

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Theology Bites—Salvation, Pt 2

Selected Passages

PowerPoint Presentation: None

Keywords: Orthodoxy, Sound Doctrine, Salvation, Jesus Christ, New Birth, Forgiveness

SermonAudio blurb:

I. Introduction.

- A. Last week we began to compare the orthodox doctrine of salvation with how many Americans view it.
 - 1. Slides shown.
 - 2. We dealt with the last two on the last Lord's Day.
 - a. There is only one way for any person to be saved.
 - b. There is only one name given by God the Father by which we may be saved.
 - c. It is Jesus.
- B. Today we will cover the others.
 - 1. There are many ways to approach these slides and the questions that are posed.
 - 2. But if you think about what each of the questions asked then you can sum them up in three simple points:
 - a. First, does or can a person first move toward God before God will move toward them in salvation.
 - (1) "God wants to save you but you must be willing to let Him."
 - (2) "God is knocking on the door of your heart but you have to choose to let Him in."
 - b. Second, we need to do our part before God can save us.
 - (1) "God helps those who help themselves."
 - c. Third, God is too loving to not give us a second chance.
- C. First I will answer whether we can as a person make the first move toward God for salvation.

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1. In doing so we will have a basic answer as to what do we do with free will?
 2. Also we will see what God declares about each human apart from His mercy.
- D. Then we will answer simply whether there are things, usually called good works, that help us get to heaven.
- E. Finally, will we have a second chance after death.
- II. Can A Person Make The First Move toward God for Salvation?**
- A. To answer this requires first we understand the nature of sin and its power and influence in our lives.
- B. Romans 1:18ff — we all actively suppress the truth of God and we replace that truth with our own version.
- C. Romans 3:9-18, 23 — whatever we do apart from God simply is rebellion.
- D. Romans 8:5-8 — We lack the basic ability/power to follow God.
- E. John 6:35ff (if time permits).
- F. Taking just this simple survey of passages we can now answer the question easily.
- III. What can we do to contribute to our salvation?**
- A. Ephesians 2:8-9.
1. This is simply the single most clear passage on this question.
 2. "For" tells us what? [reason].
 - a. What he is doing is expanding on what he already declared in vs 5. It is almost word-for-word the same.
 - b. This grace of which he spoke of is why we are saved.
 - c. But he adds the prepositional phrase "through faith" here.
 3. God's Grace is what saves us.
 - a. Grace— Undeserved mercy. And the only way we understand grace properly is against the backdrop of sin, which we just saw together and also what Paul paints in 2:1-3.
 - b. Keep that first in your thinking as we look at this verse.

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- c. And as you keep that in mind you have already the answer to the question posed.
- d. Only and ever you are delivered from your sin and from hell because of God's grace.
- e. This is so important to state, though it may seem obvious, because it is far too easy for a person to think that grace helped them be saved. But that would be false.
 - (1) If you are here and you are thinking that you do not fit into the categories that Paul set forth in 2:1-3 then you are not a Christian. You do not yet understand that you are dead in your sins and only the grace of God can rescue your soul.
 - (2) Perhaps you are thinking that you have done certain things that you are ashamed of and messed things up in your life but now you stopped doing them so God must be pleased with you. This is not salvation by grace either.
 - (3) Grace is something unearned in any way. It is simply God showing rich mercy to one who deserves nothing but God's wrath.
- f. The way this is constructed is such that it emphasizes that this act of salvation is completed and continues on to this day.
 - (1) You are saved and being saved daily.
 - (2) A Christian lives in a sphere of salvation, where your heavenly Father is continuing to hold you in His hand. The blood of Christ continues to cover and redeem you. The Spirit perpetually seals and holds you safe.
 - (3) Even in your darkest moment, where your fears are realized and your faith shrinks and fades, if it is found to be in the gospel, you are saved.
- g. How are you saved?
 - (1) Yes it is by grace, but that doesn't mean that just because Christ died that you are automatically saved. "Grace is the divine source of salvation, and human faith is the means whereby salvation takes place." (Bratcher, R. G., & Nida, E. A., p. 46 A Handbook. . .)

