

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION



STUDY GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

GOD SAVES SINNERS.

That truth is the main point of the Bible. That truth is the essence of the gospel. That truth is what we celebrate week in and week out. That truth is what we offer to friends and family who are far from God.

This study on **GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION** is all about how God saves sinners. Through the course of this study, we'll see that the Bible teaches that God is playing an active role in forgiving sins and renewing lives.

Our prayer is that you would not only embrace the truths of **GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION**, but that you would live differently as a result. There are tremendous practical applications that come with believing these truths. This study is not about understanding doctrine just to get smarter—it's about having the great doctrine impact your life.

We believe that embracing **GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION** will make you:

- A stand in awe of God and worship Him with passion.
- B marvel at your own salvation.
- C believe that God will finish the work that He has planned and begun in your life.
- D trust that God has the will, power, and right to answer prayer that people be changed.
- E remember that evangelism is absolutely essential for people to come to Christ and be saved, and there is great hope for success in leading people to faith, but conversion is not finally dependent on you or limited by the hardness of the unbeliever.¹

To God be the glory,

East Valley Bible Church
Elders & Staff

¹ Other implications can be found at
<http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/doctrinesgrace/teneffects.html>

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GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Making The Most Of This Study



This study guide is designed to help you make the most of the **GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION** series. We want this study guide to be an "all-in-one" place to take notes, answer questions, and write down important applications.

Each session contains the following:

- 1 INTRODUCTION... a brief introduction that will acquaint you with the topic being covered
- 2 MESSAGE NOTES... Tom Shrader's message outline with a column for notes as you listen each week
- 3 STUDY GUIDE... questions to help you apply the lesson as well as Scripture to study for the following session.

In order to make the most of this series, please take the time to read and pray over the Scriptures listed for the following session. If possible, try to spend time thinking about these passages prior to listening to the following week's sermon. This multi-layered approach of interacting with God's word before the sermon, pondering God's word during the sermon, and applying God's word after the sermon will help solidify these important truths in your heart and mind.

Finally, **GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION** is a great study for individuals or groups. You may find it helpful to study and discuss this material with a group of people who will challenge you and encourage you to walk in obedience to God's word.

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

1

Introduction & Overview



The first message of this series introduces **GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION** (also known as the Doctrines of Grace or Calvinism). It defines some important terms like "predestination" and also provides a helpful look at how the church has viewed God's role in salvation throughout history. Finally, this introduction establishes some important ground rules that will guide you through the entire series.

QUESTIONS...

- A What is Calvinism?
- B Was their definition accurate?
- C Why the strong reaction?
- D Does it matter?

CALVINISM

the group of Christian doctrines of John Calvin and his followers, esp. those of **predestination and the salvation of the elect** solely by God's grace

Predestination

Pre - before hand

Destiny - the place we are going; a destination

What predestination means, in its most elementary form, is that as believers, our final destination is decided by God.

the group of Christian doctrines of John Calvin and his followers, esp. those of predestination and the salvation of the elect **solely by God's grace**

A QUICK HISTORY LESSON

Considerable discussion had arisen in the Netherlands at the beginning of the 17th century concerning the understanding of divine sovereignty. This centered for a period in the teaching of Jacob Arminius (1560-1609), a Dutch seminary professor. *New Dictionary of Theology*

Remonstrance Document

- a God's election is based on foresight of man's faith.
- b The intent of Christ's death was the salvation of all human beings.
- c Fallen man is incapable of any good without the intervention of the Holy Spirit.
- d Saving grace may be resisted.
- e Whether the truly regenerated can lose their salvation requires more study.

Arminianism made man's salvation dependent ultimately on man himself, saving faith being viewed throughout as man's own work.

J.I. Packer

Synod of Dort (1618)

- a Purpose: examine the "five points" of the Remonstrance
- b Compare them with Scripture
- c Considered them incompatible with Scripture
- d Consequently rejected the teaching

No doubt it will seem strange to many in our day that the Synod of Dort rejected as heretical the five doctrines advanced by the Arminians, for these doctrines have gained wide acceptance in the modern Church. In fact, they are seldom questioned in our generation. Salvation was viewed by the members of the Synod as a work of grace from beginning to end; in no sense did they believe that the sinner saved himself or contributed to his salvation. The ability

of fallen man to believe the gospel was itself a gift from God, bestowed only upon those whom He had chosen to be the objects of HIS unmerited favor. It was not man, but God who determined which sinners would be shown mercy and saved. This, in essence, is what the members of the Synod of Dort understood the Bible to teach. *David Steele & Curtis Thomas*

- e Rejection not enough
- f Issued a response "Five Points of Calvinism"

FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

- 1 Fallen man, on his own, cannot believe the gospel.

