

**POWER
OF
SALVATION**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?

FOR THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE WHAT WAS LOST. *LUKE 19:10 (NIV)* WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ACTUALLY BE SAVED? HOW DOES SCRIPTURE DESCRIBE SALVATION? WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND? THE GREEK WORD FOR SAVE IN LUKE 19:10 IS **SOZO**. THIS WORD COMMUNICATES THE FULL MEANING OF SALVATION.

Sozo encompasses many different aspects of salvation:

1. **Deliverance.**
2. **Restoration.**
3. **Protection.**
4. **Preservation.**
5. **Healing.**
6. **Making whole.**

Look at the six words above. They are a great description of what Jesus had in mind when He ministered. Does this definition of salvation change your perspective? Had you limited salvation to eternal life? Sozo gives us a much fuller understanding of the richness of our salvation.

It is exciting to know what it means to be saved! Can you begin to imagine all he has planned for you? The love of Christ is so deep!

WHAT DOES THE WORD "LOST" REALLY MEAN?

HE IS SO RICH IN KINDNESS THAT HE PURCHASED OUR FREEDOM THROUGH THE BLOOD OF HIS SON, AND OUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN. *_EPHESIANS 1:7 (NLT)*

JESUS REPLIED, "I TELL YOU THE TRUTH, EVERYONE WHO SINS IS A SLAVE TO SIN." *_JOHN 8:34 (NIV)*

Without a relationship with Jesus Christ we are truly lost, but what does "lost" really mean? Why are we lost without Jesus? What have we lost that only a relationship with Jesus Christ can restore?

The common definition for "lost" (found in Webster's Dictionary) provides real insight about what it means to be lost. Look at the definition below and consider what it means practically.

1. LOST: NOT MADE USE OF, NOT WON OR CLAIMED. Salvation restores our purpose, which, prior to salvation, we had not "used" or "claimed." However, we can be saved for many years and still not make use of our purpose. Instead, we continue to function in the purpose we have chosen for ourselves. In this scenario, Jesus is given only a small piece of our life to use for His purposes. Typically, crisis or hardship will drive us to consider the Lord's plan, but once the crisis has passed we return to our own purposes.

2. LOST: NO LONGER POSSESSED OR NO LONGER KNOWN. Prior to salvation, our design was lost. Christ's plan for our life was not known. His love for us was not known. Eternal life was not possessed. Jesus' love for those around us was not known.

Forgiveness for our sins was not known.

3. LOST: RUINED OR DESTROYED PHYSICALLY OR MORALLY. Our mind was ruined and completely consumed with self. Salvation restores our mind and transforms our heart (Romans 12:1-2).

4. LOST: TAKEN AWAY OR BEYOND REACH OR ATTAINMENT. Our fulfillment and significance was diminished because of our sin. We are unable, through our own actions, to be made right with God. Because of this deficit of fulfillment, all men and women are in a constant search for significance. We go from activity to activity, relationship to relationship, purchase to purchase, but remain empty after these pursuits. Our significance only comes through a restored relationship with God in Jesus Christ, and a revelation of our design and purpose.

WHY DO WE NEED TO BE SAVED?

Why do we need to be concerned with the concept of being saved, or salvation? What does deliverance, restoration, healing, making whole, etc. mean? What am I being saved from?

IN THE BEGINNING

Humankind was created to live in perfect relationship with God, in a beautiful garden with a perfect environment. There was no sin, crime, heartache, sorrow, disease, or death. Adam and Eve had a literal walking and talking relationship with God. But the Scriptures make it clear that these two sinned, they disobeyed God, and could no longer have this same special relationship.

Immediately after Adam and Eve sinned, all humankind was separated from God. Death entered into the world. It was not long before the world was filled with jealousy, anger, hatred, abuse, murder and every other sin. Scripture states that every person born since has sinned.

. . . FOR ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD. . .

_ROMANS 3:23 (NASB)

WHAT IS SIN?

Sin is a violation of God's nature and character—His glory. He is infinite and perfect in love, mercy, righteous-

ness, justice, truth, and goodness (just to name a few). When we fail to love, be merciful, righteous, act justly, or tell the truth (just to name a few), we sin. Sin is not merely the physical act of doing wrong, but a wrong heart toward God. God's standard is a righteousness of heart.

THE CONSEQUENCE?

