
BELIEVERS INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

UNDERSTANDING SALVATION

God's Redemptive Plan for Humanity

A comprehensive biblical teaching on redemption, regeneration, reconciliation, and eternal life.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS & DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURES

John 3:1–17 • Romans 3:21–26 • Romans 5:1–11
Romans 10:8–13 • Ephesians 2:1–10
2 Corinthians 5:17–21 • Titus 3:3–7

CENTRAL TEACHING PRINCIPLE

Salvation is God's redemptive work through Jesus Christ by which humanity is rescued from sin and condemnation, reconciled to God, spiritually regenerated, brought into His Kingdom, and given eternal life.

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INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?

Salvation is one of the most foundational doctrines of the Christian faith. Yet many people understand salvation only as the experience of coming to an altar, repeating a prayer, or joining a church.

Although these experiences may accompany a person's response to the Gospel, biblical salvation is far more comprehensive.

Salvation is not merely a religious experience. It is a divine work of redemption that changes humanity's spiritual position, relationship with God, identity, and eternal destiny.

Salvation addresses the deepest problem of the human condition: sin and separation from God.

Through Jesus Christ, God has provided the means by which humanity can be forgiven, restored, reconciled, and brought into a new life under His Lordship.

John 3:16 (KJV)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This passage establishes four foundational truths:

1. Salvation originates in the love of God.
2. Salvation is made possible through the gift of Jesus Christ.
3. Salvation calls for a personal response of faith.
4. Salvation provides deliverance from perishing and the promise of everlasting life.

Therefore, salvation must be understood not simply as an event, but as God's comprehensive redemptive work that begins with the saving grace of Christ and produces a transformed relationship with God.

PART I — THE BIBLICAL DEFINITION OF SALVATION

1. What Is Salvation?

The word *salvation* refers to rescue, deliverance, preservation, and restoration.

In the New Testament, one of the primary Greek words translated as salvation is *sōtēria* (σωτηρία).

It carries the meaning of deliverance, rescue, preservation, and salvation.

In its biblical context, salvation speaks primarily of God's rescue of humanity from sin, guilt, condemnation, and death through Jesus Christ.

Matthew 1:21 (KJV)

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Notice that the angel did not announce that Jesus came simply to improve humanity's circumstances.

The announcement was that Jesus would **save His people from their sins**. This reveals the primary purpose of Christ's redemptive mission.

Salvation involves several inseparable dimensions:

- **Deliverance:** Rescue from the guilt, condemnation, and dominion of sin.
- **Forgiveness:** The remission of sins through Jesus Christ.
- **Justification:** Being declared righteous before God through faith in Christ.
- **Reconciliation:** The restoration of relationship with God.
- **Regeneration:** Being made spiritually alive through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- **Adoption:** Being received into God's family as His children.
- **Sanctification:** Being progressively transformed into Christlikeness.
- **Glorification:** The future completion of redemption in resurrection and eternal life.

These dimensions reveal that salvation is not a shallow religious designation. It is a profound work of divine grace affecting the believer's standing before God, inward life, daily conduct, and eternal future.

Key Principle: Salvation changes our standing before God and begins the transformation of how we live before Him.

2. Salvation Originates With God

Humanity did not create the plan of salvation. God initiated redemption because of His love, mercy, righteousness, and grace.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (KJV)

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

There are three important truths in this passage.

Grace is the source of salvation. Humanity cannot earn God's saving favor through personal goodness or religious achievement.

Faith is the means by which salvation is received. Saving faith trusts in Jesus Christ and His completed redemptive work.

Salvation is God's gift. It is not a reward humanity can purchase through good works.

This does not mean that good works are unimportant. Rather, Scripture places them in their proper order.

Ephesians 2:10 teaches that believers are created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*.

We do not perform good works to purchase salvation. We are saved by grace and then called to demonstrate the transforming power of that grace through obedience and good works.

PART II — WHY HUMANITY NEEDS SALVATION

3. Humanity Was Created for Fellowship With God

To understand salvation, we must first understand God's original intention for humanity.

Genesis 1:26–27 records that God created humanity in His image and likeness.

Human beings were created to know God, reflect His character, exercise responsible dominion under His authority, and live in relationship with Him.

Humanity's original purpose included communion with God and obedience to His will. However, sin disrupted this relationship.

