

SALVATION AND I

Introduction

This booklet is specifically prepared for people who do not know the Lord yet. Its contents are easy to understand and include four topics: “Why is salvation needed?”, “What is salvation?”, “How to receive salvation?”, and “The blessings of salvation”. We sincerely hope this booklet not only helps people to be saved and also serves as a useful tool for Christians when sharing God’s love with others.

by

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I. WHY IS SALVATION NEEDED?

A. The existence of God, the Creator of heavens and earth

"... because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse." Roman 1:19-20

We all know there is a God who created us and the entire universe. Even though we cannot see Him with our physical eyes, we can tell that He exists through the things He created. For example, when we see a chair, we immediately assume it was built by a certain carpenter. When we touch a car, we can safely assume that someone has designed it and manufactured it. Likewise, when we see the wonder of creation and the incredible laws governing the order of the universe, we know for sure that a Creator God exists.

B. God's eternal purpose is creating man

"God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea And over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'" Genesis 1:26

"Everyone who is called by My name, And Whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made." Isaiah 43:7

The human being is the most honorable of all God's creations. Human beings are God's masterpiece and were created for His glory. The Bible says that God created man and woman according to His own image and likeness, for He had the glorious purpose that they should be just like Him. God wanted them to be like Him in his own glory, holiness, righteousness and loving-kindness. God wanted to have fellowship with men, to share His abundance with men, and eventually reign with them in all things.

C. The Sin and Fall of Man

1. Men have sinned and come short of the glory of God

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

Even though God's original purpose for man was glorious, men sinned against Him and came short of His glory; therefore, they fell from God's high purpose. Sin was brought into the world through Adam, our ancestor. When Adam sinned, not only did he represent the entire human race, but what he did also included the entire human race. As a result of his sin, sin was able to enter into human life and produce its manifestation, such as greed, jealousy, wickedness and hatred. Man's sinful deeds only further prove

the existence of sinfulness within. Both sinful lives and sinful deeds have brought disaster into men's lives.

2. Sin brings forth death and judgment

"...For the wage of sin is death..." Romans 6:23

"And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment..." Hebrew 9:27

Because of our sins, death has power over us. Regardless of our sex or social status, no one can be exempted from the law of sin resulting in death. Those who are still alive are nothing but a broken branch. Outwardly, we are alive, yet in reality we have death in our hearts. The wages of sin are not only death, but also God's righteous judgment. The result of God's judgment will be eternal death, that is, death for the second time, to suffer forever in the lake of fire.

D. Man Needs Salvation, and God had to Accomplish Salvation for Him

On one hand, God is righteous, so He judges us. On the other hand, God is also loving and kind, so He has prepared salvation for us. When He saw how we sinners suffered for our sins, He was determined to save us. He not only wanted to save us from the judgment and punishment due to sin, but He also desired to bring us back to our original glorious purpose. Therefore, as much as man need salvation, so God will accomplish the salvation.

II. WHAT IS SALVATION?

A. God loves us and gave us His only begotten Son

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

God wants to bring men back to His original glorious plan. However, when trying to do so, He cannot act against His holiness. Therefore, He sent his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus, to die for us to fully satisfy the requirements of His righteousness. "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"(I John 4:10). God completed redemption for us so that we could obtain salvation. In order to do so, He even gave us His only begotten Son. Therefore, we now know the greatness and depth of God's love for us. We also realize how precious His salvation is.

B. The redemption of Christ - The completion of salvation

1. The death of Christ

a. His death abolished our sinful deeds.

"He himself bore our sins in His body on the cross..."

1 Peter 2:24

In order for the Son of God to take our place to receive the punishment of sin, he had to become a man, for only a man can take the place of another man. This "God-become-man" became our marvelous Savior. He was punished for our sins and crushed for our iniquities. The One who did not sin took the blame for our sins. The righteous one took the place of the unrighteous. He received judgment from God so that our sins before God could be done away with.

b. His death took care of our sinful nature.

"...our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, we should no longer be slaves to sin..."

Romans 6:6

The death of Christ not only took care of the problem of our sin, but also the old self that sinned. Not only have our sins been forgiven, but we sinners also were crucified with Christ. The death of Christ is all inclusive. His crucifixion encompassed us in His death, which released us from the bondage of sin. Therefore, we are no longer under the bondage of sin, but saved and released.

c. His death released a holy life

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." John 12:24

To the Lord, the cross is not a bondage but a release. Through His death on the cross, the life of the Lord Jesus was released and received by His believers. He was just like a grain of wheat that fell to the earth and died. We are His fruit sharing the same life, which is the eternal life of Jesus Christ.

2. The Resurrection of Christ - He was resurrected so that we might be justified.

"He was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification."

Romans 4:25

The Lord Jesus not only died for us, but also was raised for us. Sin resulted in death. The death of the Lord not only solved the problem of sin, but also overcame death. He died for our sin, was buried, and raised from the dead on the third day. The resurrection of the Lord proved that the death He suffered for us had fully satisfied the requirement of God's righteousness. The resurrection of the Lord is also the proof that He obtained God's approval. God can justify us because His son had taken the blame for our sins. Because of Jesus' resurrection, we now have the assurance of justification and the forgiveness of sins.

