



Soteriology - The Doctrine of Salvation - Part 3



The Meaning and Scope of Salvation

Phase III.

This is the future tense of salvation which refers to the future deliverance all believers in Christ will experience through a glorified resurrected body.

It contemplates that, though once and for all saved from the penalty of sin and while now being delivered from the power of sin, the believer in Christ will yet be saved into full conformity to Jesus Christ

Romans 8:29 New International Version

29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

Romans 13:11 New International Version

The Day Is Near

11 And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

1 Peter 1:5 New International Version

5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 John 3:2 New International Version

2 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,^[a] we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

This recognizes and shows that the Christian in his experience never becomes perfect in this life.

Philippians 3:12-14 New International Version

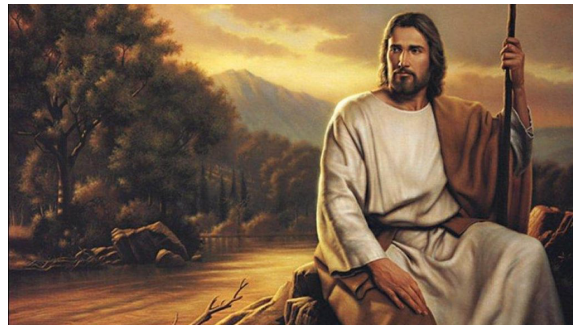
12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Full conformity to the character of Christ, experientially speaking, awaits ultimate glorification.

However, the fact that some aspects of salvation for the one who believes are yet to be accomplished in no way implies that there is ground for doubt as to the outcome of eternal salvation because all three phases are dependent upon the merit and the work of God in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.



3 The Nature of Salvation As the Work of God

Salvation is the free gift of God to man by grace through faith, completely aside from human works.

Works in the life of a believer are tremendously important, but they are to be the result of receiving and appropriating God's grace in the salvation they receive.

As the prophet declares in:



Jonah 2:9 New International Version

9

But I, with shouts of grateful praise,
will sacrifice to you.
What I have vowed I will make good.
I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the Lord.’”

“Therefore, in every aspect it is a work of God in behalf of man and is in no sense a work of man in behalf of God.”

4 Salvation as the saving work of God so completely provides for the believer that believers are declared “complete in Christ” and “blessed with every spiritual blessing” (Col. 2:10; Eph. 1:3).

Colossians 2:10 New International Version

10 and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.

Ephesians 1:3 New International Version

Praise for Spiritual Blessings in Christ

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

A fathomless source of blessings become the possession of all believers when they trust in Christ as their Savior.

The Apostle Paul refers to these blessings as “the unfathomable riches of Christ” in Ephesians 3:8.

Ephesians 3:8 New International Version

8 Although I am less than the least of all the Lord’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ,

“Unfathomable” is the Greek *anexichniastos* which means “past finding out, unsearchable, not to be tracked out.”

The idea is that our blessings in Christ are “too deep to be measured.”



This saving work of God encompasses various aspects which together accomplish salvation: these include redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, propitiation, justification, imputation, regeneration, propitiation, expiation, sanctification, and even glorification.

It is all of this and much more which provide salvation, make believers qualified for heaven and become the children of God:

John 1:12 New International Version

12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

Colossians 1:12 New International Version

12 and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[a] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.

Ephesians 1:6 New International Version

6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

As a Finished Work



The last words uttered by the Savior just before He died on the cross were, “It is finished.”

He was not referring to the end of His life or ministry, but of His substitutionary sufferings on the cross which He would complete by His death which occurred immediately following **His shout, “It is finished.”**

He was declaring He had finished the special work of salvation which the Father had given Him to accomplish.

We speak of “the finished work of Christ” because there is nothing left to be done to provide man’s salvation.

God has done it all in the person and work of His Son and He raised Him from the dead as the proof of that very fact.

The work of God in Christ is a once-and-for-all work of God accomplished in total by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Christ’s death was distinctly a work accomplished for the entire world (John 3:16; Heb. 2:9) and, provisionally speaking, it provided redemption (1 Tim. 2:6), reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19), and propitiation (the appeasement or satisfaction of God’s holiness) (1 John 2:2) for every person in the world.



John 3:16 New International Version

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Hebrews 2:9 New International Version

9 But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

1 Timothy 2:6 New International Version

6 who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

2 Corinthians 5:19 New International Version

19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

1 John 2:2 New International Version

2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Salvation is a done proposition.





Man's responsibility is to accept this by faith, faith alone in Christ alone.

The finished work of Christ includes not only deliverance from the penalty of sin, but also from the power of sin.

Faith in Christ for salvation means coming to Him as the source of salvation from every aspect of sin through trusting in the accomplished work of Christ.

When Christ cried out, "It is finished" (Greek, *telesthai*, the perfect tense of *teleo*, "to complete, finish" expressing completed action with continuing results), He was affirming the fact of the finished nature of what He had accomplished on the cross for the world.

Regarding Christ's work as a finished work, Lewis Chafer wrote:

The fact that Christ died does not in itself save men, but it provides the one and only sufficient ground upon which God in full harmony with His perfect holiness is free to save even the chief of sinners.

This is the good news which the Christian is appointed to proclaim to all the world.

5 In all the other religions of the world, salvation is a work that man does for God.



This is what makes biblical Christianity distinct from all the religions of the world because in the Bible, salvation is of the Lord (Psalm 37:39); it is the work of God for man and Christ's final shout of victory affirmed this truth. Since Christ's work is finished, it should be clear that salvation is not a work of man for God.

Psalm 37:39 New International Version

The salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord; he is their stronghold in time of trouble.

When a person comes to Christ, he is acknowledging that he cannot save himself but has now recognized the work of salvation God has wrought for him and which he accepts as God's gift. Salvation originates in God's purposes, not in man's and is forever delivered from any legalistic approach that would elevate human works as a ground for salvation.



Friends, please remember that you can't buy your way into Heaven or out of Hell.

Rev. Jesus Del Rio, Ed