What the Bible Says About Salvation – Part 7

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Review / Introduction

Lesson 1

Salvation is wholly God's work where He saves sinners through Christ from the penalty, power, and one day the presence of sin. All people apart from God's saving work are wicked, dead, blind, captive, darkness-loving, alienated-from and hostile-to-God, sin-slaves walking according to Satan's anti-God world system. All people are sinners with a sin nature. All are **totally depraved**, separate from God, completely unable to move towards Him on their own, destined for wrath, helplessness and hopelessness before Him. God, in His grace, must intervene. The only solution for sin is salvation.

Lesson 2

The Scriptures describe Christ's sacrifice as a penal substitutionary atonement. The guilt of sin demanded the penalty of death and Christ was the vicarious sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice was propitious, satisfying the demands of God's holiness and wrath toward sin. Sin placed us in alienation from and enmity with God and Christ's death reconciled us to God. Christ's death was the ransom price to the Father to redeem us from slavery to sin and the Law. Sin, death, and Satan were defeated by the atonement. **Christ's sacrifice is of infinite value and worth but is only applied to the elect.**

Lesson 3

Each person has rebelled against God and is therefore without hope in this life and destined for hell in the next. In eternity past, out of all underserving humanity of all time, God **unconditionally chose** those on whom He would bestow His love, grace, and mercy according to the kind intention of His own will and for His maximum glory. At God's perfect time, He brings the gospel to His elect, **irresistibly draws** them to Himself convicting them of sin and the need for salvation and a Savior, and gives them the gift of saving faith.

Lesson 4

At the moment of conversion, God graciously performs supernatural acts in His elect which changes them forever and cannot be undone. God brings new life to the believing sinner through regeneration. God justifies them, declaring the believing sinner righteous and placing their sin on Jesus and Jesus' righteousness on them. God forgives all their sin for all time removing the charges against them, cancelling the debt of the punishment for their sin. God adopts them making them a part of His family with all the rights and privileges (and responsibilities) of an heir.

Lesson 5

At the moment of conversion, the elect are spiritually baptized being united to Christ's body in his death and resurrection and with His body the church. They are permanently indwelt with the Holy Spirit who helps, guides, teaches, and empowers their walk with Christ. They are sealed with the Holy Spirit; they are owned by God and given a foretaste (pledge) of glory. They are uniquely gifted to serve their new spiritual family, the body of Christ.

Lesson 6

> At the moment of conversion, the elect are sanctified positionally, set apart from sin for God. They will be sanctified in the future when they will be glorified, completely separated from sin. And they are currently being sanctified, progressively conformed ever more into the image of Christ. Pursuing a vibrant relationship with Christ through the Scriptures, prayer, and body involvement is God's means for progressing in sanctification.

In our order of salvation, in eternity past, according to the kind intention of His own will and for His glory God chose His individuals for salvation (item 1). At the moment one exercises saving faith (item 2), a supernatural conversion occurs (item 3), and God performs supernatural acts (items 4) in the life of the converted. We will now look at our last three items.

1. Election
2. The gospel call, draw, and the gift of saving faith
3. Conversion
4. Regeneration, Justification, Forgiveness, Adoption, Baptizing, Indwelling, Sealing, Bestowing spiritual gifts, and Sanctification
5. **Perseverance (or preservation)**
6. **Death**
7. **Glorification**

Perseverance or Preservation

Perseverance is God's work that keeps a believer saved, causing them to persevere in the faith, despite trials, tribulations, and temptations. The doctrine of the "perseverance of the saints" or "preservation of the saints" is sometimes called "eternal security" or colloquially "once saved, always saved". A true believer cannot lose their salvation for the Scriptures declare that nothing can separate the believer from Christ (Rom 8:28-39).

> [35]Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? [36]Just as it is written, "For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." [37]But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. [38]For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, [39]nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:38-39)

Just as you cannot save yourself from sin, you cannot keep yourself saved from sin. All true believers once saved are kept by God's power and are always saved (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Cor 1:4-8; Eph 4:30; Heb 7:25; 13:5; 1 Pet 1:3-5; Jude 24).

> [37]"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. [38]"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. [39]"This is the will of Him who sent Me, **that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day**. (John 6:37-39)

> [47]Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. (John 6:47)

[27]My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; [28]and **I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand**. [29]"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. (John 10:27-29)

[1]Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Rom 8:1)

[3]Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4]to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, [5]**who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.** (1 Pet 1:5)

[24]Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, (Jude 24)

The doctrine of perseverance or preservation is clearly taught in Scripture. It is also connected to the other blessings of salvation that we have studied. At the moment of salvation, God changes His elect. The are regenerated; justified; forgiven; adopted; spiritually baptized; indwelt, sealed, given a pledge, and gifted by the Holy Spirit; sanctified positionally; and in the process of being progressively sanctified. The supernatural changes that God performs at salvation, is evidence of perseverance or preservation.

The saved, changed sinner loves Jesus and will therefore seek to obey Him. This changed life purpose is a mark of God's supernatural work.

[8]and **though you have not seen Him, you love Him**, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, [9]obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. (1 Pet 1:8-9)

[15]"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (John 14:15)

What of those who apparently fall away? Have they somehow "lost" their salvation? Were they saved from their sin for a time and then became unsaved? There are many people who identify themselves as a Christian. This does not make someone a believer.

[21]**"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*.** [22]"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' [23]"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.' (Matt 7:21-23) (See also the parable of the tares among the wheat in Matthew 13:24-30)

Unfortunately, there are those who, because of self-deception (i.e., self-effort verses grace) or external deception (i.e., accept a false gospel) at some point demonstrate in life and words that they have not surrendered their life to Christ. They were <u>*professors, but not possessors*</u> of salvation. A desertion of faith is evidence of never having exercised true saving faith to begin with. To be clear, this is not to simply stop attending a church or changing churches or missing a Sunday. It is abandoning what appeared to have once been held dear.

