

SALVATION – BEGINNING

“as many as received Him”

Key question

What active part do we play in the salvation process and what part does God play?

Key text

Ephesians 2:8-10

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

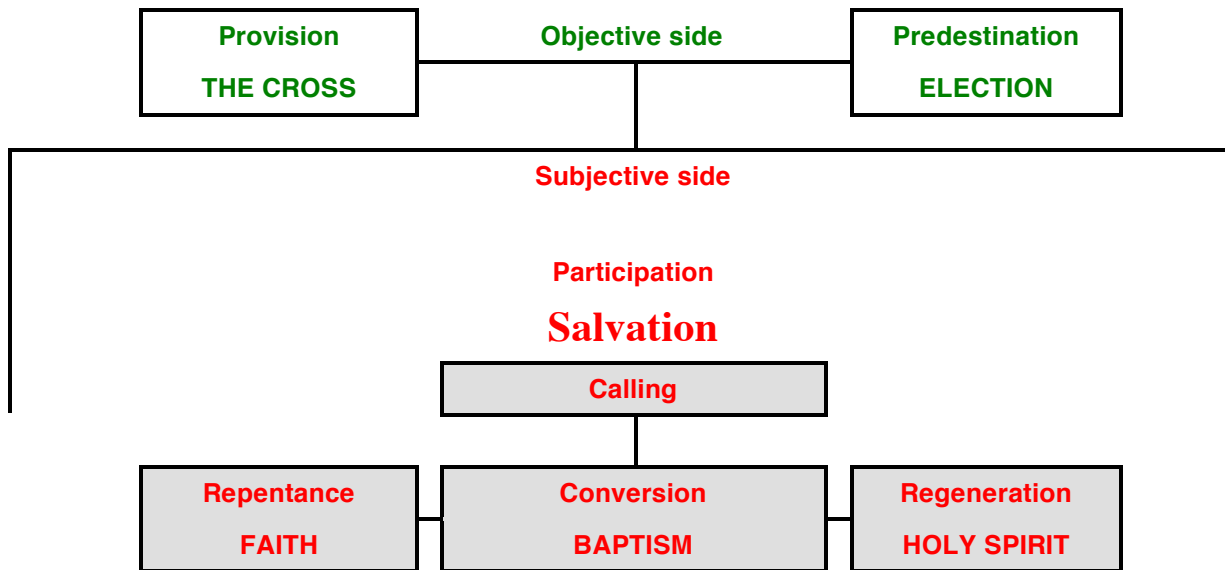
Key Definition

Salvation

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

Introduction.

1. How much does a person have to believe to be recognized as a Christian? Does the Bible indicate that regeneration comes before faith? From what must we repent in order to receive Christ?
2. The part of salvation that involves human response and experience we call the “subjective” aspect of salvation.
The part of salvation that is legal or apart from our experience we call the “objective” aspect of salvation.
3. When we talk about the work of Christ on the cross we are dealing with God’s **PROVISION** of salvation. When we talk about God’s gracious election unto faith we are talking about divine **PREDESTINATION**. When we talk about the application of that provision to the lives of individuals we are talking about our **PARTICIPATION** in salvation.
Our participation starts with the calling of God’s Spirit resulting in our **conversion** (witnessed in baptism) which is characterized by **repentance** (witnessed in faith) and **regeneration** (witnessed in the presence of the Holy Spirit).



A. **The ACTIVE aspects of salvation (from human perspective).**

Key definition

Efficacious Calling

The efficacious call of God’s Spirit quickens an individual’s heart to turn in faith to Christ from a life independent of God.

1. Four kinds of Spiritual calls.

1	2	3	4
To salvation	To saving faith	To sanctification	To special service
Isa.45:22	Rom.8:30	Eph.4:1	Matt.4:21
To all people	To some people	To all believers	To some believers

2. **Calling:** There are two kinds of calling with respect to our salvation.

a. A **general calling** of all to repent.

- Matt.11:28 “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”
- Isa.45:22
- Matt.22:14 “Many are called, but few are chosen”
- Lk.5:32 “I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”

b. An **efficacious calling** of the elect to believe. Calvinists believe that this call is irresistible. Others believe that it is efficacious when it meets a heart of faith.

