

Title: **SIX BIBLE DESCRIPTIONS OF SALVATION**

Text: *Ephesians 2:8-9*

Date: Sunday Morning — December 16, 2007
 Laird ST Baptist Church — New Caney, TX

Introduction:

The title of my message is **SIX BIBLE DESCRIPTIONS OF SALVATION**. We all want to be saved. We all want salvation. But if you asked a dozen men to describe salvation, if you asked them what salvation is and where it is to be found, you would get a dozen or more answers.

- Some say, “Salvation is in the church!”
- Some say, “Salvation is in Baptism!”
- Some say, “Salvation is in the Lord’s Supper!”
- Some say, “Salvation is found in meditation and prayer!”
- Some say, “Salvation is in Religious Works!”
- Some say, “Salvation is in Moral Decency!”
- Some say, “Salvation is in Love and Kindness!”
- Some say, “Salvation is in Doctrine!” — Knowledge.
- Some say, “Salvation is in a Decision!”
- Some say, “Salvation is in Surrender!” — Brokenness.
- Some say, “Salvation is in an Experience!”
- Some say, “Salvation is Grace Plus... or Christ Plus...”

With all the confusion and babel there is in this world, I think it might be wise for us to **lay aside the church creeds, confessions and catechisms**, — **all of them!** Lay aside the theology books, the religious papers, and even the opinions of great men of the past. Let’s try to forget what Calvinism says salvation is and what Arminianism says salvation is, and **try to find out what God says salvation is**. Can you, will you do that? Will you lay aside everything you have ever heard, or thought about salvation, and look with me into the Word of God to see what God says about it? Let’s begin at Ephesians 2:8-9. (Read these two verses with me).

(Ephesians 2:8-9) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast."

First, **we must be agreed upon what we are talking about** when we are talking about salvation. Salvation is the deliverance of men and women from sin, from its curse, its dominion, and its consequences, ultimately even from its being, and their complete restoration to God and holiness in the

eternal glory of heaven. That is what I am talking about when I am talking about salvation.

- Not an Experience but an Emancipation!
- Not a Decision but a Deliverance!
- Not a Reformation but a Restoration!

Second, I want you to see that **wherever salvation is spoken of in the Word of God four things are always asserted emphatically about it.**

1. Salvation is by grace alone!
2. Salvation is through faith alone!
3. Salvation is In Christ alone!
4. This salvation, by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone is accomplished entirely without works on the part of the one saved.

Be sure you hear me right – My relationship with the eternal God does in great measure determine what I do; but what I do does not in any measure determine my relationship with God. God's grace has much to do with my works; but my works, good or bad, have nothing to do with God's grace. Now let's see if this is or is not the doctrine of Holy Scripture (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:28; 4:3-5, 16; 9:15-16; 11:6; Galatians 2:16; 5:2, 4; 2 Timothy 2:9-10).

(Romans 3:28) "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

(Romans 4:3-5) "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. (4) Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. (5) But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

(Romans 4:16) "Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,"

(Romans 9:15-16) "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

(Romans 11:6) "And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

(Galatians 2:16) "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

(Galatians 5:2) "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."

(Galatians 5:4) "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

(Ephesians 2:8-9) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast."

(2 Timothy 2:9-10) "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. (10) Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

Proposition: This then is clearly the doctrine of Holy Scripture. — Salvation is the work of God alone, a gracious work of God wrought for and in sinners, without their aid or assistance, through the mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the power of God the Holy Spirit.

Divisions: Now, I want us to look at six passages of Holy Scripture. Here are **SIX BIBLE DESCRIPTIONS OF SALVATION**. It is not my purpose in this message to expound these verses in their context. I simply want to pick from them six descriptions of salvation.

1. "Thy Salvation" (Gen. 49:18).
2. "Eternal Salvation" (Heb. 5:9).
3. "Common Salvation" (Jude 3).
4. "Your Own Salvation" (Phil. 2:12).

5. "So Great Salvation" (Heb. 2:3).
6. "Everlasting Salvation" (Isa. 45:17).

"THY SALVATION"

The very first time the word "*salvation*" is used in the Bible, it is used by Jacob in the prophetic words given to his sons, regarding the twelve tribes of Israel in Genesis 49:18. There Jacob says, "*I have waited for thy Salvation, O LORD.*"

If we had nothing else to go on but the law of first mention, this is enough to teach us that wherever the Bible talks about salvation it is talking about something that is the peculiar property and prerogative of God alone. — "*Salvation is of the Lord!*" And "*salvation is the Lord's!*" (Exodus 12:13; 2 Chronicles 20:15, 17; Isaiah 41:10, 11, 13, 14)

(Exodus 12:13) "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt."

(2 Chronicles 20:15) "And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle *is* not yours, but God's."

(2 Chronicles 20:17) "Ye shall not *need* to fight in this *battle*: set yourselves, stand ye *still*, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD *will be* with you."

(Isaiah 41:10-11) "Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. (11) Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish."

(Isaiah 41:13-14) "For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. (14) Fear not, thou

worm Jacob, *and* ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel."

Illustration: *Jonah in the Whale's Belly.*

Salvation is **God's work** alone, **God's possession** alone, and **God's prerogative** alone. He gives it to whom he will (Romans 9:16; John 1:11-13).

