

Theology 2
Concepts of Salvation & Predestination
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*Salvation is **the application** of the work of Christ to the individual. Accordingly, the doctrine of salvation has particular appeal and relevance, since it pertains to our most crucial need – **the need for a Savior.***

Current Concepts of Salvation

1. Liberation Theologies – Salvation is found in the deliverance (or liberation) of the oppressed from the exploitation of the oppressors (different races, governments, etc.)
 - a. **Problems** – Who determines when someone has been liberated? Does liberation theology provide any salvation for those that are well-to-do?
2. Existential Theology – Salvation found in a fundamental alteration of our existence – our whole outlook on and conduct of life. Authenticity to one’s self is the key.
 - a. **Problems** – Who determines what it means to be one’s true self? Who determines when a person has arrived at genuine authenticity to the true-self?
3. Secular Theology – Salvation is found not through religion, but from religion. Dietrich Bonhoeffer envisioned a “religionless Christianity.” God has educated His highest creature to be independent of Him.
 - a. **Problems** – Once the need for God is done away with, so is the notion of God Himself (atheism). Aren’t humans entirely dependent on their Maker?
4. Contemporary Roman Catholic Theology – Salvation belongs to the church and can only be found therein through a mixture of faith and good works. (sacramental)
 - a. **Problems** – Even Catholics can’t agree on who is in and outside the church. Some have even proposed the idea of an “anonymous Christian.” And, of course, the idea of works salvation is contrary to that of Scripture (Eph. 2:8-9).
5. Evangelical Theology – Salvation comes only by the grace of God that is accessed through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - a. Generally speaking, salvation is a **past** (justification), **present** (sanctification), and **future** (glorification) **work of God** in the life of every believer.

Predestination

1. Calvinism
 - a. Strong emphasis on God’s sovereignty and the effectual call that determines the salvation of every believer. God predestines every person who will be saved apart from any volitional act on the part of the individual.
2. Arminianism
 - a. Strong emphasis on the free will of man and God’s desire that none should perish but that all should come to repentance. God’s effectual call unto salvation is determined by His foreknowledge of man’s volition.
3. No view of salvation is complete unless it includes *God’s sovereignty **and** man’s free will.*