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- (2) The instrument by which you receive this salvation is through faith.
- (3) To be a person of faith is to be a person who rests or trusts in God's provision for salvation. It really is that simple.
 - (a) There is an eschewing/shunning/rejection of our contribution.
 - (b) Instead it is an embracing that God has accomplished it all through His beloved Son who was our perfect substitute.
- h. How are you NOT saved?
 - (1) Due to anything in or by you (8b-9).
 - (2) And that utterly obviates the thought that we help God in any way in our salvation. It is an act of God's grace from beginning to end.
 - (3) This is driven even more powerfully home by the phrase "not of yourselves."
 - (a) The picture it paints is humbling because it literally is saying that our salvation is not out of the midst of us.
 - (b) Nothing in us can bring us to the edge of salvation, much less the entrance into it. If you need a reminder, reread vs 1-3 to remember why.
 - (4) Therefore it reminds us that it is simply the gracious, loving, merciful gift that is from God to us.
 - (a) It is here that is the well-spring of all true thankfulness of a Christian.
 - (b) And it is here that true doctrine separates out from false, which invariably involves first human effort to either begin God's favor or maintain it.
- i. And to beat this into a pulp Paul then adds the words of vs 9.
 - (1) It is not a result of our efforts. It cannot be that way for it is a gift.

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- (2) Again it is here that the truth of Christianity steps out from among the countless religions of humanity. For true Christianity rejects utterly the idea that through our efforts we can be acceptable to God.
 - (3) This is the folly of the one who sits and thinks that they are not that bad and that God will accept them. He will not and they have no hope in that way of thinking.
 - (4) How many funerals have you sat in where people get up to talk all about how good the person was and how God needed an angel in heaven and such rot. It is the age-old lie of our inherent goodness and that God rewards hard workers with salvation.
- j. The grace that saves us causes us not to boast in ourselves.
- (1) We, instead, must place a hand over our mouths when that temptation comes.
 - (2) The Christian should be truly humble among mankind. Whatever they are is not by their goodness but God's grace.
 - (3) Therefore they should boast in God's mercy.
 - (a) This is why we are called to boast in the Lord and the cross of Christ.
 - (b) This is much of what we should, and do, sing of, the mercy of God in saving us.

IV. Is there a second chance?

- A. There are some who will hear the words, "Eat, Drink and be merry for tomorrow we die" and add the idea that after we die we will make everything right.
- B. But the bible knows nothing of this idea. Salvation is offered now and judgment by God is given after this age.
- C. Certainty of Judgment—Hebrews 9:27.
 1. Note that Christ did not need to continuously offer himself as a sacrifice. It was done once.
 2. For those who do not trust in Jesus and His work on the Cross there is only death and then judgment.

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3. For those who do trust, vs 28 tells us that at the appearance of Jesus there shall not be any reference to our sin—it is already forgiven.
 4. Which is why a believer should eagerly await that day.
- D. When is that judgment?
1. At the end of this age.
 2. Revelation 20:11-15.
 - a. The great white throne.
 - (1) Throne represent rule, power, authority and judgment.
 - (2) “Great” emphasizes the importance and vastness of the judgment and authority flowing from it. This is the final judgment, the end has come and there is no more time.
 - (3) “White” probably makes reference to the purity of the judgments, they are true and righteous. Nothing unfair shall take place here.
 - (4) This picture is amazing and frightening. Heaven and earth flees from the throne, no place to hide, there is just you and God.
 - (5) I wish we all could burn this into our hearts.
 - b. **Who is sitting on it?**
 - (1) In Revelation the Father is always the One seated.
 - (2) Yet elsewhere in the New Testament we have Jesus seated on the throne as well.
 - (3) So, who is sitting on it? Probably the Father, with His Son seated next to Him, and His judgment flows out through His Son.
 - (4) This is important to note though, that the judgment given is through Jesus—the one rejected and ignored.
 - c. Now those who were not part of the great army in the end are raised.
 - (1) This is the final resurrection mentioned in vs 5.
 - (a) Daniel 12:2.

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- (b) John 5:29.
- (c) Acts 24:15.
- (2) They are judged.
 - (a) What is the basis of the judgment? Their deeds.
 - (b) Consider the blinding power of sin—Matthew 7:22ff.
- d. The book and books.
 - (1) The books (plural) appear to a registry of deeds.
 - (2) The book of life is the listing of the names of those redeemed.
- e. Death and hades are cast into the lake of fire as well.

V. Conclusion.

- A. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone. We bring nothing to the Cross but our sinful being. We hope and rest in only the finished work of Jesus our Lord and Savior.
- B. We are dependent upon the kindness of God to bring us to Himself. We, in our selves will ever and always resist, suppress and reject the good news that in Jesus Christ there is forgiveness of sin and life eternal.
- C. Today is the day of salvation for you. Do not tarry and do lie to yourself that tomorrow brings an opportunity.
 - 1. You and I live only by the kindness of God.
 - 2. But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: (Romans 2:3-6)