

THIS GREAT SALVATION



By Andrew Hancock

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Material Adapted from:

Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem, *The Theology Program*, *Christian Theology* by Millard Erickson, and *Crucifixion, Salvation, and the Glory of God* by David Platt.

SALVATION

God reveals our need.

- The doctrine of depravity.

God atones for our sins.

- The doctrine of atonement.

God chooses our salvation

- The doctrine of election.

God changes our heart.

- The doctrine of regeneration.

God enables our belief.

- The doctrine of conversion.

God reverses our status.

- The doctrine of justification.
- The doctrine of adoption.
- The doctrine of union with Christ.

God transforms our lives.

- The doctrine of sanctification.
- The doctrine of perseverance.

God resurrects our bodies.

- The doctrine of glorification.

Questions we will ask:

- What is the process of salvation?
- Why did Christ die such a brutal death?
- Did Christ die for everyone or just the elect?
- How can God be fair in just choosing some? How can our free will be upheld in this?
- What does it mean to have right standing before God?
- Can we lose our salvation if we do not persevere strongly in this life?

Further Questions (from class)

- What about those who have never heard, just and fair?
- Salvation of infants, when are they accountable?

Why here? (class)

- Deeper understanding—then able to apply it to kids/youth ministry
- Be able to better explain issues
- Be able to explain the stuff that are a mystery to adults

Summarizing the Elements of Salvation

- The Order of Salvation (Erickson)

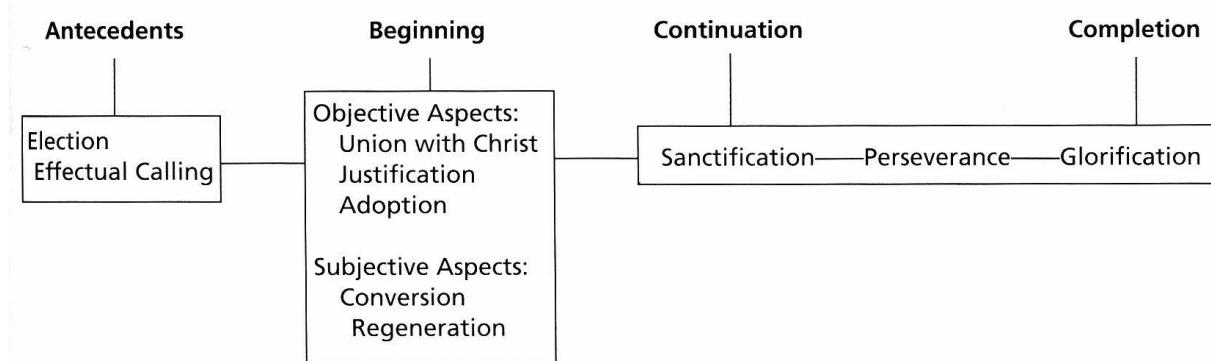


Illustration: salvation is like a diamond—many facets to its beauty !

- Salvation: Objective and Subjective aspects (God's work alone and God through Us, TTP)

Objective

What God Does
Alone

- Election
- Atonement
- Calling
- Regeneration
- Justification

MONOGISM

Subjective

What God Does
Through Us

- Faith
- Repentance
- Sanctification
- Perseverance

SYNERGISM

- T.U.L.I.P

T U L I P	<p>Total Depravity: Humanity has fallen into a state of radical corruption that has affected <i>every</i> aspect of who we are. The imago Dei has been marred, but not destroyed.</p> <p>Unconditional Election: The belief that God predestined people for salvation before the beginning of time. This election was not based or conditioned upon anything in man, good or evil, foreseen or present, but upon God's sovereign choice.</p> <p>Limited Atonement: The belief that Christ only died for the sins of the elect.</p> <p>Irresistible Grace: The belief that God's call to the elect will always be effectual in bringing about their salvation.</p> <p>Perseverance of the Saints (Eternal Security): The belief that true believers will persevere in their faith and cannot ever be lost.</p>
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God reveals our need.

- **The doctrine of total depravity**

Depravity defined ...

Apart from Christ, every human being is sinful in nature, corrupted in the entire person, unable to please God, and incapable of working out of this condition. Sin is our default mode.

⁷*the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.* ⁸*Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.*

Romans 8:7–8

- What it is... (Erickson)
 - The total population is sinful.
 - The total person, in all its elements, is depraved.
 - Sinners are totally unable to get out of this condition on their own.
- What it is not...
 - Unbelievers are totally insensitive to matters of right and wrong.
 - An unbeliever is as sinful as possible.
 - An unbeliever engages in the totality of evils, does every possible form of sin.

Consider the Character of God ...

- He is holy.

"There is none holy like the Lord; there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God."

1 Samuel 2:2

And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" Isaiah 6:3

- He is righteous in all His ways.

"The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he." Deuteronomy 32:4

The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.

Psalm 145:17

- He is just in all His wrath.

But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) By no means! For then how could God judge the world?

Romans 3:5-6

This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering—since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

- He is intolerant of sin.

You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?

Habakkuk 1:13

- He is indignant toward evildoers.

The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. Psalm 5:5-6

Consider the sinfulness of man ...

- We have denounced His sovereignty.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. Genesis 3:6-7

- We have disgraced His holiness.

"Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes."
Ezekiel 36:22-23

- We have despised His righteousness.

... as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." Romans 3:10-12

- We have disregarded His wrath.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
Ephesians 2:1-3

- We have denied His love.

Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? Romans 2:4

- We have disgraced His law

⁷the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. Romans 8:7–8

- We have desired other sources of identity

"My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water. Jeremiah 2:13

Shows us... We need a Savior! We need to be atoned for!

The divine dilemma (TTP)

God's Dilemma:

The Bible says God is righteous and must punish sinners.

Psalm 119:142

"Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness . . ."

The Bible says God loves all people, not wanting to send anyone to hell.

2 Peter 3:9

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."



2 Peter 3:9

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

Our Dilemma:

Our sin must be punished.

Romans 6:23

"For the wages of sin is death . . ."

Good works cannot save us.

Romans 3:20

"Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight."



Questions about the dilemma...

- How can a just God save rebellious sinners who are due His wrath?
- How can God express His holiness without consuming us in our sin?
- How can God express His love without us in our sin?

- How can God judge sin and justify the sinner at the same time?
- How can God satisfy Himself and save us at the same time?

*He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous
are both alike an abomination to the Lord. Proverbs 17:15*

The answer... Jesus Christ's substitutionary atonement

The death of Jesus was a complete and full satisfaction of divine justice for all who trust in Him. At the cross there is no tension between justice and mercy; instead, they meet in full harmony. Justice suffers no violence and mercy has full expression. In fact, not only has justice suffered no violence, it has been honored and magnified. It has exacted its penalty and been completely satisfied. Therefore, as believers we can rejoice in the abundant mercy of God through Christ, while at the same time fully honoring the inviolate nature of His holy justice. Jerry Bridges

God atones for our sins.

- **The doctrine of atonement.**

Atonement Defined...

The work Christ did in his life and death to earn our salvation. (Grudem)

By his death, Christ covered over our sins by appeasing God's wrath.

Key Terms considered...

- **Atonement... to cover over, to make right a wrong.**
- **Propitiation... appeasing God's wrath**

*A sacrifice that bears God's wrath to the end and in so doing changes
God's wrath toward us into favor. (Grudem)*

- **Substitution... in the place of.**
- **Vicarious Substitution (TTP)**

*Christ died to pay to God the exact penalty of the sins of individuals and therefore
appeasing God's wrath and satisfying his righteousness (justice).*

PAUSE for Questions

- How do we explain the foreign idea of a sacrifice to a kid or to a non-Christian?
- Why was a bloody sacrifice needed? Seems almost Pagan. Why did God require blood?
 - Heb 9:15-22
 - The highest price for the highest offense. We have denied our creator—the very one who made us. Since he is holy just—he demands a payment. Life is the ultimate payment. Blood represents giving up of life—the highest price.
 - Christ's blood brought about the New Covenant.

Blood atonement lies at the heart of both the wonder and the offense of the Christian proclamation. “Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” (Heb 9:22). This is not an abstract principle, much less the arbitrary command of a bloodthirsty deity. Rather, it belongs to the covenantal context of God’s law. God’s wrath is an expression of his righteous judgment, and blood represents the whole life of the person that God requires of transgressions... Not only does the OT foreshadow Christ’s sacrifice by its levitical system, but the prophets point to the Suffering Servant. Most famously Isaiah 53 the Servant is the bearer of the iniquities of those he represents and then he is exalted in glory. From the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus’ mission was marked, as John the Baptist announced, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world” (Jn 1:29)

Horton 495

Three Things Help Us

- The cross is rooted in God’s character (love and justice)
- It was the love of God that moved him to send Christ
- He did not begin to love us after the cross, but from all eternity (Eph 1:4)

The punishment that Christ bore was not an arbitrary act of revenge, but a fulfillment of the standard that God had established in creation: namely, life for obedience, death for disobedience.

The cross was a satisfaction of the claim of justice, not of dignity or irrational anger. (Horton)

History of the Atonement (TTP) Blood sacrifice seems harsh, cruel, vindictive, Pagan

Atonement Theories	Recapitulation	Ransom to Satan	Satisfaction	Moral Example	Governmental	Vic. Substitution
Proponents	Irenaeus, Eastern Orthodoxy	Origin, Eastern Orthodoxy	Anselm, Roman Catholicism	Pelagius, Abelard, Liberalism	Grotius, Arminianism	Luther, Calvin, Reformed
Why did Christ die?	Christ lived and died to earn the right to represent humanity, undoing Adam's sin.	Christ died to pay Satan so that people would be freed from bondage.	Christ died to satisfy God's honor thereby purchasing merits of grace so that people could draw upon them when needed	Christ lived and died to give us an example to follow.	Christ died as a substitute for a penalty so that salvation may be possible.	Christ died to pay the exact penalty of the sins of individuals to God.
Was His death the only way?	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Result	Salvation made possible	Salvation made possible	Salvation made possible	Salvation made possible	Salvation made possible	Salvation secured
Focus	Man	Satan	God	Man	God	God

Illustration: Leviticus 16—Day of Atonement and the OT Sacrificial System

- Leviticus 16:9–10 (ESV)

9 And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the LORD and use it as a sin offering, 10 but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the LORD to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel...
 16 Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses...
 19 And he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and consecrate it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel.
- Hebrews 7:26–27 (ESV)

26 For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. 27 He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

- **Isaiah 53—The Suffering Servant**

Key passages of the Atonement...

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. Hebrews 2:17

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:6-8

(Mk 10:45; Rom 3:23-25; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 Jn 2:1-2)

The Aspects of the Doctrine of Atonement (Grudem)

- **The Atonement of Christ is a Sacrifice**

He has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”
Heb. 9:26

To pay the penalty of death that we deserved because of our sins,
Christ died as a sacrifice for us.

- **The Atonement of Christ is a Propitiation**

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 1 John 4:10

- **The Atonement of Christ is a Reconciliation**

Through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself. 2 Cor. 5:18–19

To overcome our separation from God, we needed someone to provide reconciliation and thereby bring us back into fellowship with God.

- **The Atonement of Christ is a Redemption**

In Christ we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:14

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. Galatians 3:13

- We are redeemed *from* slavery to sin.
- We are redeemed *by* the blood of Christ.
- We are redeemed *to* be free to serve God.

Illustration: Slave market in Rome

Because we as sinners are in bondage to sin and to Satan, we need someone to provide redemption and thereby “redeem” us out of that bondage. When we speak of redemption, the idea of a “ransom” comes into view. **A ransom is the price paid to redeem someone from bondage or captivity.** Jesus said of himself, “For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life *as a ransom for many*” (Mark 10:45). If we ask to whom the ransom was paid, we realize that the human analogy of a ransom payment does not fit the atonement of Christ in every detail. Though we were in bondage to sin and to Satan, there was no “ransom” paid either to “sin” or to Satan himself, for they did not have power to demand such payment, nor was Satan the one whose holiness was offended by sin and who required a penalty to be paid for sin. As we saw earlier, the penalty for sin was paid by Christ and received and accepted by God the Father. But we hesitate to speak of paying a “ransom” to God the Father, because it was not he who held us in bondage but Satan and our own sins. Therefore at this point the idea of a ransom payment cannot be pressed in every detail. It is sufficient to note that a price was paid (the death of Christ) and the result was that we were “redeemed” from bondage.

