

Why Is Salvation So Important?

INTRODUCTION:

1. Salvation is a major theme of our day—and always has been for the most part.
 - A. We appreciate heroic actions that save someone from peril.
 - B. Great books/movies/TV shows are often driven by the plot of salvation from doom at the last moment by the keen and fearless actions of the hero or heroine.
 - C. We constantly hear the theme of how we need to “save the planet.”
2. Unfortunately, real salvation, the salvation that everyone needs, is rarely considered by the masses, even scorned by others, though there is no hope for the future without it!
3. And that, my friends, is what I would like to talk with you about today—why salvation is so important!
 - A. To do that I want to define salvation, consider the God who can save us, and look at who we are.
 - B. Understanding all three will help us grow in our appreciation of the importance of salvation.

BODY:

I. Salvation defined:

A. Old Testament (2 terms):

1. **Yasha/Yesha:**

- a. Defined: “deliverance, salvation, rescue, safety, welfare, victory” (BDB).
- b. Psalms 18:2-3 – “The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my **salvation** (yesha), my stronghold. I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised; So shall I be **saved** (yasha) from my enemies.”
- c. These are generally used in situations regarding God’s physical deliverance from one’s enemies.
- d. Yet, there are times where God’s divine salvation through mercy and forgiveness are addressed (Isa. 12:1-3 – “Then you will say on that day, “I will give thanks to You, O LORD; For although You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, And You comfort me. ² “Behold, God is my **salvation**, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song, And He has become my **salvation**.” ³ Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of **salvation**.”).

2. **Teshuah:**

- a. Defined: “deliverance (usually by God through human agency); spiritual salvation.
- b. Spiritual (Psalms 51:9-12 – “Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹ Do not cast me away from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of Your **salvation** and sustain me with a willing spirit.”)

B. New Testament:

1. **Soteria:**

- a. Defined:
 - i. “Deliverance (from the molestation of enemies), preservation, safety” (*Thayer*)
 - ii. “Salvation (in an ethical sense,...the souls safety or salvation through the Messiah).” (*Thayer*) (This is almost the universal usage in N.T.)
- b. Luke 19:9-10 – “And Jesus said to him, “Today **salvation** (soteria) has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to **save** (sozo) that which was lost.”

2. **Sozo/Diasozo:**

- a. Sozo: “to save, keep safe..., to rescue from danger or destruction.” (*Thayer*)
 - i. It is used of saving one from physical suffering (Luke 18:42 – “Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you **well** [sozo].”).
 - ii. Used in a spiritual sense of being delivered from the judgment of God due because of sin.

- 1) Matt. 1:21 – “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will **save** His people from their sins.”
- 2) John 3:17 – “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be **saved**.”).
- b. **Diasozo**: “To preserve through danger, to bring safely through” (*Thayer*) (1 Peter 3:20-21 – “who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were **saved** (diasozo) through water. There is also an antitype which now **saves** (sozo) us—baptism...”).
3. So, “salvation” involves deliverance, rescue, safety, and preservation, whether physical or, far more importantly, spiritual.
 - a. Why is salvation so important to us? Why is it such a prominent subject of the N.T.?
 - b. That is because of who God is and who we have become.

II. Salvation is important because God is holy

A. God’s holiness is exalted.

1. Isaiah spoke of this (Isa. 6:1-3 – “In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: “**Holy, holy, holy** is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth *is* full of His glory!”).
2. John spoke of this (Rev. 4:8 – “The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: “**Holy, holy, holy**, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!”)
3. I think the significance of this description can elude us.
 - a. First, the holiness of God is such that beings far greater in glory than us can only spend their days and nights praising Him for it.
 - b. Second, God is said to be “holy, holy, holy,” which is never said of any other of His characteristics—not love, grace, justice, mercy, etc.
 - c. Though I am unsure of the full significance of that fact, without question it says that in God **there is no sin** (1 John 1:5 – “This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is **no darkness at all**.”).