"**No one can** come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day." *John 6:44*

- 2 God's choice of a sinner is the cause of salvation.

And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me **unless it has been granted** to him by My Father." *John 6:65*

- 3 Christ's death actually saved His people.

"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd **gives His life** for the sheep." *John 10:11*

- 4 God's grace always accomplishes its saving purpose.

"All that the Father gives Me **will come** to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out." *John 6:37*

- 5 Those chosen by God, redeemed by Christ and given faith by the Spirit are forever saved.

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they **shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of MY hand.**" *John 10:27-28*

A proper discussion of salvation centers on God, not on man. The primary goal of redemption is the manifestation of the glory of God. God's glory is manifested even in the punishment of the wicked.

THE GROUND RULES

- a The Bible is our final authority.
- b Proceed in a logical sequence.
- c Answer the "what ifs"... later.
- d Set aside your background.

- 1 Based on your previous life experiences, how would you describe "Calvinism"?
- 2 When you hear the term "predestination" what comes to mind?
- 3 Why is it important to have the Bible be our final authority as we examine the claims of this series?

- 4 Acts 17:11 commends the people of Berea by saying, "Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." How does that verse apply to your role in this series, **GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION**?
- 5 What aspects of your background will you have to set aside in order to examine the Scriptures with an open mind?
- 6 Tom claims that understanding God's role in salvation will magnify God and minimize you. Why is it a good thing for God to seem bigger and you to seem smaller?

STUDY FOR LESSON #2:

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-24; Romans 3:9-31; Ephesians 2:1-10

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

2

Total Depravity

Part 1



The second message of this series answers the question, "What is the condition of men and women apart from a relationship with Jesus Christ?" We'll see that the Bible teaches that—in our natural condition—we are spiritually dead and enemies of God. Understanding the condition of fallen man is the foundation for understanding how God works in saving sinners.

THE GROUND RULES

- A The Bible is our final authority.
- B Proceed in a logical sequence.
- C Answer the “what ifs”... later.
- D Set aside your background.

WHAT IS CALVINISM?

the group of Christian doctrines of John Calvin and his followers, esp. those of predestination and the salvation of the elect solely by God’s grace

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)
Unconditional Election
Limited Atonement
Irresistible Grace
Preservation of the Saints

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Radical Depravity
Unconditional Election
Particular Redemption
Efficacious Grace
Persevering Grace

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement

Irresistible Grace

Preservation of the Saints

The view one takes concerning salvation will be determined, to a large extent, by the view one takes concerning sin and its effects on human nature. *David Steele & Curtis Thomas*

It cannot be said too often that a false theology finds its source in inadequate view of depravity. *J.M. Stiffler*

TOTAL INABILITY

As a result of Adam's sin, all mankind is spiritually dead, unable to either comprehend or believe spiritual truths. Man is blind and deaf to the message of salvation.

Men apart from God are spiritual zombies, the walking dead who do not know they are dead. They go through the motions of life, but they do not possess it. *John MacArthur*

It just so happens your friend here is just mostly dead. **There's a big difference between mostly dead and all dead... Mostly dead is slightly alive.** All dead, well with all dead there's usually only one thing you can do... go through his clothes and look for loose change. *Miracle Man Max*

Original Sin...

- a Not a specific act
- b Is the effect of the sin of Adam and Eve on the human race
- c Is the punishment God gives for that sin
- d Explains our behavior
- e Christians disagree on the depth of the effect
- f Our inherited condition from the sin of Adam and Eve by which we are born without grace and inclined to love ourselves more than God. *Baltimore Catechism*
- g "Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or prepare himself thereunto." *Westminster Confession of Faith*
- h Genesis 3 is the explanation of the world's condition and more importantly it is the explanation for the condition of man's heart.

1 The Warning

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."
Genesis 2:16-17

2 The Rebellion

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. *Genesis 3:6*

3 The Punishment

So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life.
Genesis 3:24

4 The Result

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned... *Romans 5:12*

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. *Romans 3:23*

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 6:23*

5 The Effect

...for there is no man who does not sin. *2 Chronicles 6:36*

For there is not a just man on earth who does good, and does not sin. *Ecclesiastes 7:20*

As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹²They have all turned aside... There is none who does good, no, not one." *Romans 3:10-12*

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ²in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. *Ephesians 2:1-3*

SO WHAT IS THE CONDITION OF FALLEN MAN?