We were redeemed from bondage to Satan because “the whole world is in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19), and when Christ came he died to “deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage” (Heb. 2:15). In fact, God the Father “has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son” (Col. 1:13).

As for deliverance from bondage to sin, Paul says, “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus ... For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace” (Rom. 6:11, 14). We have been delivered from bondage to the guilt of sin and from bondage to its ruling power in our lives. **(Grudem)**

Christ’s atonement meets our needs as sinners... (Grudem)

- We deserve to *die* as the penalty for sin, therefore we need a **sacrifice**.
- We deserve to *bear God’s wrath* against sin, therefore we need a **propitiation**
- We are *separated* from God by our sins, therefore we need a **reconciliation**
- We are in *bondage to sin* and to the kingdom of Satan, therefore we need a **redemption**

What is the Extent of the Atonement?

Three possibilities:

Christ died for all the sins of all people, some of the sins of all people, or all the sins of some people. John Owen

The Extent of the Atonement		
Belief	Extent and Nature	Position
Christ saved every person	Unlimited in extent and effect	Universal Salvation
Christ made possible the salvation of every person	Unlimited in extent, but limited in its effect.	Hypothetical universalism
Christ saved all the elect	Sufficient for all, efficient only for the elect.	Definite atonement

The Christian Faith by Horton

- Two camps—Unlimited and Limited. **L in TULIP. Calvinist/Arminian debate mostly. Explain.**
- Not asking whether death of Christ has sufficient value to cover sins of all. Not saying that he had limited power to save only some. He has all power.
- Christ's Atonement was Particular or Limited.
 - Christ died only to provide salvation for the ones he has elected. God's decision to save some logically precedes his decision to provide salvation through Christ. (Erickson)

¹¹ *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*
John 10:11

²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*
Ephesians 5:25

⁴⁵ *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.* *Mark 10:45*
(Others: John 6:39; Matt 1:21; Acts 20:28; John 17:9)

- Logic of this position: (TTP)
 - If all people's sins have been paid for, then all people stand blameless before God and will be saved. This sounds like universalism, which is contrary to the Bible (Matt 7:14)
 - If Christ's intent was to die for all people, then he failed, since not all people will be saved.
 - Why would God knowingly pay for the sins of someone He has not elected?
 - If God's righteous requirements have already been satisfied by Christ, there is no justifiable reason for God to send them to hell. God would be unjust.
- Christ's Atonement was Universal or Unlimited
 - Christ died for all people and bore their sins. "Christ died for every individual, elect and non-elect, in order to make salvation possible for all." (TTP)

¹⁰ *(and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.* *1 Timothy 4:10*

⁹ *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*
Hebrews 2:9

² *He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.* *1 John 2:2*

¹ *But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.* *2 Peter 2:1*

(Others: John 1:29; 1 Tim 2:5-6; John 3:16; 2 Cor 5:18-19)

- Logic of this position: (some, Erickson)
 - This position upholds the importance of our choice in the matter
 - This position upholds God as authentically relating with us, adjusting to us
 - Most straightforward interpretation of “the world/ all”
 - Jesus dying for sheep does not have to mean just for them...can also include a larger group.
 - Some universal texts cannot be ignored; 1 Tim 4.10; 1 Jn 2.2; 2 Pet 2.1
 - If Christ died for whole, no problem in affirming his death for part. Universal is able to account for a larger segment of Biblical witness with less distortion.

- **Points of agreement (Grudem)**

- Not all will be saved.
- A free offer of the gospel can rightly be made to every person ever born. It is completely true that “whoever will” may come to Christ for salvation, and no one who comes to him will be turned away.
- All agree that Christ’s death in itself, because he is the infinite Son of God, has infinite merit and is in itself sufficient to pay the penalty of the sins of as many or as few as the Father and the Son decreed. The question is not about the intrinsic merits of Christ’s sufferings and death, but about the number of people for whom the Father and the Son thought Christ’s death to be sufficient payment at the time Christ died.

The Disagreement

- Disagree on what the higher commitment is (because not all are saved). The higher commitment is either:
 - Human determination and the resulting love relationship OR
 - The manifestation of the full range of God’s glory (wrath and mercy) upholding God’s electing choice as primary.

"The difference between Calvinists and Arminians lies not in whether there are two wills in God, but in what they say this higher commitment is. What does God will more than saving all? The answer given by Arminians is that human self-determination and the possible resulting love relationship with God are more valuable than saving all people by sovereign, efficacious grace. The answer given by Calvinists is that the greater value is the manifestation of the full range of God's glory in wrath and mercy (Romans 9:22-23) and the humbling of man so that he enjoys giving all credit to God for his salvation (1 Corinthians 1:29)." *Are There Two Wills in God?*

- **Various conclusions offered**

- The order in the mind of God. In eternity past, God logically decides first to provide salvation, and then elects some to receive it, (sublapsarian). (Erickson)
God has an order for: create, save all, permit fall, provide salvation for elect
- Christ died for all people potentially, but actually only paid for the sins of the elect. Christ's death is sufficient for all, but efficient only for the elect. For whom did Christ die? All people. Whose sins did Christ pay for? Only the elect. (TTP)
- Piper: God sees the issue in two lenses, narrow and wide. Narrowly, he is grieved that any shall perish—thus reflecting his desire to have all repent. But with the wide angle lens, he sees that the greater priority is to only save some—reflecting his electing decree from eternity past.

For if Christ died for all men in the same way then he did not purchase regenerating grace for those who are saved. They must regenerate themselves and bring themselves to faith. Then and only then do they become partakers of the benefits of the cross.

In other words if you believe that Christ died for all men in the same way, then the benefits of the cross cannot include the mercy by which we are brought to faith, because then all men would be brought to faith, but they aren't. But if the mercy by which we are brought to faith (irresistible grace) is not part of what Christ purchased on the cross, then we are left to save ourselves from the bondage of sin, the hardness of heart, the blindness of corruption, and the wrath of God.

Therefore it becomes evident that it is not the Calvinist who limits the atonement. It is the Arminian, because he denies that the atoning death of Christ accomplishes what we most desperately need—namely, salvation from the condition of deadness and hardness and blindness under the wrath of God. The Arminian limits the nature and value and effectiveness of the atonement so that he can say that it was accomplished even for those who die in unbelief and are condemned. In order to say that Christ died for all men in the same way, the Arminian must limit the atonement to a powerless opportunity for men to save themselves from their terrible plight of depravity.

On the other hand we do not limit the power and effectiveness of the atonement. We simply say that in the cross God had in view the actual redemption of his

children. And we affirm that when Christ died for these, he did not just create the opportunity for them to save themselves, but really purchased for them all that was necessary to get them saved, including the grace of regeneration and the gift of faith.

TULIP by Bethlehem

- Unlimited limited atonement (Driscoll)

	Heresy of “Christian” Universalism	Heresy of Contemporary Pelagianism	Unlimited Atonement	Limited Atonement	Unlimited Limited Atonement
View of Sin	We are born sinful but guilty for our sins, not Adam's.	We are born sinless like Adam but follow his bad example.	We are born sinful but guilty for our sins, not Adam's.	We are born sinners guilty in Adam.	We are born sinners guilty in Adam.
Who Jesus Died For	Jesus took all the sin and pain of the world onto himself.	Jesus lived and died only as an example for sinners.	Jesus died to provide payment for the sin of all people.	Jesus died to achieve full atonement for the elect.	Jesus died to provide payment for all, but only in a saving way for the elect.
How Atonement Is Applied	God's powerful love in Jesus will overcome all sin.	Anyone can follow the example of Jesus by living a good life.	God will apply the payment to those who believe in Christ.	God designed the atonement precisely for the elect.	While God desires the salvation of all, he applies the payment to the elect, those whom he chose for salvation.
Heaven & Hell	Everyone will be saved and will go to heaven. There is no eternal hell.	Those who live a Christlike life will be saved and go to heaven. Those who reject goodness will go to hell.	All who accept the gift go to heaven. Everyone else gets to follow their free will and choose to go to hell.	God does not need to save anyone from hell, but chooses to save some.	God does not need to save anyone from hell, but chooses to save some.

Doctrine by Driscoll

At first glance, Unlimited and Limited Atonement are in opposition. But, that dilemma is resolved by noting two things. First, the two categories are not mutually exclusive; since Jesus died for the sins of everyone that means that He also died for the sins of the elect. Second, Jesus' death for all people does not accomplish the same

thing as His death for the elect. This point is complicated, but is in fact taught in Scripture (1 Tim. 4:10; 2 Peter 2:1).

Simply, by dying for everyone, Jesus purchased everyone as His possession and He then applies His forgiveness to the elect by grace and applies His wrath to the non-elect. Objectively, Jesus' death was sufficient to save anyone, and, subjectively, only efficient to save those who repent of their sin and trust in Him. This position is called Unlimited Limited Atonement or Modified Calvinism.

Christ died for the purpose of securing the sure and certain salvation of his own, elect. Christ died for all people (as Arminians say). If the 5 point Calvinist is right and no payment has been made for the non-elect, then how can God genuinely love the world and desire the salvation of all people? Answer—the genuine open door for everyone who believes in Jesus. (Doctrine)

Therefore, Modified Calvinists like the Mars Hill elders do not believe anything different than Arminians; we simply believe what they believe and more. Lastly, perhaps the Old Testament sacrificial system provides the best illustration of this both/and position. The High Priest would offer a sacrifice for the sins of the whole nation on the Day of Atonement; this is, in effect, unlimited atonement. Then, each worshipper would repent of their own sins as demonstrated by the giving of their own sacrifices for their sins; this is, in effect, limited atonement.

Doctrine of Depravity and Atonement Applications

- Realizing the depth of our sin and depravity helps us appreciate God's grace and love through Christ—it was all his work to get us out of this mess. This brings humility in our Christian walk and a desire to walk in his strength in life and ministry. Must speak of this in ministry!
- Seeing the depth of the suffering of Christ and the plan of God in the atonement makes us want to fully trust Christ as our sufficient Savior and our sovereign God.
- Since Christ bore all the guilt for our sins, all the wrath of God against sin, and all the penalty of the death that we deserved, then we can trust that God will never turn his wrath against us (Rom. 8:31–39). The hardships are not wrath against us, but chances for us to grow.

Questions for Personal Application (Grudem TTP)

- Some people object to the substitution theory of atonement believing that it foolishly promotes an evil God who vindictively punishes an innocent person for the sins of the guilty. Read 1 Cor 1:21-25 and 2:14. How do these passages help us understand this objection? Do any other verses come to mind?
- Read Isaiah 53 and underline all the words and phrases that suggest Christ was a substitution for sinners. What do we learn about God in this passage?
- Do you think that Christ's sufferings were enough to pay for your sins? Are you willing to rely on his work to pay for all your sins? Do you think he is a sufficient Savior, worthy of your trust? When he invites you, "Come to me ... and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28), do you now trust him? Will you now and always rely on him with your whole heart for complete salvation?

- If Christ bore all the guilt for our sins, all the wrath of God against sin, and all the penalty of the death that we deserved, then will God ever turn his wrath against you as a believer (see Rom. 8:31–39)? Can any of the hardships or sufferings that you experience in life be due to the wrath of God against you? If not, then why do we as Christians experience difficulties and sufferings in this life (see Rom. 8:28; Heb. 12:3–11)?
- Do you think Christ's life was good enough to deserve God's approval? Are you willing to rely on it for your eternal destiny? Is Jesus Christ a reliable enough and good enough Savior for you to trust him? Which would you rather trust in for your eternal standing before God: your own life or Christ's?
- If Christ has indeed redeemed you from bondage to sin and to the kingdom of Satan, are there areas of your life in which you could more fully realize this to be true? Could this realization give you more encouragement in your Christian life?
- Do you think it was fair for Christ to be your substitute and to pay your penalty? When you think about him acting as your substitute and dying for you, what attitude and emotion is called forth in your heart?

