

What does it mean, 'to be saved'?

To accept the only way of salvation

There has never been any shortage of people telling you how you can get right with God. The way many of them would tell you ... you would think that God *owes us* Heaven, despite how we might treat Him. Heaven is a forgone conclusion, - if there's such a place ... you'll make it because after all 'you're not too bad'.

Let's mention again very briefly what we have talked about already:

THE HOLINESS OF GOD

- * **God is Separate.** He has no comparison. There is none like Him. He alone is eternal. He is the Creator. He is the Destroyer. He's the Provider. He's the Listener. His love has all the intimacy of a father for his children.
- * **God is Sinless.** He is absolutely perfect ... holy, and all His actions/judgements are based upon His holiness.
- * **God is Sovereign.** He is in total and absolute control of the minutest details. What doesn't matter to others matters to God. Nothing happens without His permission.

And then, on the hand, completely contrary to **the Holiness of God is the awfulness of the character of sin**. We thought about how **sin excludes God** and how it is perfectly natural not to want to hear anything about Him or have anything to do with Him. If you come up to me afterwards and say, "I don't want to hear what you are talking about anymore" I wouldn't be surprised ... because that is a totally natural reaction ... **sin excludes God**. And not only that ... **sin expels God** because sin has no time for God. Sin is hell-bent on denying God access to your life. And in an attempt to eradicate Him **sin exchanges God** for something less threatening and sets in God's place a god of our own making so that that is no threat to the way we live and think.

We are asking the question, "What does it mean to be saved?" ... And we need to be sure of the answer because it affects where we spend eternity,

- * I had a member of one of the churches who told me quite innocently that it didn't matter what you believed as long as you believed, and if you believed sincerely enough that was sufficient to save you.

- * I had another member who believed you can't be sure if you are good enough for God to welcome you into His Heaven ... and she went to her deathbed believing that.

So you see, I'm not out of place looking at this most important of questions even within the context of a Baptist congregation because we need to be sure *what it means to be saved*.

We can have different views on Bible versions, the timing of the Second Coming, etc, but I'm not willing to accommodate any other teaching about "What does it mean to be saved?" other than that which God's Word presents.

GOD'S WORD IS SO CLEAR

- * There is only one way to be saved ... and the Bible makes it so clear throughout.
- * The only way to be saved is to have a living relationship with God in the way that He has appointed.
- * Before they came under the mastery of sin in the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve enjoyed a living relationship with God,
 - * He had prepared them for it,
 - * He had made all the necessary arrangements whereby they would enjoy His presence,
 - * It was the reason that God gave to them life, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever".
- * About the time of Seth the Bible tells us that ('ordinary') men began [to call upon the name of the LORD](#).
- * The man Enoch, - seventh from Adam, - had a wonderful relationship with God, [Gen. 5:22 Enoch walked with God](#).
- * Abraham, - James 2:23, - [believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God](#).
- * Moses, Samuel, David, the Prophets all enjoyed a living relationship with God.
- * When you come into the wilderness God – through Moses – instituted the sacrificial system whereby the sinner would bring a sacrifice of a lamb to the altar to atone for, - wash away, - his sin. This was the only means by which the sinner would have a living relationship with God. There was no other way.
- * However, as time progressed, the sacrifice took on new meaning ... and it was just something that you did and were seen to be doing.

