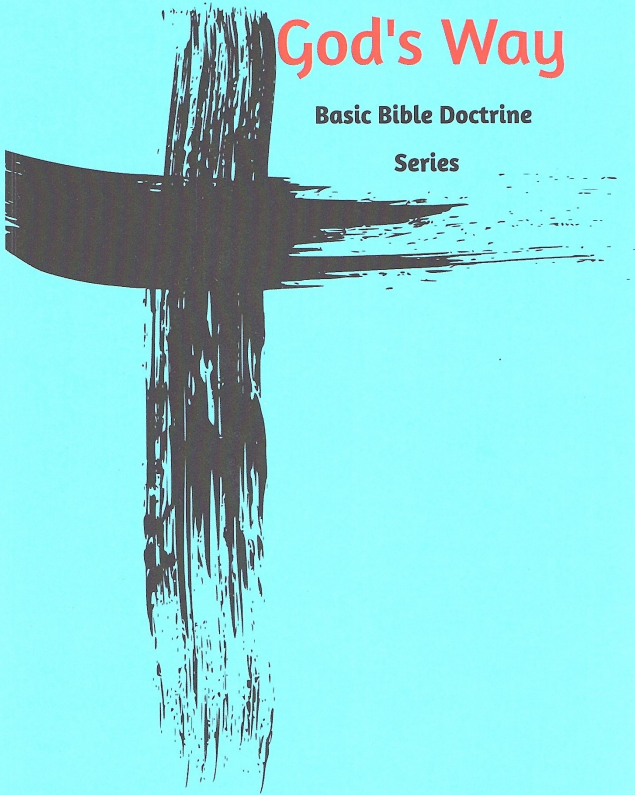


# Salvation, God's Way

**Basic Bible Doctrine**

**Series**



**Paul Dodson Th.D.**

# Salvation God's Way

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God's Way**

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Basic Bible Doctrine Series

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## Preface

Many things in this world are essential to the human race. Climate change, peace, national security, and financial stability too name a few. No doubt, depending upon the person, more could be added to this list. However, as crucial as these topics are, all are merely temporal.

All of these things will change over time and become less of a concern. But, there is one topic of human interest that is not temporal, mainly the matter of eternity.

Within this subject are two main thoughts: first, there is no eternity at all, and second, we will all spend eternity somewhere. Mr. Dodson did not write this book to address the issue of which is correct. However, he will proceed with the understanding that every person will spend eternity somewhere. This "somewhere" is either in Heaven with their creator or in Hell separated from Him for all eternity. With this in mind, our attention should be drawn to these questions; "Why do I need to be saved?", "How can I be sure I am going to be in Heaven with God and not in Hell?" And "what must I do to be saved?"

These questions and more are what this book sets out to answer. But not from a religious,

humanistic, or dogmatic point of view, but a biblical viewpoint, free from denominational dogma and personal feeling.

Join Mr. Dodson now as he embarks on a mission of truth and find the answer to life's most important question of all; what is salvation, God's way?



## **2 Timothy 2:15**

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”





### **Isaiah 33:22**

“For the Lord is our judge, the Lord  
is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king:  
he will save us.”

# Need of Salvation

## Chapter One

The old saying, "you must first convince a person they are lost before you can lead them to safety" is so apt in this situation. Most people walking around on planet Earth today have no idea of their need for salvation. When asked if they have ever been saved many will say, "oh yes, I was saved once," and then give details of a time they were in a car accident or a burning house or a boating accident, and how someone saved them. However, when asking if they have ever been "spiritual" saved, many have no answer. Most will look at you as if you had just spoken in a foreign language. When trying to talk to someone about their eternal security this breach in understanding can be a huge hindrance.

Another area that causes issues when trying to talk to someone about their eternal security is the lack of parity among teachers. Everywhere you turn, the message is different. Some Pastors teach one thing and others teach something completely different. As well, every person on the Television has some new way to get to Heaven. Besides that, every denomination pushes some type of dogma or the other. Dogma, or

a set of principles laid down by authorities that are absolute, can not all be correct if they all say something different. So, what is the truth?

But the problem is even more profound than that. Many would-be Evangelists like to using terms such as saved, born again, eternally secure, and other such Biblical phrases without clearly explaining what they mean. Even Jesus, the very God of all the Universe, had problems with people understanding what He meant. An excellent example of this is found in John chapter three. Jesus is talking to Nicodemus and tells him that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Nicodemus, not understanding the phrase "born again," becomes confused. If Jesus had left it there or continued on with what He was doing, Nicodemus would never have understood the Gospel. But, Jesus did not stop there. He explained what "born again" meant and that He was talking about spiritual birth and not a physical one. This example from God Himself should serve us well as we begin this study of salvation, and we shall now try to clearly explain "why" we need to be saved.

Our study begins at the very beginning...the book of Genesis. Here we see that God created everything

and that upon finishing His creation He proclaimed that it was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). This phrase indicates that God's creation was perfect, the "very best" as the words literally mean. Further, we see that God created mankind in "His image and likeness" (Genesis 1:26). Because God is "Holy" (1 Peter 1:15), mankind was also holy. Because God is without sin (Hebrews 4:15), mankind was also created without sin. Understanding this, we also learn that God created mankind for His pleasure (Revelation 4:11), and He longed to have fellowship with His perfect creation (Genesis 3:8, Revelation 21:3,4). This then was God's will for His creation, to be holy, perfect, sinless, and to be in fellowship with Him. At this point, there was no need to be saved because everything was as God intended. Mankind was with his Creator, his God, and there was no separation at all. This was how God created us, and this is how it was...at least for a while.

Then at some point, everything went wrong. Satan, in the form of a serpent, came to Adam and Eve to deceive them. With subtle speech He deceived Eve into doing the one thing God had commanded them not to do...eat of the fruit of the Tree Of Knowledge Of Good And Evil (Genesis 3). Now much could be said about this incident, but we will leave that for another study. What we need to see here is that once Adam and Eve disobeyed

God, something happened. Their eyes were opened, and they understood the difference between good and evil (Genesis 3:7). But something else happened as well. They understood that they had sinned, and this sin caused them to hide from God (Genesis 3:8). At this point, their sin separated them from God (Isaiah 59:2), and God had to drive them from His presents (Genesis 3:24). God's warning that the day they ate of the Tree Of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil they would surely die had come to pass (Genesis 2:17).

But they did not die physically. That would happen many years later and was also not part of God's eternal plan. However, what did happen was that they died spiritually. They had been created as spiritual beings, able to fellowship, commune, and walk with God, who Himself is Spirit (John 4:24). But by sinning, the spirit of God within them left, thus forever separating them from the God that created them. This caused a spiritual death can further be seen in two phrases in the book of Genesis. In Genesis 1:26, it is recorded that God made Adam and Eve "in His likeness and in His image." As discussed earlier, this would include being sinless, holy, eternal, and much more. However, in Genesis 5:3, it is recorded that Adam had sons in "his OWN likeness after HIS image" (emphasis mine). This indicates that Adam's children were no longer in God's likeness

and image but after his own image. This image was an image of sinfulness, mortality, corruption, and of one separated from God. Furthermore, Romans 8:28 tells us that we are to be conformed into Christ image. If we were still in the image of God, why would we need to be transformed?

Now least you think this relates to them and not you and I, consider the following verses...

Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God."

Romans 3:10, "As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one."

Isaiah 64:6, "...all our righteousness are as filthy rags."

Romans 5:12, "Therefore, as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed unto all men, for that all have sinned."

Isaiah 64:6, "...all our righteousness are as filthy rags."

You see, once the knowledge of sin entered into the world, it produced a spiritual death that was passed upon all men from that point on. This

knowledge of sin separated us from God, and this separation will end with us spending eternity in hell eternally separated from God (2 Thess. 1:8,9).

Scripture further tells us that there is nothing we can do about this sin. We can not fix it by works of righteousness (Titus 3:5), nor by being born into a godly country (Lamentations 4:17). Money will not save us (Ezekiel 7:19), and surrounding ourselves with righteous people will not save us either (Ezekiel 33:12). Furthermore, our leaders can not save us (Hosea 13:10), and lastly, there is no salvation in any other way (Acts 4:12).