- Jn.6:37,44,65 “All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me” “No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him.”
 - Rom.8:30 “And those whom he predestined he also called; and whom he called, these he also justified.”
 - I Cor.1:9 “God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”
 - I Cor.1:23-26 “²³ But we preach Christ crucified. To Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”
 - Lk.14:23; Rom.1:7; 11:29; Eph.1:18; Phil.3:14; I Thess.2:12; II Thess.2:14; II Tim.1:9; Heb.3:1; II Pet.1:10
 - Can God’s call be rejected? Some passages suggest that it can.
 - Matt.23:37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings but **you were not willing.**”
 - Lk.7:37 “But the Pharisees and the lawyers **rejected God’s purpose for themselves**, not having been baptized by John.”
 - Acts 7:51 “You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit;”
- c. **The logical order** - effectual calling, conversion, regeneration (the temporal order = simultaneous)
- **Acts 16:31** “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”
 - **Acts 2:38** “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
3. The relationship between God’s “call” of some but not all to saving faith and our responsibility to choose our fate is not easily answered and best left a mystery between God’s view and man’s view.

God’s view

Rom.8:29-30

“for whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren, and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

Foreknew

Predestined

Called

Justified

Man’s view

Rom.10:13-14

“for *‘Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.’* How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?”

Preached

Heard

Believed

Call on the Name of the Lord
Saved

Glorified

General Versus Effectual Calling

	General Calling	Effectual Calling
Definition	It involves the presentation of the Gospel in which the individual is offered the promise of salvation in Christ and invited to accept Christ by faith in order to receive the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.	It involves the general calling of God in the Gospel made effective in an individual as he or she believes the Gospel and accepts Christ as Savior and Lord.
Agent	Issued by the Father to all who hear the Gospel; mediated especially through believers empowered by the Holy Spirit of God as they communicate the Gospel as revealed in the Word of God.	It is issued by the Father and made effective by the work of the Holy Spirit as he illuminates and enables the individual to understand and respond positively to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus as contained in the Word of God.
Subjects & Examples	It is for all people but heard only by those who hear the Gospel "Many are called but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14).	It is given only to all of the elect. Saul - Acts 9:1-19; Lydia - Acts 16:14; Romans 8:30
Purpose	It reveals the great love of God to sinners in general. It reveals God's holiness and righteousness.	Because of man's total depravity, it is absolutely necessary in order to bring the elect to faith and conversion.
Results	It does not necessarily result in salvation. It can be rejected, resulting in the sinner's condemnation.	Since it is effectual and irrevocable, it necessarily results in salvation. It is impossible to reject.
Timing	It is prior to conversion and may or may not lead to it.	It is logically prior to conversion and necessarily leads to it.

- c. A **call to obedience** with respect to a ministry role or Christian living is common.
 - Rom.1:1 "called as an apostle"
 - Eph.4:1 "Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called"
 - I Cor.7:20 "Let each man remain in that condition in which he was called."

3. **Conversion** -

Key definition

Conversion

Conversion is a term that describes the whole act or process of moving from a life of disbelief and walking in darkness to a life of faith in Christ and walking in the light.

- a. Key texts
 - **Ezek.18:30-32** “Repent and turn from all your transgressions”
 - **Acts.3:19** “Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out.”
 - **Eph.5:14** “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.”
- b. The conversion experience can take different forms.
 1. Paul’s conversion (Acts 9) was dramatic.
 2. Lydia’s (Acts 16:14) was not.
4. **Repentance** - The Greek word μετανοεω METANOEO means “to think after” or to come to one’s senses.
 - a. Repentance that leads to salvation involves turning away from the world and to God.
 - b. Repentance is not a work but rather a change of heart that will by necessity be demonstrated through a change of direction in life.
 - c. Saving faith involves repentance (a change of mind or inner heart toward God).
 - d. The Hebrew terms used for “repentance” are (NACHAM) which mean “to lament or grieve”- Gen.6:6, Ex.32:14, Job.42:5-6; and (SHUV) which means “to forsake sin and follow God.” - II Chron.7:14, Isa.59:20.
 - e. Key illustrations
 1. Jonah 3
 2. Lk.15:11-32
 3. Isa.6:1-8

Key definition

Repentance

Repentance is the turning of one’s life (from the inside out) away from walking in spiritual darkness to walking in the light of God’s Word.