4. The Entrance of Sin

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command. Through this disobedience, sin entered the human experience, bringing corruption, alienation, and death.

Romans 5:12 (KJV)

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

The fall affected humanity's spiritual condition and relationship with God.

Sin is more than a mistake, weakness, or unfortunate decision. Biblically, sin includes rebellion against God's will, failure to meet His righteous standard, and actions, attitudes, or desires contrary to His holiness.

1 John 3:4 identifies sin with lawlessness.

Romans 3:23 (KJV)

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

This passage makes clear that the problem of sin is universal.

Humanity's need for salvation does not depend upon socioeconomic standing, religious background, educational achievement, or outward morality. Every person needs God's grace.

5. The Consequences of Sin

Sin produces consequences that humanity cannot ultimately resolve through self-improvement.

A. Separation from God

Isaiah 59:2 teaches that iniquities create separation between sinful humanity and the holy God. This separation refers to the broken fellowship and alienation caused by sin.

B. Spiritual Death

Ephesians 2:1 describes people apart from Christ as dead in trespasses and sins.

Spiritual death is not the cessation of physical existence. It describes humanity's condition of being alienated from the life of God because of sin.

C. Condemnation and Judgment

Romans 6:23 (KJV)

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sin carries a consequence. Yet the same verse that identifies the consequence of sin also reveals God's answer: eternal life through Jesus Christ.

D. Bondage to Sin

John 8:34 teaches that whoever practices sin is a servant of sin.

Sin does not merely affect a person's legal standing before God; it also exercises enslaving power over human conduct. Salvation therefore addresses both the guilt of sin and its controlling dominion.

Teaching Principle: Humanity does not merely need moral improvement; humanity needs redemption and new spiritual life.

PART III – GOD'S REDEPTIVE PLAN THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

6. God Revealed the Promise of Redemption

The plan of salvation was not an emergency response conceived after the entrance of sin. Scripture reveals God's redemptive purpose unfolding throughout biblical history and reaching its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Following humanity's fall, **Genesis 3:15** introduces the promise of conflict between the serpent and the woman's offspring, a passage traditionally understood by Christians as anticipating Christ's victory over evil.

Throughout the Old Testament, God progressively revealed His redemptive purposes.

Examples include:

- **Genesis 12:3:** God's promise that all families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham.

- **Exodus 12:** The Passover lamb and deliverance from judgment.
- **Leviticus 17:11:** The significance of blood in atonement.
- **Isaiah 53:4–6:** The suffering Servant bearing the iniquities of others.
- **Jeremiah 31:31–34:** God's promise of a new covenant involving forgiveness and His law written upon the heart.
- **Ezekiel 36:26–27:** God's promise of a new heart, a new spirit, and inward transformation.

These passages prepare us to understand the person and work of Jesus Christ.

7. Jesus Christ Is the Foundation of Salvation

Christian salvation is centered exclusively upon the person and redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is not merely an inspiring teacher, prophet, or moral example. He is the Son of God who became flesh, lived without sin, died for our sins, rose from the dead, and reigns as Lord.

John 1:14 declares that the Word became flesh and dwelt among humanity.

Hebrews 4:15 teaches that Jesus was tempted as we are, yet without sin. His sinless life is essential to understanding His sacrifice.

Jesus did not die to pay for His own sins. He gave Himself on behalf of sinners.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (KJV)

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

This passage reveals the extraordinary nature of Christ's substitutionary work.

The sinless Christ bore sin's burden on behalf of humanity so that those who belong to Him might receive righteousness before God.

8. The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus

The Gospel is not simply a message about positive living. It is the announcement of what God accomplished through Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 identifies the foundational Gospel message:

- Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.
- He was buried.
- He rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures.

The significance of the cross

At the cross, Jesus willingly offered His life as a sacrifice for sin.

Romans 5:8 (KJV)

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Jesus did not wait for humanity to become righteous before acting in love. His sacrifice demonstrates God's initiative toward sinful humanity.

1 Peter 2:24 teaches that Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree.

Colossians 2:13–14 explains that God forgives trespasses and removes the record that stood against us.

The significance of the resurrection

The resurrection confirms Christ's victory over death and establishes the living hope of believers.

Romans 4:25 connects Christ's death with our offenses and His resurrection with our justification.