Where are we at?

SALVATION

God reveals our need.

- The doctrine of depravity.

God atones for our sins.

- The doctrine of atonement.

God chooses our salvation

- The doctrine of election.

The Great Debate (Calvinism and Arminianism)

- This debate is most clearly seen when the doctrine of Election is considered.

Since it is a cause of Great Debate...

(Platt)

- We come to this doctrine humbly.

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

Deuteronomy 29:29

O Lord, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. Psalm 131:1

- We come to this doctrine communally.
 - The purpose of election in scripture is to unify the church, not to divide the church. (Ephesians 1:3-14)
 - The purpose of election in scripture is to comfort those who are saved, not to confuse those who are lost.

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Romans 8:28-30

- We come to this doctrine with awe and appreciation.

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?"

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Romans 11:33-36

- We come to this doctrine evangelistically.
 - This is not just an argument for theologians to have, it is also an affection for Christians to feel.

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. Romans 9:1-5

The two sides, similarities...

- Election and predestination are biblical concepts.
- Scripture should be our final authority in determining our understanding of these matters.
- The sovereignty of God is a biblical concept.
- Human beings are held responsible for their choices (2 Cor 5:10).
- Salvation is by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ alone and is not a human work.
- Human beings are responsible to preach the gospel.

Key Question: What gets the emphasis—human choices or God’s sovereignty? What is the determining factor, has the higher commitment, gets the override?

Calvinist View: Emphasis on God’s Sovereignty

- **TULIP**—Total depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints.
- God’s plan is first importance and human decisions are a consequence. Election is unconditional.
- Man’s total inability, depravity (Eph 2:1-3) Original, inherited sin (Rom 5)
- Sovereignty of God and his plan are emphasized (Jn 15:16; Acts 13:48; Jn 6:44; Ex 33:19—Rom 9:16).
- Election is about...
 - God’s good pleasure
 - Not on merit
 - It will happen
 - From eternity
 - Motivated by love
- Key Passages...

¹ And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ³Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. Ephesians 2:1-3

¹⁶ “ You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear

fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. John 15:16

When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.
Acts 13:48

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. John 6:44

So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. Romans 9:16

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love he predestined us... Ephesians 1:4

Others: John 1:13; Rom 8:29

- **Advantages of the Calvinistic view**

- It takes human sin and inability more seriously.
 - *Eph 2:1*: we are not just spiritually weak. We are spiritually dead.
 - *1 Cor 2:14*: we are spiritually blind until the Holy Spirit enables us to see the truth.
- It gives greater confidence in evangelism—that God’s will is certain for the future
 - *Is 55:10-11*: God’s Word will not come back empty.
 - *Rev 7:9*: it is the will of God for there to be a flourishing church in every people group on earth.
 - God will overcome sin and resistance, if we are faithful in preaching the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- It has the advantage of undercutting all human pride in our salvation.
- It gives a better basis for the believer’s assurance of salvation.
 - If the will of God was decisive in getting you in, the will of God will be decisive in keeping you in. *Phil 1:6*

Arminian View: Emphasis on Human Choices

- **F.A.C.T.S.**

Freed by Grace (to Believe)
Atonement for All
Conditional Election
Total Depravity
Security in Christ

- Human action primary so that complete freedom preserved. Humans make actions certain and God acquiesces. God’s plan is somewhat conditional to human decision. Election is conditional—based on foreseen faith.
- Starting point is God’s desire all to be saved: *2 Pet 3:9; 1 Tim 2:4; Ezk 18:23*

- Many calls to come and believe: *Is 55:1; Mat 11:28*
- Importance of the authentic love relationship: *John 3:16*
- God's grace given to all without distinction—prevenient grace—Those who hear the gospel may either accept or reject the grace available: *Mat 5:45*
- Foreknowledge based on foreseeing the choice: *Rom 8:29; 1 Pet 1.12*

Key Passages...

Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.
Joshua 24

"Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares the Lord God, "rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?"
Ezekiel 18:23

"Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the Lord God, 'I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?'
Ezekiel 33:11

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." *Mark 1:15*

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
John 3:16

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
2 Peter 3:9

who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
1 Timothy 2:4

Advantages of the Arminian view

- It is more consistent with the love of God for the world and not just the elect.
 - It is hard to square the love of God with a God who from all eternity has chosen to reject some.
 - If God loves all, then God should equally desire the salvation of all.
- It is more consistent with God's desire that all should repent.
- It makes God seem less arbitrary and less unjust.
- It has greater respect for human freedom emphasizes the love relationship.
- It avoids the problem of the insincere offer of the gospel.

Differences in unanswered questions: (Erickson)

- Calvinist view
 - How can God cause us to choose something willingly?
 - How can God ordain that we do evil willingly, yet not be blamed?

- How can we be held accountable for our choices when it is all determined?
- Limits the ability to make true choices
- Gives us awareness of his greatness, unfathomable
- Arminian view
 - Can God secure the future? How is there evil against his will? Will he triumph over evil in the end?
 - Diminishes greatness, omnipotence, omniscience, promises about future
 - Exalts greatness of man: freedom to do what God does not want
 - Power of Evil: comes and remains even though God does not want it

Compatibilism (TTP)

The belief that God's unconditional sovereign election and human responsibility are both realities taught in Scripture that finite minds cannot comprehend, therefore they must be held in tension.

The tension is so clear in Scripture that one can state, "If anyone is saved, all credit goes to God for electing them. If anyone is not saved, all credit goes to them for rejecting him."

- **Cross: both determined and freely chosen**

This Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. Acts 2:23

For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative.

John 10:17-18

- **Jesus' betrayal**

"For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined ; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" Luke 22:22

- **Conspiracy against Jesus**

"For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,²⁸ to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur. Acts 4:27-28

- **Rejection of Christ**

"A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. 1 Peter 2:8

The Doctrine of Election—how does it fit in with the Great Debate?

- **Terms...**
 - Foreordain: All God's decisions played out in history
 - Predestine: Concerns salvation or condemnation
 - Election: Positive choice of those who get eternal life
 - Reprobation: Passing over some to suffer condemnation
- **Election: Biblical Words (TTP)**

Elect	Predestine	Choose	Foreknow	Appoint
Gk. <i>eklege</i> : to call out or choose (Liddle-Scott); selection, choosing (BAGD)	Gk. <i>proorizo</i> : to decide upon beforehand, to predestine (BAGD)	Gk. <i>aireo</i> : to choose something for something (BAGD)	Gk. <i>prognosis</i> : to know beforehand, to purpose (USB); to choose beforehand (BAGD)	Gk. <i>tasso</i> : to assign, cause to be, command (Louw-Nida); to belong to, to be classed among those possessing (BAGD)
Matt. 24:22; Mk. 13:27; Rom. 8:33, 11:7 ; Col. 3:12; 2 Tim. 2:10 ; Tit. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1	Rom. 8:29-30 ; Eph. 1:5, 11	2 Thes. 2:13	Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:2	Acts 13:48

- **Conditional Election**

God's election is based on his foreknowledge. God looks ahead to the future, sees who will make a free-will decision to place their faith in him, and then chooses to save them.

- God has sovereignty decided to choose only those who have faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, for salvation and his eternal blessing.
- God has foreknown from eternity which individuals would believe in Christ.
- Among Arminians, there are two different views of election conditioned on faith:

1. Individual election: The classic view in which God individually chose each believer based upon His foreknowledge of each one's faith and so predestined each to eternal life.
2. Corporate election: Election to salvation is primarily of the Church as a people and embraces individuals only in faith-union with Christ and as members of his people. Since the election of the individual comes from the election of Christ and the corporate people of God, individuals become elect when they believe... and remain elect only as long as they believe.

- God must give people a free choice in order to hold them responsible. His desire to save all is the priority. God's election is based on foreknowledge of their free will decision.

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. John 3:18

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. 1 Peter 1:1-2

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Romans 8:29

- **Arguments for Conditional Election**

- God desires all to be saved and does not desire the death of the wicked (Ezk 33:11)
- The universal character of God's commands and exhortations reveal his desire to save all people (John 3:3). Also, God issues a universal invitation for all to come to Christ (Mt 11:28). It depends on man's free response.
- All people are able to believe and be saved because God has given prevenient grace to counteract sin and render everyone able to respond to the gospel. There is no need for special grace from God for salvation.
- It would be unjust and unfair of God to hold people responsible for what they are unable to do.
- God does choose some to salvation and pass over others. This is because he has foreseen who will accept the offer of salvation. Foreknowledge is God's knowing beforehand who will receive salvation, closely tied to election (Rom 8:29).

- **Unconditional Election**

The belief that God predestined people before the beginning of time and elected them based on God's sovereign choice, not on anything in man or foreseen faith.

- Key Passages...

as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." Romans 3:10-12

"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. John 6:44

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give it to you. John 15:16

10 And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— 12 she was told, "The older will serve the younger." 13 As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." Romans 9:10–13

When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.
Acts 13:48

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. John 6:44

So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. Romans 9:16

- Election must be unconditional and individual, because man is totally depraved. If election were conditioned upon the choice of man, no one would ever be elect, since man does not have the inclination for ability to choose God on his own.
- The words predestine, choose, appoint, and foreknow are all in the active voice, which speaks of the actor (God) behind the action. Foreknow is more than just prior knowledge, it is a love relationship (OT background). Election is to the praise of God's glorious grace, not to point out our faith.
- **Arguments for Unconditional Election**
 - The whole human race is lost in sin and is totally corrupted by sin. Therefore, man is unable to respond to God's offer of salvation because he is spiritually dead (Eph 2:1-3).
 - God is sovereign in all he does and can choose whomever he wills to save. He does this to show his grace, according to his good will and pleasure (Eph 1:5).

- God has chosen to save people not on the basis of their deeds or foreseen faith—but on the basis of his grace and for his glory (Eph 1:4-5).
- Election is an expression of God's sovereign will and is the cause of faith (Eph 2:8-10).
- Election is effective for all of the elect. Those whom God chooses will certainly come to faith in Christ (Rom 8:29-30).
- Election is from all eternity and cannot be undone (Eph 1:4, 9-11).

What is the ultimate difference?

*In the final analysis, the difference between two views of election can be seen in the way they answer a very simple question. Given the fact that in the final analysis some people will choose to accept Christ and some people will not, the question is, "What makes people differ?" That is, **what ultimately makes the difference between those who believe and those who do not?** If our answer is that it is ultimately based on something God does (namely, his sovereign election of those who would be saved), then we see that salvation at its most foundational level is based on **grace alone**.*

*On the other hand, if we answer that the ultimate difference between those who are saved and those who are not is because of **something in man** (that is, a tendency or disposition to believe or not believe), then salvation ultimately depends on a combination of grace plus human ability.*

Wayne Grudem

Reasons why I am convinced about unconditional election...

- **Man's depravity, total inability to respond positively to God. All over the Scriptures!**

Rom 3:9-11, 18	Eph 2:1-5
John 3:19-21	Eph 4:17-18
Rom 14:23	1 Cor 2:14
Rom 1:18	Jer 17:9
Rom 7:18	1 Kgs 8:46
Rom 8:5-9	1 Jn 1:8
Rom 6:17-18	Ps 51:5

It is important to consider (the Bible's) vivid picture of the lostness, blindness, and inability of humans in their natural state to respond in faith to the opportunity for salvation... it follows that no one would ever respond to the gospel call without some special action by God... there is no clear and adequate basis in Scripture for a concept of a universal enablement... God sincerely offers salvation to all, but all of us are so settled in our sins that we will not respond unless assisted to do so... If, as we have argued, humans in the unregenerate state are totally depraved and unable to respond to God's grace, there is no question as to whether they are free to accept the offer of salvation—no one is! (Erickson)

If God were to leave it up to us, not a single person would ever want to be with God, and no one would ever desire to please God...God's choosing is never a matter of his turning away some who wanted to come. His choosing is always a matter of his bringing to him those who never would have come. (Ware)

- **God's foreknowledge is not just based on facts—the word *foreknow*.**

Some have argued that the verb *προέγνω* (*proegnō*, he foreknew) here should be defined only in terms of God's foreknowledge. That is, God predestined to salvation those whom he saw in advance would choose to be part of his redeemed community. This fits with Acts 26:5 and 2 Pet. 3:17, where the verb *προγνώσκειν* clearly means "to know beforehand." According to this understanding predestination is not ultimately based on God's decision to save some.

Instead, God has predestined to save those whom he foresaw would choose him. Such an interpretation is attractive in that it forestalls the impression that God arbitrarily saves some and not others.

The background of the term should be located in the OT, where for God "to know" (יְדָה, *yāda*) refers to his covenantal love in which he sets his affection on those whom he has chosen (cf. Gen. 18:19; Exod. 33:17; 1 Sam. 2:12; Ps. 18:43; Prov. 9:10; Jer. 1:5; Hos. 13:5; Amos 3:2). The parallel terms "consecrate" and "appoint" in Jer. 1:5 are noteworthy, for the text is not merely saying that God "foresaw" that Jeremiah would serve as a prophet. The point is that God had lovingly chosen him to be a prophet before he was born. Similarly, in Amos 3:2 God's knowledge of Israel in contrast to that of the rest of the nations can scarcely be cognitional, for Yahweh had full knowledge of all nations of the earth. The intention of the text is to say that Yahweh had set his covenantal love only upon Israel. Romans 11:2 yields the same conclusion, "God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew." The verb *προέγνω* here functions as the antonym to *ἀπώσατο* (*apōsato*, he rejected). In other words, the verse is saying that God has not rejected his people upon whom he set his covenantal love (cf. also Acts 2:23; 1 Pet. 1:2, 20). Similarly, in Rom. 8:29 the point is that God has predestined those upon whom he has set his covenantal affection. (Schreiner, *Romans*)

If anyone comes to faith in Jesus, it is because they were quickened from the dead (Ephesians 2:5) by the creative Spirit of God. That is, they are effectually called from darkness into light. So the foreknowledge of Romans 8:29 is not the mere awareness of something that will happen in the future apart from God's predetermination. Rather it is the kind of knowledge referred to in Old Testament texts like Genesis 18:19 ("I have chosen [literally:known] Abraham so that he may charge his children...to keep the way of the Lord"), and Jeremiah 1:5 ("Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations") and Amos 3:2 ("You only [Israel] have I known from all the families of the earth"). (Piper, TULIP)

- The impressive amount of texts indicating God's selection of some based on His determination.

Eph 1:3-6	1 Cor 1:26-30	James 2:5
Acts 13:48	John 6:37-39	John 10:24-27
John 6:44, 65	Romans 8:28-33	Romans 9:1-23
John 15:16		

- The reasons of Eph 1; In love, To Praise His Grace, Riches of his Grace, Kind Intention of His Will, To Praise His Glory. Election is GOD CENTERED!!

³ *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.* ⁴ *For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love* ⁵ *he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—* ⁶ *to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.* ⁷ *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace* ⁸ *that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.* ⁹ *And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,* ¹⁰ *to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.* ¹¹ *In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,* ¹² *in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.* ¹³ *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,* ¹⁴ *who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*

That choice in Christ was made in eternity, before time and creation, as the phrase before the creation of the world makes plain. The language of election before the foundation of the world occurs a number of times in the Pauline letters, not least in the context of thanksgiving (1 Thess. 1:4; 2:13; cf. Rom. 8:29; 2 Tim. 1:9), as part of an expression of gratitude for God's amazing grace. To say that election took place before creation indicates that God's choice was due to his own free decision and love, which were not dependent on temporal circumstances or human merit. The reasons for his election were rooted in the depths of his gracious, sovereign nature. To affirm this is to give to Christians the assurance that God's purposes for them are of the highest good, and the appropriate response from those who are chosen in Christ from all eternity is to praise him who has so richly blessed us (O'Brien, Pillar).

Regardless of which side you are on, remember that the NT teaches the doctrine of election...

(Grudem)

- As a Comfort.

But if God has always acted for our good and will in the future act for our good, Paul reasons, then will he not also in our present circumstances work every circumstance together for our good as well? In this way predestination is seen as a comfort for believers in the everyday events of life.

- **As a Reason to Praise God.**

2 Thes 2:13, "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved." Paul was obligated to give thanks to God for the Christians at Thessalonica because he knew that their salvation was ultimately due to God's choice of them. Therefore it is appropriate for Paul to thank God for them rather than praising them for their own saving faith. Understood in this way, the doctrine of election does increase praise given to God for our salvation and seriously diminishes any pride that we might feel if we thought that our salvation was due to something good in us or something for which we should receive credit.

- **As an Encouragement to Evangelism.**

Paul says, "I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus with its eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10). He knows that God has chosen some people to be saved, and he sees this as an encouragement to preach the gospel, even if it means enduring great suffering. Election is Paul's guarantee that there will be some success for his evangelism, for he knows that some of the people he speaks to will be the elect, and they will believe the gospel and be saved. It is as if someone invited us to come fishing and said, "I guarantee that you will catch some fish—they are hungry and waiting."

(Grudem)

What are some implications for life and ministry from the doctrine of Election?

Implications of Predestination

Correctly understood, the doctrine of predestination has several significant implications:

1. We can have confidence that what God has decided will come to pass. His plan will be fulfilled, and the elect will come to faith.
2. We need not criticize ourselves when some people reject Christ. Jesus himself did not win everyone in his audience. He understood that all those whom the Father gave to him would come to him (John 6:37) and only they would come (v. 44). When we have done our very best, we can leave the matter with the Lord.
3. Predestination does not nullify incentive for evangelism and missions. We do not know who the elect and the nonelect are, so we must continue to spread the Word. Our evangelistic efforts are God's means to bring the elect to salvation. God's ordaining of the end includes the ordaining

of the means to that end as well. The knowledge that missions are God's means is a strong motive for the endeavor and gives us confidence that it will prove successful.

4. Grace is absolutely necessary. While Arminianism often gives strong emphasis to grace, in our Calvinistic scheme there is no basis for God's choice of some to eternal life other than his own sovereign will. There is nothing in the individual which persuades God to grant salvation.

F. Practical Application of the Doctrine of Election (Grudem)

The doctrine of election tells us that I am a Christian simply because God in eternity past decided to set his love on me. But why did he decide to set his love on me? Not for anything good in me, but simply because he decided to love me. There is no more ultimate reason than that.

It humbles us before God to think in this way. It makes us realize that we have no claim on God's grace whatsoever. Our salvation is totally due to grace alone. Our only appropriate response is to give God eternal praise.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think that God chose you individually to be saved before he created the world? Do you think he did it on the basis of the fact that he knew you would believe in Christ, or was it "unconditional election," not based on anything that he foresaw in you that made you worthy of his love? No matter how you answered the previous question, explain how your answer makes you feel when you think about yourself in relationship to God.
2. Does the doctrine of election give you any comfort or assurance about your future?
3. After reading this chapter, do you honestly feel that you would like to give thanks or praise to God for choosing you to be saved? Do you sense any unfairness in the fact that God did not decide to save everyone?
4. If you agree with the doctrine of election as presented in this chapter, does it diminish your sense of individual personhood or make you feel somewhat like a robot or a puppet in God's hands? Do you think it should make you feel this way?
5. What effect do you think this chapter will have on your motivation for evangelism? Is this a positive or negative effect? Can you think of ways in which the doctrine of election can be used as a positive encouragement to evangelism (see 1 Thess. 1:4–5; 2 Tim. 2:10)?
6. Whether you adopt a Reformed or Arminian perspective on the question of election, can you think of some positive benefits in the Christian life that those who hold the *opposite* position from yours seem more frequently to experience than you do? Even though you do not agree with the other position, can you list some helpful concerns or practical truths about the Christian life that you might learn from that position? Is there anything that Calvinists and Arminians could do to bring about greater understanding and less division on this question?

SALVATION—where we are at...

God reveals our need.

- The doctrine of depravity.

God atones for our sins.

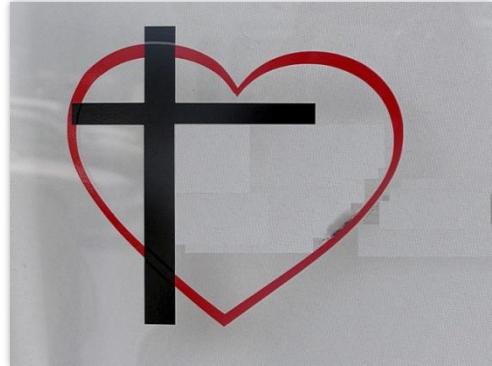
- The doctrine of atonement.

God chooses our salvation

- The doctrine of election.

God changes our heart.

- The doctrine of regeneration.



God Changes Our Heart: The Doctrine of Regeneration

What is regeneration?

Regeneration is a secret act of God in which he imparts new spiritual life to us. This is sometimes called “being born again” (Grudem)

It is God’s transformation of individual believers, his giving a new spiritual vitality and direction to their lives when they accept Christ. (Erickson)

Why do we need to be Regenerated?

- Our minds are blinded.

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:4

- Our hearts are defiled.

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Romans 1:24-25

- Our wills are distorted.

For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Romans 8:7

- Our relationships are broken. With God (James 4:4). With one another (James 4:1)

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

James 4:4

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? James 4:1

- We are slaves to sin.
- We are children of wrath.

... among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Ephesians 2:3

- We are perishing.

The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

- We are condemned before God.

"Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."

John 3:18

- We are separated from God.

And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds ... Colossians 1:21

- We are morally evil.

"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Luke 11:13

- We are destined for hell.

- A place of fiery agony (Rev 20:5; 21:8)
- A place of conscious torment (Luke 16:22-24)
- A place of total darkness (Mt 22:13)
- A place of divine destruction (2 Thess 1:9-10).
- A place of eternal duration (2 Thess 1:9-10).

Therefore, we have a big problem, but God has provided a solution ...

A New heart! (Regeneration)

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Jeremiah 17:9

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.”

Ezekiel 36:26-27

Here's the way I understand those verses: To be sure, the heart of stone means the dead heart that was unfeeling and unresponsive to spiritual reality—the heart you had before the new birth could feel. It could respond with passion and desire to lots of things. But it was a stone toward the spiritual truth and beauty of Jesus Christ and the glory of God and the path of holiness. That is what has to change if we are to see the kingdom of God. So in the new birth, God takes out the heart of stone and puts in a heart of flesh. The word flesh doesn't mean “merely human” like it does in John 3:6. It means soft and living and responsive and feeling, instead of being a lifeless stone. In the new birth, our dead, stony boredom with Christ is replaced by a heart that feels (spiritually senses) the worth of Jesus. Then when Ezekiel says in verses 26 and 27, “a new spirit I will put within you. . . . And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes,” I think he means that in the new birth, God puts a living, supernatural, spiritual life in our heart, and that new life—that new spirit—is the working of the Holy Spirit himself giving shape and character to our new heart. (Piper)

Key Texts...

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Titus 3:3-7

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?”

John 3:1-10

The Doctrine of Regeneration: Breakdown: (Platt)

*An instantaneous, unrepeatable, mysterious act of God
in which He changes a lost sinner’s heart.*

An instantaneous...

One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

Acts 16:14

(John 1:12–13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:1, 5–6; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3, 23; 1 John 2:29; 5:1, 4).

Unrepeatable...

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

Colossians 2:13-14

Mysterious...

“The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

John 3:8

Exactly what happens in regeneration is mysterious to us. We know that somehow we who were spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1) have been made alive to God and in a very real sense we have been “born again” (John 3:3, 7; Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13). But we don’t understand how this happens or what exactly God does to us to give us this new spiritual life. Jesus says, “The wind blows where it wills,

and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). (Grudem)

Act of God...