- f. The elements of repentance are illustrated in **Acts 2:37-47**.
 1. The instructions:
 - a. Repent
 - b. Be baptized
 2. The promise:
 - a. Remission of sins
 - b. The gift of the Holy Spirit
 3. The fruit:
 - a. Water Baptism
 - b. Devotion to:
 1. The ministry of the Word
 2. Fellowship

3. The Lord's table
4. Prayer
- c. Perseverance
- d. Joyful worship
- e. Growth
- g. Other key texts.
 - **Mk.4:17** "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - **Acts 17:30** "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent"
 - **Acts 2:38** "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
 - **Acts 3:19** "Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away,"
 - **Lk.24:47** "and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations,"
 - **Acts 5:31** "to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."
 - **Acts 11:18** "repentance that leads to life"
 - **Acts 26:18-20** "so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins ---"
- h. The focus of repentance that leads to salvation is on our attitude toward the cross of Christ.
 1. Before the death and resurrection of Jesus, the barrier between a holy God and sinful man was man's moral failure.
 2. Christ took the sins of the world (that failure) away so that man's moral failure is not now so much the issue as the sin of unbelief in the crucified and resurrected Christ.
 3. The focus of repentance is on our attitude toward Jesus more than our attitude toward cleaning up our act.
 4. Once a person comes to faith in Christ, attention can be given to repenting from specific sins that are inconsistent with our calling and new liberated nature.

5. **Faith** - a whole life commitment to trust Christ.

Key definition

Saving Faith

Saving faith is a conscious commitment of one's life to Christ's person and work as defined by the fundamentals of the Christian gospel.

- a. Kinds of faith mentioned in Scripture.
 1. **Intellectual affirmation** - (Matt.7:26; Acts 26:27-28; Jas.2:19) trusting that God is there and has done something.
 2. **Miracle expectation** - (Matt.8:10-13; 17:20; Acts 14:9) trusting God to do something.

3. **Temporary trust** - (Lk.8:13) trusting God on an on-off basis.
 4. **Saving faith** - trusting God from the context of regeneration.
- b. Key texts.
- **Jn.1:12** “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name:”
 - **Jn.3:14-16** “that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life.”
 - **Jn.7:37-40** “that every one who beholds the Son, and believes in Him, may have eternal life;”
 - **Acts 10:43** “that through His name every one who believes in Him has received forgiveness of sins.”
 - **Acts 13:38-39** “through Him every one who believes is freed”
 - **Acts 15:9** “cleansing their hearts by faith.”
 - **Rom.3:21-4:8** “But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.”
 - **Rom.9:33** “and he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed.”
 - **Rom.10:10** “for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation”
 - **I Cor.1:21** “to save those who believe”
 - **Gal.2:16** “a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus”
 - **Gal.3:2** “Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?”
 - **Gal.3:26** “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”
 - **Eph.1:13** “having also believed, you were sealed in Him”
 - **Eph.2:8-10** “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God”
 - **I Tim.1:16** “for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.”
 - **I Jn.5:1** “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God”
 - **I Jn.5:13** “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.”
6. **Regeneration** (This topic could also be considered under the following heading (Passive aspects of Salvation) as it is ascribed to both an act of God and the faith of man.

