

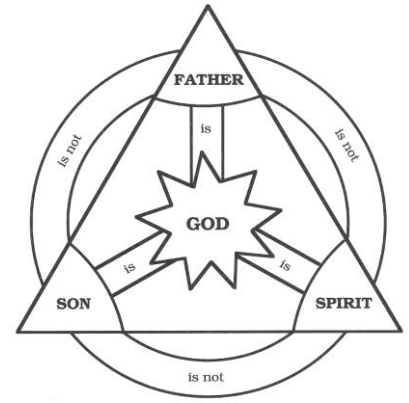
**Lecture Notes on  
The Doctrine of Salvation  
Greg Burgess**



# THE GOSPEL REALLY IS GOOD NEWS

## God's Glorious Gospel

We believe that the one God has eternally existed in three persons, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup>. These three are coeternal, coequal and consubstantial (of one and the same substance, essence or nature). This means that God is by nature both personal and relational. Since God is also perfect (Matthew 5:48) Father, Son and Holy Spirit have for ever been in a loving, joy filled, harmonious relationship, completely fulfilled, lacking nothing (e.g. Matthew 3:17; John 3:35; 12:28; 15:9-11; 16:12-15; 17:1-5; 1 Timothy 1:11; 6:15 ; Revelation 5).



## Eternal Life

The elements of the relationship described above is what I believe is meant by the very life of God (cf. John 5:26). Thus Jesus is “the Life” (John 1:4. He received this life from his Father (John 5:26) and came from the Father to offer this “life” to all who would believe (John 3:16; 10:10). Eternal life, that which the believer attains through faith in Christ, is defined as knowing both God the Father and the Son (John 17:3), thus sharing in the beauty of their relationship, or partaking ‘in the divine nature’ as Peter put it (2 Peter 1:4). This I believe is the heart of the Gospel, meaning it is (as best I can tell) the motivation from God’s perspective (since it reveals his glory) and the reward/goal from our perspective. It is what drives all that God has done on our behalf. So in summary, God’s glorious gospel is that God, (through Jesus Christ and by means of his Spirit), offers sinful man eternal life, eternal life being the very life of God, the joy, peace, harmony and fullness that has coeternally existed between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

## The Bad News

The bad news is that man, though initially created to enjoy relationship with God, naturally and willfully rebelled against Him in the Garden of Eden (cf. Genesis 3). The sin of Adam and Eve was catastrophic. Their sin resulted in: separation from God’s life (spiritual death), physical death, loss of blessings and suffering under cursed conditions (covenantal death), alienation from other humans (relational death) and a corruption of the entire created realm (cosmic death).<sup>3</sup> This sin nature has been passed on from generation to generation (original sin cf. Ps 58:3; Rom 5:12 etc.) leaving all people in a state whereby they are both unable and unwilling to turn to God in and of themselves (total depravity).<sup>4</sup>

Since God is holy, righteous and just such wickedness on the part of man must be punished. This punishment must be infinite in nature for the crime is infinite in nature. Yet God’s desire is for people (all people) to experience his life (John 20:31; 1 Timothy 2:4). Enter the solution, God’s plan of redemption.

<sup>1</sup> This is not the place for a systematic unpacking of the doctrine of the Trinity so I will refer you to good systematic theology books for a much more detailed explanation and biblical defense. For now hopefully these references will suffice: The Father is God (John 6:27; Gal 1:1); Jesus the Son is God (Mark 2:5; John 1:1; 5:18; 8:58; 10:10; 20:28; Rev 5:13); the Spirit is God (Ps 139:7; Acts 5:3-4; Rom 15:30; 1 Cor 2:11); References to the Trinity (Matt 28:20 – one name three persons; 2 Cor 13:14).

<sup>2</sup> Some may object on the grounds of passages like 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 where Paul lays out clearly ‘the gospel that I preached to you...by which you are saved’. That gospel being that Christ died for our sins, was buried and after three days was raised. This is indeed the gospel, the core of what must be believed to be saved. But Scripture reveals there is more to the story, and the big story helps us to grasp just how good the Gospel really is.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Holsteen & Svingel, Exploring Christian Theology v.2, p.42

<sup>4</sup> Romans 1:18-3:23 should be enough to establish the truth of this statement. Though of course we could reference many more passages (e.g. Eph 2:1-3; Col 1:21 etc.).

