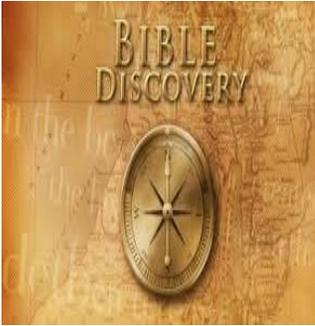


Assured Salvation



What do Christians mean when they speak of Salvation? The Apostle John writes, *“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.”* [1 John 5:11-12] Luke the Biblical historian records, *“It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth...salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”* [vs. 10 & 12] From these scriptures we can learn that salvation is the application of the work of Christ to a fallen world, restoring life through our faith. We can learn 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 us who believe throughout history.

No one else can save us from our sins; no one else can lift us from the stain of our fallen nature; no one else can unite us with our Heavenly Father giving us the righteousness we need if we're to have fellowship with God. God's Word shows us that only the transformation children receive when they accept God's gift of grace in His Son Jesus as the Christ can unite us with the Father. We use words often which we don't fully understand to explain it, yet we need to – golden words from our Lord such as...

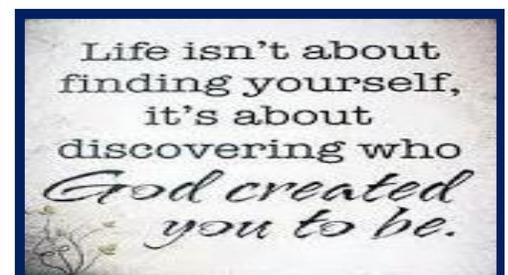
**No one other
than Jesus can
save us from
our sins!**

- **“Justification”** as the Apostle Paul instructs, *“since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* [Romans 5:1] Justification is simply the judicial act of God whereby He declares the sinner to be righteous and therefore **“not guilty”** through faith in Christ.
- Then because we're justified by God, we receive **“Adoption”** into God's family. In fact, adoption is the loving act of our Heavenly Father through which He joyfully embraces those who believe as children in to His family. This is explained by John at the very beginning of his gospel where he writes, *“yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God...”* [John 1:12]
- All this is accomplished through **“Regeneration”**. Also referred to as a new birth, it's 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 which combats the now outdated old nature that cannot but sin. Look at Titus 3:5-7...

⁵ He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, ⁶ which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ⁷ so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

Again, our Lord promises, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”* [2 Corinthians 5:17]

- And then **“Sanctification”**, which is a lifelong process, is the continuing transformation we experience by the Holy Spirit from the “natural man” walking in darkness to the “spiritual man” walking in the light to discover life. I found a quote years ago that helps explain the process - **“Life isn't about finding yourself; it's about discovering who God created you to be”**. Several years ago I worked at the military hospital in Kingston and we had a doctor take a leave of absence so he could go to India to discover himself. I never heard what happened to him, but I doubt there was any great resolve since finding “yourself” isn't an external process. In contrast, Paul speaks of proclaiming Christ and teaches us to present ourselves *“perfect in Christ.”* [Colossians 1:28] Again 1 Thessalonians



5:23-24 Paul encourages, “*May the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.*” [RSV]

- We await “**Glorification**” which is the transformation the believer receives along with all of creation back to the perfect state of our Creator’s image at the end of time. While each previous process plays a role in our lives lived on earth, you and I know we live imperfect lives - we stumble and fall, we fail to meet the grade set for us! Perhaps over time, or quite suddenly we’re reminded that we’re triumphant solely because we have Jesus in our heart and He’s given us His Holy Spirit to teach, admonish and direct us while we’re on this journey. We recognize we’re waiting for a new city; we’re looking forward to a time when we shall no longer be tossed on the waves of humanness. May it be that we can, with the Apostle Paul claim that we, “*consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed to us.*” [Romans 8:18] I think John instructs us well as he encourages in his first letter,

“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as He is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as He is pure.”

Salvation is...the sum total of all God’s work for man delivering us from our lost condition of sin and presenting us forever with Him in glory.

So then salvation’s the culmination of all these terms and much more. It’s the sum total of all God’s work for man in delivering us from our lost condition in sin and presenting us forever with Him in glory. It’s received through faith, but the root and the cause of God’s salvation is wholly in God, delivered through His Son Jesus Christ, not in us.

Not everyone calling themselves a Christian is a Christian. A person might be pious, or religious, but not a real Christian. Our Lord taught: “*Not every one that says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven; but only he that does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*” [Matthew 7:21]. I’m reminded of when the Apostle Paul walked about Athens and instructed them as such...