Key definition

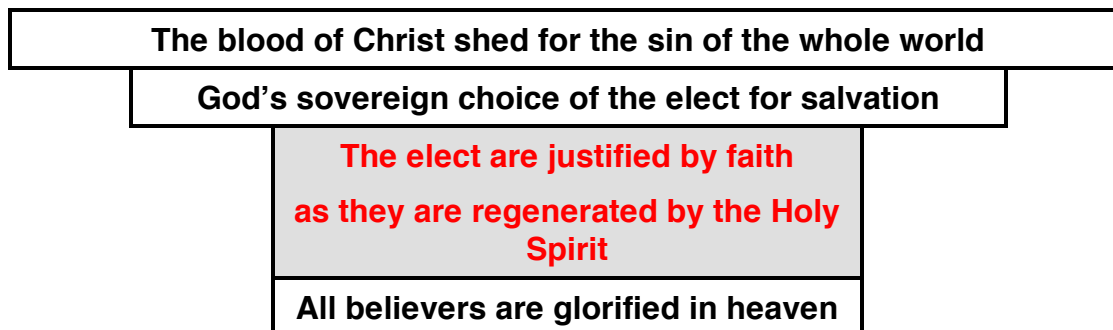
Regeneration

Regeneration or new birth is the awakening of the life of Christ in a person's soul through the gift of the Holy Spirit and faith, 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.

- a. Characteristics of regeneration
 1. It is a change in a person's basic nature - a whole reversal of the person's natural tendencies.
 - a. The sign of a born again life is that its direction has changed.
 - b. This new nature is best understood as the nature that Adam possessed before the fall. It is the state of being fully human in the image of God.
 2. It is an instantaneous change.
 - a. The language used is always in the Greek aorist or perfect tenses.
 - b. We may not be conscious of the time of new birth.
 3. It is not an end in itself.
 - a. Eph.2:10, Phil.1:6, Gal.5:19-23
 - b. It is the basis of a new life style.
 4. It is a supernatural occurrence.
- b. The relationship between regeneration and saving faith.
 1. In the reformed tradition it is understood that saving faith is the first response of a regenerate life. The bases of this claim are the number of Scriptures that ascribe regeneration directly to God. While the order (regeneration preceding faith) may be logical, in time, Scripture indicates that faith precedes regeneration. This is illustrated in the Pentecost event where believing disciples were regenerated by the coming of the Holy Spirit after they believed.
 2. Salvation is always through faith, not unto faith or because of faith (Eph.2:8). Some have suggested that if salvation is totally of grace then even faith must be a gift of God. **There is no clear or direct Scriptural support for faith as a gift of God.** Note the following passages that are often used to support the idea that saving faith is a gift from God.
 - a. **Eph.2:8** – In this passage the gift is more naturally connected to salvation not faith as Paul teaches in many other texts. The Greek words translated “that” and “it” are neuter and do not match “faith” and “grace” both of which are feminine making it more likely that “it” refers to the whole of salvation. John Calvin interpreted the “gift” of this passage as “salvation,” and not faith (**The Epistle to the Ephesians**, Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1965, p. 144). This is in perfect harmony with Paul's declaration that the “gift of God is eternal life” (Rom. 6:23).
 - b. **Heb.12:2** – In this text the term “faith” is most naturally referring to the system of faith – salvation under the New Covenant.
 - c. **Rom.12:3** – In this passage the context is not salvation but ministry.
 3. It is often argued that if people are “dead” in their sins (Eph.2:1, 5, 13) they cannot believe. But Paul teaches that those who are “dead” to sin (Rom.6:2, 7) must also “recon” themselves so (Rom.6:11) to keep from sinning. Dead cannot mean “without the capacity” to decide.
 4. If faith is a gift of God, then we are forced to conclude that it is not God's will that all be saved. But this conclusion seems to stand in tension with the uniform scriptural teaching that God's love is universal and impartial (Acts 10:34; cf. Deut.10:17-19; II Chron.19:7; Job 34:19; Is.55:4-5; Mk.12:14; Jn.3:16; Rom.2:10-11; Eph.6:9; I Pet.1:17). If it is only up to God to choose who would be saved, we have every reason to believe that He would choose everyone. We must not confuse a *condition* of

salvation with a *cause* of salvation. Let's say, I freely believe that my wife deposited a check in my personal account as a birthday gift. This does not mean that the gift is a reward for my faith nor does it mean that I would benefit from it without acting on it.

5. The logical sequence of the salvation drama through time might be illustrated with the following chart.



c. Key texts.