# THE GOSPEL REALLY IS GOOD NEWS

## God's Plan of Redemption

From earliest times God provided a means for people to deal with their sin and so have relationship with him. This involved sacrifices and offerings that were given to God in faith. Under the Mosaic Covenant the nation of Israel were given an elaborate system of sacrifices, officiated by an elaborate priesthood that prefigured the one sacrifice and the one priest who would make a once for all sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 10:3-4, 10-14). When the time was right God the Father sent forth his Son, born of a woman to be that sacrifice and that priest who would rescue people from their sins (cf. Galatians 4:4). Here are the six key truths concerning Jesus that form the core of the Gospel and so are absolutely essential for our salvation:

### 1. **The Incarnation – God the Father sent his Son into the world**

Scripture: Jn 1:18; 14:7-9; Rom 8:3; Phil 2:6-9; Heb 2:9, 14; 4:14-16; 1 Jn 3:8

Significance: Jesus came to reveal the Father, defeat the devil, become our great high priest, deal with our sin problem and make humanity compatible with deity.

### 2. **The Atonement - Jesus' perfect life and substitutionary death for sinners**

Scripture: Mark 10:45; Acts 3:18-18; 13:38-39; Rom 3:21-26; 5:9-11; 2 Cor 5:21; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14, 22; 1 Tim 2:6-7; Tit 2:14; Heb 9:26-28; 1 Pet 1:18-19; 1 Jn 3:5; Rev 5:9

Significance: Jesus' perfect life and substitutionary death forgives the sin of those who believe, spares them from God's wrath, and reconciles them to God (among many other things! See lecture 3).

### 3. **The Resurrection – God powerfully raised Jesus from the dead**

Scripture: Acts 2:23-24; 3:15; 4:10; 10:40; 13:30-37; 17:31; 26:23; Rom 1:4; 4:25; 6:9-10; 1 Cor 15:4-8; Eph 1:19-20; Col 1:18; 1 Th 1:10; 2 Tim 2:8

Significance: The resurrection proved that Jesus had paid the penalty for the sins of the world, showed that death itself had been defeated and guaranteed life after death to those who believe.

### 4. **The Ascension – Jesus was taken into heaven and exalted at his Father's side**

Scripture: Mk 16:9; Lk 24:51; Acts 1:9-11; 2:33; 3:21; Ph 2:9-11; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 6:19-20.

Significance: The ascension declared Jesus to be Lord (Acts 2:36), saw him begin his ministry as Mediator (Heb 9:15), High Priest (Heb 7-10), and saw him become Head of the church (Eph 1:22).

### 5. **Pentecost – Jesus (and the Father) send the Holy Spirit**

Scripture: Jn 14:16-17; Acts 2:1-4; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; Eph 1:13-14; 5:18f; Gal 5:22f; Tit 3:4-6

Significance: Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to apply the work of Christ to those who believe, to indwell and empower believers, and to help them grow in Christlikeness.

### 6. **The Second Coming – Jesus will return to earth and set up his kingdom**

Scripture: Mt 24-25; Acts 1:11; 1 Th 4:13-17; 2 Th 1:10; 2:1f; 1 Pet 1:5; 5:4; Jd 1:21; Rev 19-20

Significance: Jesus will return to vindicate and reward the righteous, to give believer's new bodies and so complete their salvation, to judge the wicked and to set up His kingdom on earth.

Taken together this is the glorious Gospel, the good news of what God has done for us in Christ. What then should be people's response to this revelation? Stay tuned...

## WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

### What Must I Do to Have Saving Faith?

Given all that God has done for us in Christ what does he want from us in return?

“and after he [the Philippian jailor] brought them out he said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved? They said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.’” (Acts 16:30-31)

“If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Rom 10:9)

“Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brethren what shall we do?’ ‘Repent and each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.’” (Acts 2:37-38 see also 3:19; 5:31; 11:8; 17:30; 26:20)

In response to all he has done for us God calls us to ‘repent and believe,’ or in one word he wants us to have faith. I believe that repentance and belief in Jesus as Lord are not two conditions for salvation but one. I’ll let F. Leroy Forlines explain (pp.253-254)

“Faith and repentance are involved in each other. To exercise faith implies a change from unbelief, whatever the form of unbelief may be. Repentance terminates in faith. If we tell a person to repent, or we tell him to believe, we are telling him to do the same thing. Repent stresses that change is involved. Faith stresses the end to which change is directed.”

The word ‘repent’ itself simply means to change one’s mind. With respect to salvation this change in mind includes a change in attitude, a change in one’s mind, heart and will if you like. Forlines (p.254) says it well,

“in repentance, there is a ‘from’ and a ‘to.’ The exact nature of the ‘from’ may vary from one person to another. Some need to change from a simple case of unbelief. Others need to change from false religion or paganism...[but]...the ‘to’ for all is the same. All are to change to faith Jesus Christ.” (see Acts 20:21 and 2 Tim 2:25)

### What Must I Believe to have Saving Faith?

Just exactly what must someone need to believe in order to be saved? John Piper answered this question on a pod cast, so it might be helpful for us to watch his response and then discuss it.

