

Prayer List

Veda
Wallace
Sheila
Judy
Rose
Ken

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 10:00 a.m.
Assembly 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

What flower were the capitals on the temple columns shaped like?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Ezekiel - Ezekiel 27:15

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Salvation

L. A. Stauffer

The dominant term in the New Testament to denote God's eternal purpose and goal for man is—salvation. The Greek words in their various forms—“save,” “savior,” “salvation”—occur some 180 or so times and mean essentially what they did to the ordinary man or woman on the streets of Athens or Corinth.

The New Testament was written in koine—the “common” Greek used in everyday circumstances of life. The root idea of this family of words is “safety,” “deliverance,” “rescue,” “freedom,” “escape,” or “wholeness” and was applied to salvation or rescue from imminent danger, safety after deliverance or escape from ominous threats, freedom from condemnation in judicial proceedings, and wholeness of a body healed of disease.

New Testament writers employ the words similarly to denote escape and freedom from physical danger or harm. Noah and his family were “saved” from the flood (Hebrews 11:7), Israel from Egyptian bondage (Acts 7:25), and the apostles from a storm on the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 8:25). Jesus was challenged to “save” himself from the cross if he be the Son of God (Matthew 27:40, 42) and a number of diseased people

called on Jesus to “make them whole” or “save” them from maladies of the body (Mark 5:23, 28, 34).

No fundamental shift in meaning is discoverable in a study and analysis of these words in the spiritual context of man’s relationship to God his Creator—a relationship that was broken and severed by sin (Isaiah 59:1, 2; Ephesians 2:1–3). Spiritual salvation essentially denotes rescue from sin and its eternal consequences. Use of the word in its various forms is hardly distinguishable in application from sister words: “justification,” “redemption,” “sanctification,” and “reconciliation.” And yet each of these terms has its own nuance. Salvation, as is evident from the word’s meaning, implies a circumstance of “danger” or “threat” which calls for “rescue” or “deliverance,” and that danger and threat is the vengeance of God against sin—a consequence all sinners face (2 Thessalonians 1 7–9).

And that includes every man. All have sinned and have fallen short of God’s glory, the scriptures plainly state; there is none righteous, no not one (Romans 3:9, 10, 23). But what’s equally clear and important is that the end result for sinners exceeds the curse of the earth and the physical death that passed to all men through Adam’s sin (Genesis 3; see Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:21). When Paul writes that the wages of sin is death, he includes the “second death”—a lake that bums with fire and brimstone (see Romans 6:23; Revelation 21:8). Salvation for sinners is in essence, according to Biblical terminology, “snatching them out of the fire” (Jude 23).

But this begins with salvation or “deliverance” from sin, which is defined as “remission” or “forgiveness” of sins (Luke 1:77; see Acts 2:38, 40). Once man is “freed” from the bondage or slavery of sin (John 8:32–35), he is also “rescued” from the wrath of God (Romans 5:8, 9), whose justice insists that sin be punished. Finally, salvation denotes the eternal “wholeness” and “safety” of man in the heavenly kingdom, where life that is incorruptible and undefiled is reserved for

men of faith (1 Peter 1:3–9). There they “escape” the curse of pain, groaning, and suffering from earth life and physical death by the redemption of the body (Romans 8:18–25).

New Testament writers, to depict the one who rescues man, use the word “savior” some 24 times to denote both God and Christ. Seven or eight times they write of “God our Savior” (1 Timothy 1:1) and another 15 or 16 times of “our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:11). On one occasion they speak of “the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Jude 25), a reference to saving the world by grace through the sacrifice of Christ—the message of the gospel of salvation (1 John 4:14; Romans 5:8, 9; 1:16). Oh, that theologians would not stop here; that they would teach men the way to the cross and to God’s grace. The fatal flaw of reformation theology and denominational preaching is the doctrines of “grace only” and “faith only,” an effort to eliminate conditions that man must meet to receive the gift of salvation. Man, all will surely agree, must come to Christ, the Savior, and to the cross where God’s grace abounds and cleansing is effected by the blood of Christ. There man is loosed or washed of his sins (Revelation 1:5). In this matter the gospel is clear beyond misunderstanding.

Sinners come to Christ and to God’s grace by what Paul called the “obedience of faith”—the message he was commissioned to preach to the world of sinners (Romans 1:5; 16:26). Sinners become sons of God and heirs with Christ when by faith they are baptized into Christ and put on Christ (Galatians 3:26, 27; Romans 8:16, 17). Baptism by faith is into Christ’s death where his blood was shed and sins are washed away (Romans 6:3; Acts 22:16). This is the gospel message and by it men who walk by faith are saved: rescued from sin and its eternal consequences.

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