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## *“By Grace”*

### The Doctrine of Salvation

#### Various Passages

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**O**ne of the most important doctrines of scripture is the Doctrine of Salvation. And as well as being vital, it is one that is frequently a major area of contention between believers. The disagreement is not tied to the issue of God’s grace, but in understanding God’s sovereignty versus man’s free will. I don’t intend to resolve that battle here, although we did discuss it in depth during our study on Romans.

The other point I need to make is that volumes have been written on the Doctrine of Salvation. I could spend weeks, or is that years?, on the subject. Consequently, this session is intended to serve only as an introduction and survey of the subject. I hope it stimulates you to a further exploration of the topic. And of course, if you consistently read the Word you will be doing an ongoing study of the subject.

As in the previous doctrinal studies, the material is drawn primarily from Through the Bible in One Year<sup>1</sup>, and supplemented from Willmington’s Guide to the Bible<sup>2</sup>.

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**I Introduction:** The most fundamental doctrine of scripture is the Doctrine of Salvation. This is the entire focus of the Bible, from God’s planning for it, the need of it, the bringing it about, and its three tenses. Stringfellow introduces the study this way.

*“Salvation of lost souls is the reason Jesus died, the reason He established the church, the reason He gave to the church His gifts of ‘apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers’ (Ephesians 4:11). These gifts were given to the church for the winning of the lost, then for growth of the new person in Christ and ‘for the maturing (perfecting) of the saints (saved ones) for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ’ (Ephesians 4:12).*

*Salvation may be gained by one way, and one way only. The way is God’s way and is the subject of is study.”<sup>3</sup>*

**“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).**

**II The Great Truth:** The most important truth of salvation is what it says about God and not what it says about us. God’s desire to even save a fallen humanity tells us of His love and mercy. The message of salvation is the message of God’s grace.

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<sup>1</sup>Stringfellow, Alan B., ed., *Through the Bible in One Year*, Vol. 3, Great Truths of the Bible, Copyright © 1981 by Virgil W. Hensley, Inc., Publisher, Tulsa, OK, p. 105-110.

<sup>2</sup>Willmington, H. L., *Willmington’s Guide to the Bible*, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL., 1981, p. 727-755.

<sup>3</sup>Stringfellow, p. 105.

**1. Salvation was conceived in the Mind of God:** Because God knew even before the work of creation that man would fall, He planned for the work of Salvation.

*“For he chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight” (Ephesians 1:4).*

All that followed Adam and Eve’s sin and the fall of humanity (*see the doctrinal studies on man and sin*) was in place to restore fallen humans to a relationship with their Creator. And as we can see from Paul’s words here, not only was the work of salvation planned before creation, so was our individual calling to that salvation. This speaks to God’s foreknowledge (omniscience).

*“He (Jesus) was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake” (1 Peter 1:20).*

*“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:29). (also see Titus 1:2.)*

We are assured and confident of our salvation because it is in God’s hands and it has been his purpose since before the beginning of time. Praise the Lord!

**2. Salvation—the Grace of God:** As already noted salvation is the story of God’s grace. This is often defined as

*“... that unmerited favor of God toward fallen man whereby, for the sake of Christ—the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)—he has provided for man’s redemption. He has from all eternity determined to extend favor toward all who have faith in Christ as Lord and Savior.”<sup>4</sup>*

The following is often used as a way to remember the meaning of **Grace: God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense**. And the Christian walk is a response to the full import of the message of Grace and its impact on us.

*“who has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time” (2 Timothy 1:9).*

*“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11).*

And what is the motivation of God’s Grace? God’s love, His love for His creation. This is another factor in our peace and sense of security. God’s love for us isn’t based on our merit but His nature.

*“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).*

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<sup>4</sup> Douglas, J. D. and Merrill C. Tenney, editors, NIV Bible Dictionary, Zondervan Interactive Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1990

**III Salvation Before and After the Cross:** One of the more interesting questions regarding salvation is how it was worked out prior to the cross versus how it is provided since Christ's day. We start by remembering that salvation was provided by the atoning work of Christ, with atonement being defined as "to cover", specifically, the covering of sin.

- 1. Salvation Before the Cross:** The whole of the sacrificial system was provided to be a picture of Christ's work on the cross. (see Leviticus 16). But the levitical system was only able to provide ceremonial covering in anticipation of the true atonement.

*"For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that He has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant" (Hebrews 9:15).*

Note the author makes it clear that Christ's work had a retroactive effect on those who lived under the Law. They put their faith in God's provision of atonement even though they may have not understood the full implication of His working it out.