(John 1:11-13) "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (12) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: (13) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

(Romans 9:16) "So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

This is the universal message of Holy Scripture – "*Salvation is of the Lord!*"

- He planned it! God the Father did!
- He purchased it! God the Son did!
- He performed it! God the Spirit did!
- He preserves it!
- He perfects it!
- He shall have the praise of it!

When you think or talk about God's salvation, remember these two words – "**Thy Salvation!**" Salvation is the Lord's!

"ETERNAL SALVATION"

Second, in Hebrews 5:9 we read that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Author of "eternal salvation" – "*Being made perfect, he became the Author of Eternal Salvation unto all them that believe.*"

Now listen carefully. Though it was purchased at Calvary by the blood of Christ, though it is wrought in the hearts of chosen sinners by God the Holy Spirit at God's appointed time of love in regeneration, salvation is an eternal work of God. It was devised and secured, predestinated and

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purposed, and in the mind and purpose of God, it was performed in the covenant of grace before the world began. Read your Bible and you will see that this is so. I am not talking to you about what Calvinism says, or even what logic and reason necessitate. I am talking to you about what God says.

- Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8).
- We were chosen and predestinated unto salvation before the world began (Eph. 1:4-6).
- We were redeemed, justified, called, and glorified from eternity (Rom. 8:28-30).

(Romans 8:28-30) "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. (29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

We were accepted in the Beloved before we were ruined in Adam (Eph. 1:6).

We were blessed of God with all the blessings of salvation and grace in Christ before ever the worlds were made (Eph. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:8-10).

(2 Timothy 1:8-10) "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; (9) Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:"

Our salvation in time is neither more nor less than the outworking of "*eternal salvation!*"

"THE COMMON SALVATION"

Thirdly, Jude writes to us of "*the common salvation.*" (Read Jude 1-3.)

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(Jude 1:1-3) "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called: (2) Mercy unto you, and peace and love, be multiplied. (3) Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Certainly, Jude does not mean for us to think that God's salvation is common in the sense that it is ordinary or cheap. Not on your life! But he does mean for us to understand that salvation is the same wherever it is found. It is the same in the experience of all who are saved. Every true child of God has experienced the same salvation. **All are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.**

We do not all experience grace the same way. Paul's experience was not the same as Lydia's. Both experienced the same grace, but not the same way.

Illustration: *The Two Blind Men* (Mk. 8:22-25 cf Mk. 10:51-52).

The experience of grace is not always the same. Our needs are the same, the grace is the same, and the results are the same; but the experience is not the same. **Yet, all who are saved have a common salvation.**

- A Common Savior!
- A Common Family!
- A Common Hope!
- A Common Blessedness!
- A Common Inheritance!

"YOUR OWN SALVATION"

Fourth, the Apostle Paul calls salvation, "*your own salvation*" (Phil. 2:12).

(Philippians 2:12) "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

I like that! If you are saved, the salvation you have is "*your own salvation.*" God devised it for you. Christ purchased it for you. The Holy Spirit brought

it to you and wrought it in you. It is your possession forever! If you trust the Lord Jesus Christ, all that is included in that word “*salvation*” belongs to you by the grace of God!

Here is an admonition – “*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*” That does not mean, “work that you might be saved.” **It means** “work outwardly the salvation that God has wrought inwardly” (Philippians 2:1-5).

(Philippians 2:1-5) "If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, (2) Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. (3) *Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. (4) Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. (5) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"

- “*Adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.*”
- “*Let your light so shine before men.*”
- “*Be careful to maintain good works.*”

Here is an assurance – “*For it is God which worketh in you both to will (to desire) and to do of his good pleasure*” (1 Thess 5:25). If you are saved, your salvation is “*your own salvation!*”

“SO GREAT SALVATION”

Fifth, Hebrews 2:3 describes salvation in these words: — “**So Great Salvation!**” – “*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed with us by them that heard him?*” That is a good description of salvation – “**So Great Salvation!**”

- It comes from a great God!
- It is for great sinners!
- It comes to us through the merits of a great Savior.
- It flows to us from a great reservoir of great grace – The heart of God! — The love of God!

“Could we with ink the oceans fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a guile,
And every man a scribe by trade –
To write the love of God above
Would drain the oceans dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky!”

- It secures for us a great inheritance in Heaven!

What is God’s description of salvation? It is...

1. “*Thy Salvation!*”
2. “*Eternal Salvation!*”
3. “*The Common Salvation!*”
4. “*Your Own Salvation!*”
5. “*So Great Salvation!*”

“AN EVERLASTING SALVATION”

And, sixth, the prophet Isaiah calls it “**an everlasting salvation**” – “*Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end*” (Isa. 45:17). — Salvation is eternal both ways. It is from everlasting to everlasting. If salvation is God’s work, it is an everlasting work (Eccles. 3:14). Sinners saved by grace shall never perish. They are beyond the reach of condemnation, or even danger!

- God’s love is an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3).
- His election is an everlasting election (Mal. 3:6).
- His grace is everlasting grace (Rom. 11:29).
- Christ’s redemption is an everlasting redemption (Heb. 9:12).
- The Spirit’s seal is and everlasting seal (Eph. 1:14).

Conclusion: “*Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.*” Amen!

Illustration: Rowland Hill’s Dream

Amen.