1. I must believe that I am a sinner (cf. Rom 3:23).
2. I must believe that the Creator God exists whom I have sinned against (otherwise my sin makes no sense). (cf. Heb 11:6)
3. I must believe I am under God’s judgment and wrath (cf. Rom 6:23).
4. I must believe in the deity of Jesus (cf. Rom 10:9).

## WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

5. I must acknowledge what Jesus did, he lived a perfect life (cf. 1 Cor 5:21).
6. I must believe that he died for my sins on the cross (cf. 1 Cor 5:21).
7. I must believe that he rose from the dead never to die again (Rom 10:9).

### Some Curly Questions

#### 1. Is faith a gift of God?

Salvation is God's gift to be accepted by faith (Eph 2:8-9). The question comes, is that faith also a gift? Yes and no! "Faith is a gift in the sense that God gives to us the aid that is necessary, without which, we could not exercise faith..." (Forlines, p.257-258). It is not a gift in the sense that it must be exercised by the person, it must be their own action, hence the many calls in the Scriptures 'to believe' (e.g. John 20:31).

#### 2. Which comes first, faith or regeneration?

I believe the Scriptures make it very clear that faith precedes regeneration (e.g. John 1:12; 3:16; 3:18; 3:36; 5:24; 5:40; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 3:22; 3:26; 4:3; 4:5; 5:1). The argument some make is that it is impossible for people to desire salvation given their total depravity. The heart must be changed before anyone will want to believe in Christ. In response, people can only have faith because God in his grace has brought them to that point prior to conversion. This is referred to as prevenient grace, grace that comes before salvation (see Tit 2:11).

#### 3. What about those who cannot believe, infants, small children and the intellectually disabled?

Some believe that only baptized infants will be saved (Roman Catholics, Lutherans etc.), others believe that God can elect infants to salvation (Calvin). While we can't be 100% sure, I believe all who cannot believe will indeed go to heaven. Following Geisler (3:447-454), the arguments for this are as follows: (1) Jesus indicated the kingdom belonged to little children/infants (Luke 18:15-17); (2) Since David anticipated life in heaven after death (cf. Ps 16:10-11), when he said he would go to his dead child (2 Sam 12:23), he could be implying his child was in heaven (not just the grave); (3) The Bible speaks of an age of accountability (Is 7:15; Deut 1:39; John 9:41) and (4) Romans 5:18-19 indicates that in some way Christ made 'all righteous'. This could mean Christ's death cancelled original sin, making people culpable not for Adam's sin but only their own (Rev 20:12-13).

#### 4. What about those who have never heard the Gospel?

All such people stand guilty and condemned before God on the basis of general revelation (cf. Ps 19 and Romans 1:20). Remember also at one point in their ancestor's history they did know God (Gen 11 and Rom 1:21f), so their ignorance is in part a result of the unbelief of their forebears (beware the unintended consequences of sin!). The fact that such people are lost is the spur to our missionary endeavour (Rom 10:14-15).

#### 5. How is hell justifiable if God is all loving?

The gravity of our sin is measured by the nature of the one we sin against. God is infinite in value thus to sin against God is to commit an 'infinite' crime (this is why only a God-man could die for our sins). Since God is also holy and just, such sin must be punished appropriately. A place of eternal torment is therefore not only justifiable but necessary.

# WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I'M SAVED?

## Salvation Past, Present and Future

**I have been saved from the penalty of sin (Eph 2:5)**

I am being saved from the power of sin (1 Pet 1:8-9)

I will be saved from the very presence of sin (Rom 5:9-10; 13:11; 1 Cor 3:15)

## The Work of God the Son in Salvation

- **Jesus' Active Obedience** (cf. Rom 5:19)  
Jesus lived a sinless, joy-filled life under the Moasic Covenant. He thus completely fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law and proved himself to be a lamb without blemish, fit to be the sacrifice for the sins of the world (cf. Jon 1:29). This is what is referred to as the active obedience of Christ and it is this righteousness (Christ's righteousness) that is given to believers at conversion (Rom 3:21-22; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21).
- **Jesus' Passive Obedience (The Substitutionary Penal Atonement)**  
As sinners, the Bible makes it clear that all people are God's enemies (Rom 3:23, 5:10). God is holy and just and so must punish sin. Yet as the lamb of God Jesus died on the cross as a substitute for sinners (Isa 53:6; John 6:51; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; 1 Pet 2:24). On the cross Jesus took upon himself the sin of the world and placated God's wrath (this is called propitiation Rom 3:25; Heb 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10). In doing this, among other things, he also redeemed those who believe from their sin (Mark 10:45; Acts 20:28; Gal 3:13; 2 Pet 2:1; Rev 5:9-10) and reconciled them to God (Rom 5:1-10; 2 Cor 5:18-21; Eph 2:16).
- **Jesus' Resurrection**  
If the wages of sin are death (Rom 6:23), to show that Jesus had defeated sin and death it was necessary for him to rise from the dead. This he did! According to Romans 4:25 Jesus "was delivered over to death for our sins but raised to life for our justification." Jesus' resurrection proved that the payment he made on the cross for sins had been sufficient and had been accepted by his Father. Now all who believe in him are declared righteous. No resurrection, no salvation.