*"God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished" (Romans 3:25).*

Stringfellow notes:

*"The levitical offering of sacrifice was offered in anticipation of the supreme Sacrifice, Jesus Christ. God had promised a Lamb (Genesis 3:15; 22:8), and had forgiven sin on the basis of His promise." <sup>5</sup>*

*"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." ... "Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together" (Genesis 3:15, 22:8).*

So, those who were saved prior to the cross, were saved on the same basis we are, the atonement through the shed blood of Christ. Understand it this way. Sins of the Old Testament saints were put on a "credit card," a bill which was paid on the Cross. Ours is put on a "debit card," already paid for in the past.

- 2. Salvation After the Cross:** Which brings us to after the cross. Now we no longer depend on a system that foreshadows Christ's death and resurrection. We now can look back on it. His work was a one-time offering.

*"But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God. because by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (Hebrews 10:13-14).*

There is a difference between the atonement of the levitical system which was a covering, and the atonement of the Cross, which actually paid for, washed away the sins of its recipient.

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<sup>5</sup> Stringfellow, p. 106.

*“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).*

*“... having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross” (Colossians 2:14).*

**IV The Price Paid for Salvation:** The gift of our salvation was the most costly one of all: it was Christ’s life. This being the case, it is understandable there is no other way one can come to God.

**1. Christ Had to Die to Provide Salvation:** The source of salvation is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

*“And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you” (Romans 8:11).*

*“For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).*

**2. Christ Suffered for the Sins of the World, Our Sins:** Understand, there was a penalty to be paid for sin. Someone had to pay it, Either we do, or we accept Christ’s payment.

*“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit” (1 Peter 3:18).*

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission/forgiveness for sin.

*“In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (Hebrews 9:22).*

This was the reason for the picture of the sacrificial system and the celebration of Passover. And it was to this Jesus spoke during Passover, the Last Supper.”

*“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:28).*

**V Salvation for the Penalty of Sin:** To be saved requires the recognition of the need for salvation, that is, seeing the need to be saved from something. And the “something“ is sin. This is why the individual has to recognize that he is a sinner before he can turn to Christ for the gift of salvation.

**1. Christ Saves From the Guilt and Penalty of Sin:** As already noted, the penalty of sin must be paid. Guilt must also be done away with. (This is why as believers, we are no longer guilty of sin and therefore have no need to feel “guilt.”)

*“God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

*“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Ephesians 4:31-32).*

2. **Christ Will Save All Who Will Come to Him:** While scripture teaches an unlimited atonement, meaning that salvation is available to all, clearly Christ’s propitiation is only effective to those whom the Holy Spirit draws and who in turn accept it.

*“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).*

**VI Salvation From the Power of Sin:** One of the exciting benefits of the Christian life is that we are no longer slaves to sin. This means in any given situation, in dependency on the power of the Holy Spirit, we can choose not to sin.

1. **Christ Ever Lives to Make Intercession For Us:** We need not fear the accusations of the Evil One, for we stand righteous before God, covered in Christ’s righteousness.

*“For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace” (Romans 6:14).*

*“Nor did He enter heaven to offer Himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own” (Hebrews 9:25).*

Sadly, while we no longer have to sin, we still struggle with it. We are still disposed to it.

*“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One” (1 John 2:1).*

2. **The Christian Can Live a Victorious Life:** Nevertheless, we can still experience victory over sin. (see Romans 7:15-25)

*“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering” (Romans 8:1-3).*

But remember, it is only as we depend on the Holy Spirit that we can experience this victory.

*“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words*

*cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will" (Romans 8:26-27).*

And so we have wisdom and understanding which allows us to recognize sin and depend on God to overcome it.

*"We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know Him who is true. And we are in Him who is true—even in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20).*

**VII Salvation From the Presence of Sin:** Here we recognize that not only are our sins forgiven but we will one day be freed from its very presence. This is looking at the eschatological aspects of redemption.

We have a future to look forward to in which sin will no longer even be an issue. This speaks to the three tenses of sin. We have been saved from sin—Redemption. We are being saved from sin—Sanctification. We will be saved from sin—Glorification.

**1. Jesus Shall Return to Take the Redeemed from the Presence of Sin:** This is the day we look forward to. The day when Christ shall come for His Church.

*"... so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him" (Hebrews 9:28).*

*"... and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:4-5).*

**2. God Sees Christians as They Shall Be:** What a blessing, to be seen by God through the righteousness of Christ, instead of seeing us as sinners. We stand positionally before Him in righteousness.