1 Peter 1:3 declares that believers have been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Without the resurrection, the Christian message would be emptied of its saving foundation.

1 Corinthians 15:17 declares that if Christ has not been raised, faith is vain and people remain in their sins.

Teaching Principle: The cross reveals the sacrifice through which redemption was accomplished; the resurrection declares the victory and living hope secured in Christ.

9. Salvation Is Found in Jesus Christ**John 14:6 (KJV)**

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts 4:12 (KJV)

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

These passages establish the central Christian conviction that reconciliation with God is found through Jesus Christ.

Church attendance, ministry titles, family heritage, good deeds, and religious traditions cannot replace the saving work of Christ.

PART IV – HOW DOES A PERSON RECEIVE SALVATION?

10. Hearing and Responding to the Gospel

Romans 10:17 (KJV)

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

The proclamation of the Gospel invites a response.

As the Word is heard, the Holy Spirit convicts hearts and reveals the truth about sin, righteousness, and judgment.

John 16:8 describes the Spirit's convicting work.

The biblical response to the Gospel includes repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

11. Repentance: Turning Toward God

The Greek word commonly translated as repentance is **metanoia (μετάνοια)**, conveying a change of mind or understanding.

Biblical repentance is more than feeling regret. It involves a change of heart and mind concerning sin, leading a person to turn from sin toward God.

Acts 3:19 (KJV)

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

Repentance includes acknowledging our sinfulness, rejecting rebellion against God, and turning toward His mercy and authority.

It is not the claim that a person has already achieved moral perfection. Instead, it is a sincere turning to God that begins a new direction of life.

Mark 1:15 records Jesus proclaiming repentance and faith in the Gospel.

Repentance and faith belong together in the biblical response to God's saving message.

12. Faith: Trusting in Jesus Christ

Saving faith is more than intellectual agreement that God exists.

It involves personal trust in Jesus Christ, confidence in His redemptive work, and reliance upon Him as Savior and Lord.

Romans 10:9–10 (KJV)

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Notice the relationship between the heart and the mouth.

Belief in the heart speaks of inward faith. Confession with the mouth expresses the acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord.

True faith is not merely the ability to recite correct theological statements.

James 2:19 warns that even demons believe God exists.

Saving faith receives Christ and produces a new relationship of trust and allegiance to Him.

13. Calling Upon the Name of the Lord

Romans 10:13 (KJV)

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

This promise establishes the open invitation of the Gospel.

Salvation is not limited to a preferred social class, nationality, or background.

Anyone who sincerely turns to the Lord Jesus Christ in repentance and faith may call upon Him for salvation.

The saving power is not located in a particular wording of a prayer.

The power of salvation is found in Jesus Christ, not in the mere repetition of religious phrases.

A prayer may express authentic repentance and faith, but the prayer itself is not a magical formula.

14. The Necessity of Spiritual Rebirth

Jesus taught that salvation involves a new birth.

John 3:3 (KJV)

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus was a religious leader who possessed knowledge of the Scriptures.

Nevertheless, Jesus taught him that religious knowledge and status were insufficient. He needed to be born again.

In **John 3:5–8**, Jesus describes being born of the Spirit.

This reveals that salvation is not merely a change in outward religious association. It involves an inward work of God.

Titus 3:5 declares that God saves according to His mercy, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, rather than through works of righteousness that we have performed.

Regeneration is the Holy Spirit's work of giving new spiritual life.

Teaching Principle: Salvation is received by grace through faith, and the new birth is accomplished by the Holy Spirit.

PART V — WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PERSON IS SAVED?

Salvation produces realities that may not all be immediately visible outwardly.

These are foundational spiritual truths concerning the believer's relationship with God.

15. Justification — Declared Righteous Before God

Justification refers to God's gracious declaration that the believer is righteous in His sight through Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1 (KJV)

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Justification addresses our standing before God.

It is not the assertion that believers have never sinned.

Rather, it means that through Christ's saving work, those who trust in Him are forgiven and accepted by God.

Romans 3:24 describes believers as being justified freely by His grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus.

16. Redemption — Purchased Out of Bondage

Redemption communicates the idea of liberation accomplished through the payment of a ransom or redemptive price.

