

## Theology

Our Saviour Evangelical Free Church

### The Doctrine of Redemption (part 2) & The Doctrine of the Church

Key Concepts:

- ➔ The Ordo Salutis (Order of Salvation)
- ➔ Death and the Intermediate State
- ➔ Glorification
- ➔ The Nature of the Church

Pages covered in *Bible Doctrine* by Wayne Grudem: 307-375

#### The Ordo Salutis

1. Election (God's sovereign choice of people to be saved)
2. The gospel call (the proclaimed message of the gospel)
3. Regeneration (being born again)
4. Conversion (believing in faith and repenting of sin)
5. Justification (right legal standing before God)
6. Adoption (being granted membership in God's family)
7. Sanctification (being transformed into the image of Jesus Christ)
8. Perseverance (remaining a Christian)
9. Death (going to be with the Lord)
10. Glorification (receiving a resurrection body)

#### Justification

Acts 15:11; Romans 8:30; Gal. 3:11

Definition: 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.

The difference between a surgeon and a judge

A surgeon goes into a person and removes what is harmful. This is what happens in regeneration. A judge, on the other hand, does not do the work, he simply declares someone guilty or not-guilty. In regeneration and justification, God is both a surgeon and a judge.

What does it mean that God imputes Christ's righteousness to us? (Romans 4:6)

This means that Christ's righteousness becomes ours. That is, God views the righteousness of Jesus as belonging to us. Therefore, when He looks upon those who are in Christ, He sees them as spotless and worthy.

**How are we justified? It is entirely a gift of grace through faith!**

## Adoption

Galatians 4:5

Definition: Adoption is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family.

### **Adoption is Distinct From Justification**

*But it is possible that God could have creatures who are spiritually alive and yet are not members of his family and do not share the special privileges of family members – angels, for example, apparently fall into that category...it is important to recognize this because it helps us to recognize how great are our privileges in adoption.*

– Grudem, Systematic Theology, page 739

The privileges of adoption:

- We are able to relate with God
- We are given the gift of the Holy Spirit
- God disciplines us as children (this is a good thing!)
- We are shown how to relate to one another

## Sanctification

Phil. 2:12; 1 Thes. 5:23

Definition: 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.

3 Stages of Sanctification:

1. It has a definite beginning
2. Sanctification is on-going and increases throughout our life
3. Sanctification will be completed
  - a. At death for our souls
  - b. At the Second Coming for our bodies

How does sanctification work? Who is involved? Read Philippians 2:12

Both God and people have a role in sanctification. It is primarily an act of God. See 1 Thes. 5:23. First, Christ earned our sanctification for us. Secondly, it is the HS who works within us to produce holiness. We play a passive role in sanctification when we trust God, worship Him, and follow Him. We also play an active role in sanctification. Romans 8:13. We are part of putting to death the flesh and deeds of the body. We can strive for holiness, etc.

## Perseverance

Rom. 8:35-39; Eph. 1:13-14; Phil. 1:6

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.

How can a believer have genuine assurance?

1. A present trust in Christ for salvation
2. Evidence of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit
3. A long-term pattern of Christian growth

What about those who have made professions of faith in the past, possibly walking with the Lord for a period of time, but have "fallen away" or renounced the faith? (A pastoral response): Unfortunately, this is a very common problem. Many people have walked an aisle, prayed a prayer, raised their hand, or were even baptized, however the rest of their life does not seem to reflect the Bible's testimony of a growing Christian. Pastorally, I believe we can say two things. First, there is hope that their one-time conversion was genuine and that they will realize the folly of their ways and repent (Phil. 1:6). However, perhaps the most loving thing to do is question their salvation, pray for them, and share the Gospel evangelistically with them. This is loving because it is what is best and necessary for them. If a person does not treat a person who bears no evidence of a true conversion as though they are a Christian and assumes the work of the Gospel in their life, it may make them more comfortable in the short-run, but could have disastrous consequences at the end of their life.

## Death

Why is death a part of life and how should we view it?