- **Ezek.11:19-20** “And I will give them a new heart, and put a new spirit within them; I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and obey them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”
- **Titus 3:5** “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.”
- **Jn.3:1-15** (vs.3) “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
- **II Cor.5:17** “Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”
- **Jn.1:12-13** “¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, ¹³ who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”;
- **I Pet.1:3** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”,
- **I Pet.1:23** “for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is through the living and abiding word of God.”
- **I Jn.2:29** “If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.”
- **I Jn.5:1** “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of god; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.”
- **I Jn.5:4-5** “⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. ⁵ And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”

B. The PASSIVE aspects of salvation (from human perspective).

1. Our **POSITION** “in Christ.” (see theology file #706)
2. **Union with Christ.**

Key definition

Union with Christ

At conversion the believer and Christ are united so that the nature and inheritance that belongs to Christ also belongs to the believer.

- a. References to the believer being “in Christ.”
 - **II Cor.5:17** “Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”
 - **Eph.1:3-4** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.”
 - **Eph.2:10** “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”
 - I Cor.1:4-4; I Thess.4:16; I Cor.15:20
- b. References that speak of Christ being in the believer.
 - **Col.1:27** “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”
 - **Gal.2:20** “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”
 - Jn.15:4-5; Matt.28:20; Jn.14:23
- c. Other references that identify believers and Christ.
 - **Rom.8:17** with Christ’s suffering
 - **Gal.2:20** with Christ’s crucifixion
 - **Col.2:20** with Christ’s death
 - **Rom.6:4** with Christ’s burial
 - **Eph.2:5** with Christ’s quickening
 - **Col.3:1** with Christ’s resurrection
 - **Rom.8:17** with Christ’s glorification and inheritance
- d. Several inadequate explanations of the believer’s union with Christ.
 1. The metaphysical view - a pantheistic notion that we are one with God by nature.
 2. The mystical view - the believer loses his identity in Christ. Gal.2:20
 3. The psychological view - a sharing of the same values.
 4. The sacramental view - the believer takes Christ into himself through the bread and cup.
- e. Characteristics of the union.
 1. It is revealed as a great mystery. Eph.2:32, Col.1:26-27

2. It has to do with our righteousness before the law. It means that we are counted righteous.
 3. It is spiritual in the sense that the indwelling Spirit and the indwelling Christ are related. I Cor.12:13, Rom.8:9-11
 4. It is vital to fruitfulness in life. It means that we can live in Christ's strength. Jn.15:4, Rom.12:2, II Cor.4:16
 5. It means that we will share Christ's suffering and glory. Phil.3:8-10, Jn.15:20, I Pet.4:13, II Tim.2:12
3. **Justification** - to declare righteous as opposed to actually make righteous.

Key definition

Justification

Justification is the judicial act of God whereby he declares the sinner to be righteous through faith based on the life and death of Christ alone.

- a. Justification is not the summit but the ground of the Christian life, not the end but the beginning of the journey of evangelical faith.
- b. Characteristics of the Reformation understanding of justification:
 1. It refers to the believer's legal status not his moral state.
 2. A distinction is made between justification (a divine declaration of righteousness) and sanctification or regeneration (inner transformation work of the Spirit).
 3. The formal cause of justification is the righteousness of Christ imputed to believers.
 4. The imputation of Christ's righteousness to the Christian is inseparable from the believer's union with Christ by faith.
 5. This understanding separated Protestants from Roman Catholics.
- c. Key texts on justification
 - **Rom.4:5** "God justifies the ungodly by faith."
 - **Rom.6:23** "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - **Gal.3:6** "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."
- d. It is an **imputed righteousness** - not a righteousness earned by or produced by the believer.

