

# **SALVATION - CONCEPTS**

## **“he who has the Son has life”**

### **Key question**

What do Christians mean when they speak of Salvation?

### **Key text**

## **I John 5:11-12**

“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son has not life.”

### **Key Definition**

## **Salvation**

Salvation is the application of the work of Christ to a fallen world, restoring life through faith.

### **A Fundamental of the Faith**

## **Christian Salvation**

Christian Salvation is the reconciliation of the world to its Creator through the grace of God in Christ by personal faith in Jesus with the result that the life of Jesus is lived out through the believer in history.

### **Introduction.**

1. When does the salvation of our souls take place?
  - a. A point of time in the past - “We have been saved.”
  - b. A present on going process - “We are being saved.”
  - c. A future hope - “We shall be saved.”
2. What are we saved from?
  - a. Alienation from God? (Evangelical theology)
  - b. Alienation from other people?
    1. Individually - (Relational theology)
    2. Systemically - (Liberation theology)

3. Internally - (Existential theology)
3. How is salvation received?
    - a. Through physical sacraments - (Roman Catholicism)
    - b. Through moral action - (Social gospel, Liberation theology)
    - c. Through faith - (Evangelical theology)
  4. What needs to be changed if salvation is to be experienced?
    - a. The structures of society when changed will solve the problems of individuals behavior - (Social gospel, Liberation theology)
    - b. The nature of the individual must be changed before society will be just - (Evangelical theology)
  5. Who is the recipient of salvation?
    - a. **Particularists** - Only those who respond in faith to Jesus as Savior will be saved.
    - b. **Universalists** - Eventually all will be saved.
    - c. **Extended mercy** - Salvation is granted to all who God sees would believe if they had a chance to hear the gospel.
  6. What are the objects of salvation?
    - a. Humans made in God's image.
    - b. All creation.
  7. Why did not God use another way of saving humanity?
    - a. The way of the cross and faith best displayed all of God's attributes.
    - b. The nature of human creation dictated certain aspects of salvation (ie. Volition).
    - c. Other options were inadequate
      1. Coercion – violated free volition.
      2. Pardon without reparation – violated holiness. Moral ethics are mocked if there is no penalty for sin.
      3. Nonredemption – violated love.
  8. Key concepts:

<i>Term</i>	<i>Scripture</i>	<i>Definition</i>
<b>Justification</b>	Rom.3:28; 4:5; 5:9; 6:23; Gal.3:6; Titus 3:4-7	Justification is the judicial act of God whereby He declares the sinner to be righteous through faith in Christ.
<b>Adoption</b>	Jn.1:12; Eph.1:5-6; Gal.3:26; 4:4-6	Adoption is the act of God whereby He joyfully embraces the believer as a special child in to His family.
<b>Regeneration</b>	Ezek.11:19-20; Titus 3:5; Jn.1:12-13; 3:1-15; II Cor.5:17;	Regeneration or new birth is the awakening of the life of Christ in a person's soul through the gift of the Holy Spirit with the result that the believer acquires a new spiritual nature that cannot sin and coexists in tension with a now outdated old nature that cannot but sin.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Rom.6-8; I Cor. 3:1-3; Gal.5:17; Col.1:28; Eph.4:17-24; I Thess.5:23;	Sanctification is the dynamic transformation of the believer by the Holy Spirit from the "natural man" walking in darkness to the "spiritual man" walking in the light.

<b>Glorification</b>	Ps.24:7-10; 73:24; Rom.8:18; 30; I Cor.15:51-52; II Cor.4:17; I Pet. 5:1,4; I Jn.3:2;	Glorification is the transformation of the believer along with all creation to the perfect state of the Creator's image and likeness at the end of time.
<b>Propitiation</b>	Rom.3:25; I Jn.2:2; 4:10; Heb.2:17; 8:12; Lk.18:13	Propitiation embodies the concept that the death of Christ fully satisfied the demands of a righteous God with respect to judgment upon the sinner.
<b>Election</b>	Matt. 22:14; Acts 13:48; Eph. 1:4; II Thess. 2:13	Election is that aspect of the eternal purpose of God whereby he certainly and eternally determines by means of unconditional and loving choice who will believe. This is not merely the intention of God to save all who may believe; rather, it determines who will believe.
<b>Omniscience</b>	Ps. 139:1-4; Isa. 40:28; Rom. 11:33; Heb. 4:13	Omniscience relates to God's knowledge of all that is or could be. He has full knowledge of himself and all of his creation. He knows from eternity all that will occur for certain and also all that could occur.
<b>Foreknowledge</b>	Acts 2:23; Rom. 8:29; 11:2; Eph.1:5	Foreknowledge is the selective knowledge of God that makes one an object of God's love; it is more than mere knowledge or cognition beforehand. The term focuses on God's motivation to act, relating to persons rather than what the persons will or will not do.
<b>Foreordination</b>	Eph. 1:5	Foreordination is God's predetermination of all things that occur in his creation, both events and a person's actions. All things that happen external to God are determined by him and are certain.
<b>Predestination</b>	Rom. 8:29-30	Predestination differs from foreordination in that the former concerns the determination of all things, whereas predestination relates specifically to the determination of the elect and their conformity to the image of Christ. Predestination never occurs in the sense of one's being predestined to damnation.
<b>Calling</b>	General: Matt. 22:14; John 3:16-18  Effectual: John 6:44; Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Cor. 1:23-24	Calling (General): The call of the Gospel through proclamation in which all persons are invited to receive Christ.  Calling (Effectual): The application of the word of the Gospel to the elect. The Holy Spirit does this work only in the elect, and this results in salvation.
<b>Salvation</b>	John 3:16-17; 6:37; Acts 4:12	Salvation is the culmination of election: the sum total of all God's work for man in delivering him from his lost condition in sin and presenting him in glory. It is received through faith, but faith is not a cause or reason for which God has justified the person. The cause of God's salvation is wholly in Himself not in man (Rom. 9:12, 16).
<b>Reprobation</b>	Isa. 6:9-10; Rom. 9:27; 11:7	Reprobation is God's passive attitude in passing over some people in the bestowment of salvation. It is an expression of God's divine justice in condemning them to eternal punishment for sins.