## The Work of God the Holy Spirit in Salvation

- **Baptism of the Holy Spirit** (1 Cor 12:13)  
Believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ (the church). This occurs at salvation and is a non-repeatable event (1 Cor 12:13). This baptism also associates the believer with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and so enables and calls us to live holy lives increasingly separated from indwelling sin (Rom 6:1-10; Col 2:12).
- **Regeneration by the Holy Spirit** (Tit 3:3-5)  
Regeneration is the work of God the Holy Spirit in giving new spiritual life to the one who believes (Tit 3:3-6). It is referred to by Jesus as a new birth (John 3), and so results in a person becoming a 'new man' (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10; 2 Cor 5:17).

# WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I'M SAVED?

- **Sealing of the Holy Spirit** (Eph 1:13-14)

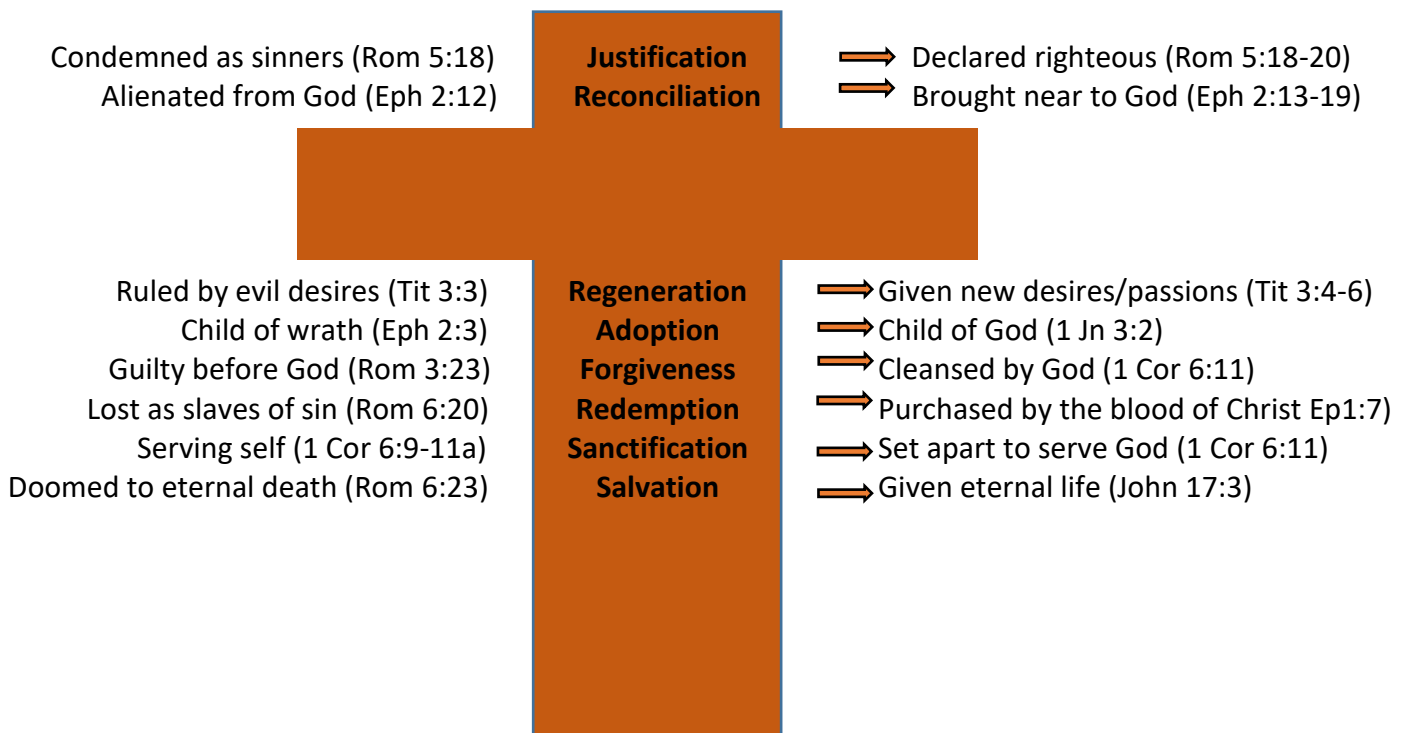
God seals all believers with the Spirit (2 Cor 1:22), from the moment they first believed (Eph 1:13), until the day of redemption (Eph 4:30). This sealing is like a down payment that assures believers will be fully redeemed, a guarantee that we will receive all that God has promised us. "The concept of sealing includes the ideas of ownership, authority, responsibility, and, above all, security." (Ryrie, p.361)