“People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you. “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything... for He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising Him from the dead.” [Acts 17:22-25; 31]

What I’m saying to you is this: “Christianity” is all about a personal relationship between God & you. Without this relationship with the Saviour, there’s nothing, there’s no other means by which you will have the assured salvation any of us seek. Without knowing Jesus deep within our heart and having His Spirit directing our daily path – there is no salvation! In our modern age, perhaps as always, there is confusion over assured salvation, some people are secure in Christ because they’ve accepted Him as their Saviour but are not sure because they have not solidly built their trust in His Word. There are those who are "sure" through their own works and good living but are not secure because only faith in Jesus Christ gives us salvation. But through God’s wonderful gift of assurance through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ who died on the cross for our sins, was resurrected on the third day and sits with the Father waiting that time when He shall return to claim His own, there are those who are both secure and sure! Category one are conscientious believers in Christ

Without knowing Jesus - there is no salvation!

**Basis of
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who are saved but lack assurance, they've never heard the message of the Bible told explicitly and surely. In category two are professing Christians who say, "*Even though I'm living in sin, I'll make it. After all, 'once saved, always saved!' Why change?*" The third group are born-again believers who enjoy a warm, secure relationship with Christ each day. The basis of our salvation is the finished work of God's Son on the cross. We have assurance of salvation because we've God's Word on it! It's never based on our interpretation or our own accomplishments.

Therefore, the Christian who has assured salvation is neither by birthright nor by heritage, nor by works, nor by coercion, nor by force. Rather, he's the person who responds to God's call and the working of the Holy Spirit in his heart, inviting him to eternal salvation. *Because* he responds and accepts Christ as a personal Saviour, the true Christian subsequently lives the godly life, in obedience to God, becoming a reflective light of Christ in the midst of this world of darkness.

So let me summarize what it is to be assured salvation. God promises forgiveness and eternal life to anyone who asks. Jesus Christ, through his death on the cross and resurrection three days later, has already paid the price for our sins establishing our relationship with God the Father.

Our role in salvation is to first recognize that through sin, all of us have separated ourselves from God and that the way back to God is through Jesus Christ, God's Son and that ***He is the only way.*** In order for us to be forgiven, we must acknowledge we've been going the wrong way and ask Him to turn us around - to forgive our sins. *Do you fear that you've done something so terrible that God won't forgive you?* This question comes from a wounded, troubled, heart beaten down by the enemy of God. Yet it also means you feel guilty for what you've done and that means you're open to hearing from God through His Holy Spirit! While many believe they're not forgivable, let me tell you, no one is forgivable on their own merit, no one deserves forgiveness - we're all members of the club of sin and all of us have our only hope in God's wonderful unmerited favour and grace.

Perhaps this morning it's not that you consider yourself too bad to be forgiven - you think you're too good to need forgiveness! You've never really hurt anyone, never stolen (and gotten caught), never really denied God existed. But have you lived with the assurance that God lives in you? Have you given your life to Christ? Again, we're told that *all have sinned* and fallen short of God's glory. We all need forgiveness! Forgiveness that comes only from our Creator and God through His Son Jesus Christ!

The cost of that forgiveness has been paid for you and me by Jesus, God's perfect Son when He died on the cross. Have you accepted that gift of grace? Salvation comes only through Jesus who restores our relationship with God.

So then, God, our Heavenly Father, has done everything necessary to provide salvation for us. To receive this wonderful gift of eternal life, all we have to do is accept in faith what God has already done for us through Jesus. Jesus is returning soon. What keeps you from making a faith commitment to Jesus right now? If you have never had the assurance in your heart that if you died right here, right now you would be with Jesus in glory, then I encourage you to make your salvation sure and ask Jesus into your heart. If you worry that your relationship is built on culture, on tradition, on works or on any other means than faith in Jesus as your Saviour, then I ask you to receive the salvation God is offering right now. God is waiting- are you ready to make that call?

"Making the call" is based on God's Word, in particular Romans 10:9-10 which tells us, "*If you confess with mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*"

**We're all
members of the
club of sin and
all of us have
our only hope
in God's
wonderful
unmerited
favour & grace.**

**Are you
ready to
make
that
call?**

If you would like to pray and you're not sure how, here is a sample prayer you can follow...

“Dear Heavenly Father, I come to you in the name of your Son Jesus. I acknowledge to you that I’m a sinner, and I am sorry for my sins and the life that I have lived; I need your forgiveness. I believe that your Son Jesus Christ shed His precious blood on the cross at Calvary and died for my sins, and I am now willing to turn from my sin.

Right now I confess Jesus as the Lord of my soul. With my heart, I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead. This very moment I accept Jesus Christ as my own personal Saviour and according to His Word, right now I am saved. I have that assurance. Thank you Lord God for your unlimited grace which has saved me from my sins, therefore Lord transform my life so that I may bring glory and honour to you alone and not to myself. Thank you Jesus for dying for me and giving me eternal life, Amen.”

If you are ready to speak with someone about this relationship with Jesus Christ, we'd love to hear from you. Drop us a note by email at office.mbbc@xplornet.com or call us at 1-519-317-8659. And know the blessing of assurance that Jesus has saved you from your sins.

Blessings,

Pastor Dave

