

Bible Truths  
Foundations of the Faith

*God's Solution to Man's  
Problem!*

The Need for Salvation

*Iron Range Bible Church  
Dedicated to the Systematic Exposition of the Word of God*

# *Salvation: God's Solution for Man's Problem*

## **Fundamental Concepts**

The Word of God makes it very clear that there are only 2 kinds of people and 2 destinies:

#1 - Those who have believed in Jesus Christ → heaven.

#2 - Those who have rejected Jesus Christ as Savior → Eternal Judgment.

No clearer teaching in the Word than this.

Read John 3 (believe and the result is life; reject and be judged)

Since this teaching of the Word of God is so important and so foundational it is no wonder then that it is increasingly coming under attack today.

Attacks on the Gospel of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone, that is by grace, will increase as our culture becomes increasingly more pluralistic and heterogeneous in character.

(somehow we're supposed to assimilate other views, to integrate them with what the Word of God teaches, because all are of equal value, not true)

Increasingly you will hear in response to the Gospel of Grace related to salvation; "Well I know people who don't believe that, and they're such good people I can't believe that a loving God could ever condemn them to eternal judgment!"

**What's the problem?** They're saying that God must think, react and evaluate things in the same way as they do! Nothing could be further from the truth, or the reality of the situation!

God's thinking and God's ways are not the same as ours. (Isaiah 55:8-9)

What we must do is to ensure that our thinking, our viewpoint increasingly becomes that of His!

Only way is to learn what He has revealed to us through the Bible.

Its the only place you can arrive at a viewpoint, a standard of thinking that is consistent with His.

**Some crucial issues we need to understand.**

**Why the necessity of the Cross? Why did God need the Cross?**

**The issue is His character, His nature:**

The most common attribute found in the self revelation of God, especially in the Old Testament is **His Holiness**, this encompasses 2 areas:

**#1 Righteousness** - Psalmist declares "*The Lord is righteous in all His ways.*" and **#2 Justice**

Righteousness in its simple/basic form is the quality of God's perfection or character that demands goodness.

Justice is that characteristic that hates sin. (that is anything that doesn't comply with His expressed will in the Word)

## **What implications do these characteristics have in regards to us, to man??**

Not very good ones, I'm afraid!

Holiness is that attribute that, if we bring the concept right down to its basics as far as our situation is concerned is saying, there is no way that I can be satisfied with you!

I cannot be satisfied with anything less than perfect righteousness and furthermore as an unbeliever You are a sinner, and I hate sin! (He can't even look on evil, Habakkuk 1:13)

Romans 3:23 says *all have sinned and fall short of the glory* (the righteousness) of God.

So we have a very basic problem! Man in and of himself cannot measure up to God's holiness and all that His perfect righteousness and justice demands. A Problem that must be solved if we are to have a relationship with God.

God in His grace has provided not just an adequate solution to solve our problem but a complete and total solution to meet our need through the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **The answer begins with the Cross!**

We might ask, Why the necessity of the Cross?

Need to examine: Where is man from birth? Who is he? Also How does God view us?

In relationship to God, just where or what are we from square one from God's viewpoint.

### **Romans 3:9 gives us the answer! "All under sin!"**

No exceptions!

A conclusion that Paul has arrived at after 2½ chapters of Romans.

We know this from the particle that he uses to begin this verse; "**What then**" which introduces a logical, factual conclusion.

From these 2½ chapters, the content, the arguments presented up to this point bring him to this all encompassing conclusion!

This statement about sin would be new and shocking to the readers, since it is the first use of it in the book.

If you go back to Romans. 1:29 Paul gives a very comprehensive list of sins that man commits - the product of his sin nature.

So through out ch:1 - 2 - 3:8 the emphasis has been on sins, the activities of man that violate God's expressed standards for man; and that violates His perfect righteous standard. But in 3:9 when Paul gets to this point he says; "**All under sin!**"

This stands in contrast to the previous section. Up to this point he was describing man's activities. But now in 3:9 he describes man's **condition**, his nature.

### **Who man is as far as God is concerned! According to God's viewpoint!**

What Paul has done in the previous section was to describe three categories of individuals and their sins.

1<sup>st</sup> the flagrantly unrighteous pagan unbeliever Romans 1:24-32.

2<sup>nd</sup> the sins of the self righteous moral pagan unbeliever Romans 2:1-16.

