

Biblical Foundations

Point 1. Your salvation is God's idea: God chose you – God called you to Himself – God saved you – God is the one who will keep you.

Point 2. Your salvation depends entirely on what God has already done in and through Christ: you can't add anything to it – and you dare not take anything away from it.

Point 3. Apart from Christ, all men are sinners: Man cannot save himself and man cannot break the power of sin in his life. God does it, and God gets all the credit.

Point 4. The biblical response to the gospel is to repent, be water baptized, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and be added to the church.

Any experience you or I have has to be interpreted in such a way that it conforms to the Scriptures. The Word interprets what happens to you, not vice versa.

Your experience can illustrate sound doctrine if you interpret it properly, but sound doctrine can only be based on the Scriptures – not on someone's experience.

Point 1. Your salvation is God's idea. God chose you, God called you to Himself, God saved you, and God is the one who will keep you.

Your salvation is part of the eternal purposes of God [Eph 3:11].

_____ A. Eph. 1:4-6; God "chose us (in Christ) before the foundations of the world . . . (and) predestined us to adoption as sons through Christ Jesus to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace . . ."

B. II Thess. 2:13; ". . . God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation, through sanctification by the Spirit, and faith in the truth."

C. I Thess. 5:9; ". . . God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ . . ."

God accomplished something in Christ, through his life, his death and his resurrection, that put us in a new relationship with God because it freed us from the wrath of a Holy God.

A fundamental aspect of God's nature is that He is perfectly and absolutely holy – He doesn't take sin lightly.

If God took your sin lightly – Jesus never would have suffered and died on the cross.

A. Rom. 5:8-9; ". . . God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him."

B. Heb. 7:25; ". . . (Jesus) is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession . . ."

Salvation is eternal, we begin enjoying the fruits of our salvation here and now, and we are protected by the power of God.

A. II Tim. 4:18; "The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely into His kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

B. Heb. 9:28; "Christ also . . . shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him."

C. I Pet. 1:5; ". . . we are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Conclusion: Your salvation is God's idea. God chose you, God called you to Himself, God saved you, and God is the one who will keep you.

Point 2. Your salvation depends entirely on what God has already done in Christ. You can't add anything to it, and you dare not take anything away from it.

What happened at the cross?

His Death was a Sacrifice: Old Testament passages like Isaiah 53, looked forward and said Christ would offer himself as a sacrifice, and New Testament passages like Hebrews 9, look backwards and confirm what he's done.

After describing the Old Testament sacrificial system, the author of Hebrews says it was, "a symbol for the present time" . . . that "Christ appeared as a high priest" . . . and that unlike anything the old testament sacrifice could offer, "once for all, (Christ) obtained (our) eternal redemption." and that " the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, (will) cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

His Death on the Cross Appeased the Wrath of God: Sin is an assault against God's nature – He cannot abide it, he hates sin, and he's angry about it.

Rom 1:18; says, “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness”.

Christ’s sacrifice appeased the wrath of God. God forgave us – his wrath was turned away from us, because of what Christ did.

God is holy – and the wrath of God against sin should come as no surprise. What’s so amazing about the cross isn’t that God’s wrath required an atonement for sin – it’s that the love of God provided it.

Christ was our Substitute: Christ died in our place. A whole set of passages tell us that our sins were laid upon him, that he bore our iniquity, and that he was made sin for us.

Isa. 53; Looking forward “. . . the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all.”

2 Cor. 5:21; “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Gal 3:13; “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us”

1 Pet. 2:24; “He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness;”

Because he has come to be sin on our behalf, we have ceased to be sin in God’s eyes. God sees us as saints instead of sinners because of what Christ accomplished.

His Death Reconciled us to God: God is hostile toward sin not toward man. If God were hostile toward man – mankind would cease to exist in an instant.

Unregenerate man is hostile toward God.

Col 1:21-22; although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death,

2 Cor 5:19; God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them

Every aspect of the cross is necessary, and together they are all sufficient for our salvation.

Col 2:8-15; For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete , and He is the head over all rule and authority; and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

In the mystery of the incarnation, God the Son became fully man and remained fully God. It was necessary that he was fully God in order for his sacrifice to be sufficient (the sacrifice of a mere man was not enough), and he had to be fully man in order for his sacrifice to be effective for mankind.

Conclusion: Your salvation depends entirely on what God has already done in Christ. You can't add anything to it, and you dare not take anything away from it.