*"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:1-2).*

**VIII Salvation is the Free Gift of God:** Finally, it must be understood, there is nothing that can be done to earn salvation. All who try to earn their way into heaven will of necessity fail. This is why scripture teaches there is no way to God except through the work of Christ on the Cross.

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).*

The reason we have reviewed what we all know about salvation is to remember all the issues in a systematic way. And why? So we can be equipped to offer the gift of salvation to all whom God places in our path. Remember, our purpose beyond glorifying God is to advance the kingdom, to participate in the work of salvation. So ...

- 1. How Can a Person be Saved?:** Whether one believes in unlimited or limited atonement, it is clear that Christ's death is only effective for those who receive it. Paul summarizes the way of salvation but stating:

*“Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.*

*For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).*

Remember, a person must see the need of a saviour, that is, realize he is a sinner in need of a payment for sin. And without Christ's payment all must pay for sin in eternal judgment.

*“... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” ... “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 3:23; 6:23).*

*“... that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame.”” (Romans 10:8-11).*

- 2. How Can a Person Live a Christian Life?:** And so we come to the conclusion of this survey. We have two responsibilities as believers: (1) to spread the Gospel to those who have not yet received the gift of salvation, and (2) to allow the Spirit to live the Christian life through us. Only God's children are capable of obeying God.

*“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).*

We can walk the walk, by being in the word, being filled with the Spirit, and keeping short accounts, that is, repenting of the sin that interferes with our relationship with the Father. (More on repentance next week.)

*“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).*

So, praise the Lord, we are not called to live the Christian life out of our own strength, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. We have much to be grateful for and most of all our salvation, knowing once saved always saved, for that is how we know we have eternal life in the presence of God.

***“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13).***

*There is coming a day  
when no heartaches shall come—  
No more clouds in the sky,  
no more tears to dim the eye.  
All is peace for ever more  
on that happy golden shore.  
What a day, glorious day that will be!*

*There'll be no sorrow there,  
no more burdens to bear  
No more sickness, no pain,  
no more parting over there.  
And forever I will be  
with the One who died for me.  
What a day, glorious day that will be!*

*What a day that will be  
when my Jesus I shall see,  
And I look upon His face  
the One who saved me by His grace.  
When He takes me by the hand,  
and leads me thro' the Promised Land;  
What a day, glorious day that will be!<sup>6</sup>*

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<sup>6</sup> Hill, Jim, The Celebration Hymnal, “What A Day That Will Be,” Word/Integrity, Waco, TX, 1997, #762.



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**Various Passages**

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**I Introduction:**

*(Ephesians 4:11-12; 2:8-9)*

**II The Great Truth:**

**1. Salvation was conceived in the Mind of God:**

*(Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:20; Romans 8:29; also see Titus 1:2)*

**2. Salvation—the Grace of God:**

*(John 1:14; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 2:11; Romans 5:8)*

**III Salvation Before and After the Cross:**

**1. Salvation Before the Cross:**

*(Hebrews 9:15; Romans 3:25; Genesis 3:15; 22:8)*

**2. Salvation After the Cross:**

*(Hebrews 10:13-14; John 1:29; Colossians 2:14)*

**IV The Price Paid for Salvation:**

**1. Christ Had to Die to Provide Salvation:**

*(Romans 8:11; John 3:16)*

**2. Christ Suffered for the Sins of the World, Our Sins:**

*(1 Peter 3:18; Hebrews 9:22; Matthew 26:28)*

## **V Salvation for the Penalty of Sin:**

- 1. Christ Saves From the Guilt and Penalty of Sin:**  
*(2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 4:31-32)*
- 2. Christ Will Save All Who Will Come to Him:**  
*(2 Peter 3:9)*

## **VI Salvation From the Power of Sin:**

- 1. Christ Ever Lives to Make Intercession For Us:**  
*(Romans 6:14; Hebrews 9:25; 1 John 2:1)*
- 2. The Christian Can Live a Victorious Life:**  
*(Romans 8:1-3; Romans 8:26-27; 1 John 5:20; see Romans 7:15-25)*

## **VII Salvation From the Presence of Sin:**

- 1. Jesus Shall Return to Take the Redeemed from the Presence of Sin:**  
*(Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 1:4-5)*
- 2. God Sees Christians as They Shall Be:**  
*(1 John 3:1-2)*

## **VIII Salvation is the Free Gift of God:**

*(Ephesians 2:8-9).*

- 1. How Can a Person be Saved?:**  
*(1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 3:23; 6:23; Romans 10:8-11)*
- 2. How Can a Person Live a Christian Life?:**  
*(John 1:12; 1 John 1:9; 5:13)*