

*** AUGUST ***

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE “SAVED”

A common Christian term

Many believers around the world would commonly say “*I am saved*”. Many Christians even would ask others “*Are you saved*”? It has become a common Christian term around the world but what do we mean when we say it? Terms like “*saved*” lose their meaning when people continue to use them without understanding. They simply become religious terms that have no depth or revelation. Generally the term has come to mean that “*I am saved so that I can go to heaven when I die*”. Let us find out what it really means to be *saved*!

“Saved”

The word *saved* is a Greek word “*sozo*” and means: *to save, heal, cure, preserve, keep safe and sound, rescue from danger or destruction, deliver...in primitive cultures it is translated simply, ‘to give new life’ and ‘to cause to have a new heart’* (Word Wealth in **Luke 7:50** in New Spirit Filled Life Bible). It is obviously linked to the word *salvation*, which in Greek is “*soterion*” which is: *an all-inclusive word signifying forgiveness, healing, prosperity, deliverance, safety, rescue, liberation and restoration. Christ’s salvation is total in scope for the total man; spirit, soul and body* (Word Wealth in **Acts 28:28** in New Spirit Filled Life Bible). There is more to this word for us to understand. Being *saved* is a liberation, deliverance, healing and rescue that affects us in every area of our life. It is to be experienced now.

WHAT ARE WE SAVED FROM?

Saved from this perverse generation

It is written in **Acts 2:40** concerning Peter the apostle, “*And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation’*”. What did Peter tell us to be *saved, rescued and liberated* from? This ***perverse generation***. We actually need to be *delivered* from the perverse and crooked nature of the generation that we live in. We need to be *cured* from living in a generation that hates Jesus, hates God and wants to legislate everything that is against who He is. We need to be *rescued from the danger* of being trapped by religious blindness; *delivered* even from Christian religion that blocks the revelation of God in Messiah Jesus coming to us. The Jews that Peter spoke to were part of a “***faithless and perverse generation***” (**Matt.17:17**). They “believed in God” but still needed *salvation*!

Delivered from this present evil age

The apostle Paul talks of something similar, “*our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father*” **Galatians 1:3b-4**. We need deliverance, to be set free from ***this present evil age***. This present evil age is characterised by darkness, ignorance and blindness

to the truth of the Messiah. Paul says this present evil age is known by people *“whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them”* 2 Corinthians 4:4. We need to be *“delivered from the power of darkness”* Colossians 1:13a. We are to be *released* from the tyranny of the darkness of this age so that we are no longer blinded.

Saved from sins

The angel told Joseph that the Son who was conceived by the Holy Spirit in Mary’s womb was to be named *“JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins”* Matthew 1:21. We need to be *rescued* from our sins. The Amplified Bible gives an interpretive meaning of this verse as *“to prevent them from failing and missing the true end and scope of life which is God”*. To be rescued from sins is to be saved from missing everything that God intended for your life. “Sin” is missing and falling short of the glory that God had planned for your life (Rom.3:23). God does not want you to miss what you were created for. In Jesus He has made a way for us to **be** rescued from a life that misses God’s purpose.

WHAT ARE WE SAVED INTO?

Knowing what we are saved from is good but what is the alternative life that Jesus has for us? What are we saved to be a part of?

The new society

If we are saved from a *perverse generation* it is good to know that we are brought into *“a chosen generation”* 1 Peter 2:9. This *chosen generation* is also named *“a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light”*. We are saved to be a part a new and different people group, a new nation, royalty and a praising people, giving God honour and glory.

If we are *delivered from this present evil age* it is good to know we have **been** saved to now experience *“the good word of God and the powers of the age to come”* Hebrews 6:5. We are delivered to inherit and experience **the age to come!**

The new government

We have been *“delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed into the kingdom of the Son of His love”* Colossians 1:13. The *power of darkness* was the authority, control and government we used to live under. We *“once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience”* Ephesians 2:2. We were once under the government of Satan but now we have come under the governing rulership of the *“the Son of His love”*. No longer governed by fear but now governed by love. No longer bound in disobedience but *released* into obedience to the Christ.

The new fellowship

We are *“to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness”* (Eph.5:11) but we are to receive the *“Word of Life”* so that *“truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ”* 1John1:1,3. This word *fellowship* means: *sharing, unity, association, participation, a society, a communion* (Word Wealth Acts 2:42 New Spirit Filled Life Bible). We are saved to enter a unity, association and society with the Father in the Son. We no longer associate with the unfruitful works of darkness. We are no longer a *“friend of the world”* (Js.4:4) but now we are righteous like Abraham who was *“called the friend of God”* (Js.2:23). We now have a new association that we are joined to. We now eat and drink of a different table. We now have a *“communion (fellowship) of the blood of Christ...a communion of the body of Christ”* 1Corinthians 10:16.

Members of Christ

We believe in Jesus and are then *“baptized into Christ Jesus”* Romans 6:3. We were *“baptized into His death...buried with Him...united together in... His resurrection”* Romans 6:3-5. This makes us all *“members of that one body...For by One Spirit you were all baptized into one body”* 1 Corinthians 12:12-13. This means now that your *“bodies are members of Christ”* 1 Corinthians 6:15. We are actually *“members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones”* Ephesians 5:30. We are rescued from a disjointed, chaotic, confusing existence to be joined and placed into the body of Christ. This is the place we were made to occupy. This is what we were created for. We are no longer an isolated individual trying to survive but a true member of Christ’s body able to function and thrive on the life of Jesus manifesting in His Body.