Point 3. Apart from Christ, all men are sinners. Man cannot save himself and man cannot break the power of sin in his life. God does it – and God gets all the credit.

A. (Rom. 3:9); “. . . both Jews and Greeks are all under sin”

B. (Rom. 3:23); “. . . all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God,”

C. (Eph. 2:1-9); “. . . you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace

in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Conclusion: Apart from Christ, all men are sinners. Man cannot save himself and man cannot break the power of sin in his life. God does it – and God gets all the credit.

Point 4. The biblical response to the gospel is to repent, be water baptized, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and be added to the church.

Every one of the central figures of the N.T. preached the same foundational message.

John the Baptist preached repentance, baptized in water and prophesied about the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

A. Matthew 3: 1-2 ". . . John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying 'Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

B. Matthew 3: 6 -8 ". . . . Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the district around the Jordan; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan river as they confessed their sins . . ."

C. Matthew 3:11 "As for me I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Jesus was baptized, He preached repentance, He and His disciples baptized, He is the one who sent the Holy Spirit, and He instructed His disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit and preach repentance to all the nations.

A. Matthew 4:17; (After the temptation in the wilderness) "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

B. John 3:22; ". . . Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing."

C. Luke 24: 47-49; Jesus said, ". . . that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations . . . (and that He would be) . . . sending forth the promise of (His) Father upon (them); but (they should) stay in the city until (they were) clothed with power from on high."

D. Acts 1: 4-5; ". . . (Jesus) commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, 'Which', He said, 'you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

On the day of Pentecost Peter preached:

A. Acts 2:32-33;36;38-39; "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified . . . And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself.'"

B. After Philip had preached in Samaria (Acts 8:14-17); ". . . the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

How important was it to the early church that all believers receive the Holy Spirit? Important enough that they sent apostles to pray for them to make sure new believers received the Holy Spirit.

C. Peter preaching to the household of Cornelius (Acts 10: 44-48); "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. And all the circumcised believers . . . were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out . . . For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, 'Surely no one can refuse water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just like we did, can he? And he ordered them to be

baptized. . ."

1. The disciples knew the household of Cornelius had received the gift of the Holy Spirit because they were speaking in tongues.
2. They viewed water baptism and baptism with the Holy Spirit as separate and distinct actions. Man performed one act by faith, baptism; and by faith man received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

D. Peter describing what happened with the gentiles said; (Acts 11:15-16) "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord. . . . John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Peter viewed his actions as obedience to the word of the Lord.

The Apostle Paul preached and practiced the same thing: repentance, water baptism, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

A. After Paul encountered Jesus on the Damascus road, he repented, was baptized, and received the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17-18); ". . . Ananias . . . after laying his hands on him said, 'brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you has sent me that you might regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he arose and was baptized. . . ."

B. Paul and Silas in prison at Philippi preached to their jailer (Acts 16: 31-33); "And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your whole household.' And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. And they took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household."

C. Paul at Corinth (Acts 18: 8); ". . . and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized."

D. Acts 19: 1-7; ". . . Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples, and he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' And they said, 'No, we have not ever heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said, 'Into what then were you baptized?' And they said, 'Into John's baptism.' Paul said, 'John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming

after him, that is, in Jesus.' And when they heard, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying."

E. Paul said at his trial before King Agrippa (Acts 26: 19-20); ". . . I did not prove disobedient . . . but kept declaring . . . (to everyone he preached to) that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance."

What can we conclude from the scriptures? The biblical response to the gospel is to repent, be water baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Repentance: Literally means to change your mind. The reason you change your mind is because God has changed your heart, and you now know that God is right and you are wrong.

In the biblical sense, repentance means that you turn from your sin based on faith in Christ – who He is and what He has accomplished. It involves a conscious moral separation from sin, a faith decision to forsake sin and recognize Christ as Lord.

Lordship is a simple proposition really - God created you, He has a right to your life, and he has the right to tell you what to do.

The Church: The way that God has chosen to bring about the Kingdom is through Christ and His body, the Church.

Paul wrote that God's eternal purpose for the Church was ". . . that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 3: 10-11)

The Church is not the Kingdom, but the Church is not an afterthought or an alternative plan either. The church, which Paul calls, ". . . the household of God . . . (and) . . . the pillar and support of the truth", is the means that God chose to bring the Kingdom to the world before there ever was a world.

Conclusion: The biblical response to the gospel is to repent, be water baptized, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and be added to the church.