

Firm Foundations for Christian Maturity

Sozo, Our Great Salvation

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I. Introductory Remarks

The Bible refers to our common salvation experience as a '**Great Salvation**'—a salvation that Old Testament prophets, righteous men, and even angels have longed to see but could not experience.

Hebrews 2:3 *how shall we escape if we neglect **so great a salvation**, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,*

Matthew 13:16-17 *"But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; ¹⁷ "for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.*

1 Peter 1:10-12 *Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, who was in them, was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹²To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven; things which angels desire to look into.*

In this lesson, our goal will be to look into this great salvation that has been freely given to us by the Father and to see why it is so great. What are the components of salvation that make it so great? How do we receive all that God intended for us to experience through this Great Salvation?

Every one of us begins life with a natural birth. Jesus referred to this birth as being "born of water" in *John 3:1-9*. Through Adam, sin entered into this world, and because of this sin, all of mankind is separated from God and therefore has a need for a Savior.^a Jesus is the Savior and the only way to man's salvation. There is no other way, no matter how hard one may try.^b

^a Romans 3:23

^b John 14:7 & Acts 4:12

II. The Components of This Great Salvation.

1. Salvation is For Everyone.

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

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

It is because He died for all that we can claim for ourselves and confidently extend to others the right and title to sonship and salvation through Christ, and live in a state of blessed assurance. The following scriptures make it very clear that Christ died for every person.

His sacrifice for all allows individuals to assert and share the entitlement to sonship and salvation through Christ, fostering a sense of assurance in their faith.

2 Corinthians 5:14 *For the love of Christ constrains us, because we judge thus: that if **One died for all**, then all died.*

Hebrews 2:9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for **everyone**.*

Romans 5:18 *Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift **came to all men**, resulting in justification of life.*

Since all humanity came under judgment in Adam, all humanity must come into at least the possibility of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:32 *For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on **all**.*

The truth of God's universal grace needs to be proclaimed fervently, a grace that springs from a love which cannot be limited temporally, geographically, racially, religiously, economically, sexually, or culturally, a love which has no limits except the limits which unbelief imposes.

Some might say that the word (all) refers to worldwide distribution of the church, rather than the universally potential redemptive work of Christ.

The problem with this thinking is that there are Scriptures such as *1 John 4:14-15* that personalize the atonement by using the word '**whoever.**'

1 John 4:14-15 *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. **Whoever** confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.*

It is crucial for us to understand that predestination does not teach who should be saved and who shouldn't be saved but simply teaches that God has determined or predestinated that each person who is born again by the Spirit of God will be adopted into His family and will be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ completely at His appearing. ^c

2. Salvation Comes Through the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Under the Old Covenant in the Old Testament, salvation came through the sacrificial blood of lambs and goats. When John the Baptist came on the scene, He introduced Jesus as the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

John 1:29 *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

It is through the blood sacrifice of Jesus that salvation is made possible. What is it about blood having to be spilled that is so important in relation to salvation?

Leviticus 17:11 *'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; **for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.**'*

Hebrews 9:22 *And according to the law, almost all things are purified with **blood**, and without shedding of **blood** there is no remission.*

This is why Jesus Christ is the only way to mankind's salvation. It was His shed blood that made atonement for our sin.

3. Why Jesus is the Only Way to Salvation.

^c 1 John 3:2, John 12:32, 1 John 2:2, John 12:32, 1 John 2:2, 1 Timothy 2:3-4, Titus 2:11 *For more information on the subject of predestination, please see <http://kenbirks.com/predestination.html>*

Scripture clearly states that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation for mankind. What is it about Jesus that separates Him from all other religions or spiritual figures?

John 14:6 *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

Acts 4:12 *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

The Reason Jesus is the only way to the Father is that He was and is both God and man. He came to us as the only begotten of the Father and gave Himself as a ransom for our sins by dying on the cross and pouring His blood out to make atonement for our sins.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 *For there is one God and one **Mediator** between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,*

Hebrews 9:13-16 *For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, ¹⁴how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? ¹⁵And for this reason He is the **Mediator** of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. ¹⁶For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.*

4. Salvation is a Free Gift from God to Us.

We must realize that salvation is a free gift from God and that there are no amount of good works we can do to earn it. It's Free!