The Bible states very clearly that all who sin will suffer death and punishment. This death is not merely physical; it is a ruining of relationships, health, and eternal separation from God and the glorious existence of His heaven.

FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, BUT THE FREE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

_ROMANS 6:23 (NLT)

This punishment is not only temporal, with all that is lost on this earth from not operating in God's original design for us and our world, but it is eternal, everlasting. Because God is just, He must punish sin. Scripture is clear that there is an eternal punishment of separation from God due to our sin, and there is only one way to resolve this situation.

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

RECOGNIZE YOUR NEED

The road to restoration and salvation begins with admitting our need. This is difficult for most of us because humility is required to admit that we have violated God, that we are sinners in desperate need of God. Such humility is central to our entire Christian life and path of restoration.

There is a question we can ask ourselves that will help us recognize our need: "**What must I do to be as righteous (holy, perfect) as God is righteous?**" There are not enough good works that we can do to erase our sin and make us as righteous as God! **We must humbly admit we are sinners in need of God's grace. . .**

REALIZE THE SOLUTION

JESUS! Jesus is the only solution. He was fully God, yet He was fully a man. He lived a sinless life on earth. Being God, He actually lived out the righteousness of God. He then died on the cross, was buried for three days

and resurrected from the dead. Through the resurrection, He conquered sin and the judgment of sin, which is death. He suffered the punishment of our sin for us.

HE MADE HIM WHO KNEW NO SIN TO BE SIN ON OUR BEHALF, SO THAT WE MIGHT BECOME THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIM. *_2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 (NASB)*

BECAUSE GOD'S CHILDREN ARE HUMAN BEINGS—MADE OF FLESH AND BLOOD—JESUS ALSO BECAME FLESH AND BLOOD BY BEING BORN IN HUMAN FORM. FOR ONLY AS A HUMAN BEING COULD HE DIE, AND ONLY BY DYING COULD HE BREAK THE POWER OF THE DEVIL, WHO HAD THE POWER OF DEATH. ONLY IN THIS WAY COULD HE DELIVER THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED ALL THEIR LIVES AS SLAVES TO THE FEAR OF DYING.

_HEBREWS 2:14-15 (NLT)

JESUS TOLD HIM, "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. NO ONE CAN COME TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME." *_JOHN 14:6 (NLT)*

APPLY THE SOLUTION

It is impossible for us to earn God's righteousness—it is out of our reach. We must receive it as a gift. That is exactly what God has arranged for us.

- *You must agree with God in regards to your need for His righteousness because of your sin.*
- *You must believe that Jesus Christ is fully God who became fully man, but without sin.*
- *You must believe that He died on the cross to pay for the punishment of your sin and resurrected from death, conquering the power of sin.*
- *Then you must pray in faith, declaring you believe the truths just stated. Receive God's forgiveness for your sin, and declare you want to become a child of God and that, with God's help, you will devote your life to following Him.*

You cannot earn this amazing gift! You do not deserve this wonderful gift. God's plan is that you freely receive

His gift of eternal life and salvation by His grace through faith. You cannot do enough good things to earn God's righteousness. You cannot be religious enough to receive God's righteousness. He simply gives it to you as a gift of absolute grace.

God then declares that you are fully righteous even though you have sinned. The Bible uses the legal term justification to explain this truth. Even though you are guilty of sin, through Jesus Christ, God declares you innocent; you are righteous with His righteousness. Jesus made an exchange and took your sin and gave you His righteousness!

ONCE WE, TOO, WERE FOOLISH AND DISOBEDIENT. WE WERE MISLED BY OTHERS AND BECAME SLAVES TO MANY WICKED DESIRES AND EVIL PLEASURES. OUR LIVES WERE FULL OF EVIL AND ENVY. WE HATED OTHERS, AND THEY HATED US. BUT THEN GOD OUR SAVIOR SHOWED US HIS KINDNESS AND LOVE. HE SAVED US, NOT BECAUSE OF THE GOOD THINGS WE DID, BUT BECAUSE OF HIS MERCY. HE WASHED AWAY OUR SINS AND GAVE US A NEW LIFE THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

_TITUS 3:3-5 (NLT)

FOR IF YOU CONFESS WITH YOUR MOUTH THAT JESUS IS LORD AND BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART THAT GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, YOU WILL BE SAVED. FOR IT IS BY BELIEVING IN YOUR HEART THAT YOU ARE MADE RIGHT WITH GOD, AND IT IS BY CONFESSING WITH YOUR MOUTH THAT YOU ARE SAVED.