*... who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:13
(John 3:6, Mt. 19:26)*

...in which He changes a lost sinner's heart.

Regeneration: Promised in the Old Testament.

"And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules."

Ezekiel 36:26-27

- God will forgive His people of their sin.

"And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Jeremiah 31:34

- God will fill His people with His spirit.

"And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord."

Ezekiel 37:14

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit."

Joel 2:28-29

- God will transform their wants.

"And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares

the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”
Jeremiah 31:34

- God will enable their wills.

“And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”

Ezekiel 11:19-20

Regeneration: Fulfilled in the New Testament.

Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” John 3:5

- God cleanses us.

And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,” then he adds, “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.” Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 10:15-22

And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 6:11

- God indwells us.

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

Romans 8:9

- He doesn't improve our old nature.
- He imparts a new nature.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17

- A new mind.

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Colossians 3:9-10

- A new will (Gal 5:16-25).
- A new relationship.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

- with others who have been born again.
- with God.

- New Desires!!

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." John 6:35

- We don't conquer sin by working hard to change our deeds.
- We conquer sin by trusting Christ to change our desires.
- Regeneration is a revolutionary new taste capacity.

May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

2 Thessalonians 3:5

"Our external delights, our earthly pleasures, our ambition, our reputation, and our human relationships, for all these things, our desires are eager, our appetites strong, our love warm and affectionate. When it comes to these things, our hearts are tender and sensitive, deeply impressed, easily moved, much concerned and greatly engaged.

We are depressed at our losses and we are excited and joyful about any worldly success or prosperity. But when it comes to spiritual matters, how dull we feel. How heavy and hard our hearts; we can sit in here of the infinite height and length and

breadth and love of God in Christ Jesus, of his giving his infinitely dear Son, and yet sit there, cold and unmoved. If we are going to be excited about anything, shouldn't it be our spiritual lives? Is there anything more inspiring, more exciting, more loveable and desirable in Heaven or on Earth than the Gospel of Jesus Christ? We should be utterly humbled that we are not more emotionally affected than we are."

Jonathan Edwards

"it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

C.S. Lewis

"The only way to disposes the heart of an old affection is by the expulsive power of a new one...it is when the heart is brought under the mastery of one great and predominant affection..." Thomas Chalmers

Closing Issues...

- The new birth is usually not felt when it occurs. It will, rather, establish its presence by producing a new sensitivity to spiritual things, a new direction of life, and an increasing ability to obey God.
- No one can predict or control who will experience new birth. It is ultimately God's doing; even conversion depends upon his effectual calling.
- *Effective calling* is an act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the gospel, in which he summons people to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith. (John 6:44, Acts 16:14)



Two Callings of God



General Call	Effectual Call
Jn. 7:37; Isa. 45:22; Rom. 1:18-20, 2:14–15; Ps. 19:1–6; Matt. 22:14	Rom. 8:29-30; Matt 22:14; Jn. 6:37, 44, 65

- As the gospel comes to us, God speaks through it to summon us to himself (effective calling) and to give us new spiritual life (regeneration) so that we are enabled to respond in faith. Effective calling is thus God the Father *speaking powerfully to us* and regeneration is God the Father and God the Holy Spirit *working powerfully in us* to make us alive. These two things must have happened simultaneously as Peter was preaching the gospel to the household of Cornelius, for while he was still preaching “the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word” (Acts 10:44).
- Irresistible grace:** It refers to the fact that God effectively calls people and also gives them regeneration, and both actions guarantee that we will respond in saving faith. The term *irresistible grace* is subject to misunderstanding, however, since it *seems* to imply that people do not make a voluntary, willing choice in responding to the gospel—a wrong idea,

and a wrong understanding of the term *irresistible grace*. The term does preserve something valuable, however, because it indicates that God's work reaches into our hearts to bring about a response that is absolutely certain—even though we respond voluntarily.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you been born again? Is there evidence of the new birth in your life? Do you remember a specific time when regeneration occurred in your life? Can you describe how you knew that something had happened?
2. What do you think about the fact that your regeneration was totally a work of God, and that you contributed nothing to it? How does it make you feel toward yourself? How does it make you feel toward God? By way of analogy, how do you feel about the fact that when you were born physically you had no choice in the matter?
3. Are there areas where the results of regeneration are not very clearly seen in your own life? Do you think it is possible for a person to be regenerated and then stagnate spiritually so that there is little or no growth? What circumstances might a person live in that would lead to such spiritual stagnation and lack of growth (if that is possible), even though the person was truly born again? To what degree does the kind of church one attends, the teaching one receives, the kind of Christian fellowship one has, and the regularity of one's personal time of Bible reading and prayer, affect one's own spiritual life and growth?
4. If regeneration is entirely a work of God and human beings can do nothing to bring it about, then what good does it do to preach the gospel to people at all? Is it somewhat absurd or even cruel to preach the gospel and ask for a response from people who cannot respond because they are spiritually dead? How do you resolve this question?

SALVATION

God reveals our need.

- The doctrine of depravity.

God atones for our sins.

- The doctrine of atonement.

God chooses our salvation

- The doctrine of election.

God changes our heart.

- The doctrine of regeneration.

God enables our belief.

- The doctrine of conversion.

The Doctrine of Conversion.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Mark 1:14-15

The Doctrine of Conversion: Defined

*“Conversion is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we sincerely repent of sins and place our trust in Christ for salvation. The word conversion itself means “turning—here it represents a spiritual turn, a turning from sin to Christ. The turning from sin is called *repentance* and the turning to Christ is called *faith*. True saving faith includes knowledge, approval, and trust.”*

(Grudem)

“Conversion is the divinely enabled response of individuals to the gospel in which they turn from their sin and themselves (repent) and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord (believe).” (Platt)

The divinely enabled...

- Repentance is a gift .

Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old ...
Lamentations 5:21

“God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.” Acts 5:31

*When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying,
"Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."*

Acts 11:18

*God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth ...
2 Timothy 2:25*

- Faith is a gift.

And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

Acts 14:27

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

“Faith, wherever it exists, is in every case, without exception, the gift of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. Never yet did a man believe in Jesus with the faith here intended, except the Holy Spirit led him to do so. ... Faith in the living God and his Son Jesus Christ is always the result of the new birth, and can never exist except in the regenerate.”

Charles Spurgeon

Response of individuals to the gospel ...

And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 2:38

In which they turn from their sin and themselves (repent) ...

Repentance is a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ. (Grudem).

“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live.”

Ezekiel 18:30-32

From that time Jesus began to preach, saying,

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17

*Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out ...
Acts 3:19*

- Repentance involves intellectual acknowledgement of sin.

Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Psalm 51:4

... But this alone is insufficient.

- Repentance involves emotional sorrow over sin.

As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

2 Corinthians 7:9-10

And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

Isaiah 6:5

*“... therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”
Job 42:6*

... But this alone is insufficient.

- Repentance involves a personal decision to flee sin.

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

“Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

Joel 2:12-13

For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God ...

1 Thessalonians 1:9

And trust in Jesus (believe) ...

Saving faith is trust in Jesus Christ as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God. (Grudem.)

... because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

- Faith involves knowledge about Christ.

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Romans 10:14-17

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:1-6

....But this alone is insufficient.

You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!

James 2:19

- Faith involves trust in Christ.

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God ...

John 1:12

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take

my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30

“There are two ways of believing. One way is to believe about God, as I do when I believe that what is said of God is true. ... This faith is knowledge or observation rather than faith. The other way is to believe in God, as I do when I not only believe that what is said about Him is true, but put my trust in Him, surrender myself to Him and make bold to deal with Him, believing that without doubt that He will be to me and do to me just what is said of Him.”

Martin Luther

- As savior and Lord.

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

- Jesus is the savior who died for us.

God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

Acts 5:31

Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised.

Acts 13:23

- Jesus is the Lord who rules over us.

And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” *Acts 16:31*

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:10–11

Conversion debated...

Are faith and repentance both necessary for salvation?

- Sometimes scripture mentions only faith.

"If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" Acts 11:17

And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. Acts 14:23

And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."
Acts 16:31

- Sometimes scripture mentions only repentance.

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
Acts 2:38.

"Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out ... "
Acts 3:19

"God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31

Acts 26:20 Acts 17:30 Acts 8:22

- Sometimes scripture mentions both faith and repentance.

"... testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20:21

Conclusion ... Faith and repentance are inseparable . They are two sides of the same coin.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
Mark 1:14-15

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God ...
Hebrews 6:1

"It is impossible to disentangle faith and repentance. Saving faith is permeated with repentance and repentance is permeated with faith."
John Murray

- Repent of your sin.
 - You have a disease you cannot cure.
 - You have a destiny you cannot change.
- Look to His grace and love .
 - He was lifted up to suffer as savior.

So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.”

John 8:28

“And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

John 12:32

- He is lifted up to reign as Lord.

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11

Both Faith and Repentance Continue Throughout Life

Although we have been considering initial faith and repentance as the two aspects of conversion at the beginning of the Christian life, it is important to realize that faith and repentance are not confined to the beginning of the Christian life. They are rather attitudes of heart that continue throughout our lives as Christians. Jesus tells his disciples to pray daily, “And forgive us our sins as we also have forgiven those who sin against us” (Matt. 6:12, author’s translation), a prayer that, if genuine, will certainly involve daily sorrow for sin and genuine repentance. And the risen Christ says to the church in Laodicea, “Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent” (Rev. 3:19; cf. 2 Cor. 7:10).

With regard to faith, Paul tells us, “So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13). He certainly means that these three abide throughout the course of this life, but he probably also means that they abide for all eternity: if faith is trusting God to provide all our needs, then this attitude will never cease, not even in the age to come. But in any case, the point is clearly made that faith continues throughout this life. Paul also says, “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

Therefore, although it is true that *initial* saving faith and *initial* repentance occur only once in our lives, and when they occur they constitute true conversion, nonetheless, the heart attitudes of repentance and faith only begin at conversion. These same attitudes should continue throughout

the course of our Christian lives. Each day there should be heartfelt repentance for sins that we have committed, and faith in Christ to provide for our needs and to empower us to live the Christian life.

(Grudem)

Spurgeon's Conversion Story

"I sometimes think I might have been in darkness and despair until now had it not been for the goodness of God in sending a snowstorm, one Sunday morning, while I was going to a certain place of worship. When I could go no further, I turned down a side street, and came to a little Primitive Methodist Chapel. In that chapel there may have been a dozen or fifteen people. I had heard of the Primitive Methodists, how they sang so loudly that they made people's heads ache; but that did not matter to me. I wanted to know how I might be saved, and if they could tell me that, I did not care how much they made my head ache. The minister did not come that morning; he was snowed up, I suppose. At last, a very thin-looking man, a shoemaker, or tailor, or something of that sort, went up into the pulpit to preach. Now, it is well that preachers should be instructed; but this man was really stupid. He was obliged to stick to his text, for the simple reason that he had little else to say. The text was,— 'LOOK UNTO ME, AND BE YE SAVED, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.'

"He did not even pronounce the words rightly, but that did not matter. There was, I thought, a glimpse of hope for me in that text. The preacher began thus—'My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says, 'Look' Now lookin' don't take a deal of pains. It ain't liftin' your foot or your finger; it is just, 'Look.' Well, a man needn't go to College to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. A man needn't be worth a thousand a year to be able to look. Anyone can look; even a child can look. But then the text says, 'Look unto Me.' Ay' said he, in broad Essex, 'many of you are lookin' to yourselves, but it's no use lookin' there. You'll never find any comfort in yourselves. Some look to God the Father. No, look to Him by-and-by. Jesus Christ says, 'Look unto Me.' Some of you say, 'We must wait for the Spirit's workin'.' You have no business with that just now. Look to Christ. The text says, 'Look unto Me.' ' Then the good man followed up his text in this way:—

" 'Look unto Me; I am sweatin' great drops of blood. Look unto Me; I am hangin' on the cross. Look unto Me; I am dead and buried. Look unto Me; I rise again. Look unto Me; I ascend to Heaven. Look unto Me; I am sittin' at the Father's right hand. O poor sinner, look unto Me! Look unto Me!'