NOTE: Part of the above chart is modified from Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine by H. Wayne House, Zondervan

## A. **Current concepts of Salvation.**

### 1. **Liberation Theologies**

- a. Salvation is the economic and political deliverance of oppressed peoples from their oppressors.
- b. History is a study in class struggle.
  1. White upper and middle class male capitalists are the chief culprits.
  2. The third world cultures, American Blacks, and Women are the most common victims.

- c. Economically and politically powerful nations and individuals owe their position to the presence and exploited work of the weak and poor.
  - d. The Biblical message gives special attention to the poor and weak.
    - 1. The Exodus is a key story and a model for salvation.
    - 2. Jesus stood against the rich and powerful.
    - 3. The gospel was understood only by the poor.
    - 4. The idea of a God who loves both rich and poor alike is a construct of those who have a vested interest in the status quo.
    - 5. God calls the church to resist the rich along with the systems that they construct and defend (usually capitalism) to preserve their position.
  - e. The teaching of the Kingdom in the Gospels is a main source of support.
    - 1. Usually the references to Jesus' miracles are equated with acts of social, economic, and political, justice.
    - 2. The Social Gospel has its origins in Liberal Protestant theology. (Basic tenants)
      - a. **Affirmation of pluralism** – Christianity does not have a corner on religious truth.
      - b. **Relativizing of classical doctrine and practice** – Traditional Christianity is viewed as irrelevant in that it privatizes faith.
      - c. **Positive attitudes to culture and science** – The new authority for truth rests with science and secular culture.
      - d. **High valuation of individual conscience** – Ethical impulses from within the liberal's mind drive ethical agendas.
      - e. **Preference for immanentist theological language** – God is viewed as fully immanent in that He (or she) is active (only) in the affairs of history.
      - f. **Anthropological and social optimism: world-affirming** – There is every expectation that with proper political, economic, and social reforms the values of the kingdom (as seen my liberals) can be realized.
    - 3. The epistles are often ignored or used very selectively. The O.T. prophets and Jesus are quoted often but only insofar as they seem to support the liberal model.
2. **Existential Theology** (Rudolf Bultmann)
- a. The Bible is to be understood subjectively not objectively.
  - b. Salvation is a call to “authentic” existence - being all that we are meant to be including the taking of responsibility for our actions.
  - c. Two characteristics of lost humanity are:
    - 1. Self interest at the expense of others.
    - 2. Self confidence in being able to solve human problems.
  - d. As we “demythologize” (down-load its significance for our lives) the Bible we are transformed and thus saved.
3. **Secular Theology**
- a. Secularism is encouraged by:
    - 1. The growing power of science to explain all the phenomena of life.
    - 2. The theory of evolution as a working model in understanding the complexity of human behavior.

3. The success in modern technology and the social sciences to solve life’s problems.
- b. Two responses emerge:
  1. Traditional Christianity views secularism as a hostile competitor.
  2. Secular religion sees secular trends as the hand of God.
- c. Dietrick Bonhoeffer proposed “religionless Christianity.”
  1. He suggests that as a parent desires to create independence in a child so God desires to free humanity from the constraints of “religion.”
  2. Salvation is not so much through religion as from religion.

**4. Modern Roman Catholic Theology**

- a. Vatican II has broadened the church’s view of grace and salvation to include well intended people of all religions.
- b. Three categories are recognized.
  1. Catholics who are “**incorporated**” into the visible church.
  2. Non-Catholic Christians, who are “**linked**” to the church (Protestants). Their situation is not as secure as that of Roman Catholics.
  3. Non-Christians, who are “**related**” to the church through sincere hearts to do what is right in the eyes of God.
- c. Justification is by grace through faith mediated through the sacraments of the church resulting in a sanctified heart and life. Justification and sanctification are synonyms. Saving faith is “formed faith” (obedience).
- d. The sacraments are the means of grace that save a person’s soul. Penance is necessary for Mortal sin (a sin that destroys love in the heart) and the Eucharist for Venial sin (sin that does not destroy love in the heart).

**5. Evangelical Theology**

- a. The evangelical view of salvation grows out of its view of sin.
  1. A broken legal relationship with God.
  2. A depraved nature that is hostile to God.
  3. A pattern of behavior that is evil.
- b. The aspects of salvation.

Antecedents	Beginning	Continuation	Completion
Election  Calling	<p><b>Objective aspects:</b> Union with Christ, Justification, Adoption</p> <p><b>Subjective aspects:</b> Conversion, Regeneration</p>	Sanctification  Perseverance	Glorification