_ROMANS 10:9-10 (NLT)

ANYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.

_ROMANS 10:13 (NLT)

GOD SAVED YOU BY HIS SPECIAL FAVOR WHEN YOU BELIEVED. AND YOU CAN'T TAKE CREDIT FOR THIS; IT IS A GIFT FROM GOD. SALVATION IS NOT A REWARD FOR

THE GOOD THINGS WE HAVE DONE, SO NONE OF US CAN BOAST ABOUT IT.

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 (NLT)

UNDERSTANDING REPENTANCE

What was just described is more than mere words or a belief system. It is an action that involves every fiber of your being. It saturates your entire life. It includes your mind, will, emotions, and physical body. Truly being saved is an act of repentance.

HOW DOES REPENTANCE FIT INTO SALVATION?

Faith and repentance are never mutually exclusive. One cannot have faith in Jesus Christ and ignore living in repentance. Theologian Wayne Grudem defines repentance as:

***“a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ.”*¹**

True repentance will result in a changed life. According to Scripture, the fruit of repentance is a changed life. A truly repentant person immediately begins to walk away from old patterns. Repentance is something that occurs in the heart and involves the whole person in a decision to turn from sin.

It is important to realize that mere sorrow for your actions, or even deep remorse over your actions, does not represent genuine repentance. Genuine repentance must be accompanied by a sincere decision to turn your back on sin. Paul wrote:

I HAVE DECLARED TO BOTH JEWS AND GREEKS THAT THEY MUST TURN TO GOD IN REPENTANCE AND HAVE FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS. *ACTS 20:21 (NIV)*

He wrote that he rejoiced over the Corinthians not simply because they were grieved, but because they were grieved to the point of repenting.

FOR THE SORROW THAT IS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD PRODUCES A REPENTANCE WITHOUT REGRET, LEADING TO SALVATION, BUT THE SORROW OF THE WORLD PRODUCES DEATH.

2 CORINTHIANS 7:9-10 (NASB)

A worldly sort of grief may involve great sorrow and guilt for one's actions and probably also a fear of punishment, but no genuine renouncing of sin or a commitment to forsake it in one's life.

In Hebrews 12:17 Esau wept over the consequences of his actions, but did not truly repent.

The prior Scriptures make the case that repentance and faith are two sides of the coin of salvation and cannot be separated. It is not that a person first turns from sin and then trusts in Christ or first trusts in Christ and then turns from sin. They occur at the same time.

When we turn to Christ for salvation from our sins, we are at the same time turning away from the sin. If that were not true, turning to Christ for salvation from sin could hardly be considered genuine repentance.

Therefore, it is clearly contrary to the New Testament evidence to speak about having true saving faith without any repentance for sin. It is also contrary to the New Testament to speak about the possibility of someone accepting Christ as their Savior but not as their Lord if that means simply depending on Him for salvation but not committing oneself to forsake sin and to be obedient to Christ from that point forward.²

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO JESUS?

To clarify what it means to make a commitment to Jesus as our Savior and Lord let us consider the word “conversion.”

It means turning and represents a complete spiritual turn; a turning from sin to Christ. To be saved is more than just head knowledge. It is more than knowing a set of facts about salvation and agreeing with a list of creeds. In order to have a relationship with God, we

must have complete dependence on Jesus for salvation. He must save us.

SAVING FAITH IS PERSONAL TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF MY SINS AND FOR ETERNAL LIFE WITH GOD.

The word trust is critical because it implies a personal commitment between you and Jesus. Just like any relationship, without trust there is neither real friendship nor intimacy. You are putting your trust in Jesus for forgiveness of sin. At salvation the life of trust is birthed and continues to grow as you obey the Lord.

TO ALL WHO RECEIVED HIM, WHO BELIEVED IN HIS NAME, HE GAVE POWER TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD.

_JOHN 1:12

. . . WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

_JOHN 3:16

Salvation is about having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is an act of the will and a conscious decision. By accepting Christ, you willfully accept the gift of God through Jesus Christ to be saved from the penalty of sin.