Ephesians 1:7 (KJV)

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

In biblical salvation, redemption is accomplished through the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:18–19 contrasts corruptible things such as silver and gold with the precious blood of Christ.

The believer's freedom is grounded in the costly sacrifice of Christ.

17. Reconciliation — Restored Relationship With God

Sin alienated humanity from God.

Through Jesus Christ, God brings believers into a restored relationship with Himself.

2 Corinthians 5:18 (KJV)

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

Reconciliation means that the believer is no longer treated as an enemy remaining outside God's saving peace.

Through Christ, peace with God becomes possible.

Romans 5:10–11 connects reconciliation to the death of God's Son and the saving life of the risen Christ.

Reconciliation also carries a practical calling. Those who have received reconciliation are called to represent God's message of reconciliation to others.

18. Regeneration — Receiving New Spiritual Life

Regeneration is God's inward work of making a person spiritually alive.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV)

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

This new creation identity does not mean that every habit, memory, or pattern of thought disappears instantaneously.

It means the believer has entered a new relationship with Christ and received new spiritual life.

From this new life, an ongoing process of transformation begins.

The believer is no longer defined only by the former life apart from God.

19. Adoption — Becoming Children of God

Salvation brings believers into God's family.

John 1:12 (KJV)

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Romans 8:15–17 explains that believers receive the Spirit of adoption and are identified as God's children and heirs with Christ.

Adoption speaks of belonging, identity, relationship, and inheritance.

The believer is not merely forgiven and left without a family. Through Christ, the believer is welcomed into God's household.

Ephesians 2:19 describes believers as fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

20. Deliverance From the Dominion of Darkness

Salvation changes the believer's spiritual allegiance.

Colossians 1:13–14 (KJV)

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

This Scripture reveals a Kingdom dimension of salvation.

Through Christ, believers are delivered from the dominion of darkness and brought under the reign of God's Son.

Salvation therefore involves more than escaping future judgment. It establishes a new relationship to the authority and Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The believer is called to live under the government of Christ through faith, righteousness, holiness, love, and obedience to God's Word.

Key Principle: Salvation establishes belonging to Christ; discipleship teaches believers how to live faithfully under His Lordship.

PART VI — THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION

21. The Holy Spirit Brings Conviction and New Life

The Holy Spirit is essential to the application of Christ's saving work.

Scripture reveals several dimensions of His work.

Conviction: John 16:8 — The Spirit convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Regeneration: Titus 3:5 — The Spirit renews and brings new life.

Indwelling: Romans 8:9–11 — The Spirit dwells in those who belong to Christ.

Adoption and assurance: Romans 8:15–16 — The Spirit bears witness concerning our identity as God’s children.

Sealing: Ephesians 1:13–14 — Believers are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

Empowerment for holy living: Galatians 5:16 — Believers are instructed to walk in the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit does not merely provide an emotional experience.

He applies God’s redemptive work, establishes new spiritual life, and empowers believers to grow in obedience.

22. The Fruit of the Spirit as Evidence of Transformation

Galatians 5:22–23 identifies the fruit of the Spirit as:

Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and temperance.

These qualities reflect the transforming work of the Spirit.

They are not achievements used to earn salvation. They are characteristics that should increasingly develop in the lives of those who belong to Christ.

Matthew 7:16 teaches that fruit helps reveal the character of a person’s life.

Therefore, genuine Christian discipleship should produce visible growth in Christlike character.

PART VII — SALVATION, SANCTIFICATION, AND SPIRITUAL MATURITY

23. Salvation Begins a New Life of Holiness

A common misunderstanding is that salvation and sanctification are interchangeable.

They are closely connected but should be distinguished.

Salvation refers broadly to God’s redemptive work in Christ.

Justification refers to the believer’s accepted standing before God through faith.

Sanctification refers to being set apart for God and increasingly transformed into holiness.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 (KJV)

For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

God’s purpose is not merely to forgive believers while leaving their lives unchanged.

His purpose also includes their transformation.

Romans 12:2 commands believers to be transformed by the renewing of their minds.

This involves the ongoing reordering of attitudes, desires, habits, priorities, and behavior according to God's truth.

24. Understanding the Three Dimensions of Salvation

The New Testament speaks of salvation in ways that include an accomplished reality, an ongoing work, and a future completion.