B. God’s holiness demands holiness:

1. As our holy lawgiver, God has given us a righteous law to live by (Psa. 119:172 – “My tongue shall speak of Your word, for all Your commandments *are* righteousness.”).
2. God in his holiness demands holiness of all who will be His children (1 Pet. 1:14-16 – “As **obedient** children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance,¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, **be holy** yourselves also in all your behavior;¹⁶ because it is written, “**You shall be holy, for I am holy**.”).
3. Note that we can only be holy as “**obedient** children,” which means that righteousness comes by *doing* God’s righteous commands (1 Jn. 3:7 – “Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who **practices righteousness is righteous**, just as He is righteous.”).

C. God in holiness will judge the world in *righteousness* according to His word.

1. God’s conviction of the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment has already begun through the work of the Spirit in revealing the truth (John 16:7-8 – “But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.⁸ And He, when He comes, will **convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment**.”).
2. Yet, there is coming a day when all the world will receive final and eternal judgment according to God’s righteousness (Acts 17:30-31 – “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,³¹

because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”).

3. God’s judgment will be based upon how you and I have lived our lives—whether we have obeyed God or not.
 - a. God will judge us by our **deeds** (Rom. 2:5-8 – “But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶ who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: ⁷ to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; ⁸ but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.”).
 - b. God will deal out retribution on all who **have not obeyed** (2 Thess. 1:6-8 – “For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷ and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, ⁸ **dealing out retribution** to those who **do not know God** and to those who **do not obey the gospel** of our Lord Jesus.”)
- D. God’s holiness, His demand for it, and punishment for those who refuse to submit are the reasons the world despises Him!
 1. People want a god who conforms to their standards, not one that demands conformity to His law and holds them accountable.
 2. God is not unjust in this, seeing He will condemn sinners not because of ignorance of Him and his demands, but because of their desire to suppress His truth in favor of unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18-19, 25 – “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who **suppress the truth in unrighteousness**, ¹⁹ because that which is known about God is evident within them; for **God made it evident to them**...²⁵ For they exchanged the truth of God **for a lie**, and **worshiped** and **served the creature** rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.”).
- E. God’s holiness and His demand for holiness in those who will be His people means we have a problem, just as Isaiah realized upon seeing God’s holiness! (Isa. 6:5 – “Then I said, “Woe is me, for I am **ruined!** Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”).

III. Salvation is important because we are sinners

- A. Our sin is not God’s fault.
 1. God has made us **upright** (Eccl. 7:29 – “Truly, this only I have found: That God made man **upright**, but they have sought out many schemes.”).
 2. Jesus points to this purity in the innocence of a little child (Matt. 18:2-3 – “Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”).
 - a. There is no blaming of God, no injustice on His part, no stacking the deck against us.
 - b. God has made us free to choose. So, our destiny is a matter of *choice*!
 - c. Do we *choose* to follow God and his holy will, or do we *choose* to follow our own selfish and destructive desires?
- B. Reality is that from the beginning we have used our freedom to follow self and sin.
 1. Isaiah speaks of our self-created dilemma to Israel (Isa. 59:1-2 – “Behold, the LORD’S hand is not so short that it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear. ² But **your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God**, and your **sins** have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.”).
 2. Paul says the same—we sin and earn death, separation from God and salvation:
 - a. Rom. 3:9, 23 – “What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin...²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

- b. The consequence of sin is death—separation from God and salvation (Rom. 6:23 – “For the **wages of sin is death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”).
3. Our condemnation is just (Rom. 1:28-32 – “And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; ³² and **although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death**, they not only **do the same**, but also **give hearty approval to those who practice them.**”).

CONCLUSION:

1. The importance of salvation becomes clear when the reality of our predicament also becomes clear.
 - A. Our saving God is **holy**, and we must **give account of our lives** before Him.
 - B. Yet, our lives **are not holy** and that means **condemnation and death**—that is what our choices have brought us.
2. But what is so amazing is that we do not have to remain in *condemnation*—to remain *unsaved!*
 - A. Consider the last part of Paul’s words (Rom. 6:23 – “For the wages of sin *is* death, **but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord**”).
 - B. God has chosen to act on our condition, giving us a **gift**, the gift of Jesus, by which we can have life and hope (Romans 8:1-2 – “Therefore there is now **no condemnation** for those who are **in Christ Jesus**. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”).
 - C. That is what our holy God has done—offered to save you by making you holy like him through the forgiveness of sins found in Jesus who came and died for you.
3. Will you choose to come to Christ, to “be saved” from yourself and your sin through Jesus Christ.