C. Christ who first suffered and is now glorified is our salvation

"As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow." I Peter 10-11

The way of the Lord is to suffer first and to be glorified later. He is glorified in order to become the leader of our salvation, leading many sons into glory. Just as the hymn says: "Living, He loved me; dying, He saved me; Buried, He carried my sins far away; Rising, He justified freely forever; One day He's coming - O, glorious day!"

III. HOW TO RECEIVE SALVATION?

A. Repent - Turn to the Lord

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

"They should repent and turn to God." Acts 26:20

When Jesus started His ministry in Galilee, the first thing He proclaimed to sinners was that they must repent. A man has to repent before receiving salvation. To "repent" is not to change to being better or perfect, but to "turn around toward God". It means to turn from all things to God. Before God gives us "the Grace of forgiveness of sins", He must first give us a heart of repentance so that we may see our true wicked condition in the light of the Holy Spirit. Then we will be willing to confess our sinfulness and turn to God. Whenever our heart turns to God, a way is available by which the Lord can enter into us and save us.

B. Believe - Receive

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, [even] to those who believe in His name." John 1:12

To believe is not just to know or to agree with. To believe is to receive and accept Jesus Christ into our hearts as our Savior, so that He can give us the right to become children of God.

1. Believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

"And Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'" Matthew 16:16

"but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." John 20:31

Jesus is the Son of God. He is the only begotten Son in the Father's bosom, and also His beloved Son. He is the Christ, the anointed one of God, which speaks of His ministry. He is also the greatest prophet, who not only performs acts greater than any earlier prophet, but who also was the ultimate object of all the prophecies. He was the greatest priest, not by the blood of animals, but by His very own blood, who entered through the veil and completed salvation once for all. He is also the greatest King, who walked on the lowliest way into glory, and now is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We believe in this Son of man, Jesus, who is the Son of God and the Christ. He came to earth to manifest God in the flesh and to complete God's eternal purpose. We receive salvation by believing Jesus to be the Christ, and we obtain eternal life by believing Jesus to be the Son of God.

2. Believe that God raised Him from the dead

"that if you confess with your mouth Jesus [as] Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;" Romans 10:9

Christ died for our sin, was buried, was raised from the dead on the third day, and was declared the Son of God with power. The Lord Jesus shed His blood for us, died for our sins, and His resurrection is the proof of our justification. We can subjectively receive all the works He did on the cross through believing in His resurrection. Not only do we obtain His forgiveness, but also eternal life from God.

C. Confess - Ask

"for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." Romans 10:10

"WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."
Romans 10:13

We are justified by believing in the Lord and what He has done for us. Once we believe in the Lord, we have to confess that He is the Lord. Believing in Him is done in our heart, but confessing is done by our mouth. To God, once we believe in the Lord, we are saved. However, to men, we must confess with our mouth to authenticate that our belief is true.

D. Witness - Be Baptized

"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned." Mark 16:16

We are saved through our believing in Him, not by any deed on our part. Nevertheless, after we are saved, we should bear witness in public. Through baptism, we witness that we have received salvation, and we declare that we have died, been buried, and have risen with Christ. From now on, we wear Christ and have newness of life in all our actions so that God can be glorified.

IV. THE BLESSINGS OF SALVATION

A. The Forgiveness of Sins

"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace," Ephesians 1:7

Salvation includes many blessings. First of all, it is the forgiveness of sins, for our sins must be forgiven before we can receive any other blessings. "Without shedding of blood, there is not forgiveness"(Hew 9:22). God's forgiveness is based on the blood shed by Jesus. Jesus paid the great price by giving His life - blood in order to redeem us. When God sees the blood of His son, He no longer remembers our sins, for the blood has cleansed us. What an abundant grace and blessing!

B. Reconciliation with God

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

Men sinned and were separated from God. Our sinful nature has driven us to become opponents of God. After we believing what the Lord has done, not only we are forgiven and justified, but also reconciled with God. The Lord's redemption has solved all the problems between God and us. All the obstacles are taken away, we can turn to God and have peace in our relationship with Him. God can accept us and take delight in us.

C. Having the Eternal Life

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

Eternal life is the life of God. This was the life of our Lord Jesus and was manifested through His life on earth. God wants to give this eternal life as a gift to us through Christ Jesus. We need not pay any price, just receive it through faith. All who believe in Him will have eternal life.

D. Freedom and Rest

"If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." John 8:36

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

As sinners, we were under all sorts of bondage until the Lord came to save us. Now we experience great relief and freedom. We are no longer slaves of sin because we have a new master. Sin no longer controls us, for the life of Jesus now reigns in our hearts. People in this world often pursue freedom, but end up being bound by sin. They desire rest, but have sorrow and sighs instead. True peace is obtained only through Jesus. We are not talking about outward rest, but an inward stability, joy, and satisfaction.

E. Become God's Offspring - Heirs to God's Inheritance

"and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with [Him] in order that we may also be glorified with [Him.]" Romans 8:17

The salvation by Christ not only (1) forgives our sins, (2) makes peace with God, (3) confers eternal life, and (4) provides freedom and rest, but also enables us to become children of God. God's grace is truly great. Through Christ, He causes us to become His children and heirs, that is, co-heirs with Christ His Son. Heirs are those entitled to an inheritance, to receive God's abundant blessings. In the same way Christ is God's heir, we also are His heirs. He went through the humiliating way of the cross and ascended into His throne. We also have to go through the same things. He entered into glory through sufferings, likewise, we will suffer with Him and enter into glory with Him.