

Baptist Distinctives Part 3 – Salvation by Grace

Salvation is offered by the grace of God for the redemption of the whole person Eph 2:8-9). It is offered freely to those who accept it by faith receiving the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who shed His own blood as Lord and Savior. By His death Christ provided redemption for every believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. No salvation is possible apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ (paraphrased from *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*).

There are four aspects of our salvation experienced by every believer which are:

Regeneration – This is the change Jesus called the new birth in John 3:1-21. Believers become new creatures in Christ (2 Cor 5:17) when the Holy Spirit convicts and draws a person to repent and confess their need of salvation (Jn 16:8-11). Repentance and faith are inseparable aspects of this commitment.

Justification – This is God’s gracious and complete forgiveness available to all who confess Christ as personal Savior (Rom 5:1-6). Justification results in a believer’s being at peace with God and in His favor.

Sanctification – Beginning at regeneration believers grow in moral and spiritual maturity with the help of the Holy Spirit, who indwells every believer. Sanctification continues throughout the lifetime of a believer (Rom 15:15-17; 2 Thess 2:13; Heb 2:10-18).

Glorification – The final goal and state of every saved person is to be glorified and transformed to become like Christ (Rom 8:29-30; Jn 12:23-26). The Bible also teaches that there will be degrees of reward and punishment in the afterlife (Mt 25:14-30; Lk 16: 19-31; 19:12-27; 1 Cor 3:11-15).

Many people today believe in a salvation of works. They mistakenly believe if they try to do good things God will, in the final judgment, grant them a reprieve. The Bible is clear that salvation is a gift of the grace of God that must be received and is available by faith **in Christ alone** (Acts 4:12; Eph 2:8-9; Jn 3:16-18).

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