SALVATION IS COMPLETED YET ONGOING

We have just learned that salvation is a completely finished work in the person of Jesus Christ. Yet it is ongoing!

FOR BY THAT ONE OFFERING HE PERFECTED FOREVER ALL THOSE WHOM HE IS MAKING HOLY. *_HEBREWS 10:14*

1. UNDERSTANDING THE PROMISES OF SALVATION.

Salvation [as described in Scripture] promises deliverance from the penalty and power of sin. After salvation,

we are clean before God. God sees us as our restored self TODAY!

THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION; THE OLD HAS GONE, THE NEW HAS COME!

_2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

2. POSITIONALLY, SALVATION IS A FINISHED WORK; PRACTICALLY, IT IS AN ONGOING WORK.

The fullness of Jesus Christ is deposited in us at salvation. We live with His person, His character, and His image being released in our life in increasing measures of righteousness, holiness, love, etc.

THEREFORE, MY DEAR FRIENDS, AS YOU HAVE ALWAYS OBEYED—NOT ONLY IN MY PRESENCE, BUT NOW MUCH MORE IN MY ABSENCE—CONTINUE TO WORK OUT YOUR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING. *_PHILIPPIANS 2:12*

SALVATION IS ABOUT COMPLETE LIFE RESTORATION

Remember sozo? Each word in the scriptures below that are bold is a translation of the greek word sozo.

1. RESTORATION OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

IF YOU CONFESS WITH YOUR MOUTH, "JESUS IS LORD," AND BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART THAT GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, YOU WILL BE **SAVED**.

_ROMANS 10:9

We are reunited with our Creator and given the chance to live with Him again in eternity. We are forgiven for our sin and are made whole in Jesus Christ.

2. RESTORATION OF OUR PURPOSE.

WHO HAS **SAVED** US AND CALLED US TO A HOLY LIFE—NOT BECAUSE OF ANYTHING WE HAVE DONE BUT BECAUSE OF HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE.

_2 TIMOTHY 1:9

We are also given a restored purpose and begin to see that He has called each one of us to a great and mighty assignment. Just like Adam, God created each of us with purpose. By His power and restoration we are given the chance to join Him again in His plan, on His path.

3. RESTORATION OF OUR INNER PERSON.

AND THOSE WHO HAD SEEN IT REPORTED TO THEM HOW THE MAN WHO WAS DEMON-POSSESSED HAD BEEN **MADE WELL**. *_LUKE 8:36*

Jesus releases those that are held captive by the powers of the enemy. No power of the enemy can stand against the power of Christ!

AND HE SAID TO THE WOMAN, "YOUR FAITH HAS **SAVED** YOU; GO IN PEACE."

_LUKE 7:50 (NASB)

Jesus restores our whole life. By His power, we are able to escape the personal bondage caused by sin. He frees us from our past experiences and hurts and leads us in a life of freedom!

4. RESTORATION OF OUR PHYSICAL BODY.

AND JESUS SAID TO HIM, "GO YOUR WAY; YOUR FAITH HAS **MADE YOU WELL**." AND IMMEDIATELY HE REGAINED HIS SIGHT AND BEGAN FOLLOWING HIM ON THE ROAD. *_MARK 10:52*

Jesus can remove any obstacle, including physical ailments. He created us, and He suffers with us when our bodies are not whole. He has sovereign purposes (that we will never understand) about why He releases or withholds physical healing. But Christ's heart is for all to be healed!

APPLICATION

CLOSING QUESTIONS

You now have the opportunity to make an informed decision about making a personal commitment to Jesus Christ.

1. Have you personally put your trust in Jesus Christ for your salvation?

You now have the opportunity to recommit your life to Jesus Christ.

2. Is it time to put your full trust back into Jesus? Are you ready to return to your first love?

Write down some thoughts on what you have learned.

3. How has your understanding of salvation grown from this teaching?

GROUP PRAYER DECLARATION

Jesus can restore my purpose! Jesus can restore my marriage! Jesus can heal my mind! Jesus came to restore, deliver, heal, protect! Jesus can make me whole, He can set me free!

ENDNOTES:

1. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), p. 713

2. This section "How does Repentance Fit into Salvation?" is an adaptation of "Faith and Repentance Must Come Together," Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), p. 713-714. This is a highly recommended resource!