"When he had gone to about that length, and managed to spin out ten minutes or so, he was at the end of his tether. Then he looked at me under the gallery, and I daresay,

with so few present, he knew me to be a stranger. Just fixing his eyes on me, as if he

knew all my heart, he said, 'Young man, you look very miserable.' Well, I did; but I had not been accustomed to have remarks made from the pulpit on my personal appearance before. However, it was a good blow, struck right home. He continued, 'and you always will be miserable—miserable in life, and miserable in death,—if you don't obey my text; but if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved.' Then, lifting up his hands, he shouted, as only a Primitive Methodist could do, 'Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothin' to do but to look and live.'

"I saw at once the way of salvation. I know not what else he said,—I did not take much notice of it,—I was so possessed with that one thought. Like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up, the people only looked and were healed, so it was with me. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard that word, 'Look!' what a charming word it seemed to me! Oh! I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away. There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that instant, and sung with the most enthusiastic of them, of the precious blood of Christ, and the simple faith which looks alone to Him. Oh, that somebody had told me this before, 'Trust Christ, and you shall be saved.' Yet it was, no doubt, all wisely ordered, and now I can say,—

" 'Ever since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.' "

Charles Spurgeon

The Amazing Promise ...

- His boundless and eternal life are available to everyone who believes.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION (GRUDEM)

1. Have you come to trust in Christ personally, or are you still at the point of intellectual knowledge and emotional approval of the facts of salvation without having personally put your trust in Christ? If you have not put your trust in Christ yet, what do you think it is that is making you hesitate?

2. Did this chapter help you think of faith in Christ in more personal terms? If so, how might that increase your own level of faith? Do you think that it might be easier for young children than for adults to think of trust in Christ as trust in a real *person* who is alive today? Why or why not? What does this tell you about the way Christian parents should teach their children about Jesus?
3. If your knowledge about God has increased through reading this book, has your faith in God increased along with that knowledge? Why or why not? If your faith has not increased along with your knowledge, what can you do to encourage your faith to grow more than it has?
4. In terms of human relationships, do you trust a person more when you do not know that person very well or after you have come to know him or her quite well (assuming that the person is essentially a trustworthy and reliable person)? What does that fact tell you about how your trust in God might increase? What things might you do during the day to come to know God better, and to come to know Jesus and the Holy Spirit better?
5. Did you feel a sincere sorrow for sin when you first came to Christ? Can you describe what it felt like? Did it lead you to a genuine commitment to forsake sin? How long was it before you noticed a change in your pattern of life?
6. Have you ever truly repented of sin, or do you think you have been taught a watered-down gospel that did not include repentance? Do you think it is possible for someone genuinely to trust in Christ for forgiveness of sins without also sincerely repenting for sins? Do you think that genuine repentance usually involves only a sincere feeling of sorrow for sin in general, or does it involve genuine sorrow for specific sins, and turning from those specific sins?
7. Have faith and repentance remained a continuing part of your Christian life, or have those attitudes of heart grown somewhat weak in your life? What has been the result in your Christian life?

SALVATION

God reveals our need.

- The doctrine of depravity.

God atones for our sins.

- The doctrine of atonement.

God chooses our salvation

- The doctrine of election.

God changes our heart.

- The doctrine of regeneration.

God enables our belief.

- The doctrine of conversion.

God reverses our status.

- The doctrine of justification.

Justification Defined...

Justification is the gracious act of God by which He declares a sinner righteous only through faith in Jesus. (Platt)

Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which he
(1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us, and
(2) declares us to be righteous in his sight. (Grudem)

Key Texts...

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 3:21-26

We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. For through the law

I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Galatians 2:15-21

As we come to Christ, then, empty-handed, claiming no merit of our own, but clinging by faith to His blood and righteousness, we are justified. We pass immediately from a state of condemnation and spiritual death to a state of pardon, acceptance, and the sure hope of eternal life. Our sins are blotted out, and we are “clothed” with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. In our standing before God, we will never be more righteous, even in heaven, than we were the day we trusted Christ, or we are now. Obviously in our daily experience we fall far short of the perfect righteousness God requires. But because He has imputed to us the perfect righteousness of His Son, He now sees us as being just as righteous as Christ Himself. (Bridges)

*Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling.—Rock of Ages*

*My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.—The Solid Rock*

In the New Testament, justification is the declarative act of God by which, on the basis of the sufficiency of Christ's atoning death, he pronounces believers to have fulfilled all of the requirements of the law which pertain to them. Justification is a forensic act imputing the righteousness of Christ to the believer... It is a matter of declaring the person righteous, as a judge does in acquitting the accused. (Erickson)

Justification is a righteousness that God both requires and provides for us.

It is the righteousness that He requires because it must fully satisfy the utmost demands of His Law, both in its precepts and penalty. For although this righteousness is apart from Law as far as we are concerned, it is not as far as God is concerned. Rather it must be a righteousness that both perfectly fulfills the righteous requirements of His Law and satisfies the demands of His justice toward those who have broken His Law. This righteousness from God, then, is nothing less than the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, who, through His sinless life and His death in obedience to the Father's will, perfectly fulfilled the Law of God in both its precepts and its penalty. In other words, this righteousness that God both requires and provides embraces all the work of Christ.

(Bridges)

Justification is by the gracious act of God.

*If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?
Psalm 130:3*

Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my pleas for mercy! In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness! Enter not into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you.

Psalm 143:1-2

- God gives faith.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

- God grants justification as a gift.

And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Romans 8:30

For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. Romans 3:23-24

Justification is a declaration by God.

And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 6:11

- A legal declaration.

The use of the word *justify* in the Bible indicates that justification is a legal declaration by God. Romans 4:5: “And to one who does not work but trusts him who *justifies the ungodly* his faith is reckoned as righteousness.” ... “justify,” God issues a legal declaration about us. This is why theologians have also said that justification is *forensic* where the word *forensic* means “having to do with legal proceedings.” (Grudem) (Rom. 3:20, 26, 28; 5:1; 8:30; 10:4, 10; Gal. 2:16; 3:24).

- An eternal declaration.

And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:30-39

Justification is God declaring us to be just in his sight.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn?

Romans 8:33-34

Justification is God imputing Christ's righteousness to us.

When we say that God *imputes* Christ's righteousness to us it means that God *thinks of* Christ's righteousness as belonging to us, or regards it *as belonging* to us. He "reckons" it to our account.
(Grudem)

Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Genesis 15:6

To one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness. Romans 4:6

- The three imputations...
 - Adam's guilt was imputed to us.
 - Our sin was imputed to Christ.
 - Christ's righteousness is imputed to us
 - God thinks of it as belonging to us. Justification!

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith ...

Philippians 3:8-9

Justification is through faith alone in Jesus alone.

... yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 2:16

- Christ is the object of our justification.

So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Galatians 3:24-29

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Romans 5:6-9

- He fulfills the promise to Abraham.

That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Romans 4:22-25

- He obeys the law of Moses.

For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Romans 10:3-4

... and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.

Acts 13:39

- He makes possible the grace given to David.

Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

Romans 4:4-8

- Faith is the means of our justification. Why faith? Because it is the anti-work.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1

- Be aware of dangerous legalism.

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

Galatians 1:6-9

O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—

just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”?

Galatians 3:1-6

- working in our own power.
- working according to our own laws and rules.
- working to earn God's favor.
- working to steal God's glory.

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

Galatians 5:1-6

- Embrace the divine love.

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

- Jesus is passionate about you.
- Jesus has paid a price for you.
- God's pleasure in you is not based upon your performance for Him.
- God's pleasure in you is based upon Christ's performance for you. (Platt)

Justification and faith and works

- Works are the evidence of our justification.

You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

James 2:24

- Paul wants us to avoid thinking that works are necessary as a basis or means of our salvation.

We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 2:15-16

- James wants us to avoid thinking that works are not necessary as evidence of our salvation.

But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

James 2:18-24

The principle of salvation by grace brings us to the question of the relationship of faith to works. It is apparent from what has been said that works do not produce salvation. Yet the biblical witness also indicates that while it is faith that leads to justification, justification must and will invariably produce works appropriate to the nature of the new creature that has come into being. It is well when we quote the classic text on salvation by grace, Ephesians 2:8–9, not to stop short of verse 10, which points to the outcome of this grace: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” James puts it even more forcefully: “So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead” (James 2:17; see also v. 26). Despite the fairly common opinion that there is a tension between Paul and James, both make essentially the same point: that the genuineness of the faith that leads to justification becomes apparent in the results which issue from it. If there are no good works, there has been no real faith nor justification. (Erickson)

How can I be justified?

“We are justified by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone.”

How are you righteous before God? Only by true faith in Jesus Christ. In spite of the fact that my conscience accuses me that I have grievously sinned against all the commandments of God, and have not kept any one of them, and that I am still ever prone to all that is evil, nevertheless, God, without any merit of my own, out of pure grace, grants me the benefits of the perfect [sacrifice] of Christ, imputing to me his righteousness and holiness as if I had never committed a single sin or had ever been sinful, having fulfilled myself all the obedience which Christ has carried out for me, if only I accept such favor with a trusting heart.

Heidelberg Catechism

God Reverses Our Status.

- **The doctrine of justification.**
- **The doctrine of adoption. We are loved by the Father.**
- **The doctrine of union with Christ.**

Adoption defined... We are loved by the Father.

Adoption is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family. (Grudem)

Adoption is a transfer from status of alienation and hostility to one of acceptance and favor. That part of salvation in which God receives the estranged sinner back into the relationship and benefits of being his child. (Erickson)

Key Passages...

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.
John 1:12

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.
Galatians 4:6-7

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:14-17

What does it mean to be adopted by God?

- **We have been born of God the Father—by his Spirit and through his Word.**

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."
John 3:8

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 1 Peter 1:3
(1 John 2:29, 3:9, 4:7; 5:1; 5:4; 5:18)

- **We are partakers of the divine nature.**

by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 2 Peter 1:4

- **We have been brought into a close, personal relationship with God the Father.**

⁴ *For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love* ⁵ *he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will. Ephesians 1:4–5*

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. James 1:17

Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers? Malachi 2:10

- God loves us.

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. 1 John 3:1

- God understands us.

As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. Psalm 103:13-14

- God provides for us.

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

Matthew 6:25-34

Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

Matthew 7:9-11

And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19

- God protects us.

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Matthew 10:29–31

- God encourages us.

You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry. Psalm 10:17

- God comforts us.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. (2 Corinthians 1:3–4).

- God forgives us.

Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.'

Matthew 6:9-12

- God disciplines us.

And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:5-11

- God leads us.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Romans 8:14

- **We have confident and ready access to the Father.**

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba!

Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Galatians 4:6-7

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16

- **We have the privileges that accompany being children of Father God.**

Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. Romans 8:17

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will. Ephesians 1:11

Implications for our lives as children of God... (Platt)

- We worship Him.

Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.’ Matthew 6:9

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

- We imitate Him.

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. Ephesians 5:1

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” 1 Peter 1:14-16

- We obey Him.

By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. 1 John 3:10

- We reflect Him. Caring for the afflicted.

*Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation.
Psalm 68:5*

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

James 1:27

The Doctrine of Union with Christ

Union with Christ Defined...

The restoration of a believer to the relationship with God that was originally intended. It has been brought about by the death of Christ. By being identified with Christ in his atoning death as well as in his resurrection power, believers obtain his righteousness and vitality. (Erickson)

Union with Christ is a phrase used to summarize several different relationships between believers and Christ, through which Christians receive every benefit of salvation. These relationships include the fact that we are in Christ, Christ is in us, we are like Christ, and we are with Christ. (Grudem)

Key Passages...

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5

- We are in Christ.
- Christ is in us.
- We are like Christ.
- We are with Christ.

Union means that we are in Christ...

