

How To Be Saved?

Just three chapters into the Bible, men and women are in need of a Saviour to deliver them from the curse and consequences of sin.

Shortly after the first sin of Adam and Eve, God gave a wonderful promise to send a Saviour, 'the seed of the woman' to come and crush the head of the serpent that tempted them to sin.

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

From that time, up until the birth of Christ, man was waiting and looking for one who would rescue (save) him from the curse and the effect of sin.

Even now, there is hard-wired in all of us the desire for a Saviour. This is seen in everything from the latest political or social movement to so many movie plot lines.

As we look into the Bible, we see that all of man's attempts to save himself have never worked. But God, who is both able and willing, designed a plan of salvation before the world began by which He could save all mankind.

No subject is more important than salvation, because:

- It is about deliverance from the penalty, power and presence of sin.
- It is about how people who are condemned to be separated from God for all eternity in the lake of fire can escape such an awful fate.
- There is only one means of salvation; not many.

Acts 4:12

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

In this lesson, we will look at: 1) Who salvation is for; 2) What salvation does for us; 3) Why salvation is essential; 4) How God saves; 5) The wrong way to try to be saved; and 6) The right (& only) way to be saved.

KEY VERSE: Ephesians 2:8-9 *'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.'*

BOOKS TO MEMORISE: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, **Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi**

CHAPTERS TO READ THIS WEEK: Genesis 22-29

1. WHO IS SALVATION FOR

God's salvation is FOR THE UNRIGHTEOUS.

Romans 3:21

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

'But now'

The book of Romans is written like a legal defence of God's dealings with men.

It shows the righteousness of God in allowing "the just to live by faith" (1:17)

In Romans 1:18-3:20, God shows that no one is righteous based on their own merit. Romans 3:9-20 sums up this argument.

Romans 3:9-20

⁹ What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; ¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: ¹¹ There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. ¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ¹³ Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: ¹⁴ Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: ¹⁵ Their feet are swift to shed blood: ¹⁶ Destruction and misery are in their ways: ¹⁷ And the way of peace have they not known: ¹⁸ There is no fear of God before their eyes. ¹⁹ Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Notice, in Romans 3:19-20, that the whole purpose of God's law (summed up in the ten commandments) was:

To show those who have the law (Jews) that they have broken God's law,

To stop their mouths from protesting about their own goodness,

To show that all the world is guilty before God,

To show that no person is righteous in the sight of God through their own good deeds, and

To show that all the law can do is help us realise that we are sinners.

'the righteousness of God without the law'

When measured up to God's personal infinite righteousness, man falls far short and the law points this out very clearly.

But now, we read about a different kind of righteousness - a righteousness that comes 'without the law'.

This is a righteousness that man can have even though he has not and cannot keep the law.

It is a righteousness that we can have even though we have done wrong, broken many of God's laws and stand completely guilty before God.

'is manifest'

Manifested = to make clear or to reveal

No doubt this is a reference to Jesus Christ who came into the world.

2 Timothy 1:10

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

'being witnessed by the law and the prophets'

'The law and the prophets' is a way to refer to the entire Old Testament.

All through the Old Testament, there are many pictures and prophecies that point to the one who will come and take away the sins of the world.

Romans 4 gives a couple Old Testament examples: Abraham (v.3) and David (v.6).

John 1:29

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

The Gospel Is Not for 'Good' People.

We need to understand that this whole plan of salvation is not for good people, because no such people exist. By God's standards, there are truly no good people.

God's salvation is for those who know they don't measure up, who stand guilty before God.

As we look into our own hearts and lives, if we are honest, there is much about which to be ashamed. What a relief to know that there is a way to be saved apart from deserving it.

Illustration: The Fire Brigade

Imagine the fire brigade showed up at your house and tried to rescue you from a fire that you didn't know existed.

You'd have to be informed of the fire first before you let them drench your entire home with water. But once you realised the fire was real, you'd do anything to have them put it out.

In the same way, we have to first understand we are in trouble and need help before we will accept the deliverance of the Saviour.

2. WHAT SALVATION DOES

God's salvation MAKES RIGHTEOUS ALL WHO BELIEVE ON JESUS.

Romans 3:22

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

'Even the righteousness of God'

Righteousness can be defined as "the state or condition of perfectly conforming to God's perfect law and holy character."

What is so great about the righteousness of God is that it is given to unrighteous people and it makes them righteous.

God does not just **overlook** man's unrighteousness; instead He **transforms** the unrighteous person - making them legally, practically, and eventually totally free from sin.

'which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference'

The way we can receive this gift of righteousness from God is by faith of Jesus Christ.

When we accept...

Jesus Christ as God's chosen Saviour and Deliverer

who came from God and was God

and when we trust in Him and what He did on the cross

we are made righteous in the sight of God.

Anyone and everyone who believes will have this righteousness come *upon* them. *There is no difference.*

It doesn't matter who you are or what you've done, you too can have this great righteousness given to you if you will just accept Jesus Christ and believe on Him!

Man's Religion vs God's Salvation

Manmade religion only dresses man up and helps him look and act better. It tries to reform man from the outside.