3<sup>rd</sup> the sins of the self righteous religious type 2:17-29.

So you have characteristics of three groups: The flagrantly immoral; the self righteous moralist; and the religious type; God says that "**All under sin!**"

Paul's conclusion is that no matter which category **All under sin.**

All fall under that same umbrella; under the **guilt and penalty of sin before God.**

### **So who are we in God's eyes? All under Sin!**

This sets off a chain reaction, there cannot be sin without guilt before God! Therefore All are **under the guilt and penalty of sin.**

The result of this guilt is Condemnation. So the thought flow: Where there is sin -> there is guilt!

Where there is guilt -> **there is death!**

### **We are all born under penalty of death Ephesians 2:1.**

The idea of death in Scripture is that of separation. Separation here is one that man cannot cure on his own.

Religion is patently ludicrous when you think about how they attempt to deal with the fact that we're dead, separated from God.

If we had a corpse right here, religion attempts to do all kinds of things to this dead body, they baptize it, feed it, sure can't get it to do any good works.

Whatever you might try, anything/everything that you hear so often that man and religion says is a way to God, to attain to heaven, it won't help this corpse, its still dead. The immaterial but very real part of that individual is gone!

This corpse cannot speak, comprehend, can have no relationship with anyone. It is dead, it's separated from physical life, all of which are a part of and fundamental to physical death.

What Paul is saying in Ephesians. 2:1 is that from God's perspective man is dead, separated from Him; not physically but spiritually. Spiritual death is the focus which says man cannot in that status have a relationship with God.

And there is NO way that man can cure that status by himself from his own efforts. And when we finally recognize and come to grips with that reality. Absolute despair, hopelessness!

There is an absolute barrier between God and man, a barrier that separates them. One that man can not do anything in anyway to solve on his own.

God says, I have good news for you, I have a solution for your problem, to deal with your nature, the fact that you're under sin, the fact that you're dead!

### **God's Solution is the Cross work of Jesus Christ.**

A provision God has made for man totally by Grace! Grace is the principle, the basis on which God operates in relationship to man. Never forget that Grace depends on the character of God not on who or what man is. Remember, from God's viewpoint, man before salvation is bankrupt, dead, all under sin, having nothing to commend them to God no matter who they are, their heritage or their status in life before man. All are in the same status.

This grace principle in salvation is expressed in Ephesians 2:4-5. Notice that it starts with a statement of facts about God's character;

“But, God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us...”  
to an infinite degree God is both merciful and loving.

Next follows a statement about man: “...we were dead in our transgressions...” to this condition of death God responded and

“...made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” States so clearly the principle upon which God saves is grace.

Grace is God giving favor to those who do not merit it or deserve it in any way.

In salvation this grace is directed towards those who place their faith in Jesus Christ and is based on the cross work of Christ.

It was at the cross that we see Grace manifested. Titus 2:11 “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men.” The fact that salvation is available to all.

Christ bore the penalty of our sin satisfying the demands of God’s righteousness and justice and creating a grace basis on which man could be saved.

**The Only response that is compatible with grace is faith!** (Romans 4:16)

Faith is set forth as an act that is not treated as a “work.”

Romans 4:5 makes this clear, setting believing in contrast to work! That is standing opposite to anything man can do!

So God’s Grace in salvation is appropriated by the merit less "act of faith". The purpose of such an arrangement is stated in Romans 3:27.

A salvation based on God’s grace and extended on the condition of faith eliminates human boasting and pride and thus directs all the glory to God himself.

If we attempt to compromise grace with any human effort or works it is no longer grace.

Romans 11:6 “But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.”

Works and grace are mutually exclusively!

**How then does the Cross deal with the barrier between God and man?** How does God in Grace deal with dead men without compromising His character, especially His Holiness?

**<1> Problem of Sin and its solution.**

Already noted that we’re “all under sin” born dead and that we all have a sin nature. (Romans 5:12) The Solution is Redemption which deals with man’s sin.

**The condition that demands redemption**

**1. All are slaves to sin! Romans 6:17**

“You were slaves of sin” a reference to their former condition as unbelievers, that is before they believed in Christ.

Romans 7:14 “sold into bondage to sin.”

A slave was owned by his master in a very real sense of the word and had no legal rights. His duty was obedience and service. Point is that man as an unbeliever is a slave to sin and cannot on his own purchase or in some way gain his release from this slavery to sin.

