

What is salvation?

1 Peter 1:3-5

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3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,

5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Peter begins the body of his letter by ecstatically praising God. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

He then takes the remainder of three verses to tell us why God is deserving of praise.

- 1) Because of his great mercy
- 2) Because he has caused us to be born again
- 3) Because we have a living hope
- 4) Because Jesus has been resurrected
- 5) Because we have an imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance kept in heaven
- 6) Because we are being guarded through faith
- 7) Because our salvation will be revealed

Jason's sermon demonstrates how each of these reasons for praising God leads to the next reason. God in his wisdom gave us his mercy, which leads to our complete and total salvation. We will spend the rest of eternity not merely giving glory to God for his mercy, but continually comprehending more of the wonder of our salvation than we can possibly even know at this moment.

The idea of the *progressive* nature of salvation may seem new to some Christians. After all, the world is divided into only two camps: those who are saved and those who are. But we can also speak of those who are saved as those *are being saved* as well as those who *have been saved*. This is because salvation has a past, present, and future element. Our salvation is continually unfolding right before our very eyes.

For our purposes, as we grow in our knowledge of God's salvation and see its ever-widening impact on our lives and our futures, we should continually be brought back to one simple truth. Salvation is completely God's work and he gives it to us only by his grace and mercy. The theological term for this is *monergism*, which means that God, through the Holy Spirit, is the only one who cause men and women to be born again to new life.

Read how Venture Church defines salvation and its parts in our core beliefs:

- I. **Salvation-** Salvation is God's idea. He takes full responsibility for initiating salvation and carrying it to its eternal completion. All three persons of the Trinity are actively involved in salvation. There are four necessary parts of salvation that are true of every believing child of God. *John 15:13-16, Romans 5:8, John 6:44, Ephesians 2:1-5*

A. Regeneration

All people are born dead in their sins and unable to reach out to God for salvation. Salvation begins when God supernaturally awakens a dead spirit so that person can hear the Gospel, respond with belief in the Gospel, repent from his sins, and embrace Jesus as Lord. *John 3, Colossians 2:13 Titus 3:5, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 Peter 1:23, 1 John 5:1*

B. Justification

No person is saved by anything he does on his own merit. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone. The saved are declared justified before God at His judgment seat because of the sinless life of Jesus, his death as a substitute for our punishment on the cross, and his resurrection to secure the finality of victory over sin. *Genesis 15:6, Romans 3-5, Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 1:3-10, 1 John 2:2*

C. Sanctification

Because Jesus has already accomplished victory over sin, every person who belongs to Jesus is guaranteed to be able to battle sin in his own life. Through the Holy Spirit's work in our ongoing battle against sin, every Christian is being made more like Jesus in our desires, thoughts, and actions. *Romans 6:1-8:16, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 3:1-10, 1 John 3:9*

D. Glorification

The culmination of our salvation and sanctification will occur with the return of Jesus to earth. He will rule the earth in full glory and the Church (all of those who are saved) will rule alongside him as his specially chosen bride. *Romans 8:17-25, Ephesians 1:11-14, Philippians 1:6, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

Discussion Questions

- **What is Peter's posture toward God in light of his salvation?**
- **Where is Peter giving all of the credit for his salvation?**
- **Does Peter give the impression that he is someone who is continually learning new things about his own salvation?**
- **How are you blown away by the mercy of God?**
- **What aspect of salvation from this passage had you previously given little thought toward?**
- **Do you find it difficult or easy to explain the concept of being "born again?" (v.3)**
- **How do the many pieces of salvation work together for you?**
- **Are people tempted to sometimes take credit for some portion of salvation?**
- **How can you communicate salvation in a way that makes it attractive to others?**