

## Systematic Theology, Lesson 23: Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation, Part 1

### 1. Introduction

- a. The word soteriology comes from the Greek word *soteria* (σωτηρία) which means salvation.
- b. Moving from Christology to Soteriology is a natural progression because we move from the objective \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation to the subjective \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation to our lives.
- c. When we use the word “salvation” we are using a word that encompasses many other words, like election, regeneration, conversion, faith, repentance, and so on.

### 2. *Ordo Solutis*: The Order of Salvation

- a. Since God is a God of order, the *ordo solutis* is an attempt to organize various aspects of the doctrine of salvation.
- b. Scripture hints at an *ordo solutis*:
  - i. **John 1:12**: 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.
  - ii. **Rom 5:1**: Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - iii. **Rom 8:30**: and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.
    1. First, we are predestined.
    2. Second, we are called.
    3. Third, we are justified.
    4. Fourth, we are glorified.
- c. The *ordo solutis* is not strictly a temporal sequence but a logical sequence. However, to a degree, we can determine temporal sequence to the *ordo solutis*.

d. The *ordo solutis*:

i. Before life (eternity past):

1. Election
2. Reprobation

ii. During life (one-time event):

1. Effectual calling
2. Regeneration
3. Repentance
4. Faith
5. Justification
6. Adoption

iii. During life (on-going):

1. Sanctification
2. Perseverance

iv. After life (future):

1. Death
2. Glorification

3. Union with Christ

- a. Union with Christ is the \_\_\_\_\_ organizing theme of salvation. “Union with Christ is really the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation. . . .”<sup>1</sup> Thus, all aspects of our salvation, from eternity past to eternity future, are done in union with Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1955), 161.

## i. Election

1. **Eph 1:4**: just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.
2. **2 Tim 1:9**: who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.

## ii. Calling and Regeneration

1. **1 Cor 7:22**: For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.
2. **Eph 2:4-5**: But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).
3. **Eph 2:10**: For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

## iii. Repentance and Faith

1. **Gal 2:20**: I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
2. **Eph 3:16-17**: that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; .  
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## iv. Justification and Adoption

1. **2 Cor 5:21**: He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
2. **Phil 3:8-9**: More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so

that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith.

3. **Rom 8:15-17:** For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.
4. **Eph 1:5:** He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

#### v. Sanctification

1. **John 15:4-5:** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.
2. **1 Cor 1:30:** But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.
3. **2 Cor 5:17:** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

#### vi. Perseverance

1. **John 10:27-28:** My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.
2. **Rom 8:38-39:** For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### vii. Death

1. **1 Thess 4:16:** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
2. **Rev 14:13:** And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

viii. Glorification

1. **Rom 8:17:** and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with Him.
2. **Col 3:4:** When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

ix. All aspects of our salvation are done in union with Christ. Thus, we should not see salvation as a \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e., election, regeneration, faith, etc.), but we should see salvation as a \_\_\_\_\_.

b. The meaning of union with Christ: union with Christ is the central organizing theme to describe a believer's relationship with Christ. The Scriptures speak of union with Christ in main two ways:

i. We are in Christ.

1. **1 Cor 15:22:** For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.
2. **2 Cor 12:2:** I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven.
3. **Gal 3:28:** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

ii. Christ is in us.

1. **Rom 8:10:** If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

2. **2 Cor 13:5**: Test yourselves *to see* if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?
  3. **Col 1:27**: to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
- iii. We are in Christ and Christ is in us.
1. **John 6:56**: He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.
  2. **John 15:4a**: Abide in Me, and I in you.
  3. **1 John 4:13**: By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.
- c. The significance of union with Christ:
- i. Because of union with Christ, Christ's death and resurrection is \_\_\_\_\_.
    1. **Rom 6:4**: Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.
    2. **Col 2:12**: having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.
  - ii. Because of union with Christ, we are united together in one Body.
    1. **Rom 12:5**: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
    2. **Gal 3:28**: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- iii. Because of union with Christ, we have \_\_\_\_\_ with the Triune God.<sup>2</sup>
1. **1 Cor 1:9:** God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
  2. **1 John 1:3:** what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.
- iv. Because of union with Christ, our fundamental identity is that of a Christian.
1. **Col 3:1a, 4a:** Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ . . . who is our life, . . .
  2. **Gal 2:20:** I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- v. Because of union with Christ, Christ's spiritual blessings are ours.
1. **Eph 1:3:** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.
  2. "[W]e must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value for us. . . . [A]ll that he [Christ] possesses is nothing to us until we grow into one body with him."<sup>3</sup>
- vi. Summary: In reality, the whole Christian life can be summed up with this: union with Christ. Christianity is Christ. Christian life (or the personal experience of Christianity) is union with Christ.

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<sup>2</sup> For more on union, communion, and fellowship with the Triune God and other Christians, see: "Dan Burrus, "Biblical Fellowship, Part Three: Fellowship with the Son," message available at GCBC sermonaudio.com web-page.

<sup>3</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. by John T. McNeill (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960, 2006), 3.1.1.