

We Believe: Doctrines of Our Faith

The Doctrine of Salvation

Q1—What is salvation?

A1—The biblical terms for “salvation” refer to a type of aid in which the “savior” rescues the “saved” from some danger and restores them to a state of safety.

Q2—Why do we need salvation?

A2—All of us—with the likely exception of the cognitively impaired—are in danger of God’s eternal wrath.

Exodus 34:6-7—The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

Romans 3:21-24—But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

Q3—How does salvation work?

A3—God effects salvation by (i) crediting our transgressions to Christ and allowing him to bear the punishment for them that would have been ours and (ii) crediting Christ's righteousness to us.

1 Peter 2:19-25—For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Q4—How do we participate in salvation?

A4—Participation in Jesus' saving work requires three acts: (i) repentance of sin, (ii) trust in Jesus Christ, (iii) Submission to Jesus as lord.

Philippians 3:8-9—Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith