

BF&M 4, Salvation (part 1)

Memory Verse: *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" John 3:16.*

To a large degree, the story of the Bible is the story of salvation. It is about God's creating man in His image, man's fall into sin, and God's plan to rescue man from his sin. The choosing of Israel to be His covenant people, Israel's history of failure, repentance, and restoration, God's promise to send a messiah who would establish an eternal kingdom of righteousness—all are about this one great story of God's love for mankind and His determination to save a people for His name. The focus of this story is Jesus Christ, the one and only Savior from sin.

But while the Bible tells one story, it does so from many different angles and uses a wide array of terminology to describe what God does for His people in saving them. In addition to the general subject of salvation, why it is needed and what God has done to bring it about, the Baptist Faith & Message looks at four aspects of salvation: regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification.

SALVATION ACCOMPLISHED

Man's Need

As we saw in our brief study of the BF&M article on man, God originally created man in His image, free of any taint or hint of sin. God gave man dominion over the earth, provided for his every need, and expected him to obey his Creator as he exercised wise stewardship over what God had created. However, man, being tempted by the serpent, chose to disobey God and plunged himself and all his posterity into ruin. Man was no longer innocent; he no longer bore the undistorted image of his Creator. All mankind was now sinful by nature and by choice.

Romans 3:23 and **Romans 6:23** teach the reality and the result of man's new, fallen condition before God. Sinners cannot solve the problem of sin. As the apostle Paul described in Ephesians 2:1, sinners are "dead in trespasses and sins."

Match the following verses with what they teach about sin:

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| ___ 1. Isaiah 59:1-2 | A. Sin is universal; no one is righteous, everyone has turned away from God. |
| ___ 2. Jeremiah 17:9 | B. Unbelief in Jesus brings condemnation. |
| ___ 3. John 3:18, 36 | C. Sin builds barriers between us and God, and He hides His face from us. |
| ___ 4. Romans 3:10-18, 23 | D. Knowing to do good but not doing it is sin. |
| ___ 5. James 4:17 | E. Sin is breaking God's law. |
| ___ 6. 1 John 3:4 | F. The heart of a human being is deceitful and sick. |

Jesus, the one and only Savior

The story of the Bible obviously does not end with sin, but with _____. There is salvation from sin because there is a Savior. His name is Jesus. Paul writes of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ in this way: "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" 2 Cor. 5:19. Many other New Testament passages, such as **Mark 10:45**, **Luke 19:10** and **John 1:29** emphasize that the reason Jesus came into the world was to _____.

Jesus' _____ life, _____ atonement, and _____ resurrection were all necessary to secure salvation from sin. Jesus endured temptation, but without sin (**Heb. 4:15**), which meant He perfectly fulfilled God's law. **How would Christ's ability to save from sin been affected if He had not been sinless?**

Jesus' death was not that of a martyr's example, but that of a substitute, a sin-bearer, **Romans 5:6-8**, **1 Cor. 15:3**. The Baptist Faith & Message says that Jesus Christ obtained eternal redemption for believers "_____." This truth weaves together themes from the Old and New Testaments. In the Book of Leviticus, God instructed the Israelites not to eat the blood of animals, because the life is in the blood, by which atonement is made, **Leviticus 17:10-11**. In the Book of Hebrews, the necessity of a blood atonement is made even more emphatic, **Heb. 9:22**. It was by His own blood, Christ's life given in death to atone for sin, that Jesus obtained redemption for all who trust Him as Savior and Lord, **Heb. 9:24-26**. **There are some today who question or even deny that Jesus died as a substitute for sinners. How would you respond to someone who said that this belief is unnecessary or even offensive?**

Finally, the resurrection of Christ bodily from the dead is God's demonstration to mankind that Jesus' sacrifice has been accepted and that He is the one and only Savior from sin, **Rom. 1:1-4**, **Acts 2:32-36**. Salvation is given only to those who _____ and believe in their hearts that He is a resurrected (and living) Savior, **Rom. 10:9-10**. **There are some who teach that the resurrection of Jesus was a spiritual rather than a bodily resurrection (His spirit was raised, or came to life). How does denying the bodily resurrection affect the gospel?**

While it is an unpopular message to modern ears, the _____ of Jesus Christ as Savior from sin is a teaching found again and again in the New Testament. The Baptist Faith & Message statement that "There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord" is both the affirmation of clear biblical teaching and the historic Christian confession. **See John 3:16-18**, **John 14:6**, & **Acts 4:12**. **How would you respond to someone who rejected the exclusivity of Jesus Christ as the only savior from sin?**