

Doctrines of Salvation and of the Church



Our Daily Bread University
This course was developed by
Our Daily Bread University.



The Doctrine of Salvation

1. Q. What is salvation?

A. Salvation is deliverance from the penalty, pollution, and power of sin (Rom. 6:14,23; Ti. 3:4-6). It is eternally more important than being saved from fire, deep water, illness, or loneliness. While most people struggle to be saved from social embarrassment, poor health, poverty, or personal discouragement, the issue of their eternal well-being is usually overlooked or minimized.

2. Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is any thought, word, or deed that either violates or falls short of complete conformity to God's holy laws (Rom. 3:23; 1 Jn. 3:4). In short, Jesus and His apostles taught that sin is anything that doesn't reflect selfless love for God and others.

3. Q. What has God done to provide salvation?

A. He became a member of the human race in the person of Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:1,14), lived sinlessly as our substitute to fulfill God's righteous demands (2 Cor. 5:21), suffered and died on the cross to bear the penalty for our sins (Mt. 20:28; Rom. 4:23-25; 1 Cor. 15:3-4), and rose from the grave to break the power of death and defeat Satan (Acts 2:24; Heb. 2:14-15).

In other words, He accepted full responsibility to pay the price for the consequences of our sin. Although Christ actually took our place, His suffering was shared by the Father and the Spirit. Certainly they deeply felt the pain of seeing one so dearly loved experience such terrible





humiliation and agony.

4. Q. For whom did Christ die?

A. Jesus Christ died for all, even for those who will not believe on Him (Jn. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:4-6; Heb. 2:9; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 Jn. 2:2). He died for those who are sinners by nature (Ps. 51:5), disobedient by choice (Rom. 3:23; Col. 1:21; Ti. 3:3), spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1,5), unable to please God (Rom. 8:8), and under His wrath and condemnation (Jn. 3:36; Rom. 1:18; 3:19).

Christ died for people who have nothing to offer Him but brokenness and need. He died for people who have fallen far short of their original purpose to know Him (Jn. 17:3), to glorify Him (1 Cor. 10:31), and to enjoy Him forever (Rev. 7:15-17; 21:1-4).

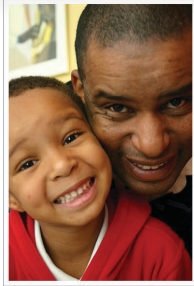
5. Q. Who will be saved?

A. From the divine perspective, God saves those whom He has chosen from before the foundation of the world (Acts 13:48; Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:4; 2 Th. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9). From the human viewpoint, salvation is legitimately offered to everyone and is freely given to all who believe in Jesus Christ (Mt. 11:28; Jn. 1:12; 3:15-16,36; 6:40,47; 11:25-26; 20:31; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9-10).

Our part is not to understand the mind and mystery of God but to gratefully accept His undeserved love. Of this we can be sure: All who sincerely want to be saved and who accept the invitation to believe in Christ will never be turned away (Jn. 6:37). In time and eternity they will learn that they came because of the choosing, urging, and drawing of the Father (Jn. 6:39,44,65).

6. Q. On what does God base His choosing of some and not others for salvation?

A. God sovereignly chooses according to His own good pleasure (Eph. 1:4-11). Although His choice is in harmony with His foreknowledge (1 Pet. 1:2), it is not based on it. If God did not take the initiative, no one would believe and choose Him (Jn. 6:44).



≠ Salvation

Place
your
trust in
Christ = Salvation

7. Q. Does divine election do away with human freedom and responsibility?

A. No! God is sovereign and man is both free and responsible. We cannot fully harmonize these truths, but we must accept both of them in humility and faith.

This requires reasonable trust in God. A human parent expects his small child to trust his parental judgment when that child is not able to see the big picture. Shouldn't we grant the infinite God that same consideration and respect?

8. Q. How do we receive salvation?

A. By faith alone. Neither zealous commitment to good works (Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 4:1-12) nor careful observance of religious ritual (Gal. 3:1-9) play a part in obtaining salvation.

Salvation is not found in our efforts for God but in trusting God's efforts for us. As important as it is to go to church, a 50-year record of perfect attendance would not help us to qualify in any way for heaven. God does not require our money, our attendance, our prayers, or our songs. All He requires is that we place our trust in Christ. On that basis He gives salvation. Everything else follows.

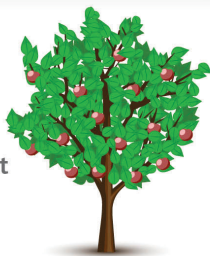
9. Q. What is the repentance called for by John the Baptist, Jesus, Paul, and Peter? (Mt. 3:1-2; 4:17; Acts 2:38; 20:21).

A. Repentance is that change of attitude about one's self, one's sin, and God, which involves the whole personality—mind, emotions, and will. In varying degrees, it always accompanies true faith. Sorrow for sin often accompanies it and helps give evidence that genuine repentance has occurred (2 Cor. 7:9-10).

10. Q. What is saving faith?

A. It is personal trust in God. It is believing that He, on the basis of Christ's substitutionary death and resurrection, forgives and accepts all who trust in Jesus Christ and rely on Him alone for salvation (Rom. 3:21-26; 4:1-25; 5:1-2; Eph. 2:8-10).

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It is therefore not what I do but what I believe that counts. If what I believe is right, doing right will follow. Good works are the fruit and the evidence (Eph. 2:10; 1 Jn. 3:7-10), not the ground or the cause.

11. Q. What does the Bible mean when it speaks of our justification? (Rom. 5:1-2).

A. The Greek word Paul used is a legal term meaning “to be declared righteous.” It depicts the action of God as Judge. When we believe in Jesus, He declares us righteous (Rom. 3:24-26), free from condemnation (Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 4:8; 8:1), and restored to His favor (Rom. 5:9-11).

No human court has ever offered a decision of mercy, pardon, or acquittal that deserves more celebration than the justification God offers to every person who believes in Jesus.

12. Q. What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification, which in the Greek language means “set apart,” begins as an act of God by which He sets apart for Himself those who trust Christ (1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Th. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2). This positional sanctification on God’s part calls for us to respond in practical sanctification—an ever-increasing separation of ourselves from sin and a continual growth in holiness (2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Pet. 3:18).

God’s command to be holy is as fitting to a Christian as the insistence of a mother who requires that her children, the dog, and her husband not track mud, tar, paint, and grease into the house.

13. Q. What is redemption?

A. Redemption is our salvation viewed from the perspective of the price Jesus paid to rescue us. He redeemed us from the law (Rom. 7:6) and from its penalty (Gal. 3:13), from our bondage to sin (Rom. 6:6,11,18,22; Ti. 2:14), and from the domain of Satan (Col. 1:13-14). He did so through His death on the cross, the act by which He met the demands of God’s holy nature (Mt. 20:28; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).



The Doctrine of the Church

1. Q. What is the church?

A. The church is the body of Christ. The term *church* in the New Testament sometimes refers to the entire body of people—past, present, and future—who through faith in the Lord Jesus make up the organism called the body of Christ, the universal church (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23-32; Heb. 12:23). At other times, the same Greek word *ekklesia* (which means “a called-out group”) refers to a local assembly of believers (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 1:2; 16:19; Gal. 1:2; 1 Th. 1:1).

In either case, the church should be as important to us as it is to Christ. It is far more than brick and mortar. Its people together make up the body of Christ. Its members both individually and collectively house the Spirit of Christ.

2. Q. When did the church begin?

A. The church was born on the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after our Lord’s resurrection, when the Holy Spirit came on a small number of disciples, baptizing them into one body and filling them with His power (Acts 2:1-13).

By this act, God temporarily set aside the nation of Israel as His primary means of revealing Himself to the world. In Israel’s place, the Lord chose to work through an international body of people who were united not by national affiliation but by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:27-29; Eph. 2:13-3:10).

3. Q. Who are the officers of the local church?

A. Bishops (elders) and deacons. Their qualifications are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-13. Turmoil, confusion, and spiritual dissension occur as a result of not taking the spiritual qualifications of church leaders as seriously as the apostle Paul did. Their role is not merely administrative—serving on committees and exercising authority. They are to provide the church with examples of spiritual maturity and Christlikeness.



Israel set aside



God reveals Himself through the Church

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4. Q. What is the meaning of church baptism?

A. Baptism in the name of the triune God (Mt. 28:19) testifies to the believer's faith (Acts 2:38; 8:37-38), symbolizes the washing away of his sins (Acts 22:16), and expresses the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and his intention to live a Christ-exalting life (Rom. 6:1-23).

This is far more than induction into a fraternity or club. No other ceremony deserves to be compared with the importance of this act of public identification with Christ and His people.

5. Q. What is the meaning of the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper is a church observance in which believers share bread and the cup as a memorial to Christ's crucified body and shed blood (Mt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

By vividly reminding us of the price Jesus paid to save us, Communion calls us to self-examination and spiritual renewal. While it has no saving power, it is not to be observed carelessly or indifferently (1 Cor. 11:27-34).

6. Q. What is the local church to do when a member continues to live in sin despite repeated warnings?

A. The church is to confront such a person lovingly about his sin. If all attempts at correction are resisted, the church is to disassociate itself from the member with the hope and prayer that such action will result in his repentance and return (Mt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-13).

If this were done more consistently and lovingly, individual members of the church would not think it a light or casual thing to live in sin while identifying with the Lord Jesus Christ.