So, here is the problem we have...We are sinners separated from God, with a sentence of eternal death hanging over our heads. We can not do anything to save ourselves, and no one nor anything else can save us either. So, without some form of salvation we will spend an eternity in a godless hell, forever separated from the one that created us. If ever there was a person in need of salvation, it would be mankind. But, there is hope.

## Discussion Questions For Chapter One

- (1) Please take a few moments to read Genesis chapters two through four. This will help give you a better understanding of some of the points given in this lesson.
  
- (2) Describe several of the characteristics of Adam which made him in the “likeness” and “image” of God.
  
- (3) What is significant between how God created Adam, and how Adam's children were born?
  
- (4) According to Psalm 51:5 and Ephesians 2:3, when exactly do we become sinners?
  
- (5) Do you feel God is justified in pronouncing everyone a sinner?
  
- (6) Have you ever sinned?





### Psalm 32:5

"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD: and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

## Who is to Blame?

### Chapter Two

Several questions will typically arise once people realize and understand that they are eternally separated from God because of their sins. The first question is, "Why would God create us with the ability to sin?" and a second question, very closely related, is, "How can a Holy God send His creation to hell?" Finally, a third question will naturally arise that goes something like this, "What if you have never sinned?" Of course, these are not the only questions that arise when discussing sin and hell, but most other questions will eventually get to these three specific ones. So, let us look at each one separately and we will probably answer many of the other questions along the way.

The first two questions try to bring God's Holiness and motives into question. First, they imply that God did something wrong; mainly, He created us with the ability to sin, and secondly, He blames us for His mistake and we have to pay the price. However, the truth has something different to say. Did God create us with the ability to sin? Well, the answer to that question is a resounding "Yes." Adam and Eve did have the ability to sin, or they could not have sinned at all.

The truth is, the potential for good and evil existed before Adam and Eve ate of the Tree Of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil. However, creating the possibility or potential for sin is not the same as creating sin. Sin is an action, not a created substance. The truth is, 1/3 of the Angels sinned when they rebelled against God in Heaven. So, it could truthfully be said that sin existed BEFORE God created this Heaven and Earth.

In the book of Genesis, we learn that God created, among many things, two specific trees. They are both mentioned in Genesis 2:9 with the first one being the "Tree Of life" and the second one being "The Tree Of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil." We will look at the "Tree Of Life" later, but I want you to see a significant point regarding the second tree. As you recall, God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of the "Tree Of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil," but they did anyway. When they did this, did "sin" enter into the world? Yes, but the potential for sin was already there. Eating the fruit of this tree opened their eyes to sin's existence but it did not create it. Notice the name of the tree, "The Tree Of The **KNOWLEDGE** Of Good And Evil." You see, my dear reader, sin, or should I say the potential for sin, was already there, but they did not know what sin was until after eating from this tree. As we have already mentioned, the

Angels in Heaven had already sinned, so sin was already present, they simply did not have the KNOWLEDGE of it yet. Consider the verses that immediately follow Adam and Eve's disobedient act when they ate of this forbidden tree.

Genesis 3:6 "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Genesis 3:7 "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they **knew** that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Emphasis mine). Notice here that when they disobeyed God, "the eyes of them both were opened, and they KNEW that they were naked." It doesn't say that "sin entered into the word," but that they "KNEW" being naked was a sin. Adam and Eve were naked before they eat of the Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil and possibly had even sinned somewhere else along the line already, but it was not until after they ate of the Tree Of The KNOWLEDGE Of Good And Evil did they know it. Their action was a sin, but had it not involved the Tree Of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil that God had commanded them not to eat of, they would not have known it nor would they have been accountable for it (Romans 5:13).

Furthermore, God Himself says that He created

evil in Isaiah 45:7. This verse does not mean that God literally "created" evil because, as I stated earlier, "sin is an action, not a created substance." But, God did allow for the possibility of evil. You see, God created us for His pleasure (Revelation 4:11), and God finds pleasure in those who love Him and seek Him willingly (Proverbs 8:17). Without the ability to turn the other way, there would be no choice, and we would be nothing more than robots performing God's will.

So, we must conclude that God did not create evil, and neither is He to blame for the evil in the universe. God could have made people in such a way as to act like robots, responding in a predictable manner when God commanded. But that would not give humanity any significance, nor would it give God pleasure. Instead, God decided to make people so that they could choose whether or not to obey Him. Sadly, all of the evil in the universe is due directly to the choices that we individually make. Murder, stealing, lying, and other such sins cannot be blamed on God. People chose to do these things and must be held accountable.

What about earthquakes, floods, famines, and other natural disasters? Again, God is not responsible for these either. They occur as a result of our sin. When the knowledge of sin entered the

universe, judgment naturally followed, and the earth was cursed (Genesis 3:17). The perfect working order that God created became tainted by sin and as a result, the entire creation is now suffering (Romans 8:22).

The conclusion of the matter is that sin is a result of man choosing to disobey God, not something that God literally created. He created us with the ability to make this choice because He did not want us to obey Him because we had to, but because we willingly chose to do so. He also told us what the consequences of disobeying Him would be, and that is death. Adam and Eve made their decision, and the knowledge of good and evil entered into the world, and with that knowledge comes consequences and responsibility. So, if you or I end up in hell, it is not God that sends us there, but we who choose to go there. We make this choice by rejecting God and choosing to do things our way. In the end, we are responsible for our choices individually and can not blame God. He told us "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23) and that those who sin will not go to Heaven but will experience a "second" death (Revelation 21:8), which is the Lake of Fire.

But what about the last question that we ask at the beginning of this chapter? "What if I have never sinned?" This question would suggest that

mankind can be perfect and that some of us may not need salvation. But let us look at this further. Romans 5:12 tells us, "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." Here we learn a universal truth. When Adam and Eve sinned, the knowledge of good and evil became known to mankind, and as a result, we became responsible for our sins. Furthermore, consider the following Scripture...

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5).

"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one . . . For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:10, 23).

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isaiah 64:6).

These verses and so many more clearly tell us that we have all sinned. No one can stand before God

holy and righteous in and of themselves. I think at this point, a good working definition of sin would help out. Sin is "a word, deed, or desire, in opposition to the eternal law of God," or as scripture states, "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). When dealing with Children I define sin as "anything you think, say, or do, that is displeasing to God."

The word "sin" in the Bible comes from a word that means "to miss the mark." It speaks of a person shooting at a target and missing the bull's eye. In regards to this definition, sin would then be defined as anything that misses the mark of God's perfect will in our life. The truth is, we have all said, done, or thought something that was displeasing to God. We have all missed the mark of God's perfect will for our lives. As a result we have all fallen short of God's glory. This "falling short," regardless of what it was, is sin, and sin has been passed upon all men, for all have fallen short.

Since we have all sinned and we can not save ourselves by any means whatsoever, it would be a safe assumption that we all need a saviour to rescue us from this eternal death that is sure to come. The good news is, God has a plan.





**Deuteronomy 24:16**

“The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.”

## Discussion Questions

### For Chapter Two

- (1) When people ask questions regarding why God created man with the ability to sin, what are they doing?
- (2) Did God create us with the ability to sin? Defend your answer.
- (3) Did God create evil? Defend your answer.
- (4) Did eating of the "forbidden" tree bring sin into the world or bring the knowledge of sin? Defend your answer.
- (5) God finds pleasure in those who....?
- (6) In your own words, define "sin."
- (7) Would you agree that if God had not created us with the ability to make choices, we would be nothing more than robots? Defend your answer.



**Amos 3:7**

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing,  
but he revealeth his secret unto his  
servants the prophets."

## The Plan Prophecied

### Chapter Three

Up to this point, we have discussed the negative aspects regarding Biblical salvation and what we must be saved from. And further, we have looked at how God created everything perfect and for His pleasure. However, He also created mankind with the ability to choose. With this ability came consequences which God had laid out and told us from the very beginning. As you recall, mankind chose to disobey God, and because of this, the knowledge of sin entered into the world. Once this happened the penalty for sin... death, became a reality. We also looked at precisely what sin is and that nothing we can do will ever make things right again. The end result? Mankind became eternally separated from His Creator and God.

