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Salvation - Problem, Penalty, Possibility

Why do I need to be Saved?

Bible Discussion Guide

Everyone is encouraged to participate in the discussions, but no one is required to talk or read if they feel uncomfortable doing so.
(Superscripted text) in scripture passages are from the version's notes.)

ICE BREAKERS

1. What is the biggest adventure you have ever been on? What impact did the adventure have on you?
2. Do you remember the days before GPS? If you were on a trip and had no GPS signal, would you stop and ask for directions or just keep going and try to find your own way?

Story of the camping trip – J. Rob

3. Have you ever been in a situation that ended up in disaster or near disaster? (You do not have to share details.) Did you seek help? Were you able to avoid the disaster? How?
4. In Christian circles, you may hear a lot about “being lost” and “getting saved.” Regardless of your religious background, what do the phrases “being lost” and “getting saved” bring to mind?

INTRO AND OUTLINE

During these discussions we will seek to strip away any traditions or misinformation that have clouded what Jesus and the Apostles originally taught about what it meant to be a Christ follower or to inherit eternal life. In order to take the time necessary to truly deal with the scriptures, we have divided the topic of salvation into several principles for study:

- A. **the Problem** – why we need salvation,
- B. **the Penalty** – if we reject salvation,
- C. **the Possibility** – the hope of salvation,
- D. the Price Paid – what it cost to buy our salvation,
- E. the Power Provided – victory over death!
- F. the Promises – the benefits of salvation,
- G. the Process – how to accept the gift,
- H. the Proof – a changed life.

During this discussion we will seek to cover the first three.

SALVATION - THE PROBLEM

Please read the following passages.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:9-12

There is no one righteous, not even one. There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away; all alike have become useless. There is no one who does what is good, not even one.

Isaiah 59:1-2

Indeed, the Lord's hand is not too short to save, and His ear is not too deaf to hear. But your iniquities [gross injustice, wickedness] have built barriers between you and your God, and your sins [actions that violate God's commandments and holiness] have made Him hide His face from you so that He does not listen.

Revelation 21:27

Nothing profane will ever enter it [heaven]: no one who does what is vile or false, but only those written in the Lamb's book of life.

Romans 6:16

Don't you know that if you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of that one you obey—either of sin leading to death or of obedience leading to righteousness?

Romans 1:18-2:16 Gives a fairly thorough list of sins if you want to check it out.

1. What is this thing called “sin?”

Unless otherwise indicated, scriptures quoted from HCSB = Holman Christian Standard Bible; NIV = New International Version; ESV = English Standard Version. Emphasis added. Letters in red spoken by God the Father or Jesus.

2. What problems does “sin” cause?
3. Who is guilty of “sin?”
4. What does sin do to those who commit sins?

SALVATION - THE PENALTY

Sin actually has three negative outcomes. Sin has wages. Sin has penalties, and Sin has consequences.

Briefly, penalties are legal actions to be taken by society against the person who committed the sin. There are differing levels of penalties detailed in scripture based on the impact of the sin on the lives of others, e.g. there may be no enforced penalty for a “white lie,” but the scriptural penalty for murder is death while the penalty for theft is restitution with interest.

Consequences are natural outcomes of sin in the life of the person who commits the sin as well as the lives of those around them. For example, sexual promiscuity often results in unplanned pregnancy, reduced ability to have healthy long-term relationships and STD’s which can lead to sterility and other complications. Gluttony’s consequences include obesity, cardiovascular difficulties, and early death.

The following passages deal with the first outcome, wages. Wages are the spiritual/eternal impact of sin. Every sin has exactly the same “wage” and one sin has the same wage as 10,000 sins.

Read the following verses:

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Revelation 20:13-15

Then the sea gave up its dead, and Death and Hades gave up their dead; all were [or: each was] judged according to their works. Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And anyone not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Matthew 25:41,46 — Parable of the sheep and goats

⁴¹ Then He will also say to those on the left, ‘Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels! ... ⁴⁶ “And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Revelation 21:8

“But the cowards, unbelievers, vile, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars—their share will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

5. According to the verses, what are the wages of sin — what is the eternal result?
6. In the Revelation 21:8 passage, do you find anything listed as a sin that surprises you? How would you compare the sins in this list?

SALVATION - THE POSSIBILITY

Now read the following verses:

Romans 3:24-25

They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God presented Him as a propitiation [payment in full] through faith in His blood, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His restraint God passed over the sins previously committed.

Romans 6:20-23

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from allegiance to righteousness. So what fruit was produced then from the things you are now ashamed of? For the end of those things is death. But now, since you have been liberated from sin and have become enslaved to God, you have your fruit, which results in sanctification—and the end is eternal life! For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 5:6-8

For while we were still helpless, at the appointed moment, Christ died for the ungodly. For rarely will someone die for a just person—though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die. But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!

7. The scriptures above indicate that God provided a way out. What is it?

8. Who made it possible for us to avoid receiving the wages of our sin? How?

RESOURCES

(See also [Matthew 18:6-9](#) and [Mark 9:42-48](#))

PASTORAL BLESSING

God scripted the first pastoral blessing which the priests were to say over the people at each gathering. It is recorded in [Numbers 6:22-27](#) (NIV):

The Lord said to Moses,

“Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them:

‘The Lord bless you and keep you;

the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;

the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.’

“So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.”

FOR YOUR PERSONAL QUIET TIME

Sometimes the cares we experience in the Temporal-Physical realm can get us down. We can struggle to keep moving forward. Sometimes we may want to just give up. But, according to Jesus, we have Heaven to look forward to:

Revelation 21:1-7

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.”

In [Romans 8:18](#), Paul says, “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” (NIV)

What have you learned about the Spiritual realm that could help you have victory in the Physical realm?

How can you use these truths to help you in your times of struggle?

God’s blessings on you,