"Justification's nature is pardon, its condition is faith, its ground is the righteousness of God, and its fruits and evidences are good works." John Wesley

"iustitia Christi aliena" (alien righteousness of Christ) Martin Luther

 - **Gal.3:13** "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, **having become a curse for us**"
 - **II Cor.5:19-21** "19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 **He**

made Him who knew no sin {to be} sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

- **I Cor.1:30** “But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, **who became to us** wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.”
- **Phil.1:11** “having been filled with the fruit of righteousness **which comes through Jesus Christ**, to the glory and praise of God.”
- **Phil.3:9** “and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but **that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,**”
- **Rom.1:17** “For in it **the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith**; as it is written, ‘But the righteous man shall live by faith.’”
- **Rom.3:21-31** “²¹ But now apart from the Law {the} righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even {the} **righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe**; for there is no distinction; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. {This was} to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶ for the demonstration, {I say,} of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and **the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus**. ²⁷ Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. ²⁸ For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. ²⁹ Or is God {the God} of Jews only? Is He not {the God} of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one. ³¹ Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law..”
- **Rom.4:5-24** “⁵ But to the one who does not work, but believes in **Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness** ⁶ just as David also speaks of the **blessing upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works**: ⁷ *"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, And whose sins have been covered.* ⁸ *"Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account."* ⁹ Is this blessing then upon the circumcised, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say, *"Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness."* ¹⁰ How then was it reckoned? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; ¹¹ and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to them, ¹² and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. ¹³ For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; ¹⁵ for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there violation. ¹⁶ For this reason {it is} by faith, that {it might be} in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷ (as it is written, *"A father of many nations have I made you"*) in the sight of Him whom he believed, {even} God, who

gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. ¹⁸ In hope against hope he believed, in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, "*So shall your descendants be.*" ¹⁹ And without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; ²⁰ yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform. ²² Therefore also *it was reckoned to him as righteousness.* ²³ Now not for his sake only was it written, that it was reckoned to him, ²⁴ but for our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,"

- Rom.5:12-21** "¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and **so death spread to all men, because all sinned**--¹³ for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. ¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the transgression. **For if by the transgression of the one the many died**, much more did **the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.** ¹⁶ And the gift is not like {that which came} through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment {arose} from one {transgression} resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift {arose} from many transgressions resulting in justification. ¹⁷ **For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.** ¹⁸ So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. ¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
- Rom.10:3-4** "³ For not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For **Christ is the end of the laws for righteousness to everyone who believes.**"

1. Four kinds of righteousness.

Perfect righteousness of God	This is expressed by the nature of God alone.
Relative righteousness of the flesh	This is the relative moral goodness of man.
Imputed righteousness of faith	This is the perfect righteousness of Christ credited to the believer's account by God.
Imparted righteousness of the Spirit	This is the relative but true character of Christ being lived out through the obedient believer.

2. Three great imputations.

The imputation of Adam's sin to the human race	The imputation of the sins of the world to Christ at the cross	The imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer
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3. It is a judicial (legal) act - not a self accomplished (experiential) act.

The Judge	God	Heb.12:23; Rom.3:19
The Accuser	Moses (The Law)	Jn.5:45
The Witness	Our Conscience	Rom.2:15
The Verdict	Guilty	Rom.3:23
The Advocate	Christ	I Jn.2:1
The Sacrifice	The Cross	I Jn.2:2; Rom.5:19; II Cor.5:21
The Sentence	Acquittal	Rom.8:1,33,34 (This is due to a class action payment made by another - Christ).

4. It is a declared fact - not an experienced transformation of nature.

5. It is a gracious gift – not the result of obedience to the law.

6. The “sweet exchange”

- a. Sin is not charged against the believing sinner, for “god was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them” II Cor.5:19.
- b. Christ’s righteousness is accredited to the believing sinner, who is “found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes form God and is by faith” Phil.3:9. Righteousness is thus reckoned to one “who does not work but trusts God,” whose “faith is credited as righteousness” Rom.4:5.

e. Justification under the Law.

1. In Hebrew thought, justification does not point so much to a personal ethical quality, as a right relationship with God (I Kings 8:32)

2. There are two ways of justification (theoretically).

- a. By perfect obedience to the Law which means conformity to the image of God. But this is not possible. See notes on the nature of sin.

NOTE: The Jews knew that no one could live a perfect life. They believed however that God would vindicate all who respected the Law, repented of transgressions, and practiced the sacrificial system that granted pardon from transgressions.