Dead or Mostly Dead?

And there is a big difference!

FALLEN MAN IS DEAD!

WHAT DOES A DEAD MAN NEED?

LIFE

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷"Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' *John 3:5-7*

How can a dead man be born again?

Can he do this on his own power?

Does natural (fallen) man have the ability to "come to CHRIST"?

Can fallen (natural) man do anything that is spiritually profitable?

- 1 As you look at the world around you, what evidence is there that we live in a fallen, sinful world?
- 2 In what ways has your life been directly affected by sin (either your sin or other people's)?
- 3 Which of the four possible views of man (blank slate, basically good, bad but can do good, totally depraved) have you previously embraced? How do the verses from this message impact that view?

- 4 Even though the Bible says that “no one does good” (Romans 3:12), it is quite common to see non-Christians do things that—as far as we can tell—seem good (feed the poor, help single mothers, give money to AIDS in Africa, etc.). In light of our experiences, how should we understand the truth of Romans 3:10-12?
- 5 Are you spiritually dead or alive? How do you know?
- 6 If all your friends, family, associates, and neighbors are spiritually dead (and won't accept the gospel unless God makes them alive), why should you bother with telling them about Jesus?

STUDY FOR SESSION #3:

John 3:1-8; 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; John 6:41-47

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

3

Total Depravity

Part 2



The third message of this series dives deeper into the implications of "Total Depravity." We'll see that natural, sinful people need God to intervene if they will ever embrace the gospel with faith. This message will also explore the idea of "free will," which is an important issue regarding the doctrines of grace.

THE GROUND RULES

- A The Bible is our final authority.
- B Proceed in a logical sequence.
- C Answer the “what ifs”... later.
- D Set aside your background.

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement

Irresistible Grace

Preservation of the Saints

The view one takes concerning salvation will be determined, to a large extent, by the view one takes concerning sin and its effects on human nature. *David Steele & Curtis Thomas*

Fallen man is dead...

TO GOOD THINGS.

TOTAL INABILITY

As a result of Adam's sin, all mankind is spiritually dead, unable to either comprehend or believe spiritual truths. Man is blind and deaf to the message of salvation.

As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹²They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.”
Romans 3:10-12

WHAT DOES A DEAD MAN NEED?

LIFE

Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' *John 3:7*

How can a dead man be born again?

Can he do this on his own power?

Can fallen (natural) man do anything that is spiritually profitable?

Does natural (fallen) man have the ability to "come to Christ"?

TOTAL INABILITY

As a result of Adam's sin, all mankind is spiritually dead, **unable to either comprehend or believe spiritual truths. Man is blind and deaf to the message of salvation.**

Can fallen (natural) man do anything that is spiritually profitable?

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
1 Corinthians 2:14

Can a natural (fallen) man understand "spiritual things"? **NO**

Is the gospel a "spiritual thing"? **YES**

Therefore, can a natural (fallen) man understand the gospel? **NO**

Does natural (fallen) man have the ability to "come to Christ"?

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day." *John 6:44*

This deals with **ABILITY**, not **permission**.

PERMISSION

"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. *John 3:16*

ABILITY

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day." *John 6:44*

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day." *John 6:44*

unless -- necessary condition, this must happen before something else can happen

draw -- Greek word is "elko" which means "to compel" *Kittel's Theological Dictionary*

But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppose you and personally **drag** you into court. *James 2:6*

...they seized Paul and Silas and **dragged** them into the marketplace... *Acts 16:19*

Can fallen (natural) man do anything that is spiritually profitable? **NO**

Does natural (fallen) man have the ability to "come to Christ"? **NO**

Don't I have free will?

Free will is the ability to make choices without any prior prejudice, inclination, or disposition. **NO!**

Free will without God's grace is not free will at all, but is the permanent prisoner and bondsman of evil, since it cannot turn itself to good. *Martin Luther*

The will always chooses according to its strongest inclination at the moment. *Jonathan Edwards*

How can a dead man change (be born again)?

Does this change require the intervention of an "outside" force?

If so, does God work with equal saving power in every person's life?

Since God choose some for salvation, must He choose all?