God's salvation totally changes us. It give us a new legal standing before God. It gives us a new inner power to change the way we live. And it promises to take us out of this world, to give us a new body, and to take us to a place where there will be no more unrighteousness.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

3. WHY SALVATION IS ESSENTIAL

God's salvation is essential BECAUSE NONE OF US ARE GOOD ENOUGH.

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

The reason we need this type of salvation is because we can't earn it.

We are sinners by nature. We have sin by virtue of being human.

This sin nature was given to us by our father, who got it from his father, who ultimately got it from Adam.

Romans 5:12

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Psalm 51:5

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; And in sin did my mother conceive me.

We are sinners by choice. We keep on falling short of God's righteous standards.

We have sinned in the past, and we continue to sin in the present.

We continue to "come short" of the glory (splendour) of God.

We are not judged by man's standards, but by God's standards.

EXAMPLE: Consider how our 'best' cooking might be very poor compared to a three Michelin star chef.

The reason God offers righteousness that comes to us through faith is because we are all sinners who can't earn it any other way.

4. HOW GOD SAVES US

God's salvation is BY GRACE THROUGH THE DEATH OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS.

Romans 3:24

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Justified = a legal declaration of righteousness as a result of God's imputing (giving) Christ's righteousness to all who believe on Him

This justification is free! There's nothing we have or can do to pay for it.

We can't work for it, give money for it, or earn it.

How can it be free? It is not that God's salvation is of no value or don't cost anything. It's just that it has already been paid for. It was paid for by Jesus Christ on the cross.

Redemption = paying the price of freedom

On the cross Jesus died and shed His blood to pay for our sin and to purchase our salvation.

'By his grace'

This is how salvation can be offered freely - because it is already paid.

It does not need to be paid for twice - Christ already paid for all our sins.

Romans 3:25

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Jesus Christ, the One who is both the eternal Son of God and fully man, was publicly "set forth" by God as a propitiation.

Propitiation = an atoning sacrifice, also translated as "mercy seat" in Heb 9:25

Jesus is the eternal atoning sacrificial lamb that God provided and who satisfied God's righteous demands and makes atonement for us.

When we trust in Jesus and His shed blood, God can righteously forgive our sins and God is shown to be righteous in how He forgave the sins and was patient with sinners in the past.

Past animal sacrifices to God pointed to this one sacrifice on the cross.

Based on that one sacrifice, all people past, present, and future can and will be forgiven.

Hebrews 10:10-14

¹⁰ By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹ And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: ¹² But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; ¹³ From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Romans 3:26

To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Again, we find the emphasis on God's righteousness.

God is not unrighteous (corrupt) when he justifies the unrighteous person - because their sin was already paid for through the death of Jesus, an eternal, infinite, innocent man.

The cross is how God can be just when He justifies all those unrighteous people who believe on Jesus!

God's salvation is an amazing plan that is both just (satisfied the payment for man's sin) and gracious (allows guilty sinners to be justified).

5. THE WRONG WAY TO TRY TO BE SAVED

God' salvation does NOT COME THROUGH OUR WORKS.

Romans 3:27

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

If God's salvation is...

- for the unrighteous
- makes unrighteous believers righteous
because we are all sinners
- and is based on Christ's death on the cross

Then...

- there is nothing that we can boast about.

We are unrighteous sinners who cannot save ourselves.

We cannot add one ounce of goodness or merit to our salvation.

We just accept it freely through believing on Jesus.

God's plan of salvation excludes (shuts out) all boasting.

Does law keeping or works help? No.

Only the law of faith - that we must believe and must trust Him.

Romans 3:28

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

The conclusion is that all men are justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

We have to stop thinking we can save ourselves or right our wrongs with some kind of good living.

Luke 18:9-14

⁹ And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰ Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. ¹² I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. ¹³ And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

We must humble ourselves and realise that we are not good, will never been good on your own, and ask for God's help.

As long as we think we are good, that we are okay, that we don't need salvation, we will not be saved ('abased').

But if we humbly cry out to God in faith, He will save ('exalt') you.

6. THE RIGHT (& ONLY) WAY TO BE SAVED

God's salvation is **FREELY GIVEN TO ALL WHO BELIEVE ON JESUS**

Romans 3:29–31

²⁹ Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: ³⁰ Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. ³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

The self-righteous Jews thought they had a monopoly on God - that they were the only ones whom God loved and with whom God was impressed.

No, God is not just the God of the Jews. He is the God of the Gentiles (of everyone).

This God of the Jews (Deut 6:4 “Here, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD”) is the same God who justifies (makes righteous)...

the circumcision (Jews) by faith

and the uncircumcision (non-Jews) by faith.

God's whole plan of salvation does not make the law void (invalid).

On the contrary ('God forbid!'), God's plan establishes the entire purpose of the law, which is to cause men to:

See that they are sinners.

See that their only hope is to cry out to God in faith

Believe on Jesus Christ and His work on the cross.

Salvation can be yours.

Christ's righteousness can be yours.

God can be your God.

Just believe!

Acts 16:30–31

³⁰ And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? ³¹ And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.