

What Does Salvation Mean?

Ephesians 2:1-10

Intro:

1. "Salvation" is a technical, theological word which few non believers understand.
2. Christians use it differently than the world does & often differ from one another.
3. What does it mean, then, to be saved?

I. What is Salvation?

- A. **Save** (σώζω) = rescue, deliver, keep from harm, preserve.
- B. Jesus used the word to mean "physical healing".
 1. **The woman with the issue of blood** - Matt 9:20-22.
 - a. She said, **If I only touch His cloak, I will be healed (saved)** - v21.
 - b. The Lord answered, **Take heart, daughter, your faith has healed you (saved you)** - v22.
 2. **Blind Bartimaeus** - The Lord said to him, **Your faith has made you whole (saved you)** - Mk 10:52.
 3. **The 10th Leper** - The Lord said, **Rise and go; your faith has made you well (saved you)** - Lk 17:19.
- C. Jesus used the word to mean "escape from physical danger".
 1. **ILL: Jesus Calms the Storm** - the disciples in the sinking boat cried, **Lord, save us! We're going to drown!** - Matt 8:25.
 2. **ILL: Jesus Walks on the Water** - Peter cried as he was sinking, **Lord, save me!** - Matt 14:30.
 3. **ILL: Criticism from the Chief Priests While on the Cross** - He **saved others,"** they said, "but he can't **save himself! He's the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God' .** - Matt 27:42-43.
- D. There is only a short step from salvation from disease & danger to salvation from death to eternal life!

II. What Does Salvation Do for You?

- A. You are saved **from** something - **to** something - **for** something!
- B. You are saved **from**:
 1. Being lost - Lk 19:10.
 2. Perishing & hell - 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.** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to **save the world** through him. - Jn 3:16-17.
 3. Sins - Matt 1:21.
 4. This body of death - Rom 7:24-25.
 5. The curse of the Law - Gal 3:13.
- C. You are saved **to**:
 1. Repentance - **Repent** and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. - Act 2:38.
 2. Satisfy spiritual hungering & thirsting - I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never **go hungry**, and he who believes in me will never **be thirsty.** - Jn 6:35.
 3. A new beginning as a new creation - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation;** the old has gone, the new has come! - II Cor 5:17.
- D. You are saved **for**:
 1. Rest - There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. - Heb 4:9-10. The context identifies this "rest" as eternal life after you die.
 2. Eternal Life - Jn 5:39-40.
 3. Bearing fruit - I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing - Jn 15:5.
 4. Peace - Rom 5:1.

5. Reconciliation to God - Col 1:19-20.
6. A holy calling - II Tim 1:8-9.
7. Becoming heirs of eternal life - Tit 3:7.

III. How Do I Get Salvation?

A. There are 3 ways people have tried to get salvation.

B. The Merit System.

1. We earn our salvation by keeping all the laws of God.
2. Life is a giant book keeping system. If my good deeds outweigh my bad deeds, I'm saved!
3. Almost all the religions of the world use this system.
4. What's wrong with this system?
 - a. It opposes God's plan of salvation which is salvation by God's grace.
 - b. It assumes bad deeds can be offset with good ones - but only God knows what would cancel out a bad deed - not us!

C. The Miracle System.

1. The Miracle System is an over reaction to the Merit System.
2. If you're not saved by merit, what saves you? Faith - intellectual faith - & it's faith alone! Eph 2:8-9 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.
 - a. BUT - if faith is produced by you, isn't that a merit?
 - b. No - because you can't get faith unless God supernaturally gives it to you!
 - c. But how do I know if I have it? God gives you supernatural conversion experience.
3. What's wrong with this system?
 - a. In Eph 2:8-9 "gift" refers to "saved", not "faith". Jesus gave salvation to you in Jn 3:16! - 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.
 - b. Besides, if God gives you faith supernaturally, why doesn't He give it to everyone? II Pet 3:9 - The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
 - c. Besides, nobody is saved by faith only, or anything else only! Jam 2:24 - You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.
 - d. Other things also save us: the gospel (Rom 1:16 & I Cor 15:2); Jesus' life (Rom 5:10); grace (Eph 2:5); faith & baptism (Mk 16:16); obedience (Heb 5:9) & hope (Rom 8:24).

D. The Mercy System.

1. God's part. Jn 3:16-17 - 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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.
 - a. The Father sent His Son to live a perfect life & to die on the cross.
 - b. Lord Jesus died on the cross to make salvation available to whoever wants it - Matt 16:25.
2. Your part. Phil 2:12-13 - 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, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.
 - a. If you receive a check, you need to cash it before you get the money.
 - b. God gave you the check (salvation) when Jesus died on the cross, but you need to benefit from it by making life changing decisions: believing, trusting Jesus - having faith - repenting, a decision to obediently change your lifestyle - the good confession, your personal statement of faith; baptism, identifying with Lord Jesus & His gospel; allowing the Holy Spirit to begin transforming your life to become a godly one.

God may make changes to His biblically revealed plan if He desires - but you & I are commissioned to proclaim the one way He has revealed. Let's go proclaim it!