A. We Have Been Saved — The Accomplished Work

Ephesians 2:8 speaks of believers as having been saved by grace through faith.

This emphasizes salvation as God's gracious act already received in Christ.

B. We Are Being Saved — The Continuing Work

1 Corinthians 1:18 speaks of the message of the cross as the power of God to those who are being saved.

This emphasizes the continuing work of God in the believer's life.

C. We Will Be Saved — The Future Completion

Romans 13:11 speaks of salvation as nearer than when believers first believed.

Romans 8:23 describes believers awaiting the redemption of their bodies.

This future dimension points to the consummation of salvation in resurrection and glorification.

Teaching Summary:

- We have been saved from the guilt and condemnation of sin through Christ.
- We are being sanctified and delivered from sin's controlling patterns as we walk in the Spirit.
- We await the complete redemption of our bodies and the fullness of eternal life in God's presence.

These dimensions must not be understood as three unrelated salvations.

They are aspects of the one redemptive work of God accomplished through Christ.

PART VIII — THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SALVATION AND WATER BAPTISM

25. Why Is Baptism Important?

Following repentance and faith, baptism occupies an important place in the New Testament's teaching about entering the Christian community.

Matthew 28:19–20 records Jesus commanding His disciples to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe His commands.

Acts 2:38 records Peter instructing his hearers to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:41–42 then describes those who received the word being baptized and continuing in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers.

Baptism is therefore part of the biblical response to the Gospel and the beginning of a life of discipleship.

26. Baptism Identifies the Believer With Christ

Romans 6:3–4 connects baptism with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Baptism visibly proclaims identification with Christ and the believer's commitment to walk in newness of life.

Galatians 3:27 similarly connects baptism with putting on Christ.

Christian traditions differ in their explanations of precisely how water baptism relates to regeneration and salvation. Nevertheless, the New Testament consistently places baptism within the life of faith and obedience to Jesus.

Baptism must never be treated as a substitute for personal repentance, genuine faith, or the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

Teaching Principle: Salvation brings us into relationship with Christ, and baptism is a commanded response that publicly identifies us with Him.

PART IX — SALVATION AND KINGDOM CITIZENSHIP

27. Salvation Brings Believers Under the Lordship of Christ

Jesus did not preach salvation as freedom to continue living independently of God.

He announced the arrival of God's Kingdom and called people to repentance, faith, and discipleship.

Mark 1:14–15 records Jesus preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and calling people to repent and believe.

Colossians 1:13 speaks of believers being transferred into the Kingdom of God's Son.

The Kingdom dimension of salvation establishes a new allegiance.

The believer acknowledges Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

This means His Word, character, and commands become authoritative for the believer's life.

The Christian is called to submit personal desires, relationships, decisions, conduct, and purpose to Christ.

28. Salvation and Discipleship Are Distinct but Connected

Salvation is not earned by completing a discipleship program.

Yet the saving call of Christ leads people into discipleship.

Luke 9:23 (KJV)

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Discipleship is the continuing response of a believer who has received Christ.

It includes learning His teachings, growing in prayer, studying Scripture, practicing obedience, participating in Christian fellowship, serving others, and sharing the Gospel.

John 8:31 connects continuing in Christ's Word with being His disciples indeed.

A person should not confuse church participation with salvation.

However, those who belong to Christ are called to grow in communion with His people and obedience to His Word.

PART X – THE EVIDENCE AND ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

29. How Can a Person Know They Are Saved?

The assurance of salvation is rooted primarily in the promises of God and the completed work of Jesus Christ.

It is not based solely upon emotions.

1 John 5:11–13 teaches that God has given eternal life in His Son and that believers may know they have eternal life.

The believer's confidence rests upon God's faithfulness, the truth of the Gospel, and genuine faith in Christ.

Scripture also speaks of the Holy Spirit's inward witness and the evidence of a transformed life.

Romans 8:16 (KJV)

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Several biblical marks help believers examine their walk with Christ:

1. Faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior — 1 John 5:1.
2. An ongoing willingness to acknowledge sin and repent — 1 John 1:8–9.
3. A growing love for God and fellow believers — 1 John 4:7–12.
4. A desire to keep Christ's commandments — John 14:15.
5. Growth in the fruit of the Spirit — Galatians 5:22–23.
6. Perseverance in faith and commitment to Christ — Hebrews 3:14; Colossians 1:23.

