

## WHY BAPTISTS BELIEVE WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE, PART 9

### **HOW TO BE SAVED**

I want to begin by reading out of Ephesians Chapter 2. These are verses you all know: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). *Sola gratia*, grace alone – one of the fundamental building blocks of the Protestant Reformation, and it comes from this passage here.

So, as we talk about how to be saved, there are a number of terms used in Christian circles for salvation – being saved, redeemed, reconciled, justified, set free. We’re going to see in a passage later where Jesus uses the expression “born again.” And then you have terms such as believe, come to faith, freed from sin, and so forth.

The Apostle Peter is standing before the Sanhedrin speaking boldly about salvation. This is what he declared – “Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by Him this man is standing before you well” (Acts 4:10). Remember, what started the whole uproar with Peter and John was that they had healed a man outside the temple who had been lame. That man is now standing before them. Peter goes on to say... “This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:11-12).

[*Question 1*]. Who is Peter talking about when he makes this statement here in Acts 4:12? What name are we saved by? **Jesus Christ**. He’s the only way to be saved, the only way to heaven.

So then, we Baptists believe that faith in Jesus Christ is the only way to be saved. That's what Peter just preached. Under the heading of "Salvation" this is what the Baptist Faith and Message says: "Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord." This is pretty fundamental.

Let's discuss this concept of salvation, the idea of being saved. What are we saved, rescued, delivered FROM? From Hell, separation from God, spiritual death, the consequences of sin, God's wrath, and we could go on and on. Let me share with you a passage of scripture that you are probably not familiar with. It comes from Isaiah Chapter 59. This is out of the New Living Translation and describes the human condition apart from God: "It's your sins that have cut you off from God... Your lips are full of lies, and your mouth spews corruption. No one cares about being fair and honest... They conceive evil deeds and then give birth to sin. All their activity is filled with sin, and violence is their trademark. Their feet run to do evil, and they rush to commit murder. They think only about sinning. Misery and destruction always follow them. They don't know where to find peace or what it means to be just and good..." (Isaiah 59:2-8).

That sounds a lot like people today, doesn't it? It's as though Isaiah was reading our newspapers! The human condition hasn't changed much since Isaiah's day. The clothes we wear, how we get around, the foods we eat, the practices of the culture - these have all changed. But the human condition hasn't changed and so, our sins have separated us from God. As a result, we will have to face His wrath, His judgment. The prognosis is not good.

That's why Jesus came to earth, isn't it? To die on the cross, to rise again. He did all that to save us from our sins and the penalty of those sins. God's wrath - that is what we are saved FROM. But what are we saved TO?

In *[Question 2]* you have been give four choices. What is the PRIMARY purpose of salvation? Think about it this way: Why did God create human beings to begin with? Why did He make mankind in Genesis Chapters 1 and 2? For fellowship. Given the sinful, rebellious, unregenerate condition we were in, God had to do something. He could not enjoy fellowship with us as long as we were in that condition, could He? God had to intervene. So that's the answer - **to have a relationship with God.**

When we were saved, we received full coverage and benefits. Yes, we escaped the fire of hell. And yes, we avoided an eternal separation from God that we were doomed to face. That's all mercy. Yes, we were promised that we would spend an eternity with God surrounded by His glorious presence. That's grace. What you need to understand is that the benefits of our salvation are not all way off in the future somewhere. We can enjoy many of the benefits of our salvation right now, in this life, while we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and as we grow in our relationship with the Lord Jesus.

So then, we are saved from the wrath of God (Romans 5:8). We become a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). We become completely new people; God's workmanship created for good works (Ephesians 2:10).

The million-dollar question is: HOW are we saved? Different religions will tell you different things. This is what we Baptists believe - the "Romans Road to Salvation." In the Book of Romans Paul lays it out the building blocks of salvation for us.

*[Question 3]* READ Romans 3:10. Paul is quoting here from his Bible, the Old Testament, from Psalm 14. Who is good? "**None** is

righteous, no, not one.” That’s the first thing we need to understand.

“None is righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:10). “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Who has sinned? “For **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” This goes right along with what Isaiah said earlier.

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned” (Romans 5:12). Where did sin come from? “Just as **sin** came into the world through one man, and **death** through sin, and so death spread to **all** men because **all** sinned.” The “one man” spoken of here is, of course, Adam. He gets the blame. He was the spiritual leader of his home. He was there when Eve was being tempted and he didn’t step in and stop her. He then ate of the forbidden fruit knowing it was wrong. Well, that’s the bad news. The good news is...

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). What does God require as payment for sin? “For the wages of sin is **death**, but the **free gift** of God is eternal **life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

“But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Who paid the price for our sin? “But God shows His **love** for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ **died** for us.” You and I weren’t even born yet. We were centuries away from even being a thought. Yet Christ died for us! We don’t have to go clean up our act to be saved. Jesus saves us right where we’re at.

“Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9). What do we have to do to be saved? “If you **confess** with your mouth that **Jesus** is Lord and **believe** in your heart that God **raised** Him from the dead, you

will be saved.” We talked before about how important the resurrection is. Paul states here that it is even fundamental to your salvation. You believe in the resurrection of Jesus and not just that He was a good man or a great moral teacher. It is a fundamental tenet of our faith!

“For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:10, 13).

So, there you have the Romans Road. This is what you take someone down if you were telling them how to be saved. You can do it all right out of the book of Romans. As plain and simple as that truth seems to us, it’s amazing how so many people stumble over it. Peter (quoting from Isaiah) refers to Jesus as “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense” (1 Peter 2:8). Some people rationalize that they really aren’t that bad. But the Bible says that they are. Some people claim there is more than one way to heaven. Talk to your Muslim friends. They’ll tell you that while Jesus may be one way to heaven there are other ways to heaven such as through Islam. But Jesus said “I am THE way and THE truth and THE life, no one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Still others say it can’t be that simple. “You’re just oversimplifying things.” But the Bible clearly says, “confess with your mouth” and “believe in your heart.”

*[Question 4]* Salvation is... **check all three**. It certainly is a past event if you have already confessed Jesus as your Lord. You can think back to when that happened to you. For me it was in 1968 when I was just a boy in elementary school. When you first got saved there was a spiritual rebirth. This is called “regeneration.” Because of your faith in Jesus Christ, God declared you as righteous. This is called “justification.” Let me dispel a wrong teaching that’s out there. We are not declared “Not guilty.” That’s not it at all. The fact is we ARE guilty. When we are justified, we are declared righteous. That is different from

being declared “Not guilty.” And we are declared righteous, not because of anything that we did, but because of what Jesus did.

Salvation is also an ongoing process. The life-long process of growing in our faith and becoming more and more like Christ is called “sanctification.”

Finally, salvation is a future assurance. When we enter God’s glorious presence, ushered into heaven after this life ends; when “our faith becomes sight,” as the hymn says; whether that life ends by way of physical death by the Rapture, we will receive a new, glorified body. This is called “glorification.” So then, the answer is that salvation is all three.

Next, we will get into how do I really know that I’m saved? That’s a very important question for you to settle.