- **Indwelling of the Holy Spirit** (Rom 8:9)

Every believer is given the Holy Spirit as a gift at the moment of conversion (John 7:37; Rom 5:5; 1 Cor 2:12; 2 Cor 5:5). In fact if one doesn't have the Spirit she is not a believer (Rom 8:9). The Holy Spirit quite literally lives within the believer (1 Cor 3:16), and this indwelling is permanent (John 14:16).

"...whether or not we feel it God the Holy Spirit lives within our beings constantly. This ought to give us (a) a sense of security in our relationship with God, (b) a motivation to practice that presence of God, and (c) a sensitivity to sins against God." (Ryrie, p.358)

## The Work of God the Father in Salvation





# HOW DO I LIVE AS A CHRISTIAN?

## Salvation Past Present and Future

I have been saved from the penalty of sin (Eph 2:5)  
**I am being saved from the power of sin (1 Pet 1:8-9)**  
I will be saved from the very presence of sin (Rom 5:9-10; 13:11; 1 Cor 3:15)

The process of believers being saved from the power of sin in this life is referred to as sanctification. The term itself means being set apart for service (cf. 1 Thes 5:23), but more generally it is understood to refer to the process whereby believers become more like Christ. The believer is not left to themselves to achieve this, in fact the process is impossible without God's help. Thankfully each member of the God-head is actively involved in a Christian's sanctification.

### The Work of God the Father in Sanctification

- The Father, with the Son, provides his people with grace, mercy and peace (1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2). He equips his people (Heb 13:20).
- The Father answers the prayers of the saints for spiritual growth (Eph 1:17-23; 3:14-21; Col 1:9f).
- The Father fellowships with believers via the indwelling Spirit (John 14:23; 1 John 1:4).
- The Father moves the world towards his appointed ends (Revelation).
- The Father continues to sustain all things (Acts 17:26).

### The Work of God the Son in Sanctification

- The Son, with the Father, provides believers with grace, mercy and peace (see above).
- As head of the Church the Son provides the church with all it needs to grow spiritually (Eph 4:15-16; 5:29). The picture of Christ as the Great or Chief Shepherd reinforces this work (Heb 13:20; 1 Pet 5:4).
- The Son gives believers access to every heavenly blessing (Eph 1:3).
- The Son, as the great High Priest, prays for believers (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25 cf. John 17:11, 15).

### The Work of God the Spirit in Sanctification

- The Spirit indwells the believer (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:16).
- The Spirit 'fills' the believer to help them live the Christian life (Eph 5:18f).
- The Spirit produces godliness in the life of obedient believers (Gal 5:16-26).
- The Spirit prays for believers (Rom 8:26-27).
- The Spirit gives the believer spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12).

### The Believer's Responsibility in Sanctification

Sanctification is a cooperative effort between God and the believer. Given all that the God-head supplies, what is the believer's responsibility in sanctification? In a word it is 'faith' (cf. Heb 11:6). God calls us to believe that we might experience his life (John 10:10; 17:3; 20:31). But how is this walk of faith to be maintained and grown, especially given there are three sworn enemies of every Christian, the world (1 John 2:15), the flesh (Gal 5:16-26) and the Devil (1 Pet 5:8)? I want to suggest two primary ways. The first relates to the Christian community, and the second to the non-Christian community.

# HOW DO I LIVE AS A CHRISTIAN?

## 1. Preserve the Spirit Given Unity (cf. Eph 4:3)

When people come to faith they are united to Christ and to his body the church. This unity is what Christ prayed for us (John 17:11) and now has given to us via the Spirit (1 Cor 12:13). Just as the Godhead is wonderfully unified, through faith believers now have a taste of that blessed unity (John 17:20-21). It is this unity that is our badge of discipleship, that is a testimony to the world that we are God's children (John 13:34-35). To preserve this unity is therefore to protect and grow the quality of these relationships.

### Relating well to God

To relate well to God the church is called to love Him, obey Him, serve Him, worship Him, pray to Him and wait for Him. The call is to love God with all our being and all our strength (Matt 22:37-38). Jesus made it clear that to love Him means to obey Him (John 15:10, 14). A natural outworking of this love will be prayer (e.g. Matt 6:9-13) and worship (e.g. John 4:24, Eph. 5:18-20, 1 Cor 12-14). In addition, the church is to relate well to God by eagerly and earnestly waiting for Jesus' return (see Phil 3:20; Col 3:1-4; 1 Thes 1:10; 2 Tim 4:8; Tit 2:13; 1 Pet 1:13; 4:13; Jude 1:21).