However, at the end of each chapter, I told you that “there is hope,” and “God has a plan.” Moving forward we are going to look at the “Good News,” the “Gospel” of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16). God does indeed have a plan, and He had this plan from the very creation of the Worlds (1 Peter 1:19-21). One can not read the Holy Scriptures long without realizing that nothing catches God by surprise. He is all knowing, knowing the end from the

beginning (Isaiah 46:10), and He is in complete control of all things (Psalm 115:3). With this said, the disobedience of mankind is no difference. God knew that they would fall. He knew that sin would enter and He knew that His creation would be lost forever....unless... He did something. And with that knowledge, God set in action the most incredible plan of redemption mankind will ever know. A plan so perfect that Satan himself would never be able to overcome. Satan thought he could win. He thought he could defeat God. What he didn't realize was, he was not God. Although he wanted to be “like” God, he could never be God.

As we begin our look into God's perfect plan of salvation, let us first look at three prophecies in Genesis that will set the stage going forward. These three prophecies can be identified as “God's prophecy” regarding His future Salvation, “Gods Correction,” in regards to how to deal with sin, and “God's protection,” concerning the tree of life. The rest of this chapter will be dedicated to looking at these three points. At this point I would suggest you stop and take a moment to read Genesis chapter three in your Bible. It starts with Satan coming to Eve and tempting her with the fruit from the Tree Of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil. Eve entertains Satan and ends up doing the very thing God commanded them not to do. Verse seven states that the “eyes of them both were

opened, and they knew they were naked...” Now, there is nothing sinful about a Husband and Wife being naked together, so why would God mention this in His Word? The act that opened their eyes to sin was eating from the Tree Of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil, not being naked. God used their nakedness as a “type” or picture of sin. One might say it is the “face” of sin. God then proceeds to cover them with clothing made of skin, from an animal He killed, to picture how He will someday die a sacrificial death to cover our sins. We will look at this in more detail shortly.

What is interesting in the following passages is how each of them respond to sin. The first thing we see is that Adam and Eve understood that they were naked and that this was somehow wrong. With this understanding they immediately set out to try and cover their “sin” (nakedness) with fig leaves that they had sown together. Sadly, these fig leaves did not work. This is evident because in verse eight, they heard God calling to them and they hid. If these fig leaves had worked, and took care of the sin problem, they would not have responded that way.

An interesting observation here is that sin will ALWAYS cause you to hid from the God of the Bible. Hiding from God can manifest itself in

many different ways though. Not praying, not reading the Bible, and not going to Church are just a few of these manifestations. Of course, you may continue to be religious and serve your man-made, worldly gods, and you may even have a form of godliness (2 Timothy 3:5). But, if you regard sin in your heart, you will always hide from the one true and living God of the Bible. Understanding this helps us understand why there are so many different religions and versions of God's Word.

As God had warned, sin had killed their spiritual connection to Him, and now they are left with nothing but fig leaves and a desire to hid from their Creator. But in verse nine we find God calling unto them. Now don't be mislead, God knew right where they were at. God was not calling to them to find out where they were. Instead, He was calling to them to come to Him. Remember, God already knew they would disobey Him and would try to hide from Him. But He already had a plan, and it was already in place. Today, God is still calling to those who are hiding from Him, desiring that they would come to Him for salvation.

The next thing we see in these verses (9-14) is everyone blaming everyone else. Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed Satan, and Satan looking around,

had no one else to blame. But then we come to verse 15. Here we see the first of the three prophecies I mentioned above. In verse 15 we read how God speaks to the serpent and says, “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.” This is a prophecy regarding God's promise of a future salvation. This prophecy is a "spoken" prophecy. God tells the Serpent that He (God) will create a hatred (enmity) between the coming seed of the Woman (Jesus Christ), and Satan's seed (Man of sin, 2 Thess. 2:3). This hatred will result in Satan breaking (bruising) the “head” of Jesus Christ, and in the end, Jesus Christ will break (bruise) the head of Satan. Since Jesus Christ is God Himself, and the “Man of sin” is Satan Himself, this prophecy tells us that God's salvation will involve a battle between God and Satan.

It should also be noted that a wound to the head is not life threatening, but a wound to the head is. This tells us that Satan will not be successful in stopping God's salvation. However, God will be victorious in destroying Satan and extending His salvation to all who respond. Satan's part of this prophecy was fulfilled around 2000 years ago when God (Jesus Christ) was crucified on the cross. The “bruise” to the head took place when



they drove the nail through Jesus' foot and into the cross. The crucifixion resulted in the physical death of Jesus' body, but not His Spirit. As we know, three days later, Jesus arose victorious over death, and is seated now in heaven, awaiting the time when He will fulfill the prophecy. This will take place when He destroys Satan with a crushing blow to the head (John 19:30, John 2:19, Revelation 20:10).

The second prophecy we see in this chapter is found in verse 21. This is the prophecy where God corrects how Adam and Eve attempts to take care of their sin. This "picture" prophecy gives us a picture so we can visualize what He is prophesying. In verse 21 we read, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." If you remember, Adam and Eve tried to fix their sin problem by themselves instead of going to God. They took fig leaves and sewed them together, and made themselves a covering for their nakedness. However, once God was on the scene, He killed an innocent animal and made them clothing of skin. Why did God do this? He did it because He was giving us a visual prophecy that there will come a time when something innocent would have to die to cover our sins. From this action He also taught us that innocent blood would have to be shed for our sins (Hebrews 9:22, Romans 6:23,

Romans 5:12). This prophecy ultimately points to when God Himself would die, shed His blood, and pay the price for our sins once and for all. What a beautiful picture prophecy He gave us here.

It should be noted here that man does not respond to sin any differently today. Instead of answering God's calling to come to Him, we still try to fix it ourselves. We fashion all types of religions and works of our own hands to cover our sins. We attempt to blame anyone, including God for our sins instead of confessing our sins to Him. And God is still calling to us to come to Him. He still has the salvation we need. Are you hiding from God? Are you trusting in the works of your own hands? Repent today, and let God cover you with His Salvation through Jesus Christ.

The third prophecy is not necessarily a prophecy in the traditional sense, but is more of an “implied” prophecy. This implied prophecy can be found in verses 22-24 where we read, “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree Of Life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.” The key phrase in these verses is “lest he put forth his hand...and live forever..therefore the LORD

God sent him forth from the Garden.” If you remember there were two specific trees in the garden, the one being the Tree Of The Knowledge Of Good And Evil, and the other being the “Tree Of Life.” Many people think that when God kicked them out of the Garden, He was being mean to them, cursing them, or even judging them.

However, the truth is, this action was an act of mercy. At this point Adam and Eve had not eaten of the Tree Of Life. God knew that if they did, they would live forever in their sins, as well as the evil, wickedness, pain and suffering that goes along with it. But God knew that if they did physically die, which is the consequences of sin, then they would have the opportunity to live again with Him some day in Heaven. This “implied” prophecy teaches us that God already had a plan to take away the sins of the world (Galatians 1:4). This plan did not include mankind living eternally in their sin. So, God was not being cruel when He sent them out of the Garden. No, on the contrary, He was protecting us from an eternity in sin, suffering and pain. This implied prophecy also teaches us that God will restore His creation back to perfection in the fullness of time. What a comforting revelation this is.

Discussion Questions  
For Chapter Three

- (1) Briefly describe the three prophecies mentioned in this lesson.
- (2) In this lesson we stated that "nakedness" is a picture or type of...?
- (3) Fig leaf aprons is a picture of what?
- (4) God making clothing of skin is a picture of what?
- (5) Was God kicking Adam and Eve out of the garden a Curse or a blessing? Defend your answer.