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; **it is the gift of God**, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

Salvation has nothing to do with whether we deserve it. It is not based on how good we are or have been. It is a free gift of God's unmerited favor being bestowed upon our lives in spite of ourselves. It is totally based on our belief in the person of Jesus Christ and who we believe Him to be.

5. Salvation is based Upon Our Belief in Jesus Christ.

We must come to the place where we believe and confess what Jesus Christ has accomplished for our salvation.

Romans 10:9-10 *...that if you **confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead**, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation.*

6. Salvation Demands Repentance and Obedience to God's Word.

Repentance and obedience to Jesus and the Word of God are absolutely necessary in the salvation experience, because Jesus has become to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation.

Hebrews 5:9 *And having been perfected, **He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.***

Matthew 18:2-4 *Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, {3} and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, **unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.** {4} "Therefore, whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

A true heart belief in the Lord Jesus Christ will bring forth repentance in our lives, as Matthew 3:8 says, "bear fruit *worthy of repentance.*"

III. The Process of Salvation.

When does salvation begin in a person's life? Is it when a prayer is first offered up to God with a simple confession of who Jesus Christ is and asking forgiveness for our sins? Or is that just a seed that is trying to be planted in our hearts? Or is it when the seed actually takes root and begins to produce fruit?

The Parable of the Sower in *Matthew 13* shows that there is quite a process involved in ensuring the seed gets planted. The Parable also shows us that there is much warfare from the enemy of our faith over the seed of salvation.

Matthew 13:19 *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and **does not understand it**, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.*

1. There Must Be a Spiritual Revelation and Understanding.

- **The key presented here is to understand what is taking place.**

We need a revelation in our hearts about what is taking place. We need to understand how the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin and makes us righteous before God the Father. Without this basic understanding and revelation, the enemy will steal the seed before it gets a chance to be planted in the soil of our hearts.

- **The Scriptural Revelation & Understanding**

1 John 1:7-9 *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

Hebrews 10:12-14 *But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by **one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.***

We have to understand that we are now righteous in God. We are standing in His righteousness and not our own. Our own righteousness will always be as filthy rags^d before God our Father, but Jesus' righteousness is a perfect righteousness that enables us to continually come boldly to the throne of grace^e no matter how many times we may blow it. As far as God is concerned, we have been perfected forever^f by the one offering that Jesus made through His death, burial, and resurrection.

Proverbs 24:16 *For a **righteous man** may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity.*

This is the understanding we need to prevent Satan from stealing the seed God has planted in our hearts.

2. The Seed Must Be Watered and Nurtured.

^d Isaiah 64:6

^e Hebrews 4:16

^f Hebrews 10:14

Matthew 13:20-21 *"But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.*

This begins when we come to genuine repentance.⁹ Repentance, which begins when we confess Jesus as Lord and allows our minds to be renewed through the reading of God's word and through preaching, teaching, and personal Bible Study to wash over us, renewing our minds

1 Peter 2:1-3 (NLT) *So get rid of all malicious behavior and deceit. Don't just pretend to be good! Be done with hypocrisy and jealousy and backstabbing. ²You must crave pure spiritual milk so that you can grow into the fullness of your salvation. Cry out for this nourishment as a baby cries for milk, ³ now that you have had a taste of the Lord's kindness.*

Romans 12:2 (NLT) *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.*

Ephesians 5:26-27 (NKJV) *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

3. Stay Focused on Heavenly Things to Avoid the Cares of the World.

Matthew 13:22 (NKJV) *"Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.*

Colossians 3:1-3 (NLT) *Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. ²Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth. ³For you died when Christ died, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.*

IV. The Salvation Package – What is Included.

Salvation is much more than just being saved from Hell and going to Heaven. It

⁹ Repentance will be discussed more thoroughly in the Firm Foundations study on [Repentance](#).

involves every aspect of our lives, spirit, soul and body. When we are born again by God's Spirit, we become partakers of His Divine Nature, which brings us into a rich inheritance.

