

Systematic Theology, Lesson 26: Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation, Part 4

1. Review

- a. The word “salvation” is a broad word encompassing many other words (e.g., election, regeneration, conversion, etc.). These other words can be put into an order.
- b. *Ordo Solutis*: order of salvation
 - i. Election
 - ii. Calling
 - iii. Regeneration
 - iv. Repentance
 - v. Faith
 - vi. Justification
 - vii. Adoption
 - viii. Sanctification
 - ix. Perseverance
 - x. Glorification
- c. Union with Christ
 - i. Union with Christ is the central organizing theme of salvation.
 - ii. All of salvation, from eternity past to eternity future, is done in union with Christ.
 - iii. Salvation is not fundamentally a process but a Person.

2. Repentance

- a. Repentance involves three elements:

- i. _____ (mind): Understanding and acknowledgement of sin, which leads to confession.
1. **Luke 15:17:** But when he came to his senses, . . .
 2. **1 John 1:9:** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 3. But knowledge (the intellectual element) alone is not enough for repentance. Mere knowledge of sin might fear punishment, but involve no hatred or turning away from sin. Repentance must also involve . . .
- ii. Sorrow (emotions): Intellectual and emotional sorrow and hatred for sin.
1. **2 Cor 7:9-11:** I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to *the point of* repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to *the will of* God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter.
 2. But sorrow (the emotional element) alone is not enough for repentance. Judas “felt remorse” that he betrayed Jesus, but did not truly repent (**Matt 27:3; cf. Luke 18:23; Heb 12:17**). Repentance must also involve . . .
- iii. Forsaking (will): Decision to turn from sin to obey the Scriptures.
1. **Ps 51:10:** Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
 2. **Acts 26:17-18:** rescuing you from the *Jewish* people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
 3. **Matt 16:24:** Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.”

iv. Note: These three elements are not three steps in repentance; all three must be present for biblical repentance to take place.

b. Repentance is God-ward not man-ward or sin-ward. In other words, the ultimate _____ for repentance is a recognition that all your sin is against a holy God, for all sin is ultimately against God.¹ **Ps 51:4:** Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

3. Faith

a. Saving faith involves three elements:

i. Knowledge (mind): Knowledge and understanding of the facts of the gospel.

1. **Rom 10:14:** How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

2. **1 John 4:2-3:** By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

3. But knowledge (the intellectual element) alone is not enough for saving faith. **Rom 1:32** speaks of those who know the “ordinance of God,” i.e., they have knowledge and understanding of the facts, but do not practice these facts and thus do not have saving faith. Saving faith must also involve . . .

ii. Agreement (emotions): Agreeing both in mind and heart that the facts of the gospel are true.

1. **Acts 26:27-28:** “King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you do.” Agrippa *replied* to Paul, “In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.”

¹ For more on all sin as ultimately against God, see; Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 17: Anthropology, Part 2,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

2. **Jam 2:19:** You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.
 3. But agreement (the emotional element) alone is not enough for saving faith. Saving faith must also include . . .
- iii. Trust (will): Trust in Jesus Christ personally for forgiveness of sin and eternal life.
1. **John 3:16:** For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
 2. **1 Tim 1:16:** Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.
- iv. Note:
1. These three elements are not three steps in saving faith; all three must be present for saving faith to be present.
 2. We speak of _____ faith because the Scriptures speak of faith that is not necessarily saving: temporary faith (**Matt 13:20-21; John 8:30-32, 59**), dead faith (**Jam 2:14-16**), miracle faith (**Matt 8:10-13; 17:20; Acts 14:9**).
- b. Saving faith has as its sole object Jesus Christ. Someone can have knowledge, agreement, and trust, but the wrong object of faith (e.g., faith in faith, faith in a prayer, faith in baptism, etc.)

4. Conversion

- a. Conversion defined: "Conversion is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we sincerely repent of sins and place our trust in Christ for salvation."²
 - i. Conversion simply means "turning": turning *from* sin *to* Christ. Turning *from* sin is repentance; turning *to* Christ is faith. Conversion, therefore, is one act.
 1. **Isa 55:7:** Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have

² Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 709.

compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

2. **Acts 20:21:** solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - ii. Repentance logical precedes faith, but in terms of timing repentance and faith is one event.
- b. Conversion (i.e., repentance and faith) is both a divine and human activity. Conversion is a _____ . We are active in conversion; whereas we are passive in effectual calling and regeneration.
- i. Original sin has made us totally unable to repent and believe apart from the work of God. Thus, repentance and faith are gifts of God (divine activity).
 1. **Acts 11:38:** When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.”
 2. **2 Tim 2:24-26:** The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth.
 3. **Eph 2:8-9:** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.
 4. **Phil 1:29:** For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.
 - ii. Repentance and faith are gifts that we must exercise (human activity).
 1. **Matt 4:17:** From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
 2. **Rom 1:5:** through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name’s sake.

- c. Conversion (i.e., repentance and faith) are both _____ and _____ for salvation.
- i. Some evangelicals say that if unconditional election is true,³ man does not need to repent or believe. But the Bible teaches that it is necessary to repent and believe in order to be saved.
1. **Luke 13:2-5:** And Jesus said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were *greater* sinners than all *other* Galileans because they suffered this *fate*? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” (Also: **Matt 18:3; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 17:30; Acts 11:18; 2 Tim 2:24-26**)
 2. **John 8:24:** Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins. (Also: **John 3:16; Rom 1:16-17; 5:1; 10:9**)
- ii. Some evangelicals say that only faith is necessary for salvation not repentance. They sometimes also say that you can accept Christ as your Savior but not as your Lord.⁴ They base their argument on a faulty understanding of one Greek word for repentance, *metanoia* (μετάνοια). They say repentance is only a “change of mind.” Response:
1. The Bible sometimes speaks of repentance as necessary for salvation; sometimes speaks of faith as necessary for salvation; and sometimes speaks of both as necessary for salvation.
 - a. **Luke 24:46-47:** and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”
 - b. **Acts 2:38:** Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
 - c. **Acts 16:31:** They said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

³ For more on the doctrine of election, see: Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 24: Soteriology, Part 2,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

⁴ This view is sometimes called “non-Lordship salvation” or “free-grace salvation.”

- d. **Rom 10:9**: that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.
 - e. **Mark 1:15**: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”
 - f. **Acts 20:21**: solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. We cannot have saving faith without repentance (or repentance without saving faith) because they are two aspects of one event called conversion.
 3. The nature of repentance and faith (as described above) means that Christ must be both Savior and Lord: Christ not only saves from sins, but we must follow him as Lord.
- iii. Roman Catholics say that faith is necessary for salvation not _____ for salvation.⁵ But the nature of repentance/faith means that repentance/faith is the sole means of salvation (a.k.a. “faith alone”).
1. **Rom 4:1-5**: What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? “ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.” Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness.
 2. **Eph 2:8-9**: For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.⁶
- iv. Though repentance and faith are the necessary and sufficient for salvation, they are not the basis of salvation. The basis of salvation is God’s grace alone.

⁵ Roman Catholics have a different understanding of the nature of repentance and faith.

⁶ For more on why Eph 2:8-9 supports a Protestant understanding of grace, faith, and salvation, see: Dan Burrus, “Saved By Grace,” sermon available on the GCBC sermons.com webpage.

- d. Conversion (i.e., repentance and faith) are not only acts necessary for _____ salvation but are necessary throughout the Christian life.
- i. **Rev 3:19**: Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.
 - ii. **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.
 - iii. Implication: Because repentance and faith continue through the Christian life, repentance and faith *for the Christian* involve all three elements as discussed above.