- 1 Read 1 Corinthians 2:14. Based on this verse, do you think a person who rejects Christ does so because he can't make sense of the gospel message or because the gospel message seems too foolish to accept? Explain your reasoning.
- 2 In your own words, how would you explain the difference between having permission to come to Christ and having the ability to come to Christ?
- 3 If God has to draw (or drag) a person to Himself (John 6:44), does that mean that the person does not want to come to Christ at the point of conversion? Why or why not?

- 4 Think back to your life before Christ. In what ways was your will in bondage, preventing you from truly exercising free will?
- 5 Read Romans 10:9-17. What has the power to give faith to people who are spiritually dead? What should you do to help spiritually dead people embrace Christ?
- 6 Think of a person in your life who is not currently a follower of Christ. Does the truth that he or she is spiritually dead mean that there is no hope for the person to come to Christ? Why or why not?

STUDY FOR SESSION #4:

Ephesians 1:3-14; Romans 9:6-24; Titus 3:3-8

Unconditional Election



The fourth message of this series deals with a word that all Christians have to either accept or cut out of their Bibles: election. We'll see that God has already chosen those who will be saved, and that He did it in spite of the sinfulness of those He would save. Our understanding of God will grow as we consider that we love Him because He first loved us.

THE GROUND RULES

- A The Bible is our final authority.
- B Proceed in a logical sequence.
- C Answer the "what ifs" ... later.
- D Set aside your background.

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)
 Unconditional Election
 Limited Atonement
 Irresistible Grace
 Preservation of the Saints

TOTAL INABILITY

As a result of Adam's sin, all mankind is spiritually dead, unable to either comprehend or believe spiritual truths. Man is blind and deaf to the message of salvation.

Can fallen (natural) man do anything that is spiritually profitable?

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
1 Corinthians 2:14

Does natural (fallen) man have the ability to "come to Christ"?

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day." *John 6:44*

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement

Irresistible Grace

Preservation of the Saints

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

God chose to save certain individuals. That choice was based on nothing within these people but rested solely on God's good pleasure.

Every Christian believes in election. They believe either...

Man Chooses God OR God Chooses Man

The Bible Teaches... **GOD SAVES SINNERS**

GOD... The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together.

SAVES... Does everything, first to last, to bring man to glory.

SINNERS... People guilty before God, helpless, powerless, unable to do God's will.

After the fall and mankind's death in Adam, man simply could not save himself. And so...

God could save **none**.

God could save **all**.

God could save **some**.

God is Sovereign in Salvation

Sovereign... Above or superior to all others; supreme in power and rank; independent of all others

He would do as He pleased.

He needed no one's permission.

He was under no obligation to save anyone.

He would be perfectly just in choosing any of the 3 options.

He could choose to save some without obligation to save others.

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

God chose to save certain individuals. That choice was based on nothing within these people but rested solely on God's good pleasure.

What the Bible says about election...

God did the choosing

...knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. *1 Thessalonians 1:4*

But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation...
2 Thessalonians 2:13

God's choice was made before the world's creation

...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.
Ephesians 1:4

God's choice was not based on merit within the elect

...who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace... *2 Timothy 1:9*

...for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls... *Romans 9:11*

God's choice was not based on man's foreseen faith

So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. *Romans 9:16*

...as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. *Acts 13:48*

And a certain woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. *Acts 16:14*

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake... *Philippians 1:29*

God's choice was based on His sovereign mercy

But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit...

Titus 3:4-5

And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; ¹¹for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, ¹²it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." ¹³Just as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." ¹⁴What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! ¹⁵For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." ¹⁶So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. ¹⁷For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My Name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth." ¹⁸So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. ¹⁹You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" ²⁰On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? ²¹Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use? ²²What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with

much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? ²³And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, ²⁴even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.
Romans 9:10-24

- 1 Why is it fair for God to choose some people to be saved, but not every single person?
- 2 Why should those who are chosen have a sense of humility rather than pride?
- 3 Someone might say, "OK, I see that God has chosen me before the foundation of the world, but I really did make a choice to follow God." How would you help reconcile this apparent tension?

- 4 Suppose that you share the gospel with a person who is far from God and they don't respond with faith. Would it be right to conclude that they must not be chosen by God for salvation? Why or why not?
- 5 It is said that Charles Spurgeon, a tremendous 19th century preacher, once said, "If God would have painted a yellow stripe on the backs of the elect I would go around lifting shirts (and preaching to them). But since He didn't, I must preach 'whosoever will,' and when 'whosoever' believes, I know he is one of the elect." What comes to mind when you read that quote?
- 6 How does this doctrine of election affect your understanding of God?