### Relating well to one another

Believers are called to love one another and make disciples. Thanks to the Spirit believers are able to stop living according to the sinful nature and instead manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:16-26, see also Romans 6; Eph 4; Col 3 etc.). With God's help they are called to serve one another (John 13:14-17), carry one another's burdens (Gal 6:2), speak truthfully to one another (Eph 4:25), forgive one another (Eph 4:32), submit to one another (Eph 5:21), encourage one another (Heb 10:25), confess sins to one another (James 5:16), be hospitable to one another (1 Pet 4:9), and so on. Basically believers are to be radically concerned for one another's well-being, physical, emotional and spiritual (Phil 2:3-4; James 2:14-26; 1 John 3:17-18 ).

This is a call to Christ-centred community living. But if this is to work then there must be order and submission. The New Testament therefore gives instructions on how the church is to function (1 Tim 3:15). There are to be leaders (elders/pastors/bishops and maybe deacons cf. 1 Tim 2-3; Tit 1) and Christians are called to submit to them (1 Thes 5:12-13; 1 Tim 5:17f; 1 Pet 5:1-7). The church is responsible to worship (in an orderly Spirit empowered fashion cf. 1 Cor 11-14), exercise discipline on unrepentant members (1 Cor 5) and make disciples (Matt 28:18-20).

There are certain spiritual disciplines or faith habits that can help believers to relate well to God and each other. These include Bible intake, prayer, silence, solitude, simplicity, generosity, confession, service and so on.

## 2. Proclaim and defend the Gospel

The second way to maintain and grow the walk of faith is to proclaim and defend the gospel through both word and deed (Matt 5:17; John 13:34-35; Acts 1:8; Rom 10:17; Phil 1:14; Col 4:2-4; 1 Pet 3:1-6). The truth Christians believe and have embraced is to be seen in their lives. This 'incarnational' aspect of the Christian life is of course intimately connected to the call to preserve the unity of the Spirit, the call to relate well to both God and others.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN THE END?

### Salvation Past, Present and Future

I have been saved from the penalty of sin (Eph 2:5)  
I am being saved from the power of sin (1 Pet 1:8-9)  
**I will be saved from the very presence of sin**  
**(Rom 5:9-10; 13:11; 1 Cor 3:15)**

One day our life on earth will be over. For believers this signals our ultimate salvation. At that moment we will be saved, not just from the penalty and power of sin, but from the very presence of sin. Yet it seems from Scripture the process involved in our ultimate salvation has a number of stages, though once we're dead, all of which are out of our control.

#### The Intermediate State

Upon death the Bible teaches that believers go to be with the Lord. While our bodies will return to dust, our souls will be in the presence of our Saviour. Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 said that he "would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord," indicating throughout this passage that believers will have a conscious existence after death apart from the body (see also Philippians 1:23).

Some Christians believe in soul sleep. As the name suggests this is the belief that the Christian will not be conscious after death but will sleep till the resurrection of the body. The arguments used for this include: (1) The Bible refers to death as sleep (1 K 2:10; 11:43; 14:20; Job 14:10-12; Ps 13:3; Jer 51:39; Dan 12:2; Mt 9:24; Jn 11:11-14); (2) the dead are unconscious (e.g. Ps 146:4; Eccl 9:5-6, 10); (3) the dead need to be awakened (Jn 5:28, 29); (4) the person returns to dust (Gen 3:19); (5) people are living souls (cf. Gen 2:7), the soul is therefore not a separate entity and upon death it dies (Ezek 18:20). (cf. What Seventh Day Adventists Believe, pp.352-353).

Yet the clear teaching from Paul noted above argues for consciousness after death. To these passages there are the following arguments:

- (1) Death is separation. When we die our soul is (unnaturally you may say) separated from our body, the one last consequence of sin. "Sleep" is a metaphor for death, the language of appearance.
- (2) Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "Today you will be with me in paradise" (Lk 23:43).
- (3) Moses (though having been dead many years) and Elijah appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt 17:3).
- (4) Stephen expected to be with Jesus immediately after death (Acts 7:59, 60)
- (5) The souls of the martyrs in Revelation 6 cry out to God for justice (Rev 6:9f). This indicates not just consciousness after death, but consciousness in heaven after death.