- * By the time of Malachi the sacrifice of the offering had degenerated and the people were merely going through the motions. Here is what God said to them,
 - * Mal. 1:7 Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar ... 10 I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. ... 12 But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible. 13 Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.
- * The place of sacrifice had become deformed and the way of the lamb, - the offering on the altar, - had been profaned.
- * But God did not relax on His Holy nature, neither did He make excuses for the sinfulness of man,
 - * Indeed it is Malachi who tells us that God cannot change. He is not willing to accept anything less than total and absolute perfectness.
- * Sin has always been in opposition to His character, ... but here is what He did ...
- * For the people whom He loved so much He sent His only-begotten Son into this world to carry out the cruellest agenda that any Man had to fulfil.
- * When Jesus left the majesty of Heaven ...
 - * He left behind Him all the worship and all the glory and all the praises that the people of Heaven brought on to Him.
 - * He set aside the Throne, He stepped out from the centre of the delight of God's people in glory, and He took upon him the form of a servant,
 - * He became a Man without a home; He took upon Himself and He stood up against all the ridicule and all the sarcasm and hatred that was hurled at Him,
 - * He had only one direction in life, ... from the very moment He was born, ... and that was towards a cruel cross.
- * He didn't have to die to prove anything to Himself, but He did have to die if ever the sins of His people would be taken away.
- * His body had to be callously broken, His blood had to be freely poured out. It was the most heartless, merciless, cruel event that this world has ever witnessed.

- * No angel could have stood in His place. No prophet or apostle was worthy. Only Jesus Christ was perfect enough to wash away the sins of all those who would call upon His Name!
- * **God's Word is so clear** and it is so emphatic and so full of grace ... *Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*
- * The only way to be saved is to accept the only way of salvation that is through Christ and through Him alone. *There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*
- * You don't need to go to university, you don't need to climb a huge mountain barefooted, you don't need to 'turn over a new leaf' and try to change your lifestyle, ... if you're not saved, - **God's Word is so clear**, - you need to come to Jesus and pray a simple prayer but really mean it, "Come into my heart, Lord Jesus, come in today, come in to stay. Come into my heart, Lord Jesus."

GOD'S WORD IS SO PERSONAL

- * It gives everyone the opportunity, *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*
- * The door of God's mercy is open to all. Jesus called out to the great numbers of people in Galilee, *Mt. 11: 28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*
- * It's not for a certain type of person that the world has put into its various moulds,
 - * It was for Mary Magdalene, the prostitute who was demon-possessed,
 - * It was for the thief on the cross,
 - * It was for Saul/Paul, the hater of all things Christian,
 - * It was for Nicodemus, the man who everybody looked up to and who thought he was good enough.
- * All these people Jesus found *personally*.
- * And when you come to Christ, you come to Him *personally*,
 - * You yourself see that sin we were talking about last Sunday morning and the insurmountable barrier to your salvation,
 - * You see yourself as being totally hell-deserving and as being unworthy before God.

- * This is why I say that **GOD'S WORD IS SO CHALLENGING**. It meets you and it speaks to you where you are.

CONCLUSION.

- * So, what must I do to be saved? **God's Word is so clear** about what you must do. You must accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour. That's God's only remedy for sin.
- * And **God's Word is so personal** because He's speaking *to you*, - He's looking right into your heart and He can see the sin in your life. Stop trying to get rid of it yourself ... because you can't do it. Come to Him and He will take out the old stony heart and create in you a new heart that desires only to follow after Him.
- * What do you think it was that changed Mary Magdalene, and the rascal tax-collector Matthew, and all those people Jesus has saved, - it was the cleansing blood of the precious Saviour, the Son of God.
- * I trust that the Holy Spirit, this morning, has made **God's Word so challenging**. I hope it hasn't gone over your head. I hope it hasn't 'missed', and that it is working in your heart.
- * If you're not saved I pray that God will save you, that you will see your need to have your sins washed away, and that you will turn to Him this very day.
- * Believer, don't you marvel again at what God has done to bring about your salvation?
- * You've heard what I have been preaching over and over again from the lips of so many other preachers and it thrills your heart!
- * "Thank You Lord, for saving my soul. Thank You Lord, for making me whole. Thank You Lord, for giving to me Thy great salvation so rich, so free."
- * Praise God for Calvary. Praise God for reaching down and lifting you out of the miry pit. Maybe you've been dangling your feet in it over this last wee while. Stand up again on that Rock. Remember from what He has saved you. Stand up! Give Him His place in your life again. Hold back nothing from Him. Give Him it all. And enjoy the pleasure and privilege of knowing sins forgiven, that your place is reserved in Heaven, that you're a child of the King, that you are safe in the hand of the Master, out of which no one can steal you away.