- b. By God’s act of grace in the work of Christ on the cross where by He made atonement for sin and imputed His perfect life to all who believe.

f. Justification under grace. (Rom.3:22-26)

1. God’s way of justification is by faith not by obedience to the Law. Rom.1-5

2. The OT anticipated justification by faith.

- **Heb.11:4** “by faith he (Able) was commended as a righteous man.”

- **Heb.11:7** Noah was an “heir of the righteousness that comes by faith”
 - **Rom.4:3** (Gen.15:6) Abraham’s faith “was credited to him as righteousness”
 - **Hab.2:4** “the righteous will live by his faith”
 - **Isa.53:10-11** “The messiah “makes his life a guilt offering.”
3. The concept of justification by faith apart from human moral merit is offensive to both ancient and modern minds. It is resisted as being too good to be true and / or unfair. I Cor.1:23
- g. The causes of justification. These causes are emphasized in different ways and orders by different Christian traditions.
- The originating cause – Grace of God – This is the organizing principle of the Gospel.
 - The procuring cause – Love of God – This draws the sinner to trust God.
 - The meritorious cause – Atonement through the Cross – This is the means by which the love and justice of God are satisfied.
 - The preparatory cause – Repentance – This is the move from self-sufficiency to trust in Christ on the part of the sinner.
 - The instrumental cause – Baptism – This is the outward expression of repentance.
 - The activating cause – Saving Faith – This is the point at which the transfer of forgiveness takes place.
 - The formal cause – The justice of God – This is the framework against which the drama of the cross is worked out.
 - The final cause – The Glory of God – This is the ultimate purpose for the Gospel.
- h. Justification’s metaphors
- a. Pardon is the work of the court’s mercy.
 - b. Forgiveness is the work of the parent’s mercy.
 - c. Justification is the work of the law.
4. **Adoption** - restored to a position of favor with God.

Key definition

Adoption

Adoption is the act of God whereby he joyfully embraces the believer as a special child in His family.

- a. Key texts.
 - **Jn.1:12** “he gave power to become children of God.”
 - **Eph.1:5** “He predestined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ,”
 - **Gal.4:4-5** “that we might receive adoption as sons.”
- b. It takes place at conversion.
- c. It includes the sharing of the same spirit with the Father.

- d. It is a dimension of favor that is deeper than being children of God by virtue of creation (Acts.17:24-29) an “image bearer.” I Jn.3:1
 - e. It places us in a family to which we did not naturally belong. Eph.2:3
 - f. It means complete freedom from former relationships, particularly to the Law. Gal.4:5
 - g. It is possible only because of a voluntary act of the one doing the adopting. Eph.1:5
 - h. It means that we have full rights to all the privileges of being in God’s family. Rom.8:15
5. **Propitiation** - restored to a position of favor with God.

Key definition

Propitiation

Propitiation means that the death of Christ fully satisfies the demands of a righteous God with respect to judgment upon the sinner.

- a. Key texts.
 - **Rom.3:25** “whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.”
 - **I Jn..2:2** “and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”
 - **I Jn.4:10** “In this is love, not that we loved god, but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins.”
 - Heb..2:17; Lk.18:13; Matt.16:22; Heb.8:12
- b. The just wrath of God against sin requires satisfaction.
 1. The O.T. makes this clear. Job 21:20; Jer.21:12; Ezk.24:8,13
 2. The N.T. also speaks of God’s wrath. Mk.3:5; Lk.21:23; Matt.3:7; Lk.3:7; Jn.3:36; Rom.9:22; Eph.5:6; Col.3:6; Rev.6:16; 11:18; 14:10; 16:19; 19:15
 3. The O.T. examples of (Mrh "herem") “ban” or “devoted to the Lord” expressed in genocide of Joshua (Deut.7:1-2, 20:16-17 “When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations . . . then you must destroy them totally . . . and show them no mercy. Do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy them . . . as the Lord our God has commanded you.”) are examples of the extent of God’s wrath against sin. These acts help us understand the significance of the Cross, which was not only a sign of God’s love for sinners but also a sign of God’s judgment on sin.
- c. The wrath of God in the Bible is distinct from the pagan concept of an angry god venting his temper on his subjects.
 1. It is not the question of satisfying a vengeful God, but satisfying a God who is just, righteous and holy in all of His dealing.
 2. This God not only demands complete satisfaction but is also the God of love who sent His Son to make propitiation.
 3. The picture of a human being placating an angry deity is not characteristic of N.T. teaching.

