

# SOTERIOLOGY

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# QUESTIONS FOR SOTERIOLOGY

In your “small group,” discuss and answer the following questions.

Prepared by Patrick J. Griffiths

## PART 1 - QUESTIONS

1. In Romans 3:25, why is the idea of a public display for propitiation shocking?
2. In 1 John 1:5-22, what is the pattern and how inclusive is 1 John 2:1, 2?
3. In Romans 3:21-26 and 5:1-11, how many “salvation” [i.e. propitiation] words occur?
4. In Colossians 1:12-23, how would you begin organizing and explaining biblical salvation?
5. In Eph. 1:6b-12 and 1 Peter 1:13-23, what are some of the more prominent features explaining biblical salvation?
6. In Eph. 2:11-22; Heb. 10:19-22, what do the believing now have as a consequence of His cross work?
7. In Hebrews 4:11-16, how is this access described?
8. In 1 John 1:5-2:2, what affect does the blood of Jesus have on the believing?
9. In Revelation 1:5, 6, what do these verses tell us about our salvation?
10. In Hebrews 4:11-16, what does it mean to have access to the Father?
11. Is there a difference between being washed/cleansed and being sanctified?
12. If every believer is an overcomer, then is overcoming something we have to achieve?
13. What happens if one is not an overcomer?

# PART 1

## INTRODUCTION

This is one of the most celebrated truths contained in the Word of God. It is only after seeing the utter hideousness of sin and our complete helplessness to do anything about it that one can begin to appreciate the magnitude of their deliverance.

In light of our recent discovery with regard to man's spiritual deadness and ultimate aversion for God, we need to ask ourselves the question, "How can anyone be saved?" This is the question asked of our Lord by His disciples in Matthew 19:26 after His interaction with the Rich Young Ruler (Matt. 19:16-30).

- <sup>25</sup> When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"  
<sup>26</sup> But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

I would like us to begin by asking ourselves several questions.

Salvation's importance is seen in man's condition. When God chose to save mankind, He had but one option. There is only one thing that can appease the wrath of God and it is through the shedding of blood (Lev. 17:11; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 3:25; 5:9; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14,20; Heb. 13:12; 1 Peter 1:7,18-20; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:5).

When we sin, we sin against a holy and limitless God (Genesis 39:9; Psalm 51:4). The offence is against God and thus the penalty exacted must be in proportion to the crime. How can a sinful and limited humanity hope to pay the penalty for a crime against a holy and limitless God? Apart from divine intervention the payment due is an eternal separation from His presence. This is why hell's torment is eternal in nature. Finitude cannot be infinite. The thought is repugnant to our mind because it places us in a very vulnerable position. Yet, God has not left us without hope or a means of escape.

Remember, His original design was that we spend an eternity enjoying His presence. We, not God, ruined the opportunity through our rebellious acts of treason against Him. However, God has graciously secured for us a means by which the penalty of sin and its resultant debt could be paid in full. And the payment's name is Jesus.

Salvation is not left in the abstract. It is not simply an idea or concept. Salvation is embodied in a person who is tangible. Salvation is relationship oriented.

### I. WHAT IS SALVATION?

Salvation is that which has been secured by Christ in His (1) active [life] and (2) passive [death] obedience. This is what Jesus did. It is the making of a sinner acceptable before a sin hating God by the life and death of God's Son Jesus. Salvation's provision is appropriated to man by the actions of repentance and faith. Repentance is the consequence of seeing one's self for what he is in light of who God is.

Repentance turns from the idolatry of self. Faith turns to God in complete and utter dependence. Faith recognizes the depletion of self and the satisfaction of Jesus. This is what man must do. But even the faith exercised is to be considered a gift from God and not an innate ability within man's make-up.

Salvation simply means to save or deliver. The full Christian usage means saving from eternal death and endowing a person with everlasting life (Romans 5:9; Hebrews 7:25).

- Heb. 7:25 Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.
- Rom. 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Hebrews 7:25 speaks of His ability (**dunamai**) in securing a salvation which lacks nothing. It is complete or perfect (**panteles**). It will not have to be replenished nor will it fade in time.

Romans uses the simple preposition **apo** implying separation. All those who trust in Him will be separated from the wrath that is a consequence of sin.

The use of the article before wrath (**tas orgas**) makes the word stand out distinctly. It is not speaking of a wrath that is general or abstract [i.e. tribulation], but rather the wrath that is the consequence of divine retribution. It is the wrath awaiting the unbelieving in the Day of Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15 [i.e. Great White Throne]).