#### The Transformation or Resurrection of the Body (At the Rapture)

All believers will receive their eternal, resurrected bodies at the Rapture when Jesus returns for the church (1 Thes 4:13-17). (By the way every orthodox Christian believes in the rapture, it's the timing of the event that people differ over). This 'rapture' will happen in an instant. Those still living will be translated into heaven in new bodies without experiencing death, while those believers who have died will receive their new, resurrection bodies (see 1 Cor 15:51-58). The permanent result of the rapture will be that believers will forever be with the Lord (1 Thes 4:17).

## WHAT HAPPENS IN THE END?

### **The Judgement Seat of Christ**

All believers must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10). This will probably happen soon after the Rapture. At this judgment a believer's works post salvation will be examined by Christ to see to what degree they have helped build up the church. Some works will receive commendation, others will be revealed as worthless (see 1 Cor 3:10-13). Reward and 'loss' will be the consequence (1 Cor 3:14-15). The loss would seem to be a loss of reward (cf. 2 John 8). Ryrie (p.513) quotes Hoyt who gives a balanced summary:

"The Judgment Seat of Christ might be compared to a commencement ceremony. At graduation there is some measure of disappointment and remorse that one did not do better and work harder. However, at such an event the overwhelming emotion is joy, not remorse. The graduates do not leave the auditorium weeping because they did not earn better grades. Rather, they are thankful that they have been graduated, and they are grateful for what they did achieve. To overdo the sorrow aspect of the Judgment Seat of Christ is to make heaven hell. To underdo the sorrow aspect is to make faithfulness inconsequential."

### **The Second Coming of Christ**

Believers, in their glorified state will accompany Christ at his second coming (Rev 19:14 cf. 17:14). When Christ returns he will establish a 1000 year reign over the earth (cf. Rev 20:1-6) and believers will reign with him (2 Tim 2:12). This reign will include authority over the angels (1 Cor 6:3) and involve specific responsibilities according to their faithfulness in this world (Lk 19:17).

### **The New Heavens and the New Earth – Eternity**

For all eternity believers will be in the presence of Christ. According to Paul this will be glorious and make all temporal suffering seem like nothing in comparison (Rom 8:18-23; 2 Cor 4:16-18). Some of the 'forever' we can look forward to includes:

- reunion with departed loved ones (1 Thes 4:13-17);
- far greater insight and understanding (1 Cor 13:12);
- seeing Jesus face to face (1 Cor 13:12; 1 John 3:2);
- dwelling with God (Rev 21:3);
- no more sorrow, tears, pain or death (Rev 21:4);
- no more sin (Rev 21:8);
- being surrounded by the mind blowing, dazzling glory of God (Rev 21:9f);
- being involved in the amazing adoration and worship of God (Rev 4-5).

Every sacrifice for Christ will be worth it. Every effort to become more like Christ rewarded. Every attempt to rescue the lost vindicated. It will be glorious, so we pray – come Lord Jesus! (Rev 22:20).

## DID I HAVE A HOICE IN ALL THIS?

One of the most contentious issues when studying the doctrine of salvation is that of predestination. There are basically two sides, though significant variations exist in both camps. Calvinism declares that God has chosen certain individuals to be saved from before the foundation of the world. Arminianism contents that God has chosen to save from eternity past those who will believe in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Both groups would say people must choose to believe, Calvinists however say that this belief comes after a person is regenerated by God. This is a huge topic and this lecture will only serve as a brief introduction to the issues involved.

### A Brief History

- The Early Church Fathers
- St. Augustine (d. 430)
- The Medieval Church (John Cassian and the Synod of Orange)
- The Reformation (Luther d.1546 and Calvin d. 1564 v the Anabaptists)
- Jacob Arminius (d. 1609) and the Remonstrance
- The Synod of Dort (1610)

### FACTS v TULIP

#### Arminiansim

#### Calvinism

<b>T – Total Depravity (Article 3)</b> Rom 3:10-23; Eph 2:1-3	T – Total Depravity Rom 3:10-23; Eph 2:1-3
<b>C – Conditional Election (Article 1)</b> Rom 8:29; Eph 1:4	U – Unconditional Individual Election Rom 9:15, 21; Eph 1:4-8
<b>A – Atonement Available to All (Article 2)</b> Jn 1:29; 2 Cor 5:14-15; 1 Tim 2:3-6; Heb 2:9; 1 Jn 2:2	L – Limited Atonement (Particular Redemption) Matt 26:28; John 10:11; 17:9; Acts 20:28
<b>F – Free To Believe (Prevenient Grace, Articles 3-4)</b> John 1:9; 5:34, 40; 6:44; 12:32; Acts 17:30; Tit 2:11	I – Irresistible Grace John 6:28-29, 37; Acts 13:48; Rom 9:16
<b>S - Salvation Secure in Christ (Article 5)</b> John 3:16; 1 Tim 2:12; Heb 6, 10, 12	P – Perseverance of the Saints John 10:27-28; Rom 8:1; Phil 1:6

## DID I HAVE A CHOICE IN ALL THIS?

### 10 Reasons why I'm more of an Arminian than a Calvinist

(1) I believe the Arminian position better reflects the Biblical teaching that God loves the entire world and earnestly desires the salvation of all (John 3:16; 1 Tim 2:3-6; 1 Petr 3:9). See Jerry Wall's argument on the next page.