## **What then is involved with redemption?**

### **1. Redemption involves a purchase.**

“**Redeem**” is a commercial term signifying the same thing as “to buy.”

In Matthew 13:44 Jesus speaks of one who, “sells all that he has, and buys that field.” Buy is the word for redemption.

We think of buying in terms of material things. In the N.T. period in Roman Empire people were also included as property.

- \* The fact that Jesus Christ purchased, “redeemed us” is the basis for the believer regarding himself as owned by the Lord.
- \* Paul reminded the Corinthians of this in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 “Or do you not know that... you are not your own? For you have been bought (“redeemed”) with a price...”

### **2. Redemption involves a price.**

This price is emphatically stated in 1 Peter 1:18-19 “that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold ...(what man views as valuable) but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”

Nothing that man can do is able to redeem man because all human payments are perishable and cannot solve the spiritual problem of man’s alienation from God.

### **3. Redemption involves a freedom. Galatians 3:13 “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law...”**

The law brings a curse in that failure to meet its standards, to violate one is to violate all, and carries the penalty of death.

We are all, therefore, under that penalty.

Word for redeemed is *ekagoradzō* *ek* = out of or out from. The word emphasizes the separation from, the total freedom from the penalty of sin that redemption brings. It also implies a permanency, we are freed never to return to that same status! It recognizes our new position in Christ

### **4. Redemption involves a completeness.**

Romans 8:23 which says of the believer that we are among those “waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.”

The completeness of redemption is seen in 2 ways.

#1 In the fact that redemption includes our physical bodies. It is the whole person that is redeemed; body soul and spirit.

Paul is noting then that part of our future hope is the redemption our body.

Points out for us that since the body is also impacted by sin and redemption is a total solution.

#2 A 2<sup>nd</sup> emphasis on completion comes from another word used for redemption, *apolutrōsis* (n) which means to release based on a payment; in context is talking about a release from the affects, the impact of sin on the body.

## 5. Redemption involves a guarantee. Ephesians 1:13-14

The very presence of the Holy Spirit indwelling you, that is those who “*having believed*” is the guarantee that the whole program of redemption will be consummated in each one who believes.

The “*pledge*” speaks of something much stronger than down a payment, *arrabōn* is a guarantee, in that it obligated the purchaser to complete the purchase in full. It was a legal guarantee.

Only Christ was qualified and able to make the purchase, to provide the purchase price for redemption; and He did so when He went to the cross in our place.

## <2> Also have the Problem of our Physical birth and its solution - Regeneration

**We are born dead spiritually, in Adam therefore separated from God.**

1 Corinthians 15:22 “*As in Adam all die so also in Christ all are made alive.*”

1<sup>st</sup> birth = death; 2<sup>nd</sup> birth = life!

We are dead because of our connection with the first Adam (Romans 5:12) because of this connection we need a new birth, a new family and a new father.

Regeneration does this.

The necessity of the new birth grows out of the incapacity of the natural man to enter into a relationship with God.

**Regeneration is what is involved in the New birth.**

**Definition:** Regeneration is the **act of God** at salvation wherein He imparts eternal life to man on the single condition of faith in Jesus Christ.

### ➤ The Concept of Regeneration; expressed by several phrases.

1. “**being born again**” John 3:7 Nicodemus was told that he “*must be born again.*”

- “*born*” = *gennaō* common word for being born

- “*again*” = means from above; in vs:31 it is translated, “*he who comes from above is above all.*”

- In John 19:11 Jesus tells Pilate, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above...”
- The translators give us born again, a second time, which obviously is supernatural and therefore from above.
- One thing we need to emphasize though is that by using the adverb *anōthen* the stress is not on the repetition of a birth but on the **source** of the birth, it is from above.

## 2. “being made alive”

In Ephesians 2:5 the Ephesians believers are told they are “made alive together in Christ.”

Contrast there is drawn between the previous status, “were dead” now being made alive together in Christ.”

Says that man by nature apart from God is dead in his sins and that the only solution is a new life in Christ.

## 3. “becoming a new creation” 2 Corinthians 5:17 “If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature.”

Regeneration then results in a new creature, a new creation.

It refers to the life of God imparted to the individual at salvation that makes them His new creation.

