barrier to our fellowship with Him and restores us to the freedom and happiness of friendship.

Scriptures: Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14

2. God Justifies Us. This means that even though we are sinners, God treats us as though we had never sinned. He declares us as righteous even though we are unrighteous. To be just means that we are exactly what we ought to be. Because of our sin we are NOT what we ought to be, but in salvation God justifies us-- that is He makes us what we ought to be. He clothes us with His own righteousness.

Scriptures: Luke 18:4; Romans 3:24; 4:25; 5:1,9.

3. God Gives Us A New Life. This is to merely say that in salvation we are born again. Salvation is a regeneration. The Bible makes it clear that man is spiritually dead, a spiritual corpse. What he needs above everything else is life, new life, spiritual life from God. So when God saves us He gives us a new life. Our affections and activities no longer center in self, but in God. God imparts to us life-- His eternal life-- so that we are now His children.

Scriptures: John 3:3; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3, 23; 2 Cor. 5:17.

III. THE CONDITIONS OF SALVATION

The human response. -- We are saved when we respond properly to the call of God. Here are the necessary human responses:

1. Repentance. The word repentance means to change one's mind so as to change one's life. It is not merely being sorry for sin, but it is a godly sorrow that leads one to change his whole life and turn in faith to Christ. Repentance involves several things:

(1) A realization of one's condition as a sinner

(2) The love of sin must die in one's heart

(3) There must be a renunciation of sin

Scriptures: Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Acts 20:21.

2. Faith. Faith does not save. Faith is a human response, therefore if faith saved us, we would be saving ourselves. It is God that saves us. We are saved by His grace and faith is merely the response that we make to His call. Faith is a secure and firm confidence in God through Christ. It is both a conviction and a commitment to a person. Faith involves several things:

SORROW USED ONLY OF JUDAS
GOT HERE BY CAR - FAITH PUT ME IN THE CAR.