

## Soteriology - Discovering Doctrine

- This week, we'll be talking about salvation
- We should begin by defining salvation from the scriptures
- One of the first verses that comes to mind (for me) when thinking about where this word appears is Romans...

Romans 1:16

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

- The word "salvation" here is *sōtēria*
- And that word means "deliverance, rescue, safety"
- Another more well-known passage in the New Testament explains...

John 3:16-17

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

- We're talking about rescue from sin and the consequences of sin through Jesus
- And rescue from death and condemnation
- If we move further into the book of Romans, we have even more explanation...

Romans 5:6-9

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

- We are all sinners
- Without God's intervention and Christ's sacrifice
- Our future would be wrath
- But salvation is our rescue from wrath

- With all of this in mind, here are the five statements about salvation from our foundations booklet...
1. We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace.
  2. We believe that the salvation of sinners is only found through the Son of God.
  3. We believe that the atonement of sinners is through the obedient, voluntary sacrifice of Jesus Christ's death on the cross.
  4. We believe that the new life given to sinners when they are saved is because of the risen life found in Jesus Christ.
  5. We believe that the salvation of sinners is available because Jesus Christ is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.
- It's worth spending a moment defining grace before we go on
  - The shorthand definition is unmerited favor
  - That means a good thing we receive, even while not deserving it
- We've already seen what grace looks like in John 3 and in Romans 5
  - God loved the world and sent Jesus
  - And while we were yet sinners, Jesus died for us
  - This is grace
- As for the details of our first "we believe" statement, perhaps Ephesians will help...

#### Ephesians 2:1-10

1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;  
 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:  
 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.  
 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,  
 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)  
 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:  
 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.  
 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:  
 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.  
 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

- A lot of things were true about us before we came to know Christ

- We were dead in trespasses and sins
- We were walking according to the course of this world (or living the way the world lives)
- When we were doing that, our actions were consistent with Satan's desires for our lives
- Our lifestyles were shaped by the lusts of our flesh (our natural - but sinful - desires)
- We could have been classified as "children of wrath"
- But God stepped in because of His mercy
- And because of His great love
- Raising us from death to life by Christ
- Saving us by grace
- We didn't deserve His mercy, we didn't deserve His love
- But He chose to give it - and this is grace!
- Because of grace, we can spend eternity with Jesus
- In heaven, His grace will forever be on display
- His kindness, through Jesus Christ, will not be forgotten
- Without grace, we cannot be saved
- Because salvation is the gift of God
- And no amount of works can ever obtain it
- It's by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone
- Now we must go about doing the good works He intends for us to do
- We touched on "we believe" statement number two in these verses, but there are more
- They are explicit about the fact "salvation of sinners is only found through the Son of God"
- Starting in the book of Acts, when Peter and James stood before the council...

#### Acts 4:9-13

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

- In our previous lesson on Christology, we substantiated the claim that Jesus is the Son of God
- Peter quotes Psalm 118:22 in speaking of Him
- Which says "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner."
- That is, even though this council - the religious leaders of the day - the builders - set Him aside
- He became the cornerstone
- Upon which every plan of God from eternity past was built
- Among other things, no one can be forgiven of their sin without Him
- No one can be reconciled to God without Him
- No one can be raised from death to life without Him
- There is no salvation in any other
- Without Jesus, no one can be rescued
- The clear language of John 3 provides re-emphasis...

John 3:18

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

- And...

John 3:36

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

- Jesus is the Son of God
- No one is saved apart from faith in the Son of God
- Furthermore "the atonement of sinners is through the obedient, voluntary sacrifice of Jesus Christ's death on the cross"
- This "we believe" statement will take us to several New Testament addresses
- Beginning with one in Romans we have already touched upon...

Romans 5:8-11

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

- Atonement means exchange
- It's a financial term that refers to adjustment of a difference or reconciliation (the word used twice in verse 10)
- Our sin was equivalent to a debt we could never pay
- But He died in our place and for our sins, paying our debt, and justly settling our account for eternity
- We receive the atonement, but only the shedding of His blood could accomplish it
  
- He did all of this willingly, in fact, one passage encourages us...

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: [did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped]

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- He became a servant
- He humbled Himself
- He was obedient
- Going to the cross willingly
  
- Consider Jesus' words in John 10...

John 10:11-18

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

- The Good Shepherd sacrificed His life for us - the sheep
- No one took His life
- He gave it up
  
- Timothy tells us as much...

1 Timothy 2:5-6

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

- And Jesus left us His example, asking that we do the same...

Ephesians 5:25

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

- Calling this willing sacrifice the greatest kind of love...

John 15:13

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

- And His disciples obeyed with His example in mind...

Galatians 2:20

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

- More great news can be found in our foundations booklet

- And "we believe" statement four provides it, when it says "the new life given to sinners when they are saved is because of the risen life found in Jesus Christ"
- Romans provides assurances of this...

#### Romans 6:3-4

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

- What does this mean?
- The passage goes on...

#### Romans 6:8-11

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- We have new life in Christ
- Which has permanently altered our eternity
- But has also given us victory day by day over sin...

#### Romans 6:12-14

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

- Sin shall not
- Sin must not
- Sin dare not have dominion over those who are alive in Christ
- Because we are new creatures...

#### 2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

- Our final "we believe" statement declares "the salvation of sinners is available because Jesus Christ is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior"
- If I had to narrow the focus of this statement, I would simply say "the salvation of sinners is available because Jesus Christ is in every way a qualified Savior"
- He is the perfect, sinless sacrifice
- The only qualified sacrifice for the sins of mankind
  
- While we could deal with His suitability, His compassion, and His all-sufficiency too
- I suggest we concentrate on His qualification
  
- We must start by going back to the beginning
- In the early part of Genesis, after the sin of man...

Genesis 3:15

15 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.

- The head of the serpent would not just be bruised, but crushed
- Crushed by the seed of the woman
- Not a descendant of Adam
- Not polluted by sin which was passed down
- Having no imputed sin Himself
- But who would this be?
  
- Abraham was told of Him at his calling in Genesis 12...

Genesis 12:1-3

1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

- Who could provide a blessing of this sort to all families of the earth?



- The prophet Isaiah gives us a direct answer...

#### Isaiah 9:6-7

6 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, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

- We are talking about someone who will be called The mighty God
- The everlasting Father
- One who can justly reign on the throne of David
- Who will have a kingdom like no other kingdom
- One that is everlasting
- He will do something else: bring light and deliverance
- Not just to those in Israel, but also unto the Gentiles
- Isaiah provides these details...

#### Isaiah 42:5-7

5 Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

- We're talking about a Savior that can bring salvation to the whole world
- Someone who is qualified to deliver Jew and Gentile alike
- A baby that meets the description of this foretold Deliverer is announced in the New Testament...

#### Luke 1:30-33

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

- The words of Gabriel so closely resemble the words of Isaiah before Him
- Especially in their details about taking His place on the throne of David
- And on His everlasting kingdom
  
- We hear this about Him when He is twelve years old...

Luke 2:46-47

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

- And when His parent's asked Him for an explanation He said...

Luke 2:49

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

- Jesus was like no other
- Totally unique in history
- The Bible says He knew no sin...

2 Corinthians 5:21

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

- He bore none of His own sins on the cross
- If He had sinned, He would deserve the punishment
- But He did not
- He was our stand-in
- He was our replacement
  
- God in human flesh was the only worthy candidate for this assignment

- And He took the assignment willingly...

Luke 22:41-42

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

- And because of what He did - what only He was capable of doing - we can have salvation