[19]They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; **but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us**. (1 John 2:19)

The Scriptures command each of us to continually be examining if the objective truth is present and the subjective evidences of salvation are being produced in your life. Those evidences are indications of God's work of sanctification and preservation.

[5]Test *(continually)* yourselves *to see* if you are in the faith; examine *(continually)* yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test? (2 Cor 13:5)

[10]Therefore, brethren, **be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble**; [11]for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. (2 Pet 1:10-11)

- **Are you diligent to strive in the power of the Spirit to pursue Christ?**
- **Do you see subjective evidences in your life?**

<u>Death</u>

Death is God's work where the predetermined time comes (Psa 139:16; Job 14:5) for the believer to finally see the Lord face to face. At death, the believer enters an intermediate state, where they are in the presence of the Lord, but without their glorified body.

Death is the end of physical life when the soul is separated from the body (James 2:26) with no loss of our consciousness (Luke 16:19-31; Rev 6:9-11).

[26]For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. (James 2:26)

Read Luke 16:19-31

[9]When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the **souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained**; [10]**and they cried out with a loud voice**, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" [11]And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also. (Rev 6:9-11)

The Scriptures are clear that all people, without miraculous intervention (e.g., Enoch in Gen 5:24 and Heb 11:5, Elijah in 2 Kings 2:11, or raptured believers in 1 Thess 4:17) will taste death and judgment (Heb 9:27).

[27]And inasmuch as **it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment**, [28]so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (Heb 9:27-28)

The outcome of the judgment is based on acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior which is subsequently demonstrated in a changed life.

> [16]"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. [17]"For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. [18]"**He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:16-18)

> [24]"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (John 5:24)

For the believer death means to "be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.".

> [42]And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" [43]And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, **today you shall be with Me in Paradise**." (Luke 23:42-43)

> [21]For to me, **to live is Christ and to die is gain**. [22]But if *I am* to live *on* in the flesh, this *will mean* fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. [23]But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, **having the desire to depart and be with Christ**, for *that* is very much better; [24]yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. (Phil 1:21-24)

> [6]Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— [7] for we walk by faith, not by sight— [8]we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be **absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord**. [9]Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. [10]For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Cor 5:6-10)

For the unbeliever, those who have not placed their faith in Christ as Lord and Savior are kept under punishment until the resurrection of the unsaved (Luke 16:19-26; Rev 20:13-15).

There are several studies on the VBC website of heaven and hell and the intermediate state where the immaterial part of a person is separated from the body and they are kept in their pre-heaven bliss or pre-lake of fire torment awaiting their resurrected, glorified body when they will be prepared to enter eternity.

Ultimately, for the believer death is not to be feared because our eternal destiny is assured. Before Christ, death held you in slavery, but you have been freed through Christ.

> [14]Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, [15]and **might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives**. [16]For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. (Heb 2:14-16)

[8]Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, [9]**who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace** which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, [10]but now has been revealed by the appearing of our **Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**, (2 Tim 1:8-10)

- **Are you ready?**

<u>Glorification</u>

A simple definition of glorification would be the final removal of sin from the believer. While this occurs with the immaterial part of the believer upon death, it does not occur for the body until the believer receives their glorified, resurrected body.

The final separation from sin of both your immaterial and material parts is so sure to happen that the Holy Spirit uses language to speak of it as already happening.

[28]And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. [29]For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; [30]and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, **He also glorified**. (Rom 8:28-30)

For the New Testament believer, glorification will occur at the Rapture.

[13]But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. [14]For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. [15]For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. [16]For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and **the dead in Christ will rise first**. [17]**Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**, and so we shall always be with the Lord. (1 Thess 4:13-17)

[42]So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable *body*, it is raised an **imperishable** *body*; [43]it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in **glory**; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in **power**; [44]it is sown a natural body, it is raised a **spiritual body**. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *body*. [45]So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. [46]However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. [47]The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. [48]As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. [49]Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also **bear the image of the heavenly**. [50]Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. [51]Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but **we will all be changed,** [52]in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. [53]For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Cor 15:42-53)

We don't know all the details of the glorified body. But we know it will be imperishable and incorruptible and, in some way, will be in conformity with Jesus' glorified body.

> [20]For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; [21]**who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (Phil 3:20-21)

The absolute certainty of your future and the future events of Scripture (because God is faithful and will accomplish all that He has said) should impact your life in the present.

> [58]Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in* vain in the Lord. (1 Cor 15:42-58)

> [11]Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, **what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness**, … [14]Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, **be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless**, (2 Pet 3:11, 14)

- **How does knowing the future encourage/empower your life now in the present?**

<u>Conclusion</u>

While you were dead in your trespasses and sins, a slave to sin, and alienated from God, helpless and hopeless, Christ died for you. God pulled you from the cesspool of your sin and changed you forever. You were transformed at the moment you exercised the gift of saving faith. Because God started this work in you, He is faithful to bring it to His conclusion. Therefore, by His power you persevere, continuing in the faith. At His timing, your mortal life will end, and you will enter Christ's presence full of joy, freed from sin. At the Rapture, you will obtain your glorified body and be freed completely from sin in a body suited for eternity.

As you contemplate all that God has done for you in salvation, my prayer for each of us is that we stive in the Spirit's power to live full of gratitude for His glory.

> [28]Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; [29]for our God is a consuming fire. (Heb 12: 28-29)