### 1 John 5:4

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

## By Faith

### Chapter Four

At this point we should understand our need to be reconciled back to God because of our willful disobedience to Him. We should grasp how this disobedience separated us from God and how there is nothing we can do ourselves to rectify this situation. As you recall however, we saw how God showed us right from the beginning that He would defeat Satan, but that it would be through the shed blood of an innocent sacrifice. Also, we saw that God saved us from living an eternity in our sins by removing us from the Tree of Life. The good news is that this "Tree of Life" will be re-introduced again in the future (Revelation 2:7). In this verse God tells us that those who "overcome" will eat of the Tree Of Life. In Revelation 22:2,14, God mentions this "Tree Of Life" again and tells us how it is planted in the New Heaven.

This, the last book of God's Word, confirms that there is coming a day when the Tree of Life will be restored, and all those who have "overcome" will be partakers of this tree and will live eternally with God. The question then is, "who can overcome?" Well, God answers this question as well. In 1 John 5:5, God tells us, "Who is he that overcometh the

world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

So then, the next thing we learn about God's salvation is that we must "believe." In other words, we must have faith in God and His Salvation. This "faith" can be found throughout the entire Bible, but there are some notable examples I want to point out. These examples can all be found in the book of Hebrews, chapter eleven. In this "faith" chapter of the Bible, God recalls numerous Old Testament Saints who through faith, believed Him and was used of Him extensively. Among these names are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Rahab. In all of these accounts, these people's faith in God compelled them to follow Him and live for Him. This compulsion to live and serve God can be found in anyone who truly has faith in God.

One such man who had faith in God was named Simeon. His story can be found in Luke chapter four. He was a just man who had faith in God and was looking for God's promised Messiah. He was told that he would not die before seeing God's salvation and was blessed to see Jesus Christ before he died (Luke 2:26). Simeon grew up during the Old Testament period of law. All

through his life, he was required to sacrifice animals as a covering for sin. But his faith never faltered. He believed in God's promise of a coming Messiah, and his life reflected it. As his life was drawing to an end, God fulfilled His promise to Simeon (Luke 2:30). Simeon then vanishes from the pages of Scripture proclaiming, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 29,30).

However, it must be noted that not everyone who claims to believe and trust God lives for Him. The fact is, there are different types of faith. One type of faith is nothing more than a "belief" but does not produce any action. James 2:17 tells us this is "dead" faith. And then there is faith that brings about godly works (James 2:18). This latter faith is what all those mentioned above had. Their faith in God compelled them to do good works for the Lord.

Hebrews 11:1 tell us that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Biblical faith then is a faith that believes and looks for those things God has promised, but we have not seen, and as such, it moves us to live and follow God in our everyday lives. Faith is so essential in receiving God's salvation that God



told us in Hebrews 11:6 that it is impossible to please Him without it. Therefore, true salvation must be rooted in faith and that faith must be in God's Word (Romans 10:17).

But, precisely what are we to have faith in? What are we supposed to believe about God that will save us from our sins and compel us to abandon this world and live entirely for Him? The answer to this question starts back in Genesis when God promised to defeat Satan and continues all the way through Scripture as God shows us more and more of His plan. The faith we are to have is not one that simply "believes," because as Scripture says, Satan "believes" in God and trembles (James 2:19).

Satan knows that God is real, and he knows that Scripture is true. But his faith is not a faith that motivates him to "repent" and live for God. No, on the contrary, he still believes that he can defeat God and be like God. His faith has not produced a change in his heart. His faith is not "saving" faith. So, simply believing is not what Biblical faith is. To find the true meaning of Biblical faith....faith that saves... let's go back to a verse I mentioned earlier and dig deep into its original meaning. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

The Greek word for "faith" literally means "credence," or in other words, that which you accept as true.

The word "substance" means "Setting under...an under support".

"Hoped for" means, "to expect,"

and the word "evidence" literally means "proof."

So, in today's language, this verse tells us that "faith," or the things that we accept as true regarding the Gospel, are based or supported by things that are proven, even though we haven't seen it yet. So, faith that leads to salvation is not simply a "blind" faith but a faith or expectation based on proven facts of what God has already done. These proven facts lead us to confidently expect He will do what He said He will do in the future.

You see, there are over 3000 promises from God in Scripture, many being in the Old Testament and regarded His promise of a Messiah (Saviour) that would come someday. The Saints throughout the Old Testament times looked forward to this coming Messiah, and although they never saw Him in their lifetime, they had confidence that

God would do what He said because God has always done what He said. They had "Faith" in God because God had a proven record. This solid, secure, grounded faith that they had in God led them to live for Him, worship Him, serve Him, and even die for Him.

Of this coming Messiah, here are some of the things God promised us in the Old Testament...

- \* The Messiah would be the seed/offspring of a woman and would crush the head of Satan (Genesis 3:15). [Fulfilled]
- \* He would come from the seed/offspring of Abraham and would bless all the nations on earth (Genesis 12:3). [Fulfilled]
- \* He would be a "prophet like Moses" to whom God said we must listen (Deuteronomy 18:15). [Fulfilled]
- \* He would be born in Bethlehem of Judah (Micah 5:2). [Fulfilled]
- \* He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14). [Fulfilled]
- \* He would have a throne, a kingdom, a dynasty, or a house, starting with King David, which will last forever (2 Samuel 7:16). [To this date, it is fulfilled]
- \* He would be called "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," "Prince of

- Peace," and would possess an everlasting kingdom (Isaiah 9:6-7). [Fulfilled]
- \* He would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey, righteous and having salvation, coming with gentleness (Zechariah 9:9-10). [Fulfilled]
  - \* He would be pierced for our transgression and crushed for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5). [Fulfilled]
  - \* He would die among the wicked ones but be buried with the rich (Isaiah 53:9). [Fulfilled]
  - \* He would be resurrected from the grave, for God would not allow His Holy One to suffer decay (Psalm 16:10). [Fulfilled]
  - \* He would come again from the clouds of heaven as the Son of Man (Daniel 7:13-14). [Yet to happen]
  - \* He would be the "Sun of Righteousness" for all who revere Him and look for His coming again (Malachi 4:2). [Fulfilled]
  - \* He is the One whom Israel will one day recognize as the one they pierced, causing bitter grief (Zechariah 12:10). [Yet to happen]

Many other prophecies regarding God's Messiah have been fulfilled, and a few that are yet future.

But, from this list, I think a reasonable person could safely put their "faith" in God to keep His Word.

As I have said, those who lived during the Old

Testament had "life-altering" faith in God's promises and believed Him because of all the great works they had seen God do. They looked forward to God keeping His Word in the future, and as they waited, their faith produced godly works, convictions, and morals.

As we get to the New Testament times, people witnessed firsthand the fulfillment of God's promise, alive, right here on earth. Jesus Christ was born as Scripture promised, grew "in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). He then continued to fulfill many other Scriptures right up to, including His death, burial, and resurrection. He fulfilled the Old Testament law (Matthew 5:17), shed His blood as payment for our sins (Hebrews 9:14), and conquered death (Revelation 1:18) so that we could receive God's Salvation and the blessed hope of eternity with God. Jesus then ascended back into heaven with the promise that He would come again in like manner and receive us unto Himself so that we could forever be with Him in Heaven (Acts 1:11).

Those living during the 32 years Jesus was on earth witnessed God's Salvation come about.

Those who had faith in God experienced transformed lives. This transformation became evident in all that they said and did.

Today, we look back upon what God has already done, putting our faith in His "finished" work on the cross (John 19:30) completely. Of course, the knowledge of what God has done is revealed to us through His Word, the Holy Bible. It is through Scripture that we learn of what God has promised and what God has done. Here, we learn of God's salvation through Jesus Christ and that by faith we can enter into His Salvation. We also understand from Scripture that saving faith will always produce godly fruit in our lives as we turn from our sins and trust God's Word (Romans 10:17).

