

"Being Saved"

Have you considered the great blessing that God gives in saving you from sin? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're exploring what it means to be saved.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Lord's Way is indeed the way of salvation. The Lord Jesus said in Luke 19 verse 10, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." His love and compassion for those who have strayed morally and strayed from the truth is unquestionable. He seeks the lost and wants to find them, just as a shepherd searches for lost sheep. And I hope you have an open heart and a willingness to listen and change as He calls for you. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

The prodigal son wasn't like the lost sheep or the lost coin; he chose to leave his father and pursue a life of sin. He had to face life's harshest realities before he came to his senses. He thought sin would bring him happiness, but all it brought him was misery. He became ashamed of himself and no longer thought of himself as worthy to be called his father's son.

The father, however, said to his servants, "Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found." And they began to celebrate (Luke 15:22 to 24). God celebrates when those who are lost are found, and those who are spiritually dead become spiritually alive. Your greatest blessing is to be saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus, but you must answer His call.

Now this is an important study on being saved; it's part of a series, "Take Up Your Cross"; and it's free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. Now we also have downloadable materials free on our website at www.searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Titus 3:3 to 7, and explore what it means to be saved.

Our reading comes from Paul's letter to Titus chapter 3 verses 3 through 7. Where he talks about the beauty of our salvation. Verse 3.

For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Oh, what a wonderful salvation we enjoy. Let's pray together. Father we're so thankful that be Your mercy and grace with great love that You have opened a door to save us by that washing of regeneration. Father help us to come to You, to take up our crosses and follow You every day. In Jesus name, Amen.

Salvation in Christ affects every aspect of our hearts and lives. We can have no greater blessing than to know and follow Christ. And we follow away from worldliness and we follow into holiness. We must never think salvation doesn't matter. You can't enter heaven unsaved. We all need to be covered by the grace of God, to be saved by the blood of Jesus. And only those whose names are written in the

book of life enter heaven. You can't enter your way to heaven; you need the Savior. What will the Savior, Jesus Christ, do for you?

Well, first, in Christ we find redemption. To redeem is "to ransom, to buy back," so as to deliver someone from slavery or a curse. Jesus paid the price of redemption. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 20:28 that, "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Peter explains, in 1 Peter 1:18 to 19, "knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ." Jesus redeemed us personally.

1 Peter 2:24 says, "and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." He gave his head to a crown of thorns, His face to spit and slaps, His back to a cruel scourging, His hands and feet to nails, and His side to a spear. He was humiliated on the cross and mercilessly mocked, but He endured it all to taste death for every person. And His sacrifice calls us to redemption and to a new life.

Now redemption is a relief from all the wickedness. Titus 2 and verse 14 says that Christ Jesus "gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds." You see God wanted something better for you. He wanted you to be pure and zealous for good, not lawless and living in sin. The difference between being lost and being saved is a matter of character and of destiny. The Lord Jesus wants what will bless you and everyone around you rather than what will curse you and everyone you touch.

Our redemption from sin came at a great cost; it was not cheap! And God wants His redeemed souls to live godly lives. Romans 6 verses 12 to 14 says, "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God." When we surrender to God, we find our freedom. And God paid the price to win our release.

Second, in Christ we find justification. Well when Jesus redeemed us through His blood, He also justified us. Now to justify is to "vindicate, to acquit, or to pronounce and treat as righteous." A justified person has been "set free" from sin or "made pure" from any sin or guilt of sin. Paul explained in Acts 13:38 to 39, "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him (Jesus) forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.

In the New Testament the word "just" means that which is fair or right, and this was extended to include efforts to establish righteousness. A justified person is declared innocent or "not guilty." Justification means I stand right before God, "just-as-if-I'd" never sinned. God doesn't hold me responsible for sin, when I'm justified, because Jesus made me righteous through the sacrifice of His body and blood. A righteous person doesn't need to fear punishment for his sins. They are forgiven. 2 Corinthians 5:19 says that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses (sins) against them."

Psalm 103:11 to 12 reminds us, "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us." The Lord God said in Isaiah 43:25, "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins." When God forgives us, He no longer holds our sins against us. He doesn't look at us as guilty sinners but as His children who have been cleansed of sin by the blood of Jesus.

Third, in Christ we are sanctified. Now to sanctify means “to set apart for a holy purpose, that is, to make holy.” The “holy” is separated from the common and isolated for God’s service. In Christ we become holy people. The inspired apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:9 to 11, “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. (Then he says) Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, (you were made holy) but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.” The blood of Jesus washes our souls, makes us holy, and declares us guilt free in the name of the Lord Jesus. And what a blessing to belong to Jesus Christ.