These evidences should be understood as fruit of genuine faith, not as a requirement to achieve sinless perfection.

30. What Happens When a Christian Sins?

A Christian's struggle with sin must never be minimized.

But neither should believers be taught that any moment of failure automatically places them beyond God's mercy.

1 John 1:9 (KJV)

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Believers are called to confess sin, repent, receive God's forgiveness, and continue walking in obedience.

Romans 6:1–2 rejects the idea that grace provides permission to continue deliberately in sin.

God's grace forgives, restores, and trains believers toward righteousness.

Titus 2:11–12 connects saving grace with learning to reject ungodliness and live soberly, righteously, and godly.

31. Must a Believer Continue in Faith?

The New Testament contains both strong promises of God's preserving faithfulness and solemn warnings against unbelief and apostasy.

Philippians 1:6 expresses confidence that God will complete the good work He has begun.

John 10:27–29 emphasizes the security of Christ's sheep in His hand.

Hebrews 3:12–14 warns believers against developing an evil heart of unbelief and turning away from the living God.

Christian traditions differ over whether a genuinely regenerated believer can finally fall away. A responsible biblical teaching should acknowledge those differences rather than oversimplify the issue.

The common pastoral emphasis remains clear: believers should trust in Christ's faithfulness, continue in genuine faith, respond to His Word, and pursue holiness.

PART XI — COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT SALVATION

32. Salvation Is Not the Same as Church Membership

Membership provides a place of accountability, fellowship, equipping, and service.

However, membership in an organization does not itself regenerate the human spirit or reconcile a person to God.

John 1:12 identifies receiving and believing in Christ as central to becoming a child of God.

33. Salvation Is Not Earned by Being a Good Person

Good character and moral behavior matter greatly.

However, no human being can purchase salvation through personal righteousness.

Titus 3:5 explicitly teaches that God saves according to His mercy and not according to works of righteousness that we have performed.

Good works follow salvation as an expression of faith.

34. Salvation Is Not Merely an Emotional Experience

A person may experience joy, tears, peace, conviction, or other strong emotions when responding to God.

Yet emotions themselves are not the foundation of salvation.

Romans 10:9–10 emphasizes faith in the risen Christ and confession of His Lordship.

The authenticity of salvation must be understood in relation to God's Word, genuine faith, and the transforming work of the Spirit.

35. Salvation Is Not the Same as Spiritual Maturity

A newly converted believer may be genuinely saved while still lacking biblical understanding and spiritual maturity.

1 Peter 2:2 calls believers to desire the sincere milk of the Word so they may grow.

Spiritual maturity develops through discipleship, prayer, fellowship, obedience, and the Holy Spirit's work.

36. Salvation Is Not Permission to Live Without Accountability

Grace is not a license for rebellion against God.

Romans 6:15 rejects the idea that believers should sin because they are under grace.

Saving grace establishes a new relationship with God, and that relationship calls for a life increasingly characterized by righteousness and holiness.

PART XII — THE ETERNAL DIMENSION OF SALVATION

37. Salvation Includes the Promise of Eternal Life

Eternal life is more than existence without an ending.

Jesus describes eternal life in relational terms.

John 17:3 (KJV)

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Eternal life includes knowing the Father through Jesus Christ and sharing in the life He gives.

It begins in the believer's relationship with Christ and reaches its fullness in the resurrection and life of the age to come.

38. The Future Resurrection and Glorification

1 Corinthians 15:51–57 teaches the future transformation and resurrection victory of those who belong to Christ.

Philippians 3:20–21 speaks of believers' heavenly citizenship and the transformation of their bodies by the power of Christ.

Revelation 21:1–5 reveals the promised new heaven and new earth, where God dwells with His people and removes death, sorrow, crying, and pain.

The final hope of salvation is not merely escape from earthly hardship.

It is the full realization of life with God, free from sin, corruption, and death.

Teaching Principle: Salvation begins with reconciliation to God through Christ and culminates in the fullness of redeemed life in His eternal Kingdom.

PART XIII — RESPONDING TO THE GOSPEL

39. The Biblical Invitation to Salvation

The invitation of the Gospel is a call to respond personally to Jesus Christ.

