

Session Three

Our Salvation

“For now we are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and we who have been baptized into union with Christ are enveloped by Him. We are no longer Jews or Gentiles, or slaves or free men, or even merely men or women, but we are all the same — we are Christians; we are one in Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 3:26-28 (LB)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing “WHY?” They exist year after year with no idea of why they live or God’s purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is, “What is the meaning of life?”

Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:

- ...Some look for happiness by acquiring possessions.
- ...Some look for happiness by experiencing pleasure.
- ...Some look for happiness by gaining prestige & power.

But real happiness comes from understanding my Purpose.

WHY AM I HERE?

1. God made me to Love Me!

God says, “I have loved you with an everlasting love!” Jer. 31:3

“Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be His through our union with Christ...because of His love. God had already decided that through Jesus Christ He would make us His children — this was God’s pleasure and purpose.” Eph. 1:4-5 (GN)

2. We were created to enjoy a personal relationship with God and to manage all the rest of God’s creation! This makes us special!

“So God created human beings, making them in His image. He blessed them, and said,...live all over the earth and bring it under control. I am putting you in charge.” Gen. 1:27-28 (LB)

“God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.” 1 Tim. 6:17

Jesus said, “I have come in order that you might have life — life in all its fullness!” John 10:10

3. When we know and love God and live in harmony with His purpose for our lives. It produces tremendous benefits...

Clear Conscience

Rom. 8:1

Life & Peace

Rom. 8:6

Help with Weakness

Rom. 8:26

Purpose

Rom. 8:28

Confidence

Rom. 8:31

Security

Rom. 8:39

Power & Strength

Phil. 4:13

Fulfillment

Phil. 4:19

Freedom

John 8:32,36

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Man has a natural desire to be boss and to ignore God's principles for living.

"Look out for #1. Do your own thing."

"If it feels good, do it - regardless of what God says about it."

"It's my life and I'll do what I please!"

THE BIBLE CALLS THIS ATTITUDE: Sin

"All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way." Isaiah 53:6

"If we say that we never sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refuse to accept the truth." 1 John 1:8

Sin breaks our close relationship with God. It causes us to fear God and try to live our lives outside of His will.

"The trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God." Isaiah 59:2 (LB)

"All have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal." Romans 3:23

When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives — marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.

WHEN PEOPLE HAVE PROBLEMS, THEY OFTEN TRY MANY DIFFERENT WAYS OF COPING BEFORE TURNING TO GOD.

"There are ways that SEEM right to man, but they only end in death." Proverbs 16:25

Even when we know that our deepest need is God, we often try wrong ways of getting to know Him:

- "My mother was a Christian so..."
- "It doesn't matter what you believe, just be sincere."
- "I'll give up all my bad habits."
- "I'll work real hard and earn it."
- "I'll be religious and go to church."

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Jesus Christ is the One and Only Solution

Jesus Christ said, "I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except THROUGH ME!" John 14:6

God Himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The Way is a Person!

JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM!

"The wages of sin in death, BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23

God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.

"God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still separated from God by sin, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8

"God is on one side and all people are on the other side, and Christ Jesus is between them to bring them together, by giving His life for all mankind." 1 Tim. 2:5

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

1. Admit THAT GOD HAS NOT BEEN FIRST PLACE IN YOUR LIFE AND ASK HIM TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong." 1 John 1:9

2. Believe THAT JESUS DIED TO PAY FOR YOUR SINS AND THAT HE ROSE AGAIN ON EASTER, AND IS ALIVE TODAY.

"If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

3. Accept GOD'S FREE GIFT OF SALVATION. DON'T TRY TO EARN IT.

"For it is by grace you are saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8,9

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

4. Invite JESUS CHRIST TO COME INTO YOUR LIFE AND BE THE DIRECTOR (“LORD”) OF YOUR LIFE.

“To all who receive Him, He gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is to trust Him to save us. All those who believe this are reborn! — not a physical rebirth...but from the will of God!” John 1:12-13

“Jesus says, ‘Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in...” Rev. 3:30

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING BAPTIZED

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called “ordinances”) as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are: Baptism and The Lord’s Supper.

WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED

1. TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE SET BY Jesus Christ

“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river.” Mark 1:9

2. BECAUSE CHRIST COMMANDS IT.

“Jesus said, ‘Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matt. 28:19-20

3. IT DEMONSTRATES THAT I REALLY AM A BELIEVER

“...many of the people who heard Him believed and were baptized.” Acts 18:8

“We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands.” 1 John 2:3

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. IT ILLUSTRATES CHRIST’S BURIAL AND RESURRECTION

“Christ died for our sins... He was buried...and He rose again.” 1 Cor. 15:3-4

“For when you are baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ. Col. 2:12

2. IT ILLUSTRATES MY NEW LIFE AS A CHRISTIAN.

"When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!" 2 Cor. 5:17

"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead...so also we may live a new life!" Rom. 6:4

Baptism doesn't make you a believer — it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring — it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith...it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

1. BECAUSE JESUS WAS BAPTIZED THAT WAY.

"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water." Matthew 3:16

2. EVERY BAPTISM IN THE BIBLE WAS BY IMMERSION.

(Example) "...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water..." Acts 8:38-39

3. THE WORD "BAPTIZE" MEANS TO DIP UNDER WATER".

The Greek word *baptizo* means, "to immerse or dip under water".

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

1. EVERY PERSON WHO HAS BELIEVED IN CHRIST.

"Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized..." Acts 2:41

"Simon himself believed and was baptized..." Acts 8:13

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News...and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 8:12

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

WHAT IS THE SUPPER? (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

1. IT IS A HOLY ACT

"The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread..." (vs. 23)

2. IT IS A REMINDER

"...and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; eat it in remembrance of me.'" (vs. 24)

3. IT IS A SYMBOL

"In the same way, He took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me.'" (vs. 25)

4. IT IS A STATEMENT OF FAITH

"For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes back." (vs. 26)

WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

1. Only those who are already BAPTIZED BELIEVERS (Mark 14:22-26)

"For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself." 2 Cor. 11:29

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

I. I WILL PROTECT MY CHURCH

...By acting in love toward other members
...By refusing to gossip
...By following the leaders

"So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together." Rom. 15:19 (Ph)

"Live in complete harmony with each other — each with the attitude of Christ toward each other." Rom 15:5 (LB)

"Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts." 1 Peter 1:22 (GN)

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of our mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs..." Eph. 4:29

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you." Heb. 13:17

II. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

...By praying for its growth
...By inviting the unchurched to attend
...By warmly welcoming those who visit

"To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly." 1 Thess. 1:2

"Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full." Luke 14:23 (LB)

"So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified." Rom. 15:7 (LB)

III. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

...By discovering my gifts and talents
...By being equipped to serve by my pastors
...By developing a servant's heart

"Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you..." 1 Peter 4:10 (Ph)

"God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." Eph. 4:11-12

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant..." Phil 2:3-4, 7

IV. I WILL SUPPORT MY CHURCH

...By attending faithfully

...By living a godly life

...By giving regularly

"Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another." Heb. 10:25

"But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ." Phil. 1:27 (Ph)

"Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering." 1 Cor. 16:2

"A tenth of all you produce is the Lord's, and it is holy." Lev. 27:30