Biblical salvation then comes from a complete trust in what God has said and done as revealed in His Word. This trust brings us to the point it fundamentally makes a new person out of us (2 Corinthians 5:17), one that walks with God in righteousness and Biblical convictions. At this point our salvation is not based on "faith" as much as it is based on evidence. God "births again" His Spirit within us, and restores our connection to Him. Though His Spirit alive within us, God works in our life, has communion with us, and produces a "know so" attitude within us. We know God is there. We know He is doing everything He said He would do, and nobody can convince us differently. We must indeed come to God in

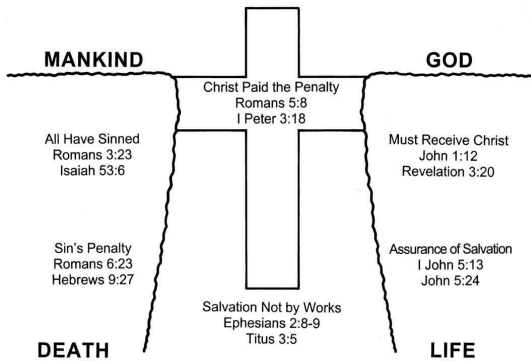
"faith", believing God's Word. But once God's salvation is secure, and God is dwelling within us once again, we move from faith as a child to a more mature relationship. This new relationship is based on "knowing" we are his Child (1 John 5:13)...Knowing He is our Lord and Saviour, and Knowing we are His children.

## Discussion Questions

### For Chapter Four

- (1) Who is it that can overcome this world?
  
- (2) Where is the "faith" chapter located in the Bible?
  
- (3) What are the two prophecies mentioned in this chapter that are yet to be fulfilled?
  
- (4) Regardless of whether a person lived during the Old Testament times, during Christ time on earth, or in the New Testament age, what is one thing that true faith in God always produces?
  
- (5) We must indeed come to God in "faith," but once we are born again and are living for God, our new relationship with Him is more of "? " we are His Child than simply one of faith.





### Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,  
saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil,  
to give you an expected end.”

## God's Plan

### Chapter Five

As you remember from previous chapters, from the moment Adam and Eve sinned, God told us that He would crush the head of Satan. He prophesied through His actions that this salvation would involve an innocent sacrifice, and that death and the shedding of blood would be involved. Scripture tells us that everything that happened in the past was for our learning, and to bring us hope (Romans 15:4), so it is to the Old Testament we will turn now to learn of God's plan of salvation.

One of the best spots to start is with the story of Abraham and Isaac found in Genesis 22. In this historical event God commanded Abraham to take his son Isaac up into a mountain and offer him up as a sacrifice. Abraham did as God instructed, but before he actually had to kill his son, God stopped him and told him it was only a test. God then provided a ram as a sacrifice instead of Isaac. Now this story on the surface may seem a little extreme, but remember, it was done as an example for us, and to give us hope. So what can we learn from this story. Below is an itemized list of the critical points in the story. If you have not read it

yourself yet, I suggest you pause right now and read the story. The first thing that we see in this story is that Isaac is Abraham's only son. Abraham loved him very much, and Abraham had to offer him as a sacrifice (V.2). In verse six we see that Abraham lays the wood and everything needed for the sacrifice upon Isaac to carry to the spot where the sacrifice was to take place.

When we get to verse eight, Isaac questions his dad about where the animal for the sacrifice was and Abraham makes a very profound statement. He says, "God will provide Himself a lamb." Further on in verse nine, we see that Abraham, the father, binds Isaac and lays him on the alter and prepares to sacrifice him.

However, since this is just done to test Abraham and his faith, and to give an example to us, Isaac was not sacrificed. Instead, God brings a ram to take Isaac's place and puts it in a thicket so they can catch it. They did not know it then but this story was to give us some crucial insight into God's plan of salvation. So let us make the comparison between this story and Jesus Christ.

First, Isaac was Abraham's only son in whom he loved very much (V.2). In John 3:16 we are told that "God so loved the World that He gave His

ONLY BEGOTTEN SON..” (emphasis mine), and in Matthew 3:17 we hear God the Father saying, “this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.”

Secondly Isaac had to carry the wood used for the alter upon his own back (V.6), and in John 19:17 we see also Jesus carrying His cross up the hill to the place of the crucifixion.

As we get to verse nine in Genesis twenty-two we find Isaac bound and placed upon an alter, and in John chapter twenty (as well as other places) we see that Jesus was laid upon a cross and bound there with nails. And also in John 10:18 we learn that the Romans did not “take” Jesus' life, but that He laid it down freely on His own.

So, in all of these similarities from Genesis chapter 22, we learn that God's salvation will involve God's only Son being laid upon the alter of the cross, nailed there, and crucified. However there is more to learn here. Do you remember the question that Isaac asked about where the sacrificial animal was? Do you remember that Abraham replied, “God will provide Himself a lamb?” Well, this gives us two more points to look at regarding God's salvation...two very important points. As

you remember, once God stopped Abraham from offering up Isaac, there was a ram in a thicket caught by his horns to take Isaac's place. Now, at first glance you might come to the incorrect conclusion that this ram became the sacrifice God was talking about. But, you would be wrong. Remember Abraham said that God would provide a "LAMB." But, there was a "RAM" in the thicket. This ram was NOT the sacrifice God was talking about. However, JESUS was the lamb of God (John 1:29). You see, God stopped Abraham that day because Isaac was only an example of what God was going to do in the future. Ultimately, Jesus is the true "Lamb of God." Isaac was an example, but Christ is the real deal. A ram was sufficient for the moment, but Jesus' sacrifice is good for all eternity.

BUT.... There is one more point to make here, and this point will take some time to spell out.

Remember Abraham said, "God will provide HIMSELF a lamb." Abraham may not have known exactly what He was saying at the moment, but God put those words in his mouth for a reason. You see, the person named Jesus that was crucified on the cross in which this story in Genesis so aptly pictures was none other than Jehovah God Himself. As it is written, Jesus was God in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16, John chapter 1). But this is not the only place in Scripture where we learn this

truth. In Malachi 3:1 we read the following statement from God... “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.”

Now, we know the “messenger” spoke about in this verse is speaking of John the Baptist who paved the way for Jesus (John 3). The “messenger of the Covenant” is speaking of the coming Messiah, who we also know by name as Jesus Christ. So why is this important to point out? Read that verse again. Do you see that little phrase, “prepare the way before ME” (emphasis mine)? Jehovah God is telling us that the coming Messiah...the coming Saviour of mankind would be Jehovah God Himself.

This truth can be found in other places within the Old Testament as well, such as in Isaiah 9:6, where we read about the coming Saviour, Jesus Christ, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The

Prince of Peace.” Notice here in this verse that two of the names given to Jesus would be “THE mighty God, THE everlasting Father” (Emphasis mine). Now, if Jesus was not “The might God,” or “The everlasting Father,” it would have been blasphemies for Him to be called such, And no doubt Jesus would have corrected them for even trying to say He was...but this was not the case. In fact, Jesus Himself stated on numerous occasions that He was the very God of the Old Testament. Consider the following verses...

John 10:30 - I and my Father are one.

John 8:58 - Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

John 14:9 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

Other verses throughout the New Testament further support the claim that Jesus is the one and only true God as well...

John chapter one... “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word

WAS God.... And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”

Colossians 1:15-17 - Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

John 20:28 - And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

In the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ says of Himself.. “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty”  
(Revelation 1:8).

And in Revelation 1:18 Jesus says of Himself.. “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.” This is a reference to the fact Jesus was alive throughout the Old Testament, died in the New Testament, and then arose again and will live forever more.

So then, When Jehovah God... God the Father in the Old Testament said that He would provide “Himself” a lamb, and that He would be the coming Messiah, He was literally telling us that it would be He Himself that would die and shed His perfect blood for our sins. But, since God is spirit (John 4:24) He cannot die, does not have blood, and can not be seen by mortal man (Deut. 4:12,



John 6:46). Therefore a human body had to be made for Him (Hebrews 10:5). This is where Jesus comes in. God moved upon Mary, caused her to conceive, and thus, the first and only physically born child God ever created....His only begotten Son was born. God then took up residence inside the body, thus taking on human form (John 1:14).

When Scripture speaks of "The Son," it is speaking of the human physical body God created to inhabit. When Jesus died, only the physical aspect of God died, the body of Jesus (the Son).