## 4. becoming “the children of God”

1 John 3:2 “Beloved, now we are children of God...” born ones

Many passages imply regeneration as they speak of the believer becoming God’s sons. The whole idea of a father and son relationship involves birth and family life.

### ➤ **The Author of Regeneration: God**

John 1:12-13 describes “the children of God” as those “who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man.”

Eternal life can not be inherited, for it is “not of blood.”

Eternal life is not the fruit of man’s ability or his search for God, because it is not “of the will of the flesh.”

Eternal life is not something man can generate, because it is not “of the will of man.”

“but of God” = *ek theos* = indicates the source/origin

The actual agent is God the Holy Spirit John 3:5

### ➤ **The means of regeneration: Word of God.**

1 Peter 1:23 links the word of God to the new birth; “for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God.”

Word is the means since the word itself is a dynamic living thing (John 6:63; Acts 7:38; Hebrews 4:12)

Therefore this indicates that knowledge precedes the new birth; the miracle of the new birth needs the gospel communicated before it can occur.

➤ **The Power of Regeneration: is related to the Resurrection of Christ.**

1 Peter 1:3 speaks of God the Father “..who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” (related to the power involved in the resurrection) This shows the kind of power needed for regeneration.

Ephesians 1:19-20 speaks of, “the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead...”

The power that raised Christ from the dead is the same kind of power that is needed to save men who are dead in their sins.

➤ **The instrument of Regeneration: Faith**

Galatians 3:26 = “For you are all sons of God through faith (dia pistis) in Christ Jesus.”

Become sons of God, born into the family of God when we respond to the message of the gospel by believing it and the person in whom it centers, Jesus Christ.

The next solution to man's problem is:

<3> **Reconciliation: The Cross brings man into relationship with God**

**Definition:** Reconciliation is the work of Christ on the cross which completely changes man in his relationship to God by removing all grounds for condemnation.

God does not change but man is changed.

**1. The Need:** The fact that man is a sinner; Romans 3:23 “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

Universality of sinfulness = “all” [just like in Romans 3:9]

Also see the nature of sin, “falls short”; *hústereō* to be lacking, to be short of; indicates to lack what one must have.

It paints a picture of having a legitimate bill that far exceeds what one can possibly pay.

The standard described here that man fails to meet = “the glory of God” This speaks of the person and character of God Himself.

He sets the standard of holiness and righteousness. Anyone who is less righteous than God falls short.

The concept of being Reconciled to God is difficult for man to comprehend, for all religion espouses the idea that man must somehow make peace with God through his own human works.

While the Bible says it is the work of Christ that changes man in his relationship to God.

The need for Reconciliation is further established in Romans 5:6-10 where four words are used to describe man's condition from God's viewpoint.

### **Helpless; ungodly; sinners; enemies**

Man is described in a state that he cannot bring himself out of; he cannot bring himself or pull himself up to God's standards.

Can God adjust himself to man? The righteous God of the universe cannot and would not adjust Himself to the sinfulness of man.

God is eternally and unchangeably holy.

The only solution then is that God must undertake to adjust man to Himself and this is what reconciliation is all about.

## **2. The standard for Reconciliation is God himself.**

2 Corinthians 5:18 says that God "...has reconciled us to Himself through Christ..."

Here we see the standard "TO HIMSELF" and the means of doing so, "through Christ." In reconciling us He cannot compromise His essence.

Reconciliation is **always to God** since He is the constant and unchangeable one, the fixed standard.

## **3. The means of Reconciliation: The cross of Jesus Christ**

Ephesians 2:16 says that God might "...reconcile them both (Jew and gentile) in one body to God through the cross..."

### **Also taught in Col. 1:19-20 [and Romans 5:10]**

1:19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

1:20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

The cross work of Jesus Christ is the very heart of salvation. It is the total solution where the problem of man's sinfulness is realized.

## **4. The only means of appropriating reconciliation is the same as all aspects of salvation, by faith.**

5. So reconciliation says very simply that man is changed by God rather than God being changed in His relationship to man.

It involves the fact that man is now a new creature in Christ, that he has been justified by faith and is now seen by God as being in union with Christ.

#### <4> **Justification** [always its justification **by faith**]

Justification speaks to the issue of God's justice. How can God a holy and righteous judge accept sinners into His presence?

How can He clear the guilty forgiving their sins and still remain just?