Belonging to Jesus, however, demands that we pursue a transformed life. Paul told Timothy in 2 Tim. 2:19 to 22, “Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.’ Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.” God didn’t save us so that we could return to sin. He wanted us to pursue what is right and good, living holy lives.

There are two aspects to our sanctification: first that which God does in saving us from sin; and second, that which God expects of us in separating us from sinful ways. 1 Peter 1:14 to 16 says, “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’” Well, how are we to pursue holiness? Well we must know the truth. The Lord Jesus prayed to the Father for His followers in John 17:17, “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” The Scriptures define what attitudes and behaviors are holy. When we obey the Word of God, we’re practicing a holy life.

A person who obeys the calling of the gospel becomes holy. A holy person is a “saint.” And everyone who is washed in the blood of Jesus is a saint. The belief saints are some special group of people within the church is a man-made notion. The Scriptures call all people whom God sanctifies saints (1 Corinthians 1 verse 2).

Fourth, in Christ we find atonement with God. The word “atone” means to make amends, to make matters right, to once again please a wronged or offended person, with the result that the people who were at odds with each other are then “at one.” God wants us to live in harmony with Him and with His teaching. The word “atonement” is literally “at-one-ment.” This means we can once again be in agreement with God and be reconciled. Paul reminded the Gentile Christians at Ephesus of their condition before they knew Christ and after they became Christians.

Before they became Christians, Paul said, “Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands— remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” Now thankfully, they didn’t stay in that condition. Verse 13 says, “But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

After they became Christians, Paul describes them very differently. "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit." Now these holy people are now God's family, saints, and dwelling with God.

Fifth, in Christ we are reconciled to God. Now the purpose of our salvation is to transform our lives so we may be reconciled to God and live with Him forever. God loves us and wants us to be friends to be in a right relationship with Him. To reconcile means that we're once again made friends and close to God. Sin separated us and destroyed our relationship with God, but the blood of Christ opens the way so that we can draw close to God once again. And the Bible pictures sin as a barrier, yes, to our relationship with God. But you know what, when we come to Him we can be reconciled. Remember that sin brakes that relationship. Isaiah 59:1 and 2 says, "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. But your iniquities (sinful things) have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear." God cannot approve of sin, because sin is offensive to Him. Sin is unrighteous and lawless (1 John 3 and verse 4 and 1 John 5:17). Psalm 5 and verse 4 says, "For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You."

Habakkuk 1:13 says, "You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong." God determines what is sin; and we must not think that we can overrule what God calls sin. We can't continue in sin, we can't ignore God's teaching, and stand in God's favor. Sin destroys our relationship with God and makes us hostile toward the One who will one day be our judge. Sin makes us enemies of God. God, however, wishes to make His enemies His children and to bring them near by the blood of Christ.

Colossians 1:19 to 22 says, "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him (that is in Jesus), and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And 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, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach." The death of Jesus is a demonstration of God's surpassing love, which restores our relationship with God. God has acted in Christ so that we are no longer enemies of God. Be reconciled to God by believing in Christ, loving Him, and obeying Him.

Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You have opened the door for us to be reconciled to You. Help us to take up our crosses and follow You. In Jesus name, Amen.

The wages of sin is death and eternal separation from God. The Lord couldn't be a righteous God if He simply overlooked sin and took us to heaven anyway. Deuteronomy 32:3 to 4 says, "For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He." You see the Lord hated sin but He loved mankind to such an extent that He sent His Son as a sacrifice to atone for their sins.

Now your salvation cost the Son everything; your salvation isn't cheap. He suffered as no one should suffer and died as no one should die to save you from sin. Now being saved isn't trivial; it matters! Jesus asked in Mark 8:36 to 38, "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? "For whoever is ashamed of Me and

My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

Now if you wish to be saved, put your faith in Jesus Christ and in His word. Repent of your sins. Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Be baptized into Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2 verse 38). When you're baptized, God washes away your sins by the blood of Jesus, makes you holy and guilt free, and adds you to His church. Come to the Savior and do it today!

We pray that today's study about being saved has stirred you consider the Lord's grace and obey the Lord. Now if you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message or the booklet "Take Up Your Cross," mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches and many fine resources on our website www.searchtv.org. You can also watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! And we also offer free bible correspondence courses. We believe you'll benefit a great deal from that. As always we encourage to tell a friend about our program.

And remember we love you and God bless you, from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.