This was necessary to pay the debt for sin (Romans 6:23) and to cleanse us from our sins (Hebrews 9:22). But, God who is eternal, can not die. Thus He was able to have victory over death and became the first fruit from the dead (1 Cor. 15:20), rising the body of Jesus Christ up from the dead, incorruptible, eternal.

Thus the plan of redemption was complete. From Genesis to Revelation, from the Garden to the Cross, God's plan of salvation was worked out entirely as He planned. First, He would create a body, a Son, take up residence in that body, and then send it to the cross to die as a sacrifice for our sins. But, the plan did not stop there. A dead Saviour is no Saviour at all. Three days later, God raised up the body of Jesus Christ, thus assuring us victory over death. But He did not stop there either. Jesus then ascended up into the Heavens

with the promise that He would come again to receive us unto Himself (John 14:3). While on the cross, He received a bruise to His heal. Satan thought he had destroyed God once and for all. But he was wrong. God's death and resurrection assured a crushing blow to Satan's head was eminent, destroying the power of Satan and redeeming mankind back unto Himself. **We had a dept we could not pay, and God paid the debt He did not owe.**

This then is what are faith is based upon, the finished work of God upon the cross of Calvary. God kept His Word, He came and paved the road to redemption just as He promised. When He died on the cross He cried out, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Once this was said, He bowed His head and let His physical body die. When this happened, the sin debt for all sins, for all mankind, for all eternity was paid. There is not one single sin that the debt has not been paid for...except one.

In Matthew 12:31 Jesus says, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."

The sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit is the only sin that can not...will not... be forgiven. This sin is the willful, continual rejection of Holy Spirit

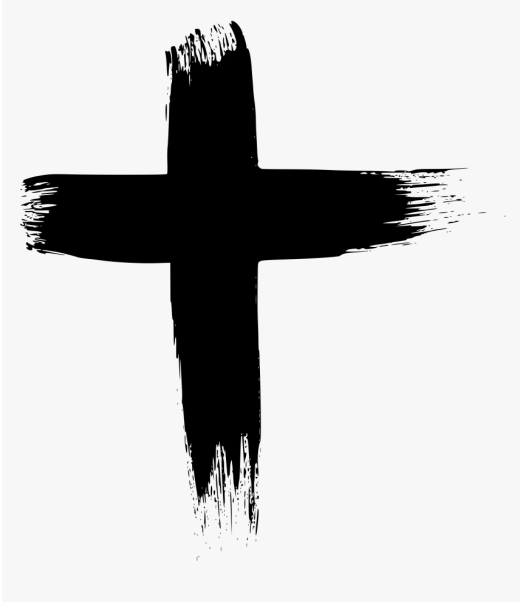
convicting you of your need for God's salvation through Jesus Christ. You see my dear friend, God paid the price for all sins, redeeming mankind back unto Himself. But you and I must accept it through faith.

When Holy Spirit (God Himself, Jesus Christ) convicts us of our need of salvation, we are to respond (2 Cor. 6:2). When we don't we blaspheme, or in other words, we treat Holy Spirit with contentment. We reject God calling us as He did in the garden. When we do that enough times, we get to the point we can not feel or hear Holy Spirit calling us anymore. This is the sin of blaspheming Holy Spirit, or as it is spoken of in other verses, the "sin unto death" (Romans 6:16, 1 John 5:16). Because it is Holy Spirit who convict us of sin (John 16:8-10), and without that conviction you can not come to Christ for salvation, once it is gone you can not be saved.

The other way to blaspheme Holy Spirit is simply die before you accept God's Salvation. Either way, the only sin anyone in hell will ever be there for is the sin of rejecting God's Salvation (blaspheming Holy Spirit). Your sins are paid for, your way of salvation secured, but you must accept it, through faith. This is the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ....God's plan of salvation.

## Discussion Questions For Chapter Five

- (1) Describe three contrast between the story of Abraham and Isaac and the Biblical account of Jesus's crucifixion.
  
- (2) Who did Jehovah God say would come and be our Lord and Saviour?  
(3)
  
- (3) In what way is “Jesus” God's only begotten Son?
  
- (4) Describe in your own words what “blaspheming the Holy Spirit is”.
  
- (5) What is the only sin anyone will be in hell for?
  
- (6) What are the two ways you can blaspheme the Holy Spirit?



## **John 19:30**

“When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, it is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”

## It Is Finished

### Chapter Six

With all this said, it must be remembered that "Jesus Christ crucified" is a foundational and fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. All throughout scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, the death of Christ is prevalent. The Mosaic instructions (first five books of the Bible) foreshadow its meaning, the historical books prove its necessity, the Psalms picture its reality, and the Prophets describe its coming in great detail. Once we get to the New Testament we see that the Gospels announce the Messiahs arrive, while Acts proclaims the power of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. As we open the books of the Epistles, we find salvation through Jesus Christ explained, and its purpose expounded upon. The Pastoral Epistles gives instructions to the Church how to live the Gospel message, and finally, Revelation sees the consummation of its blessings fulfilled. It has been often said that if you were to cut the bible anywhere it would bleed red with the redemption story. In fact, one out of every 44 verses in the New Testament deals with the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Some scholars believe there are more than 300 prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament alone.

These prophecies are specific enough that the mathematical probability of Jesus fulfilling even a handful of them, let alone all of them, is staggeringly improbable—if not impossible. Yet, this is exactly what we find. Many of the prophecies regarding Jesus being the Messiah could not have been intentionally fulfilled by Christ Himself. Lets take a quick look at some of these now...

1 - Messiah to be the seed of the Woman  
(Genesis 3:15 / Galatians 4:4)

2 - Messiah to be the seed of Abraham  
(Genesis 12:3 / Luke 3:23)

3 - Messiah to be of the tribe of Judah  
(Genesis 49:10 / Matthew 1:1,2)

4 - Messiah to be of the seed of Jacob  
(Numbers 24:17 / Matthew 1:1,2)

5 - Messiah to be of the seed of David  
(Isaiah 9:6,7 / Luke 1:32,33)

6 - Messiah to be a prophet like Moses  
(Deuteronomy 18:15 / Acts 3:22,23)

8 - Messiah to be born of a virgin  
(Isaiah 7:14 / Matthew 1:18,25)

9 - Messiah would be born in Bethlehem  
(Micah 5:2 / Matthew 2:1)

10 - Messiah would be a refugee in Egypt  
(Hosea 11:1 / Matthew 2:15)

This is just a tiny small list of all the direct and very detailed prophecies regarding God's Salvation. Many others could be added to the list, but this is enough to show the trustworthiness of the Gospel message. God's intention was always to come to earth, take on human form, and die for our sins. But as Scripture says, it had to be done according to God's timing (Romans 5:6, 1 Timothy 2:6)

One of the great proofs of the verbal inspiration of the Bible is that the writers did not always understand the message God gave them to record. For example, it appears that the death of Christ, which was prophesied centuries before Jesus even appeared physically on earth was a great mystery to the prophets (1 Peter 1:10-12). Furthermore, the disciples, even though Jesus mentioned it several times, did not grasp the immanent death of their master (John 13:19, Mark 8:31).

However, even though the prophets and the disciples did not understand God's plan of



salvation, they knew it was coming and looked forward to it. They knew this because ancient Scripture prophesied it. In fact, more than one-third of the Old Testament is prophecy, with Christ being its central theme. When the Apostle Paul said that “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ..” (Galatians 3:24) he included the ceremonial law. The shedding of blood by the offerings of animal sacrifices for the covering of sin was a symbol of the great sacrifice God would ultimately give (Lev. 1:2, 11, 15, and 8:15), and a constant emphasis on the all-important truth that “without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin” (Hebrews 9:11-14).

In addition to the over 300 prophecies about the Messiahs coming in the Old Testament, there are over 333 vivid pictures or types of God's salvation as well. Some have already been mentioned in previous chapters, but I want to highlight some other notable ones before going further.