- **We are part of God's eternal plan.**

*Even as he chose us **in him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. Ephesians 1:4*

*Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us **in Christ Jesus** before the ages began. 2 Timothy 1:8–9*

- **We are united with Christ's life, death, and resurrection.**

- In His obedience

For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Romans 5:19

- In His death

- *Our old self was crucified with him (Rom. 6:6).*
 - *I have been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20).*
 - *One has died for all; therefore all have died (2 Cor. 5:14)*
(Rom. 6:4–5, 8; 7:4; Col. 1:22; 2:12, 20; 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:11)

- In His resurrection

*And God raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places **in Christ Jesus.** Ephesians 2:6*

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. Romans 6:4–5

- **We are united with Christ in our lives right now...**

- We have died to the mastery of sin and raised with Christ.

Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

Colossians 2:12

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6:11

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4

- We have new life in Christ.

And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

1 John 5:11

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption. 1 Corinthians 1:30

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Ephesians 1:3

Every stage of the application of redemption is given to us because we are “in Christ.”

It is “in Christ” that we are *called* to salvation (1 Cor. 7:22), *regenerated* (Eph. 1:3; 2:10), and *justified* (Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:17; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:9; Col. 1:14). “In Christ” we *die* (1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 14:13) and “in him” our bodies *will be raised* up again (1 Cor. 15:22). These passages suggest that because our lives are inseparably connected to Christ himself, the Holy Spirit gives us all the blessings that Christ has earned. (Grudem).

- We are to live our Christian lives in Christ, for his glory.

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. Colossians 2:6–7

Paul also writes to believers about their actions “in Christ.” He reminds the Corinthians, “in the Lord your *labor* is not in vain” (1 Cor. 15:58). It is “in the Lord” that children are to *obey* their parents (Eph. 6:1), wives are to *submit* to their husbands (Col. 3:18), and all believers are to *be strong* (Eph. 6:10), *be encouraged* (Phil. 2:1), *rejoice* (Phil. 3:1; 4:4), *agree* (Phil. 4:2), *stand firm* (Phil. 4:1; 1 Thess. 3:8), *live a godly life* (2 Tim. 3:12) and have *good behavior* (1 Peter 3:16). “In the

Lord" they *work hard* (Rom. 16:12), *are made confident* (Phil. 1:14) and *are approved* (Rom. 16:10). (Grudem)

- We are all unified in one body in Christ.

So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Romans 12:5

Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. *1 Corinthians 10:17*

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. *Galatians 3:28*

Union means that Christ is in us...

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. *John 15:5*

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

Galatians 2:20

To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. *Colossians 1:27*

- He is the source of our spiritual strength.
- We depend on him. There should be no pride.
- We have confidence not in our own strength, but in him working in us.

Union means that we are like Christ...

Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

1 John 2:6

looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:2

- **We are to imitate Christ in all our actions...**
 - Welcome one another, as Christ has welcomed you. (Rom. 15:7)

- Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church. (Eph. 5:25)
- As the Lord has forgiven you so you also must forgive. (Col. 3:13)
- He laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.

(1 Jn 3:16)

Union means that we are with Christ...

- **We have personal fellowship and friendship with Jesus**

...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. Matthew 28:20

- We work together with Christ (2 Cor. 6:1).
- We know him (Phil. 3:8).
- We are comforted by him (2 Thess. 2:16-17).
- We are taught by him (Matt. 11:29).
- We live our whole lives in his presence (2 Cor. 2:10).
- We know that our prayers are heard him (Jn 14:13-14).

- **We have union with the Father and with the Holy Spirit.** (John 17:21; Rom. 8:9)

Implications of our Union with Christ (Erickson)

- **In Him we are counted righteous!**

*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
Romans 8:1*

- **In Him we have strength and grace!**

*But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."
Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may
rest upon me. 2 Corinthians 12:9*

- **In Him we can suffer with joy!**

*Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my
Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that
I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from
the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that*

depends on faith— that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

Philippians 3:8–10.

- **In Him we will reign!**

If we endure, we will also reign with him. 2 Timothy 2:12

For Discussion and Application...

1. Have you ever thought of yourself as being united with Christ from the point of God's choosing you before the foundation of the world to the point of going to be with him in heaven forever? How does this idea change the way you think of yourself and your own life? How does it affect the way you think of difficulties that you may be experiencing at this time?
2. Have you previously thought of doing the actions that you do each day "in Christ" (see Phil. 4:13)? What difference would it make to think of doing your daily work "in Christ"? What about carrying on conversations with friends or family members? Or eating, or even sleeping?
3. How can the idea of union with Christ increase your love and fellowship for other Christians, both those in your church and those in other churches?
4. Do you have any awareness in your day-to-day life of Christ living in you (Gal. 2:20)? What would change in your life if you had a stronger awareness of Christ living in you throughout the day?
5. For one or two days, try reading some section of the gospels and asking how you might better imitate Christ in your own life. What effect will the idea of following in Christ's steps (1 Peter 1:21) and walking as he walked (1 John 2:6) have in your life?
6. Can you name some times in your life when you have sensed an especially close personal fellowship with Christ? What have those times been like? Can you think of anything that brought about that close fellowship with Christ? What can we do to increase the intensity of our daily fellowship with Christ?

The Doctrine of Sanctification: God Transforms our Lives

Definitions...

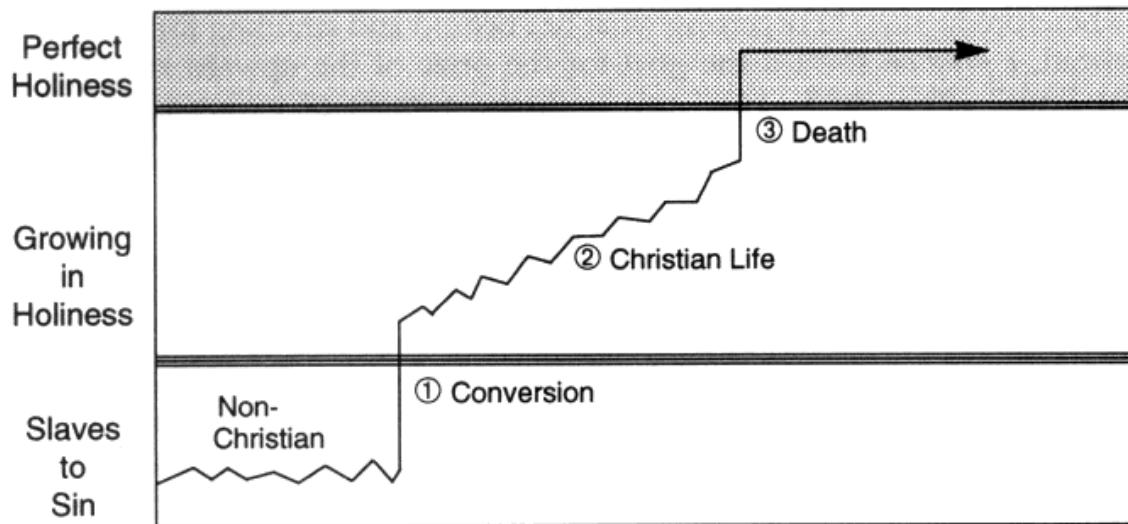
Sanctification is a process by which one's moral condition is brought into conformity with one's legal status before God...In particular, sanctification is the Holy Spirit's applying to the life of the believer the work done by Jesus Christ. (Erickson)

Sanctification is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives. (Grudem)

Sanctification is the process by which God transforms our lives into the image of Christ. (Platt)

Differences between justification and sanctification...

Justification	Sanctification
Legal standing	Internal condition
Once for all time	Continuous throughout life
Entirely God's work	We cooperate
Perfect in this life	Not perfect in this life
The same in all Christians	Greater in some than in others



- **Definitions:**
 - **Positional Sanctification**—We are holy/sanctified in God's sight (1 Cor 6:9-11)
 - **Progressive Sanctification**—We are growing in holiness (Philippians 2:12)
- **The process...**
 - Justification is an instantaneous event; sanctification is a instantaneous process.

For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.
Hebrews 10:14

- Justification refers to how we stand before God; sanctification refers to how we live before God.

I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations.
For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity
and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your
members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

Romans 6:19

- Justification involves freedom from the penalty of sin; sanctification involves freedom from the power of sin.

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.
Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.
Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but
present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life,
and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have
no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Romans 6:11-14

- Justification knows no degrees; sanctification has degrees.

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are
being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to
another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18

- By which God ...
 - Ware sanctified by God the Father.
 - We are sanctified in God the Son.

- We are sanctified through God the Spirit.

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 6:11

But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:16-18

- Transforms our lives...

- The struggle of transformation ...

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-18

- Mortification of the flesh (sark).

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Galatians 5:19-21

- Vivification of the (pneuma).

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-25

But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard

about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:20-24

- The areas of transformation ...

- He transforms our minds.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2

- He transforms our emotions.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15

- He transforms our bodies.

What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty." Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1

- He transforms our churches.
 - Sanctification is a community project.

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:24-25

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people

for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9

- Into the image of Christ.

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Romans 8:28-30

- Our sanctification will not be complete in this world.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. 1 John 1:8-10

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

Romans 7:18-19

- This is not an excuse for spiritual laziness.
- This is an exhortation to spiritual perseverance.

- Our sanctification will be complete in the world to come.

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

1 John 3:2-3

- Two dangers...
 - Legalism
 - License
- Gospel truth is never intended only to be believed; gospel truth is always intended to be obeyed.

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel...

Philippians 1:27

- Gospel truth is never intended only to be accepted in our heads; gospel truth is always intended to be applied in our lives

But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

James 2:18

- Negative “work”
 - Work that is fueled by the flesh to earn favor before God.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."

Galatians 3:10

- Positive “work”
 - Work that is fueled by faith to bring glory to God.

To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

Galatians 5:6

- Two realities ...
 - Salvation is by faith.
 - By faith, we have been accepted before God the Father.
 - This results in radical confidence.
 - Faith works.

- By faith, we now walk with God as friends.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

John 14:15

- This results in radical obedience.

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

2 Peter 1:5-7

- We are dependent on God's work in our lives.
- Ultimately, God is working for us.

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Philippians 2:12-13

- He is molding our hearts.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

Romans 8:5

- He is empowering our lives.

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. *1 Corinthians 15:10*

To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Colossians 1:27-29

- We are devoted to God's for our lives.
 - We are not free from Christ; we are free to follow Christ.

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ

*who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in
the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Galatians 2:20

- We are not free to sin; we are free from the mastery of sin.

*Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.
Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but
present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life,
and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have
no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*

Romans 6:12-14

- We are not free to flout God's commands; we are free to follow God's commands.

- Two Conclusions ...

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your
own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may
boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

Ephesians 2:8-10

- Faith is the means of our justification.
- Works are the evidence of our justification, thus showing we are being sanctified.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. Can you remember in your own experience the definite beginning to sanctification that occurred when you became a Christian? Did you sense a clear break from the ruling power and love of sin in your life? Do you really believe that you are even now dead to the ruling power and love of sin in your life? How can this truth of the Christian life be of help to you in specific areas of your life where you still need to grow in sanctification?
2. As you look back over the last few years of your Christian life, can you see a pattern of definite growth in sanctification? What are some things that you used to delight in which no longer interest you? What are some things that you used to have no interest in that now hold great interest for you?

3. As you have grown to greater maturity and holiness in the Christian life, have you become more conscious of the weight of sin that remains in your heart? If not, why has this not been so? Do you think that it would be helpful if you had a greater consciousness of the sin that remains in your own life? If you had this, what difference would it make in your own life?
4. How would it affect your life if you thought more about the fact that the Holy Spirit is continually at work in you to increase your sanctification? In living the Christian life, have you maintained a balance between your passive role and your active role in sanctification, or have you tended to emphasize one aspect over the other, and why? What might you do to correct this imbalance, if there is one in your life?
5. Have you thought previously that sanctification affects your intellect and the way you think? What areas of your intellect still need quite a bit of growth in sanctification? With regard to your emotions, in what areas do you know that God still needs to work to bring about greater sanctification? Are there areas or aspects of sanctification that need to be improved with respect to your physical body and its obedience to God's purposes?
6. Are there areas where you have struggled for years to grow in sanctification, but with no progress at all in your life? Has this chapter helped you regain hope for progress in those areas? (For Christians who have serious discouragement over lack of progress in sanctification, it is very important to talk personally to a pastor or other mature Christian about this situation, rather than letting it go on for a long period of time.)
7. Overall, has this chapter been an encouragement or discouragement to you in your Christian life?