How can God as judge impose the penalty that the offense requires and at the same time let the guilty one go free?

These issues are all dealt with by the Doctrine of Justification.

##### **1. Source of Justification: God the Father.**

Romans 8:33 "God is the one who justifies.."

What does this word justify mean? Justify and righteous are directly linked since they come from the same root word in the Greek.

Could translate justify as "to declare righteous" and be right on track, perfectly accurate.

Justification deals with our positional standing before God. We still have a sin nature and will sin, sanctification deals with our conduct before God in life after salvation.

##### **2. The Grounds of Justification: Blood of Christ**

On what grounds, what is the basis for God being able to declare the sinner righteous?

Romans 3:24 "being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood.."

It is on the basis of the shed blood of Jesus Christ, His cross death while bearing our sins, that God the Father finds the grounds for justifying the sinner.

Christ's death meets the demands of God's righteousness and thus frees God to justify those who believe in Him.

It is the accomplishments of the death of Christ that forms the sole grounds on which God can extend forgiveness and salvation to any person.

##### **3. The Instrument of Justification: Faith**

Romans 3:28 indicates this fact, "a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law."

Faith refers to our attitude toward the cross work of Jesus Christ.

When we believe, it says we view the cross as God the Father views the cross. He views it as a complete and adequate solution to the problem of man's sin and we need to view it likewise.

When we do, then we also view the death of Christ as adequate to solve the sin problem and we rest in that for our personal salvation.

This is in harmony with the fact that Salvation is by Grace.

Romans 3:26 also focuses on faith as the instrument, "...that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

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

#### **4. Principle of Justification: Grace**

Again from Romans 3:24 it says we are "...justified as a gift by His grace..."

The word "gift" helps us to understand "by His grace." The word is *dōrean* and it emphasizes that it is freely, without payment.

We do not merit justification, and we cannot merit justification, it is a gift, given freely, it is by grace. This is God's principle of dealing with man.

#### **5. The Agent of Justification is the Holy Spirit                      1 Corinthians 6:11**

Here Paul reminds the Corinthians that they, "...were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in (by) the Spirit of our God."

To summarize: It is the Father who initiates justification; sent His Son!

It is the Son who executes justification by willingly obeyed the Father and the Holy Spirit who applies justification.

#### **6. The Position of Justification: Union with Christ Paul in speaking of justification, 2 Corinthians 5:21 says,**

"He (God/F) made Him (God/S) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf (doctrine of substitution), that we might become the righteousness of God, (doctrine of justification) in Him."

The last two words, "**IN HIM**" show the position we gain in justification. Due to our union with Christ, His righteousness is imputed to us and is seen as ours.

All of this that is salvation, the work of Jesus Christ, is for the one who believes eternal! Nothing can change it!

Hearing the message of Christ's work on the cross demands a response on our part! What logically do most conclude that the response is to be?

I'll join a church! What does that have to do with anything? I'll try to live better! What does that have to do with anything? I'll give some money! What does that have to do with anything? I'll get baptized! What does that have to do with anything?

Not one of them has anything to do with acquiring salvation; not one wit!!

You can do them all in spades and your not one bit closer to salvation, not any closer to heaven.

None of them are the response that God is looking for!

**What is to be the ONLY bonifide RESPONSE!!**

BELIEVE THAT GOD SENT HIS SON; MADE HIM YOUR SUBSTITUTE; PLACED YOUR SIN, YOUR GUILT ON HIM SO THAT GOD IS NOW FREE TO GIVE TO YOU THE GIFT OF SALVATION IN RESPONSE TO YOUR FAITH.

We need to accept God's viewpoint. He sees Christ's work on the cross as the sufficient and only means of salvation; therefore we need to also.

There is nothing that we can do, No way that we can add to it, He did it all!

THE GOSPEL, THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT GOD HAS PROVIDED IN CHRIST THE ONLY SOLUTION TO OUR DIRE NEED, THE ADEQUATE, COMPLETE, FINISHED WORK OF JESUS CHRIST AND WE ARE TO REST IN IT ALONE FOR OUR SALVATION, OUR ETERNAL FUTURE.

"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, that no one should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved," Acts 16:31a

Note: Scripture is taken from the New American Standard Bible: 1995 update © LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

*Pastor John L. Griffith Sr.*  
*(218)-229-2863*  
*www.ironrangebible.com*