(2) The Calvinistic position appears to make the most significant decision not what someone does with Christ but what God decided before eternity was to happen. To me this makes the cross secondary, a means to a previously appointed end, rather than centre piece of human history.

(3) If Calvinism is true much of the Bible (and life) appears counter-intuitive. For example, God calls people to repent but this is something they cannot do unless he enables them.

(4) I believe exhaustive divine determinism (hard line Calvinism) has a difficult time not implicating God as being responsible for sin.

(5) The Calvinist, at least in theory, has a very mechanical view of the world, a cause-effect view when I think the Scriptures present God as working in an influence response way (because he and we are persons not machines).

(6) Too many Scriptures point to Christ's sacrifice being universal, for the entire world and so for every individual ever born or to be born (e.g. Ezek 33:11; Matt 18:14; John 3:16; Acts 17:30-31; Rom 11:32; 1 Cor 15:22; 1 Tim 2:4; 4:10; Tit 2:11; 1 John 4:14)

(7) Under Calvinism the offer of the Gospel to all does not appear to be sincere since God has already chosen who will (and by default who won't) be saved.

(8) The concept of God having two (sometimes seemingly contradictory) wills just confuses me. Many Calvinists believe in the Sovereign, hidden, mysterious will of God that has ordained some be saved and others not, and at the same time the revealed moral will of God that desires all be saved. How does this work and where in Scripture are these two wills taught?

(9) Scripture regarding predestination and election can easily be understood from an Arminian perspective. Most Scriptures do not indicate how God has chosen/elected people, they just relay the fact that he has. Arminians believe in God's predestination and prior election, but say that God made the decision in eternity past to choose to save those who would believe.

(10) Arminianism magnifies God's sovereignty:

"God is able to govern the truly free exercise of men's wills in such a way that all goes according to His plan. A God who created a complex universe inhabited by beings pre-programmed to act out His will for them would be great. But one who can make men with wills of their own and set them free to act in ways He has not determined for them, *and still govern the whole in perfect accord with His purpose* is greater." [page 43, italics his]"

(<http://arminianperspectives.wordpress.com/2007/09/24/gods-sovereignty-and-mans-free-will/>, 10/7/08)

## DID I HAVE A CHOICE IN ALL THIS?

### Jerry Wall on Calvinism

The Calvinist view of compatibilism is that there is no logical inconsistency between freedom and determinism [God ordains everything that happens]. Freedom and responsibility are compatible with total determinism.

- a free act is not caused or compelled by anything external to the person who performs it;
- it is however caused by something internal to the person, namely, a psychological state of affairs such as a belief, desire, or some combination of these two;
- the one doing the act could have done differently if he wanted to [you do what you want to do].

### The Calvinist Conundrum

1. God truly loves all persons
2. Truly to love someone is to desire their well-being and to promote their true flourishing as much as you properly can.
3. The well-being and true flourishing of all persons is to be found in a right relationship with God, a saving relationship in which we love and obey him.
4. God could determine all persons freely to accept a right relationship with himself and be saved [cf. definition of compatibilism above].
5. Therefore all will be saved!

Now this is a valid argument so to avoid the necessary conclusion [5], Calvinists must deny some of the premises. They won't deny 4 because that is the definition of compatibilism. To deny 3 is to place yourself outside of orthodox Christianity! Therefore all that's left is either to deny premise 1, that God loves all people, or premise 2, the definition of love. Consistent Calvinists like Arthur W. Pink happily deny premise 1:

“When we say that God is sovereign in the exercise of his love, we mean that he loves whom he chooses. God does not love everybody.” (The Sovereignty of God, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. p.17)

Many others however want to uphold premise 1 so try to deny premise 2. To do this they talk about different kinds of love that God has for people, namely:

- a. Providential love (sending rain on the just and the unjust);
- b. Taking a loving salvific stance toward the world (inviting all to be saved);
- c. God's particular, effective selecting love towards his elect.

Of course the problem here is convincing anyone that a. and b. without c. can truly be classified as definitions of love. Does God really love you if he withholds from you the only thing that can cause you to 'flourish' (namely salvation)?

Still others (like Piper) want to affirm 1 and 2 yet believe that God has greater reasons (for his own glory) for not saving everyone. However this contradicts the statement that Piper himself made famous, namely God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.

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