WHAT ARE WE SAVED BY?

We are to be rescued from all these things and saved into these wonderful realities but how does it happen? What saves us?

Grace and Faith

The apostle Paul wrote clearly that *“For by grace you have been saved through faith...it is the gift of God”* Ephesians 2:8. It is the grace of God that rescues us and this grace is accessed through faith, by believing in Jesus. Grace is an act of God. Grace is God’s storehouse of help. Faith is the key to see grace released in our life to rescue us and place us into God’s purposes. Paul also wrote that *“if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved”* Romans 10:9. Salvation in any circumstance involves the key ingredients of: *“believing in your heart”* and *“confessing with your mouth”*. Note well that faith is something that comes from the *heart*. It is not academic. It is trusting. When we vocalize the trust we have in Jesus, salvation, deliverance, healing and restoration comes!

Believing and Baptism

It is good for us to realize again that the issue of *salvation* is not a question of whether you will go to heaven or not; it is an issue of experiencing *deliverance, liberty, rescue and*

healing in the here and now that will last then for all eternity. Jesus said, **“He who believes and is baptised will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” Mark 16:16.** Many ask the question here “do we need to be baptized to go to heaven?” Jesus does not say anything here about heaven but He does tell us that baptism is definitely a part of being *saved*.

Importantly, baptism follows faith. Faith must come first as faith accesses grace. Then, by faith, we are to access the grace released through baptism. What grace is released through baptism? **“That our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin” Romans 6:6.** Baptism, acted upon by faith in Jesus’ death and resurrection, actually frees us, *liberates us*, from slavery to sin! We are freed from slavery, and the propensity to sin, by believing and being baptised into Christ! We are now free to obey God!

I HAVE BEEN SAVED! NOW WHAT...?

Many Christians do not know what to do once they have come to faith in Jesus. Generally we have been told to “get a Bible, pray, join a church and tell someone about your faith”. Once we know we have been rescued from sin and freed from slavery to sin, what are we meant to do?

Follow

Jesus saved us to make us something. When He called His first disciples He said, **“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” Matthew 4:19.** The call of salvation is a call into *following* Jesus. In the act of *following* Him, He will make us into *fishers of men*. We will be able to draw people into the kingdom of God to follow Jesus as well. Those early disciples **“immediately left their nets and followed”** Jesus (Matt.4:20). To *follow* means: *to in the same way with, to accompany*. We are saved to enter an adventurous journey of accompanying Jesus. We are to stick with Him, being on the same road, leading the same lifestyle and doing everything together with Him.

Discipleship

Jesus did not command the apostles to *get people to go to heaven when they die!* Jesus commanded them and us to **“make disciples of all the nations” Matthew 28:19a.** Once we are *saved* we are to become disciples. Disciples are learners, imitators of the Teacher and people who change their life to suit the call of God. Disciples **“abide in My Word...and know the truth, and the truth will make you free” John 8:31-32.** Disciples grow and are taught the Word so they can know the truth by experience and walk in freedom.

Disciples give themselves to **“grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ” Ephesians 4:15.** Disciples want to be like their Teacher. Disciples will be known by the way they manifest Christ’s **“love for one another” (Jn.13:34-35).** Disciples are willing to forsake everything for the sake of Jesus and the gospel (Lk.14:26-33). So now that you have begun to experience salvation, it is time to give yourself as a disciple. It is time to learn how to become like Jesus and grow up to be like Him!

WHAT IS THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF BEING SAVED?

If the ultimate purpose is not going to heaven when I die then what is it?

Predestined as sons

God has a plan! It was and is an eternal plan! In love ***“He predestined you to the adoption [the placement] as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself”*** Ephesians 1:5. We have been ***“predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren”*** Romans 8:29. We have been predestined to become exactly like Jesus. God has planned beforehand that the earth be filled with sons who fully manifest the Son, Jesus. We are saved to fully enter into this placement as mature sons, so that ***“as He is, so are we in this world”*** 1 John 4:17. As sons we have an inheritance to receive in the earth. ***“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”*** Luke 12:32. At the end of the age ***“the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”*** (Matt. 13:43) in the earth, the world!

Saved in this hope

Ultimately as sons we are to also receive the fullness of our salvation, a whole, new, eternal, body! ***“We who have the firstfruits of the Spirit...groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption [the final aspect of our placement as sons], the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope...”*** Romans 8:23-24a. We are saved to fully inherit eternal life, even our bodies changing to become immortal and incorruptible, death having been ***“swallowed up in victory”*** (1 Cor. 15:53-54). Even creation is ***“eagerly waiting for the revealing of the sons of God...because creation itself will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God”*** Romans 8:19,21. This is the hope! Not going to heaven but heaven filling the earth through sons walking as Jesus walked!

Being saved affects the here and now of our life.

Being saved is entering into God’s eternal plan in the here and now.

Being saved is bringing the eternal realm of God into the here and now.

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”

2 Corinthians 6:2.

Enter in to the reality of the salvation that Jesus has accomplished for us.

He is the “great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ! Titus 2:13

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