- For Christians, death is not a punishment
- Death is the outcome of living in a fallen world
- God uses death to complete our sanctification
- In our own death we are united with Christ
- Death is another, significant area to trust God in

What happens when a Christian dies?

Immediately after their death Christians will go directly to Heaven (Luke 23:43). However, for an intermediate time, believers will exist in Heaven without a resurrected body (2 Cor. 5:6-9). Because disembodied existence is not the ultimate intention of God, we will continue to await our resurrected bodies (Rom. 8:23). At the return of Christ, the bodies of believers will be raised from the dead and reunited with their souls (Job 19:25-26; Dan. 12:2; 1 Cor. 15:12-58; 1 Thes. 4:14, 16). Eternal life, complete with the uniting of our body and soul, in the new heaven and new earth is the ultimate purpose and glory of God (Rev. 21:3).

## Glorification

Daniel 12:2; Romans 8:29-30

Abbreviated Definition: Every Christian being given a resurrected body and a perfectly sanctified soul.

What will our resurrected bodies be like?

They will not wear out like our current bodies. Scripture leads us to believe it will be a physical body that can be most accurately compared to Christ's resurrection body. See 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:49; Rom. 8:29.

The entire creation will be renewed as well.

## **The Doctrine of the Church**

Definition: The church is the community of all true believers for all time.

Read Matthew 16:18 and Ephesians 4:1-16

Attributes of the Church:

1. It contains all Christians
2. It is invisible, yet visible
3. It is local and universal
4. Jesus Christ is its head
5. It is the new Israel

Purposes of the Church:

1. Worship
2. Discipleship
3. Evangelism and Missions

## **The Local Church**

Although the Church is a universal body that crosses time, the Bible also commands Christians to gather together in local, identifiable assemblies (Acts 2:42-27)

## **Worship: The Definition and Anthem of the Church**

### What is Biblical Worship?

A brief answer from the Westminster Catechism:

What is the chief end of man?

To glorify God and enjoy Him forever!

Biblically, we may be able to make a subtle change:

The chief end of man is to glorify God by enjoying Him forever!

Commenting on this change, John Piper says, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." (Piper, *Desiring God*)

You make known to me the path of life;  
in your presence there is fullness of joy;  
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. -Psalm 16:11

## **Spiritual Gifts**

The main lists: 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 28; Romans 12:6-8, 13; Ephesians 4:11

Have spiritual gifts ceased? The debate over 1 Corinthians 13:8-13.

2 Main Questions to Ask of Spiritual Gifts:

1. Does this bring glory to God?
2. Does this build-up the Church?

## Discussion & Application Questions

Define justification and explain why it is necessary in addition to the other steps in the order of salvation. Why must God justify us? Imagine a courtroom scene: you are on trial for a crime you know you've committed. The evidence is substantial and the prosecution's case is air-tight. However, another man stands when the judge is ready to pronounce his sentence and condemns the other man, while exonerating you. How would you feel? In this analogy, you are you and Christ is that other man. How is your heart moved to worship?

How is God calling you to grow in sanctification? In what areas do you lack holiness and what things can you do to pursue Christ? How and when will you begin to do these things?

Are you sure of your salvation? From where does your assurance come? If you are not sure of your salvation, how may the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints change your mind in one way or another? Perhaps you will realize you have never really known Christ and turn to Him. Or, perhaps, you will recognize that He is enough and trust Him fully, leaving any merit of your own behind.

Do you fear death? Why or why not? How does the Biblical and theological understanding of death presented in this class affect your understanding and feelings toward it? How do you see your own death and the death of others? Will you think differently about it in any way? If so, in what way(s)?

Review the purposes of the Church. While they are all important, the primary purpose/mission of the Church is to worship God and bring Him glory. Do you think every Christian has that as their highest priority? What do you think the Church and the world would be like if every Church and every Christian was striving to bring God glory all the time?

What is/are your spiritual gift(s)? How have you identified them? Is your exercise and application of your gifts in line with the two questions asked above? How can you more fully exercise your spiritual gifts?

**READING FOR NEXT SESSION: 427-436, 453-457, 465-468**