Acts 16:30–31 (KJV)

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

This passage records one of the clearest questions about salvation in Scripture.

The answer directs the hearer to faith in Jesus Christ.

A biblical response includes recognizing one's need for God's mercy, repenting of sin, trusting in Christ's death and resurrection, confessing Him as Lord, and beginning a life of obedience to Him.

A Prayer Expressing Repentance and Faith

Heavenly Father,

I come before You recognizing that I have sinned and fallen short of Your glory. I acknowledge that I cannot save myself through my own goodness or works.

I believe that Jesus Christ is Your Son, that He died for my sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day.

I turn from my sins and place my faith in Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord.

I ask for Your forgiveness and mercy. Cleanse me from unrighteousness, renew my heart, and lead me into new life through Your Holy Spirit.

Teach me to walk in Your truth, obey Your Word, and grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

I surrender my life to Your Lordship and trust in Your promise of salvation through Him.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Important Teaching Note: This prayer is an example of how someone may express repentance and faith. Salvation is not guaranteed by repeating a formula without genuine faith. The foundation of salvation is Christ's redemptive work, received through faith in Him.

PART XIV — WHAT SHOULD A NEW BELIEVER DO NEXT?

40. Establishing a Biblical Foundation After Salvation

The new birth marks the beginning of a new life with Christ.

Believers should be equipped to grow and mature through a healthy, Scripture-centered discipleship pathway.

Step 1 — Develop a Life of Prayer

1 Thessalonians 5:17: Pray without ceasing.

Prayer develops communion with God and teaches believers to depend upon Him.

Step 2 — Study God's Word

2 Timothy 3:16–17: Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, correction, and training in righteousness.

New believers should learn the identity of Jesus, the message of the Gospel, the character of God, and the foundations of Christian living.

Step 3 — Be Baptized

Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 8:36–38.

Baptism should be taught as an important response to Christ's command and an expression of identification with Him.

Step 4 — Become Established in Christian Fellowship

Hebrews 10:24–25: Believers are instructed to encourage one another and not neglect assembling together.

A healthy church community provides spiritual instruction, support, accountability, and opportunities for service.

Step 5 — Learn to Walk in the Holy Spirit

Galatians 5:16: Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Believers must learn to depend upon the Spirit's guidance and power for daily obedience.

Step 6 — Grow in Holiness and Christian Character

1 Peter 1:15–16: Believers are called to holiness because God is holy.

The Christian life involves continual spiritual growth and transformation.

Step 7 — Share the Gospel and Make Disciples

Matthew 28:19–20: Jesus commissions His followers to make disciples of all nations.

Salvation brings believers into God's redemptive mission and the privilege of sharing the Gospel with others.

PART XV — BIBLICAL CASE STUDIES OF SALVATION

Case Study 1: Nicodemus — John 3:1–21

His condition: Nicodemus was a knowledgeable religious leader.

His encounter: Jesus taught him the necessity of being born again.

The revelation: Religious knowledge and standing are not substitutes for spiritual rebirth.

Application: A person may understand religious practices without having personally responded to God's saving grace.

Case Study 2: The Woman at the Well — John 4:1–42

Her condition: The Samaritan woman came to the well with a complicated personal history and lived within deep social and religious divisions.

Her encounter: Jesus revealed Himself through the image of living water and exposed the truth of her circumstances.

The revelation: Jesus offers the gift of living water, and her testimony becomes the occasion for others to encounter Him.

Application: No past history or social barrier places someone beyond the reach of Christ's saving invitation.

Case Study 3: The Philippian Jailer — Acts 16:25–34

His condition: A jailer faced a crisis after an earthquake opened the prison doors.

His encounter: Paul and Silas proclaimed the Word of the Lord to him and his household.

His response: He believed, received the Gospel, and was baptized with his household.

Application: The Gospel demands a response of faith and leads naturally into obedience and new life.

Case Study 4: Zacchaeus — Luke 19:1–10

His condition: Zacchaeus was a wealthy chief tax collector.

His encounter: Jesus called him personally and entered his home.

His response: Zacchaeus demonstrated repentance through his commitment to generosity and restitution.

Luke 19:10 (KJV)

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Application: The grace of Christ produces practical evidence of repentance and transformed priorities.

Case Study 5: Saul of Tarsus — Acts 9:1–22

His condition: Saul persecuted followers of Jesus.

