



The Experience of Salvation

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

In his class, he was a troublemaker. He would not study. He annoyed other students. No teacher wanted him. He seemed hopeless. Then a new teacher arrived. She saw his possibilities and challenged his unused talents. When the boy realized someone cared about him, the change was dramatic. He tried to do better. His work and papers greatly improved.

On the parent-teacher conference day, he was panicky—he remembered the past conferences. However, just before his parents left, they complimented him. He wondered why they didn't mention his earlier failing papers?

As soon as he could, he rushed to his desk and took out his notebook. Much to his surprise, he found the reason for his parents' compliments. His kind teacher had taken out of his notebook all of the earlier failing papers and left only the more recent good ones.

The story reminds us about what Jesus does for us. When we come to Him with our failures, our sins and mistakes, He washes them clean and replaces them with the record of the good and obedient life that He lived. He changes our hearts so that we do not continue the failures and mistakes. That's what salvation is all about.

Preview

The experience of salvation is for everyone who believes and accepts Jesus as a personal Savior. Christ, the Son of God, became a human being to bring us salvation. Sinless, He lived as a gracious, loving, kind, and righteous person. To save us, He took upon Himself our guilt and died as our Substitute on the cross. Thus He ransomed us. If we accept Jesus as our Saviour, He forgives our sins. The Holy Spirit lives in us and gives us power to obey Him. He changes our likes and dislikes so that we become kind and loving, putting others before self.

Points to Ponder

1. All of us are sinners.

From the time Adam and Eve sinned, sin has reigned in the world. “All have sinned” (Romans 3:23).

We can find peace and forgiveness only by confessing and forsaking our sins and accepting Jesus as our Saviour. We need to listen to the Holy Spirit as He brings conviction of sin and leads us to repent. Without a change of heart, we cannot love God or His way of life.

2. How can we change?

Only as we come to the cross and feel truly sorry for sins will we receive the new birth.

3. How can we daily experience this new birth?

By prayer and Bible study, our faith in Jesus will grow. He will become our friend and companion. He will guide us through the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit enabled Christ to accomplish God's will, so will He enable us.

Nuts & Bolts

1. Some Christians are confused about how the Scriptures describe the experience of salvation.

To better understand how God brings about our salvation we need to think of our (1) past (already accomplished), (2) present (realized now), and (3) the future at the second coming.

When we realize we are lost in sin, what is the first step toward salvation?

Acts 2:38: "Repent, and be _____ every one of you in the _____ of _____ for the _____ of _____, and ye shall receive the _____ of the _____."

2. In Christ the sinner is not only pardoned but declared righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:21: "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no _____, that we might be made the _____ of _____ in him."

Romans 3:24: We're justified "freely by his _____."

3. Many wrongly believe that their standing before God depends on their good or bad deeds. The Bible teaches that our salvation is by faith in God's grace alone.

Romans 1:17: "The just shall live by _____."

Ephesians 2:8: "For by _____ are ye saved through _____, and that not of _____; it is the _____ of God."

We are not saved by our good deeds. Our salvation is a gift of God that we receive through faith in Jesus Christ. But that does not mean that obedience is not needed. Indeed, a saved person will lead a godly life. Genuine faith will produce good works. Says James: "Even so faith, if it hath no _____, is _____" (James 2:17).

4. What is justification?

Justification is what God does for us. It is the act by which God declares a repentant sinner righteous on the basis of what Christ did on the cross (Romans 5:18, 19). Justification brings joy now, knowing that we are accepted by Christ. "In whom we have _____ through His blood, the _____ of sins, according to the _____ of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

5. What is sanctification?

Sanctification is what God does in us. By His grace we are to lead a holy and sanctified life (1 Thessalonians 4:3, 6, 7). Daily, our characters are being “strengthened with _____ by his _____ in the inner man” (Ephesians 3:16), and we continue to grow as “partakers of the _____, having escaped the _____ that is in the world through lust” (2 Peter 1:4).

6. As we grow in the sanctified life, the Holy Spirit will produce in us the “fruits of the Spirit.”

Galatians 5:22, 23: List the nine fruits of the Spirit:

- a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
- d. _____ e. _____ f. _____
- g. _____ h. _____ i. _____ (p. 127.1)

7. What did Paul call the converts who were being sanctified?

Philippians 1:1: “To all the _____ in _____.”

God calls us “saints,” not because we are sinless, but because we are saved from sin and because He has accepted us and empowered us to walk with Jesus. Further, He has adopted us into His family as His children!

Romans 8:16, 17: “The Spirit itself beareth _____ with our _____, that we are the _____ of _____; and if children then _____; heirs of _____, and _____ heirs with Christ.”

8. These two aspects of salvation—justification and sanctification—cannot be separated.

9. The final experience of salvation, glorification, comes at the second coming of Christ. Romans 5:2:

We “rejoice in _____ of the _____ of God.”

Words to Remember

Justification: What Jesus does for us. God’s declaration that we are righteous on the basis of our acceptance, by faith, of what Jesus has done.

Sanctification: What Jesus does in us. Living a life in accordance with the will of God, by His power.

Repentance: Feeling sorry for our sins and turning away from them.

The Difference Between

Biblical Perfection. The term does not denote sinlessness, but maturity, growth, and commitment to walk with God in faith. The Bible describes Noah, Abraham, Job, and others as perfect or blameless, yet each had imperfections. The New Testament applies the term *perfect* to persons living up to all the light received, constantly growing in divine knowledge, and rejoicing in a life of victory.

I Truly Believe

We cannot understand the marvelous power of God's Holy Spirit. But we do know that if we ask, the Holy Spirit will keep us safe from Satan's temptations and power. He will transform our hearts and minds so that we will want to do His will. Then, no matter what our circumstances, we will safely walk with Him, eager to do His service.

Will you choose to answer Jesus' prayer to the Father for you? "I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but I do ask you to keep them safe from the evil one" (John 17:15, TEV).

If you feel your need of Jesus and want Him to be your Saviour, place a check by each statement that reflects your decision:

- As a sinner, I need repentance, forgiveness, and a change of heart and life.
- I believe that Jesus is My Saviour and that He died for me and will give me forgiveness and a new heart if I ask Him.
- I am ready to give Jesus my life. I ask for the power to obey His Word, so that He may transform my character into His divine likeness.
- I plan to pray daily for the Holy Spirit and to study the Bible, so that I may grow spiritually.

My Prayer

Dear Father,

Thank You for Your love in giving Your Son for me. Take my sinful heart and forgive me. Change me so that His love and obedience will flow in my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.