- d. The results of propitiation
 - 1. God is justified in forgiving sin.
 - 2. God is justified in bestowing righteousness.
 - 3. God is justified in bestowing all grace on sinners. There is no basis for double jeopardy. Our sin will not bring God’s wrath to us if we are in Christ.
- e. A question over which theologians are divided. Is the real issue the removal of sin through human repentance or the satisfaction of God’s demand for atonement through the sacrifice of Christ?

Expiation (Sin was expiated)
Focus is on removal of the obstacles to the relationship
The issue is (subjective) repentance from sin
Christ was a noble martyr
Kingdom ethics
Man is free to choose
Christ suffers with man
God’s love
Man’s alienation needs to be addressed

Propitiation (God was propitiated)
Focus is on the welcoming attitude of God for whom the obstacle was removed.
The issue is (objective) appeasing the wrath of God.
Christ was the “lamb of sacrifice”
King
Man is bound by sin
Christ suffers for man
God’s justice
God’s holiness needs to be addressed

NOTE: The concept of “expiation” with its emphasis not on the demands of God’s character but on the guilt of man has often been offered as the preferred emphasis noting that atonement is made more “for sin” as opposed to “to God.” This emphasis is popular among those who are offended by the notion that God is a God of wrath. (C.H. Dodd). The Greek term (HILASMOS) however is best rendered “propitiation” with the idea of satisfying the just wrath of God against sin.

- 6. **Reconciliation** – restoration of peace between man and God by the removal of all barriers.

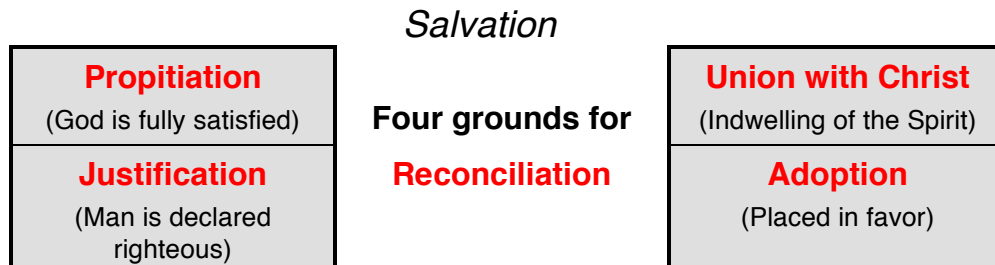
Key definition

Reconciliation

Reconciliation means that man’s state of alienation from God is changed so that he is able to be saved.

- a. Key texts.
 - **Rom.5:10-11** “For if when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”
 - **II Cor.5:18-19** “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them”

- **II Cor.5:21**“We implore you on Christ’s behalf; Be reconciled to God.”
 - **Col.1:21-22** “Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.”
- b. Reconciliation is pictured as a completed work by God through Christ that must be accepted by faith before it’s blessings can be applied to our lives.
1. We are not reconciled through our moral discipline or repentance from moral failure.
 2. Our experience of reconciliation comes through faith. II Cor.5:21
- c. The relationship of various aspects of salvation can be seen in the chart below.



Questions that you should be able to answer.

- 1. Specific facts you should know.**
 - a. How would you define the following terms - Adoption, Justification, Propitiation, Union with Christ, Reconciliation, Saving faith, Conversion, Repentance?
 - b. What is a clear text that teaches salvation by grace through faith?
 - c. What is the meaning of a person’s “position in Christ”?
 - d. What are four different kinds of righteousness mentioned in the Bible?
- 2. Issues that you should be able to discuss.**
 - a. How are these terms related - Adoption, Justification, Propitiation, Union with Christ, Reconciliation, Saving faith, Conversion, Repentance?
 - b. What is the difference between God’s general and effectual calling?
- 3. Questions you should wrestle with.**
 - a. Does faith come after during or before regeneration?
 - b. Is God’s call to faith irresistible?