God Transforms our Lives

The Doctrine of Perseverance

T U L I P	<p>Total Depravity: Humanity has fallen into a state of radical corruption that has affected <i>every</i> aspect of who we are. The imago Dei has been marred, but not destroyed.</p> <p>Unconditional Election: The belief that God predestined people for salvation before the beginning of time. This election was not based or conditioned upon anything in man, good or evil, foreseen or present, but upon God's sovereign choice.</p> <p>Limited Atonement: The belief that Christ only died for the sins of the elect.</p> <p>Irresistible Grace: The belief that God's call to the elect will always be effectual in bringing about their salvation.</p> <p>Perseverance of the Saints (Eternal Security): The belief that true believers will persevere in their faith and cannot ever be lost.</p>
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Calvinism	Arminianism
T otal Depravity (Radical Depravity)	Partial Depravity
U nconditional Election	Conditional Election
L imited Atonement (Particular Redemption)	Unlimited or Universal Atonement
I rresistible Grace (Effectual Grace)	Resistible Grace
P erseverance of the Saints (Eternal Security)	Conditional Security

Definition...

The perseverance of the saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again. (Grudem)

Two Major Views...

- You can lose your salvation (Arminian—Conditional Security)
 - The main ingredient in salvation is human choice and freedom. God gives us freedom to chose Him. We also have the freedom to leave him as well.
 - Scripture warns about falling away.

¹¹ *And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.* ¹² *And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.* ¹³ *But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Mt 24:11-14)*

²⁶ *For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,* ²⁷ *but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Hebrews 10:26–27*

- Biblical examples of Saul and Judas.
- Key Texts...

Hebrews 6:4–6

⁴ *For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit,* ⁵ *and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come,* ⁶ *and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.*

Mark 3:28–29

²⁸ *“Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter,* ²⁹ *but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”—*

Galatians 5:1–4

¹ *For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.* ² *Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.* ³ *I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he*

is obligated to keep the whole law.⁴ You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

John 15:5–6 (ESV)

⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

- You cannot lose your salvation (Calvinist—Unconditional Security)
 - Eternal security flows from the outcome of total depravity and unconditional election. If we hold to unconditional election, we hold to unconditional security.

Romans 8:30

³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

- God is unchanging, loving, and all-powerful...
 - His love is unfailing (Rom 8:38-39)
 - His faithfulness is sure (2 Thess 3:3)
 - His forgiveness is total (Col 2:13)
 - His presence is eternal (Mt 28:18-20; Heb 13:5)
 - Therefore if God has the power and the heart to save someone, he also has the power and desire to keep them strong to the end.

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24

²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

- The believer is sealed by the Holy Spirit and guaranteed

Ephesians 1:13–14

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- Salvation is a free gift of grace. It cannot be given back. If we could lose our salvation, than it would be about works instead of grace. All of the salvation process is about grace. Election—sanctification—Glorification.

Ephesians 2:8–10

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- The passages that have warnings are an encouragement to persevere in the faith, but are not suggesting that people can lose their faith. The Bible does include warnings so that those destined to persevere will indeed do so. If people do not persevere until the end, they were never true believers. Some profess faith and are really not believers.

Matthew 7:21–23

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

1 John 2:19

¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

- Other Key Texts

John 10:27–30

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

Romans 8:38–39

³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 11:29

²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

John 6:39–40

³⁹ *And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.* ⁴⁰ *For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.*"

John 5:24

²⁴ *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*

Consider the key texts of each position...

- John 10:27-30 is extremely clear.
- Hebrews 6:4-6 is extremely debated on who these individuals are and one can make a strong case that they are not believers.
 - Interpretations
 - Genuine believers that lose their salvation
 - Hypothetical situation to make a point about the warning... they can, but they won't.
 - Not saved
 - People who have been close to the church
 - Context: But we are convinced of better things concerning you—things that accompany salvation.

How do you know that you are saved?

- Do I have a present trust in Christ for Salvation? (Col 1:23)
- Is there evidence of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in my life? (Gal 5:22)
- Do I see a long term pattern of growth? (2 Peter 1:5-7)
- Am I obeying and loving Christ? (1 John 2:3)
- Am I seeking to listen to the Spirit and understand the Word?
- Am I trying to be led by the Spirit in my walk with God?

Concluding Principles...

- Our salvation is protected by the power of God!
- If you are trusting in Christ for your salvation right now, you have eternal life as a present possession.
- We are to work hard for God and make every effort to persevere in our faith—by the strengthening grace God provides.

Discussion:

1. What ideas or verses stood out to you?
2. What encourages you or challenges you from this doctrine?
3. What about the person who has never heard of Jesus? It seems somewhat unfair that millions of people have no chance of hearing the message yet are condemned anyway.

God Resurrects our Bodies

The Doctrine of Glorification

Glorification Defined

Glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like his own. (Grudem)

*In the final stage of salvation, Christ will return for His people
And resurrect their bodies to reign forever with Him. (Platt)*

Key Passages...

John 6:39–40

³⁹ *And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.* ⁴⁰ *For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.*

Corinthians 15:51–52

⁵¹ *Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,* ⁵² *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

¹³ *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.* ¹⁴ *For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.* ¹⁵ *For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.* ¹⁶ *For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.* ¹⁷ *Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.* ¹⁸ *Therefore encourage one another with these words.*

Philippians 3:20–21

²⁰ *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,* ²¹ *who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

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Truths about Glorification...

- **Most believers will die**
 - Not all believers will die.

1 Corinthians 15:51–52

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- For those believers who die...
 - Their bodies are buried on earth.
 - Their souls are immediately welcomed in heaven to enjoy the intermediate state—conscious spirit existence in paradise with the Lord.

Luke 23:43 (ESV)

⁴³ And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Acts 7:59 (ESV)

⁵⁹ And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

Upon death the spirits of believers go immediately to a place and condition of blessedness (Paradise), and unbelievers to an experience of misery, torment, and punishment (Hades). The experiences of these places will not be as intense as the final states because it is a disembodied existence—whereas the final states will body and spirit. (Erickson)

- What will we be doing in the intermediate state? How can we recognize things? How does it exactly work—will we just be spirits floating around? Scripture is interestingly silent on these questions.
 - Not a “soul sleep”
 - Not purgatory
 - Conscious time of paradise with the Lord.
- Death is not the end!
- Death is just the beginning!

- **All believers will be resurrected.**

1 Corinthians 15:42–57

⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the

last Adam became a life-giving spirit.⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual.⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."⁵⁵ "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Our bodies will be eternal.
- Our bodies will be imperishable.
- Our bodies will be powerful.
- Our bodies will be spiritual (permanently Spirit-filled).
- Our bodies will be recognizable.

Contrast between Our Present Bodies and our Resurrection Bodies

Present Bodies	Resurrection Body
Perishable, subject to disease and death	Incorruptible, immune to disease and decay
Sown in dishonor	Glorious, filled with honor
Weak	Powerful
Physical	Spiritual

- **All believers will be judged according to their works on earth, not the final judgment which declares eternal states, but a judgment for the dispensing of rewards.**
 - Christ is the basis of our justification. Faith is the means.
 - Works are the evidence of our justification.
 - We will be judged, not for eternal life or death, but for the dispensing of rewards and roles in eternity.

Romans 14:10–12 (ESV)

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;¹¹ for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

¹² So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.*

1 Corinthians 4:5 (ESV)

⁵ *Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.*

- **All believers will enter into heaven.**

- A place of unhindered fellowship.

Revelation 21:1–4 (ESV)

¹ *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”*

- We will be with him!

- Death will be replaced by life.
 - No more sin
 - No more sorrow
 - No more sickness
 - No more separation
 - Night will be replaced by light

Revelation 21:22–25

²² *And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵ and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there.*

Revelation 22:5

⁵ *And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.*

- Corruption will be replaced by purity.

Revelation 21:27

²⁷ *But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

- Curse will be replaced by blessing.

Revelation 22:1–3

¹ *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.*

- We will see his face!

Revelation 22:4

⁴ *They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.*

- A place of indescribable worship.

Revelation 19:6–9

⁶ *Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. ⁷ Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; ⁸ it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. ⁹ And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."*

Promises of Glorification

- Christians will be completely redeemed.

Romans 8:23–25

²³ *And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.* ²⁴ *For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?* ²⁵

But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

- We will be free from the presence of sin.

Revelation 19:7–8

⁷ *Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;* ⁸ *it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.*

- We will be conformed to the likeness of Christ.

1 John 3:2

² *Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*

- We will be welcomed into an everlasting kingdom.

2 Peter 1:11

¹¹ *For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

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2 Timothy 4:8

⁸ *Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.*

- Creation will be completely restored.

Romans 8:19–22

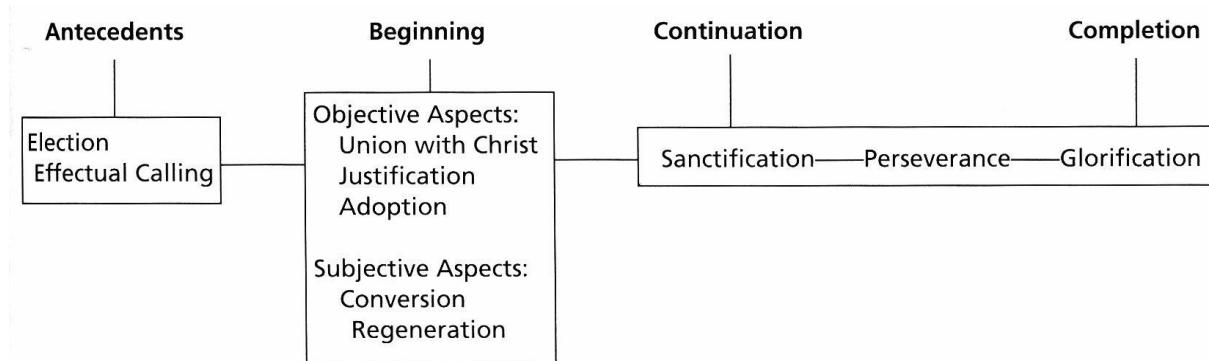
¹⁹ *For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.* ²⁰ *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope* ²¹ *that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.* ²² *For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.*

Revelation 21:1

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

Summarizing the Elements of Salvation (Review)

- The Order of Salvation (Erickson)



Salvation: For the Glory of God!

- We were dead in our transgressions and sins and unable to save ourselves.
 - The doctrine of depravity.
- Our salvation is only possible by the sovereign grace of God who chose us before the foundation of the world.
 - The doctrine of election.
- The work Christ did in his life and death to earn our salvation. By his death, Christ covered over our sins by appeasing God's wrath as a propitiation.
 - The doctrine of atonement.
- In an instantaneous, unrepeatable, mysterious act of God, He changed our hearts, and we were born again.
 - The doctrine of regeneration.
- God enabled us to turn from sin and ourselves and to trust in Jesus as Savior.
 - The doctrine of conversion.
- God declared us right before him by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
 - The doctrine of justification.

- In his grace, God our Father gave us the position of sons and the privileges of sonship.
 - The doctrine of adoption.
- Christ now lives in us, we live in Christ, we are with Christ, and Christ is with us.
 - The doctrine of union with Christ.
- God is daily transforming us more and more into the image of Christ.
 - The doctrine of sanctification.
- We will continue in our salvation to the end by the power of God.
 - The doctrine of perseverance.
- One day soon, Christ will return for us and resurrect our bodies to reign forever with him.
 - The doctrine of glorification.