STUDY FOR SESSION #5:

John 10:7-18; John 17:6-19; Mark 10:42-45

Limited Atonement



The fifth message of this series answers the questions, "For whom did Christ die?" and "What did Christ actually achieve on the cross for those for whom He died?" We'll see that Christ's death on the cross was powerful and effective to save God's people. As we understand the nature of Christ's atonement, we'll see that, on the cross, Jesus was the perfect substitute who paid the penalty for His people's sin.

THE GROUND RULES

- A The Bible is our final authority.
- B Proceed in a logical sequence.
- C Answer the "what ifs"... later.
- D Set aside your background.

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)

Unconditional **Election**

Limited **Atonement**

Irresistible **Grace**

Preservation of the Saints

GOD SAVES SINNERS

God... The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together.

Saves... Does everything, first to last, to bring man to glory.

Sinners... People guilty before God, helpless, powerless, unable to do God's will.

GOD...

The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together.

FATHER | Elects

SON | Redeems

SPIRIT | Regenerates

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement

Irresistible Grace

Preservation of the Saints

Several terms we may use...

Limited Atonement

Definite Atonement

Particular Redemption

The questions we ask:

For whom did Christ die?

What did Jesus accomplish by His death?

Did Jesus' death merely make salvation possible for everyone, because He died for all, without actually saving anyone?

Or did His death actually save someone?

FOR WHOM DID CHRIST DIE?

Today most Christians would answer, "Why, for the whole world of course!" I believe the Bible teaches Christ died for the elect, for the elect alone.

We believe the Bible teaches...

Jesus died for His people.

Jesus satisfied the wrath of God toward His people.

Jesus reconciles His people to the Father.

Jesus redeemed His people from bondage.

Jesus covers the guilt and wickedness of His people.

Every Christian believes in limited atonement...

LIMITED BY GOD or LIMITED BY MAN

Christ's redeeming work was definite in design and accomplishment -- it was intended to render complete satisfaction for certain specified sinners and it actually secured salvation for these individuals and no one else. All for whom Christ sacrificed Himself will be saved. Redemption, therefore, was designed to bring to pass God's purpose of election. *David Steele & Curtis Thomas*

Christ's obedience and suffering were of infinite value, and if God had so willed, the satisfaction rendered by Christ would have saved every member of the human race. But He came into the world to represent and save only those given to Him by the Father. *David Steele & Curtis Thomas*

Every Christian believes in limited atonement...

LIMITED BY GOD or LIMITED BY MAN

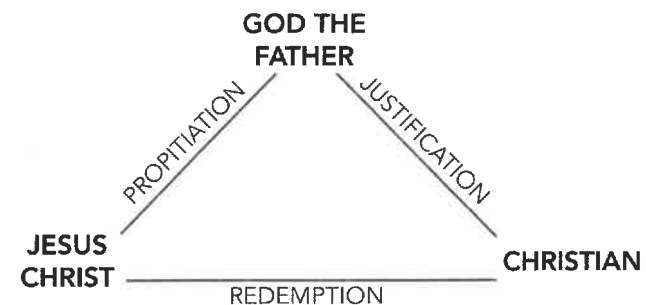
...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the **redemption** that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a **propitiation** by His blood. *Romans 3:23-25a*

Redeem

To loose or to loosen

Propitiation

To satisfy; satisfaction; quenching God's wrath



Did Christ's death **actually** atone for the sins of anyone?

Did Christ's death **actually** propitiate the wrath of God?

Did Christ's death **actually** reconcile God and any sinner?

Did Christ's death **actually** redeem anyone?

"Who gave Himself for us to redeem us."
Titus 2:14

"Christ reconciled us to Himself."
2 Corinthians 5:18-19

"Christ loved the church and gave His life for her." *Ephesians 5:25*

"Christ redeemed us." *Galatians 3:13*

"For the transgression of my people he was stricken." *Isaiah 53:8*

"...He will save His people from their sins"
Matthew 1:21

"...He has come and has redeemed His people."
Luke 1:68

"The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." *John 10:11*

I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep... ¹⁴I am the Good Shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. ¹⁵As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. *John 10:11,14,15*

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
 9Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. *Romans 5:8-9*

I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. *John 17:9*

What about all those verses that speak of all men being saved, that Jesus died for the whole world?