#### The Ark (Genesis 6-8)...

The Ark that Noah built is full of pictures and types of God's great Salvation. The length of time it took Noah to build the ark, of which he also preached to all the lost souls, pictures God's long-suffering, not willing that any should perish... (2

Peter 3:9). The single entry-way into the ark is a picture of Jesus Christ being the only way of salvation (Acts 4:12). And further, God personally closing the door to the ark reminds us that although God is long-suffering, there will come a time when the opportunity to enter into God's salvation will end. These are just a few of the pictures of God's salvation we see in Noah's ark.

The Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:5-7,13)....

The Lamb required for the celebration of the Passover was an appropriate type of God's great Sacrifice, typifying the sinless Lamb of God whose blood was to save from eternal death.

The Brazen Serpent (Numbers 21)...

The fiery serpents that invaded the camp of Israel represented sin and its fatal consequences. The brazen serpent erected by Moses represented the sin-bearer who was 'made sin for us' in order to remove the penalty of sin. Christ indicated that it was a picture of the crucifixion, IE. the uplifted cross (John 3:14,15).

And finally, let us take a moment and look at the Power of the God's Sacrifice. It is almost

impossible to measure the far reaching results of God's Salvation through Jesus Christ. But this does not simply include the aspects of our spiritual salvation. Every blessing, material or spiritual, that has come to man in the history of the World has been brought about by the death of Christ (James 1:17). Without it God could not have given blessings, for because of his sin, man had forfeited every claim to God's Grace. It has been well said that it will take eternity to fully appreciate all that the great sacrifice of God means to mankind. The power of God's salvation saves us from the penalty of sin. This has been looked at throughout this book, but I would not want to miss an opportunity to remind you of this. The fact is, Christ died in our place on the cross of Calvary, suffering the just penalty for our sins, so that we would not have to. But, this is not the only place we find the power of God's salvation in our lives.

While Satan cannot change the destiny of the true believer, he is still able to tempt him with sin. But “there is power in the blood” of Jesus Christ to give every Christian victory over temptation (Hebrews 2:18). Sin no longer has dominion over the true born again believer (Romans 6:12-18).

And then, the true believer in Christ can look forward to the certainty of an entrance into the

holy and happy habitation of Heaven, where no evil can gain entrance. This power to remove us from the very presence of sin is unmerited, indescribable, and yet, promised by God Himself (John 14:3).

This then is Salvation, God's Way. Far removed from mans traditions, religions, ideology, and yes, even mans theology. God created us perfect, but with the ability to choose. Once man chose to disobey, the knowledge of sin became a reality and the consequences of those sins became a death sentence. God, and only God can correct this problem, and He did so by coming to earth, taking on human form, dying in our place, and paying the penalty of sin that He Himself required. We can not earn it, work hard enough for it, or pay enough money to obtain it. We can not be religious enough, good enough or spiritual enough to receive it. Salvation is completely by, and through, the shed blood of Jesus Christ, Jehovah God Himself, on the cross of Calvary. His shed blood paid the price for all of our sins, for all mankind, for all eternity. The only way you can escape God's salvation is to willfully not call out to God and accepting it. God's plan of salvation is finished, it is now up to us what we do with it.

If you have not done so, I beg of you to call out to God today. Trust Him and His salvation through Jesus Christ. Turn from your sins and your self, and purpose in your heart today that you are going to live for, and walk with, God from this day forward. “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13).



## Discussion Questions For Chapter Six

- (1) What is a central, fundamental doctrine found throughout the whole Bible?
- (2) Approximately, how many prophecies are there in the Old Testament alone regarding Jesus?
- (3) Did the writers of the Bible understand what they were writing all the time?
- (4) While Satan can not change the true believers destiny, what is it that he can do?
- (5) What is the only way you can escape God's Salvation? Defend your answer.
- (6) What part of God's plan of salvation is not completed yet?



### Romans 11:33

“O the depth of the riches both of wisdom  
and the knowledge of God? How  
unsearchable are his judgments, and his  
ways past finding out.”

## What next

### Chapter Seven

As we close this study I would be negligent if I did not discuss what the future holds for a person once they have accepted God's salvation. To fully understand what the future holds, one must understand what actually "happens" at the moment of salvation. As we have discussed several times, salvation is a "deliverance" from the consequences of our sins. This salvation became available when God died on the cross. When a person honestly and truly accepts what God did on the cross and calls out to Him to be their Lord and Saviour, that salvation is applied to them (1 John 1:9). But that is not all that happens. Below is a partial list of some other things that transpire the moment you genuinely accept God's salvation...

**Born again...** (John chapter three) In this chapter Jesus is talking to a Religious leader named Nicodemus. He tells him that "Ye must be born again." The problem is, Nicodemus thinks Jesus is talking about physical birth. Jesus corrects him and explains, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit (V. 6). Here, Jesus explains that there are TWO types of



birth... a physical one that we all experience and a spiritual one that must happen sometime later. If you remember, when Adam and Eve became aware of their sins, I stated that the spirit within them died and their communion with God ended. When a person is truly saved, this "spirit" becomes alive again, and the communion with God is restored. This "spiritual" birth..this "born again" experience occurs when God comes and takes up residence within us. This is not a corruptible birth like our physical one, but an incorruptible one (1 Peter 1:23) and is brought about by the very Word of God. This "new birth" starts to bring about a changed life, a new way of seeing things, a greater understanding of the things of God, and a new desire. This will be discussed further under "New Creature."

**Justified...** (Romans 5:1) "Justified" is a legal term that means to be declared righteous in God's sight. Another way of defining "justified" would be to say that God now sees us "just as if we had never sinned." We now stand before God innocent. But one might ask, "how can God justify a sinner?" The answer to that is simple...Because He paid the price for your sins that He required. The sin debt is paid, the slate is wiped clean, and as such, there is no more penalty to pay for your sins. We stand before God just as if we had never sinned.

But that is because God now sees us through Christ. When God looks at us, He sees Jesus Christ, not us. God's Word says that we are "In Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:22). We are not justified by anything we have done or will do, but only in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross.

**New Creature**....(2 Corinthians 5:17) One of the most visible aspects of our salvation is the fact that we become a "new" person. Scripture says, "old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new." When a person is genuinely saved according to God's Word, Holy Spirit...God Himself... comes and takes up residence within them. The old nature dies, and God gives us a new life. This new life should be evident to the person who truly got saved, as well as those around them. Scripture speaks of knowing a tree by its fruit (Luke 6:43, 44). Now this does not mean you become perfect because as long as we have this flesh body, we will struggle with the flesh nature (Matthew 26:41). Still, it does mean that now we have God living in us and creating a new person. Our thoughts should change...our view should change...our language should change. We should now have a desire for the things of God more than the things of the world. Just as a good tree will produce good fruit, and a bad tree will produce bad fruit, a truly born-again child of God should also

have new fruit. Sometimes it takes a little time for the new fruit to appear, but it will appear. This is one of the ways you can actually know if you have genuinely been saved...truly born again. If there is no change, there is no salvation. Do not try to fool yourself or others because Scripture clearly tells us that if you are "in Christ," you are a "new creature."

**Sealed....**(Ephesians 4:30) One way God guarantees His promises of salvation to those who have received Jesus Christ is by sealing them. This happens the moment you genuinely accept God's Salvation. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" Paul declares in (Romans 8:9). He then goes on to say, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Incredibly, the body of every true Christian is actually "a temple of Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). The Spirit of God takes up residence within us. He then seals us unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). This seal can never be broken or taken away. If it could, God Himself would lose His down payment (Holy Spirit).

Furthermore, the Spirit of God inside us brings about the new life (born again), the justification, the adoption, and everything else that we receive as a Child of God. In fact, when the end comes,

and the rapture takes place, and you are called up out of the grave, it will be this spirit that hears the call and catches you up in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). You will not hear the trumpet, you will not hear the voice of God, and you will not hear the call with your physical ears. Instead, it will be the spirit that seals you that will hear and bring you into the presents of the Lord.