His encounter: The risen Christ confronted him on the road to Damascus.

His transformation: Saul's life was redirected from persecuting Christ's followers to proclaiming Jesus as the Son of God.

Application: God's saving grace can radically transform a person's identity, purpose, and direction.

PART XVI — DISCUSSION AND REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the biblical meaning of salvation?
2. Why does humanity need salvation according to Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23?
3. What did the death and resurrection of Jesus accomplish?
4. What is the difference between grace and works?
5. How do repentance and faith function in a person's response to the Gospel?
6. What does Jesus mean when He says that a person must be born again?
7. Explain the differences between justification, regeneration, reconciliation, and sanctification.
8. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation?
9. How does salvation establish a new relationship to the Lordship of Christ?

10. How is water baptism connected to the believer's response to the Gospel?
 11. What biblical assurances can a believer rely upon?
 12. Why is discipleship necessary after conversion?
 13. What is the difference between being spiritually born again and becoming spiritually mature?
 14. How does salvation affect a believer's behavior, relationships, and decisions?
 15. What is the believer's future hope according to Romans 8 and Revelation 21?
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PART XVII — SCRIPTURE MEMORY AND PERSONAL STUDY

Foundational Scriptures to Memorize

Week 1 — The Need for Salvation

- Romans 3:23
- Romans 6:23
- Isaiah 59:2

Week 2 — The Gift of Salvation

- John 3:16
- Romans 5:8
- Ephesians 2:8–9

Week 3 — Receiving Salvation

- Romans 10:9–10
- Romans 10:13
- Acts 3:19

Week 4 — The New Life in Christ

- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Romans 8:1
- Galatians 2:20

Week 5 — Assurance and Spiritual Growth

- 1 John 5:11–13
- Galatians 5:22–23
- Philippians 1:6

Personal Reflection Assignment

Read Ephesians chapters 1 and 2.

Identify every description of what God has accomplished for believers through Jesus Christ.

Then reflect on these questions:

- What was my spiritual condition apart from Christ?
- What has God done through Jesus to rescue me?
- What does Scripture say about my new identity in Christ?
- What areas of my life should increasingly reflect my faith in Jesus?
- How can I develop a more consistent life of prayer, Scripture study, and obedience?

CONCLUSION – SALVATION IS GOD'S REDEMPITIVE WORK

Salvation is the divine expression of God's love, mercy, righteousness, and grace toward humanity.

Through the finished work of Jesus Christ, humanity is offered forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, new spiritual life, adoption into His family, and the promise of eternal life.

Salvation is not earned by human performance, purchased through religious activity, or secured by association with a church organization.

It is God's gracious gift, received through genuine faith in Jesus Christ.

Yet the Gospel does not call believers to remain unchanged.

The grace that saves also calls believers into a new life of righteousness, holiness, spiritual maturity, and obedience to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Salvation establishes the foundation of our relationship with God.

Discipleship develops our walk with Him.

Sanctification expresses His transforming work within us.

Glorification brings His redemptive promise to its final completion.

Ephesians 2:4–5 (KJV)

*But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*

FINAL TEACHING DECLARATION

Salvation is not simply the forgiveness of a sinful past; it is entrance into a new life through Jesus Christ.

We are rescued by His grace, reconciled through His sacrifice, regenerated by His Spirit, established in His righteousness, and called to live under His Lordship.

Through salvation, we become children of God, citizens of His Kingdom, and witnesses of His redemptive power.

We are saved by grace, through faith, in Jesus Christ, for the glory of God.

Amen.

RECOMMENDED TEACHING STRUCTURE FOR BELIEVERS INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

This lesson can serve as the first foundation in the ministry's **Salvation & Next Steps Discipleship Pathway**, followed by Understanding Baptism, Understanding the Holy Spirit, Foundations of Discipleship, and Kingdom Living.

Session component	Suggested duration
Teaching and biblical exposition	60 minutes
Scripture discussions and questions	20 minutes
Prayer, ministry response and next steps	10 minutes
Total suggested session	90 minutes

This teaching can also form the foundation of a branded Believers International Ministries Salvation Study Guide, with student notes, fill-in-the-blank Scripture exercises, instructor guidance, and a salvation-to-baptism progression.

Publication and Scripture Notice

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