- Mt 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, **who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?**"
- Joh 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but **the wrath of God abides on him.**"
- Ro 1:18 **For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**
- Ro 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart **you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,**
- Eph 2:3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and **were by nature children of wrath,** even as the rest.
- Eph 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for **because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.**
- 1Th 1:10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, **who rescues us from the wrath to come.**
- 1Th 2:16 hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. **But wrath has come upon them to the utmost.**
  - The word "utmost" is the same as in Heb. 7:25.
- 1Th 5:9 **For God has not destined us for wrath,** but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

(NAS95)

## II. THE IMMEASURABLE RICHES OF HIS GRACE ([riches | **ploutos**] Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:7; 3:8, 16)

This is the salvation that has been secured for those who believe by the finished work of Christ on Calvary. This is what He delivers us from (Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:5, 6).

There are several Biblical words that describe the idea behind salvation.

For further study, see **NINE WORDS** booklet.

Our Bible tells us that “without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission of sin” (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22). The book of Hebrews is very clear that our Lord Jesus through His own blood entered the holy place once for all and secured an eternal redemption for those who believe (Heb. 9:12; 1 Peter 3:18).

A. God is **Propitiated** Through His Blood (Rom. 3:21-26; 1 John 1:5-2:2).

In Romans 3:25 there appears to be some parallelism between verse 24 with reference to Christ Jesus and verse 25 concerning the blood. The blood should be understood as representing all that our Lord is. The **en** is used in an instrumental sense, “by means of” instead of location.

B. We Are **Justified** Through His Blood (Rom. 5:6-11).

Justification, like propitiation, is *by means of* His blood (εν).

C. We Have **Peace | Reconciliation** Through His Blood (Col. 1:12-21).

Colossians 1:20, like Ephesians 1:7, used the preposition δια, “through”.

D. We Have **Redemption** Through His Blood ([**apolutrosis**] Eph. 1:6b-12; Col. 1:12-21; 1 Peter 1:13-23).

A different preposition is used in Ephesians 1:7. Δια with the genitive carries the idea of “through.” Our redemption is secured because we have passed “through” His blood. By our union with Him we are now identified in Him and thus have passed *through* Him.

First Peter 1:18, 19 notes several negative listings concerning redemption and then uses the phrase, (“but precious blood”). The **alla** is a strong contrastive conjunction. It sets what follows against what has preceded. The only thing that can redeem is the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

There is a similar idea with “purchase | redeem” from **agorazo**.

- 1Co 6:20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.
- 1Co 7:23 You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men.
- 1Co 7:30 and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods,
- Rev. 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its

seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,

- Re 14:3, 4

<sup>3</sup>and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. <sup>4</sup>It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, {redeemed: Gr. bought}

Although Acts 20:28 uses a different word for “purchase” [**peripoieomai**] both teach a singular idea. Salvation is “By means of” His blood.

- E. We Have **Access** Through His Blood (Eph. 2:11-22; Heb. 4:11-16; 10:19-22).

Both Ephesians 2:13 and Hebrews 10:19 again use the preposition εἰς, “by means of.”

- F. We Are **Sanctified** Through His Blood (Heb. 13:12).

Hebrews 13:12 also uses the small preposition δια. Our sanctification comes about only as we are passed through His blood. Such thought speaks of our identification with the person of Christ. Our complete union with the Lord Jesus Christ results in our reconciliation as well as our sanctification.

- G. We Are **Cleansed** Through His Blood (1 John 1:5-2:2; Rev. 1:5a-6).

Twice John uses “cleanse” in chapter 1 (vv. 7, 9). The blood of Jesus Christ separates me from all of my sin. There is no pocket or trace or residue of sin somehow finding a means of escaping from the cleansing power of His blood. *All of my sin* means exactly that.

We Are **Washed** White Through His Blood (Rev. 7:14). Revelation 7:14 used the preposition εἰς. It is the only time **pluno** occurs in the NT.

Revelation 1:5 uses two prepositions already noted. The cleansing that we enjoy is from *all* of our sin and it is *by means of* His blood.

“Unto him that loveth us (tôi agapônti hêmâs). Dative of the articular present (not aorist agapêsanti) active participle of agapaô in a doxology to Christ, the first of many others to God and to Christ (Re 1:6; 4:11; 5:9,12; 7:10,12, etc.). For the thought see Joh 3:16. Loosed (**lusanti**). First aorist active participle of luô (Aleph A C), though some MSS. (P Q) read **lousanti** (washed), a manifest correction. Note the change of tense. Christ released us once for all, but loves us always. By his blood (en tôi haimati autou). As in Re 5:9. John here as in the Gospel and Epistles states plainly and repeatedly the place of the blood of Christ in the work of redemption.”<sup>1</sup>

## H. We **Overcome** The Evil One Through His Blood (Rev. 12:11).

Let me pause for a moment and explain John's usage of the word **nikao**. Who are those who conquer?