**Adopted**.... (John 1:12) God is Father only to those who are adopted into his family. Every believer who repents and has saving faith in Christ enjoys this status, being adopted into the family of God as a beloved son or daughter. Your Dad is the King of the universe! Scripture tells us that Jesus is God's "only begotten" Son (1 John 4:9). Yet, 1 John 3:2 says that "we are the sons of God." So, how is this possible? Because Jesus was born of Mary physically, after God placed the seed of life within her (Matthew 1:20), to create a body for God to dwell in (Hebrews 10:5). Jesus then became a "begotten" child of God. But, every other person who calls God "Father" can do so only because they have been born again spiritually and adopted into God's family through salvation.

**Book of life**... (Revelation 21:27) Another event that takes place when you are truly saved is that

your name is written in the Book of Life which is in the presents of God. According to Revelation 20:12, this is just one of the books found in Heaven, but it is the most important one. If your name is not there you will be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15). How can you be sure your name is written in the Book of Life? First, be sure you are saved. Second, repent of your sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5). Third, verify that the Holy Spirit is alive within you, evident by the new life and godly fruit. It is comforting to know that it is never erased once your name is written in the Book of Life (Revelation 3:5; Romans 8:37-39). Finally, no true believer should doubt his eternal security in Christ (John 8:28-30). You are promised by God that you have an "everlasting" life.

Now, one Word of caution that should be mentioned here. Having everlasting life does NOT give you a license to continue sinning. If you approach salvation with that mindset, you are not saved. A new birth with a new spirit and a new mind will compel you to walk a new walk. If there is no change, there is no salvation, and if there is no salvation, your name is not in the book of life. It is that simple.

**Sanctified**... (John 17:17) The generic meaning of sanctification is "the state of proper functioning."

To sanctify someone or something is to set that person or thing apart for the use intended by its designer. For example, a pen is designed to write, so it is "sanctified" when used to write. Eyeglasses are designed to help you see, so it is "sanctified" when used to improve sight. In the theological sense, things are sanctified when they are used for the purpose God intends. Therefore, a human being is sanctified when they live according to God's design and purpose. Sanctification is God's will for us (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

In Greek and Hebrew, the word sanctification is related to the word saint; both words have to do with holiness. Jesus had a lot to say about sanctification in John 17. In verse 16, the Lord says, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of it," and this is before His request: "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" (verse 17).

In Christian theology, sanctification is a state of separation unto God. All believers enter into this state when they are born of God: "You are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). The sanctification mentioned in this verse is a one time separation of

believers unto God. It is a work God performs, an intricate part of our salvation and our connection with Christ (Hebrews 10:10). Theologians sometimes refer to this state of holiness before God as "positional" sanctification. However, we must remember this is something God does, not something we do. We can dedicate our lives to live and serve God, but only He can sanctify us.

So, true Biblical salvation God's way produces an entirely new life within the person receiving it. It must also be noted that everything that transpires during the moment of salvation is all of God.

There is nothing we can do to achieve any of it ourselves. It is God who saves us...it is God who keeps us...and it is God who will deliver us. It is all of God, and this is why our salvation is eternal. If it was left up to us, we would no doubt destroy it all, just like we did with God's original creation.

When people come to know Christ as their Savior, they are brought into a relationship with God that guarantees their eternal security. Jude 24 declares, "To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy." God's power can keep the believer from falling. It is up to Him, not us, to present us before His glorious presence. Our

eternal security is a result of God keeping us, not us maintaining our own salvation. Many Scripture speaks of our "everlasting" life, "eternal" life, and "life everlasting" (John 3:16, John 5:24). At this point someone might ask, "but what about those who were saved and have fallen away. Are they still saved?" The truth is they were never saved in the first place (1 John 2:19). As we have seen, Scripture is clear that once a person is truly saved, they are recipients of all those things mentioned here and much more. They are a new person. Once born again, they can not become "unborn." So, if a person leaves the faith, or their life does not reflect their salvation profession, Scripture says they were never saved to start with. Truth be known, there are a lot of fake Christians running around. They profess with their mouths, but the Spirit of God has never been reborn within them.

It is also evident that, as God affirms, there is absolutely only one authentic way to receive God's salvation (John 14:6). So, what about all the different religions, doctrines, and teachings in the world today? Simply put, if they do not line up with God's Word, they are doctrines of devils (1 Timothy 4:1). The sad truth is, most religions are not preaching God's Word anymore. They are simply telling their followers what they want to hear (2 Timothy 4:3). They are wolves in sheep



clothing (Matthew 7:15). Salvation God's way will always bring you face to face with Jesus Christ. It will always produce a new life within the believer, and it will always follow Scripture. Let God be true, but every man a liar (Romans 3:4).

Suppose your spiritual leader, your church's doctrine, or the spirit within you tell you something different. In that case, it is a lying spirit and is of Satan himself (John 8:44).

This, then, is God's true and Biblical plan of salvation in a nutshell...

"As it is written, 'There is none righteous, no, not one'" (Romans 3:10, KJV).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23, KJV).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23, KJV).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8, KJV).

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13, KJV).

Have you indeed received "God's Salvation?" Or, are you deceiving yourself with some form of man's salvation? Are you truly born again as evident by God's Spirit alive and working within your life? If so, you have genuinely received the greatest gift known to mankind. If not, I urge you today to Repent and turn from your sins, believe, and accept God's true salvation through Jesus Christ. It is not too late if you are reading this, but tomorrow is not promised to anyone.

## **Discussion Questions**

### **For Chapter Seven**

- (1) What does it mean to be "born again"?
  
- (2) By what is a Child of God sealed with?
  
- (3) What part of salvation can be credited to humans?
  
- (4) What part do we have in keeping our salvation?
  
- (5) How long is our salvation for? Defend your answer.
  
- (6) If someone walks away from God, did they lose their salvation? Explain your answer.

## Glossary

**Dogma:** A principle or set of principles laid down by an authority as incontrovertibly true.

**Saved:** Delivered from sin and spiritual death: rescued from eternal punishment.

**Born Again:** The act of being made alive again after death. In regards to spiritual matters, it refers to the spirit of God becoming alive within a person.

**Mortality:** The state of being subject to death.

**Sin:** An act considered to be a transgression against divine law.

**Atone:** To make amends or reparation.

**Reconciled:** The act of restoring a relationship between two parties.

**Sacrifice:** To willfully suffer loss of, give up, renounce, injure, or destroy, especially for an ideal, belief, or end.

**Redemption:** The act of reclaiming something that was previously lost.

**Repent:** To change your mind for the better. In regards to salvation, it means to cognitively purpose to stop doing things your way, and start following God's Word.

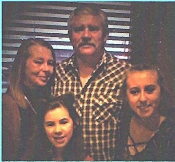
**Verbal Inspiration:** Divine inspiration which extends to the very words and forms of expression of the divine message.

## **For Further Thought**

- (1) Give your answer to the following question... "Why did God create us with the ability to sin?"
  
- (2) Since God created us with the ability to sin, is He justified in also judging sin?
  
- (3) Is God unjust in allowing bad things to happen?
  
- (4) Several reasons were given throughout this book explaining why we can not save ourselves. Please list two of them here (Hint, Ephesians 2:8 and Romans 3:10)
  
- (5) What would you conclude about a person who claims to be a child of God yet continues to live a life of sin or wants nothing further to do with Christ?
  
- (6) Is Biblical salvation eternal or conditional? Defend your answer.

## Biblical teaching on Salvation

Many things in this world are important subjects to the human race. Climate change, peace, and financial stability, to name a few. As important as these topics are, all of them will change, become less critical, or pass away. But, there is one topic of human interest that is not temporal, which is the subject of Salvation. "Why do I need to be saved"? How do I get saved"? And "Can I lose my Salvation" are questions that come to mind when approaching this topic. This book sets out to answer these questions from a Biblical viewpoint, free from denominational dogma and personal feelings. So, join me now as we embark on a mission of truth and find the answer to the most crucial question of all, "Salvation, God's Way."



Paul Dodson has been preaching and teaching the Word of God for over 30 years. He has served as an Evangelist, Youth Pastor, Associate Pastor, Senior Pastor, College Professor, and author.

Mr. Dodson's unique ability to explain Biblical concepts has earned him the respect of many students worldwide, and we pray his teachings will bless you as well.

ISBN 978-1-00-615872-8



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