2 Peter 1:2-4 (NKJV) *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Ephesians 1:11(NKJV) *In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,*

Ephesians 1:17-20 (NKJV) *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

We see this when we look at the Greek words for "Saved and Salvation." They are words that include much more than we may have realized.

1. The Full meaning of The Words "Saved and Salvation".

One of the reasons our Salvation is so great is that it involves more than just the saving of man's soul; it involves total salvation for his spirit, soul, and body. God's desire is for us to experience the fullness of what this Great Salvation has to offer us. The Greek words for Salvation and saved reveal the fullness of what Jesus accomplished when He went to the cross.

The Greek words for "saved" and "salvation" are "Sozo" and "Soteria", which mean to save, deliver, protect, heal, preserve, to do well, be or make whole, and rescue or safety.

The chart on the next page shows you how these two words are translated in the New Testament and reveals what the Great Salvation encompasses.

The Full meaning of what it means to be saved and experience Salvation.

Health – Survival	Healed	Preserved	Do Well
Acts 27:34	Acts 14:9	2 Timothy 4:18	John 11:12
	Mark 5:23		
	Luke 8:36		
Be whole	Made whole	Saved – Save	Salvation
Matthew 9:21-22	Mark 6:56	Mark 8:35, 16:16	Romans 1:16
Mark 10:52	Mark 15:30-31	Romans 1:10	
Luke 8:48-50	Luke 9:56	2 Timothy 3:15	
		1 Corinthians 1:21	2 Timothy 3:15
		1 Timothy 1:15, 2:15	
		James 5:15	
	Luke 18:42	Mark 16:16	

The following passages of scripture bear this truth out:

Acts 27:34*"This is for your **survival** (soteria)."*

Acts 14:9*"Faith to be **healed** (sozoed)."*

2 Timothy 4:18*"**Preserve (sozo) me** for His heavenly kingdom."*

John 11:12*"Lord, if he sleeps he will **get well** (sozo)."*

Mark 6:56*"And as many as touched Him were **made well** (sozo)."*

- **The Old Testament type of Salvation is consistent with N.T. teaching.**

In the Old Testament, we have the type of Moses leading the Children of Israel out of Egypt. Egypt represents slavery and bondage from which they were delivered. In Exodus 12, we read that the Passover was instituted when God spoke to Moses, instructing each family to prepare a lamb to be sacrificed so that the blood of the lamb could be put on the doorposts of their homes. That night, when God went through the land with the last plague, He smote the firstborn of every person and creature, except for those who had applied the blood to their doorposts. The Children of Israel were also told to partake of the lamb as they left Egypt.

Exodus 12:5-6 (NKJV) *'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

Exodus 12:11-14 (NKJV) *'And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So, you shall eat it in haste. It*

is the Lord's Passover. ¹² 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. ¹³ 'Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ 'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

When the children of Israel left Egypt as they had been commanded to do so, there was not one feeble or sick person among them. Partaking of the lamb was for their healing, deliverance, and preservation.

Psalms 105:37 (NLT) *But he brought his people safely out of Egypt, loaded with silver and gold; there were no sick or feeble people among them.*

- **It is also consistent with King David's understanding & teaching.**

Psalms 103:2-7 (NLT) *Praise the LORD, I tell myself, and never forget the good things he does for me. ³ He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. ⁴ He ransoms me from death and surrounds me with love and tender mercies. ⁵ He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagle's! ⁶ The LORD gives righteousness and justice to all who are treated unfairly. ⁷ He revealed his character to Moses and his deeds to the people of Israel.*

3. God's Desire is to Bless Us Abundantly – He Wants us to Do Well.

John 10:10 (NKJV) *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

2 Peter 1:2-4 (NKJV) *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Psalms 68:19 (NKJV) *Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation! Selah*

4. We are Delivered from the Enemy's Devices and Preserved.

2 Timothy 4:18 (NKJV) *And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!*

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV) *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

V. Concluding Remarks.

Our salvation is great and all-encompassing. We have so much to be grateful for.