Here is a common understand, but problematic reading of what constitutes an overcomer.

- There will be myriads of subjects during the millennium but not so many rulers or sovereigns. All Christians, apparently, will be in the millennium, but only those Christians who overcome will have the privilege of ruling and reigning with Christ.<sup>2</sup>

This, I believe, is wrong. Pastor John in his letters to the church writes in First John 5:1-5.

- 1 John 5:1-5  
<sup>1</sup>Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. <sup>2</sup>By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. <sup>3</sup>For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. <sup>4</sup>For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. <sup>5</sup>**Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

The word John uses also occurs in John 16:33.

- <sup>33</sup>"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have **overcome** the world."

Interestingly enough, Luke will also use the word to describe Jesus "binding" or "overcoming" the strong man of the house in Luke 11:21, 22.

- Luke 11:21, 22  
<sup>21</sup>"When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. <sup>22</sup>But when someone stronger than he attacks him and **overpowers** him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder."

Pastor John's use of this word to describe the believing occurs throughout First John (2:13, 14; 4:4; 5:4, 5) and the Book of Revelation (To describe the people of God [2, 3; 21:7]; to describe Jesus [5:5; 17:14]; the martyr [12:11; 15:2], and the temporal victory of evil [6:2; 11:7; 13:7]).

**Pastor John dominates the landscape of this word's usage to describe the believer.**

The Apostle Paul only uses it twice (Romans 3:4; 12:21). He does, however, use a compound form of the word in Romans 8:31-39 [**hupernikao** – "to vanquish beyond, i.e. gain a decisive victory"]. And this is the only time this compound word occurs in the New Testament.



- Rom. 8:31-39

<sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; <sup>34</sup> who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup> Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." <sup>37</sup> **But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.** <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The victor's life is lived out in tribulation. The victor's life knows defeat and struggle and suffering. But the victor's life also knows Christ and resurrection and the inseparable confidence that no matter what, nothing can separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus their Lord.

Why, because of the "cause and effect" pattern begun in verse 1 and concluding in verse 7!

It is unfortunate, but necessary we point out that reference is not being made to the literal blood of Christ, but rather that which it symbolizes, His perfect life and obedient death. There is no container in heaven that holds the blood of our Lord. His blood was like any other blood, except without sin. Just as His flesh and humanity were like any other flesh, but without sin.

### III. WHO SECURES FOR US SALVATION FROM SIN?

Salvation is found in Jesus Christ and in Him alone (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5). Salvation is not found in the absence of sinful deeds or in the presence of good works. It is not found in any one Church or in the waters of baptism.

The New Testament is singular in its voice concerning this matter. Jesus and only Jesus can claim the title of Savior. The word occurs in 24 verses and all refer to Jesus. It is interesting to note the testimony of others concerning this matter.

- A. The Virgin Mary Testified to His Saviorhood (Luke 1:47).

Notice her statement makes the relationship both personal and possessive. She looked to God as her own personal Savior.

- B. The Angel Gabriel Testified to His Saviorhood (Luke 2:11).

Notice, however, that Gabriel does not say, "my" Savior, but rather a Savior. Why? Because angels are non-redeemable beings (1 Peter 1:12). Interestingly enough, THE NET BIBLE translates Luke 2:11 with "your" Savior.

- C. The People of Samaria Testified to His Saviorhood (John 4:42).
- D. The Deacon Philip Testified to His Saviorhood (Acts 5:31).
- E. The Apostle Paul Testified to His Saviorhood (Acts 13:16, 23).

Take the time to note these passages that state Jesus as Savior. Allow yourself to be engulfed by this truth and overwhelmed by its weight (Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 1:1; 4:10; 2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6; 2 Peter 1:1,11; 2:20; 3:2,18; 1 John 4:14).

Jesus Christ is your Savior from sin. He is the one who can deliver and has delivered helpless humanity from their lost state of existence.

Now, let us explore three passages and consider how they shape our understanding of Soteriology.

## **PART 2**

- I. **SOTERIOLOGY FROM THE LETTER TO THE EPHESIAN CHURCH**
- II. **SOTERIOLOGY FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION OR THE LETTER FROM PASTOR JOHN TO THE CHURCHES IN ASIA MINOR**
- III. **SOTERIOLOGY FROM FIRST PETER 1:3-5**

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<sup>1</sup> A.T. Robertson's NT Word Pictures on Revelation 1:5.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.raptureready.com/resource/wilson/w6.htm>