"World" is used in Scripture in many different ways...

"fabric of heaven and earth" *Job 34:13*

"only the earth" *Psalms 24:1; 98:7*

"only heaven" *Psalms 90:2*

"a large group of people"

The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!" *John 12:19*

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. *1 John 4:14*

For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world. *1 Corinthians 4:9*

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." 40So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

⁴¹And many more believed because of His own word. ⁴²Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." *John 4:39-42*

Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. *Mark 1:5*

...and He Himself is the **propitiation** for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. *1 John 2:2*

Propitiation

To satisfy; satisfaction; quenching God's wrath

We believe the Bible teaches...

Jesus died for His people.

Jesus satisfied the wrath of God toward His people.

Jesus reconciles His people to the Father.

Jesus redeemed His people from bondage.

Jesus covers the guilt and wickedness of His people.

Can someone be chosen and not come?

Did Christ die for someone who will never believe?

Is God calling everyone equally with a saving call?

- 1 Do you think that Christ's sufferings were enough to pay for your sins? Why or why not?
- 2 Why is it important to your daily life that Jesus actually atoned for the sins of His people rather than just making salvation possible?
- 3 If Jesus took all the guilt for our sins—all the wrath of God against our sin, and all the penalty of the death we deserved—then are the sufferings and hardships that you experience in life ever the wrath of God against you as a believer? Why or why not?

- 4 Do you think it was fair for Christ to be your substitute and to pay your penalty? Why or why not?
- 5 When you think about Jesus acting as your substitute and dying for you, what attitude and emotion is called forth in your heart?
- 6 Why should the doctrine of limited atonement make us bolder in sharing the gospel with people who don't know God?

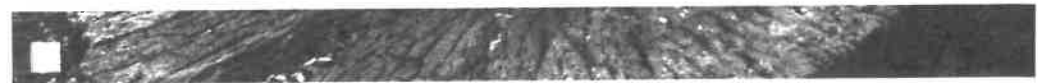
STUDY FOR SESSION #6:

1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Romans 8:28-33;
John 10:22-30

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

6

Irresistible Grace Preservation of the Saints



The sixth message in this series explores both how God overcomes our total depravity by changing our hearts, and how God keeps His people secure in His grace forever. We'll be greatly encouraged that God has given us new life and will always preserve our faith as we grow more and more like Christ.

THE GROUND RULES

- A The Bible is our final authority.
- B Proceed in a logical sequence.
- C Answer the “what ifs”... later.
- D Set aside your background.

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)

Unconditional **Election**

Limited **Atonement**

Irresistible **Grace**

Preservation of the Saints

GOD SAVES SINNERS

GOD... The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together.

SAVES... Does everything, first to last, to bring man to glory.

SINNERS... People guilty before God, helpless, powerless, unable to do God's will.

GOD...

The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together.

FATHER | Elects

SON | Redeems

SPIRIT | Regenerates

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement

Irresistible Grace

Preservation of the Saints

THE CHAIN OF SALVATION

...and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. *Romans 8:30 (NASB)*

...to all who are beloved of God in Rome, **called** as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. *Romans 1:7*

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, ⁹who has saved us, and **called** us with a holy **calling**, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity. *2 Timothy 1:8-9*

This calling is not a general invitation to sinners to believe the gospel and be saved (as in Matthew 20:16), but refers to God's effectual call of the elect to salvation. This calling results in holiness, imputed (justification) and imparted (sanctification), and finally completed (glorification). *John MacArthur*

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins... ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...
Ephesians 2:1; 4-5

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, that no one should boast. *Ephesians 2:8-9*

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. ⁴But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, ⁵He 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... *Titus 3:3-5*

WHY DID YOU BELIEVE?

And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.
Acts 13:48

And a certain woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. *Acts 16:14*

Does faith precede regeneration?

OR

Does regeneration precede faith?

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

Total Inability (Depravity)

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement

Irresistible Grace

Preservation of the Saints

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. *Philippians 1:6*

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

He who **believes** in the Son **has** eternal life. *John 3:36*

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and **believes** Him who sent Me, **has** eternal life... *John 5:24*

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who **believes has** eternal life. *John 6:47*

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰"I and the Father are one."
John 10:27-30

THE CHAIN OF SALVATION

...and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. *Romans 8:30 (NASB)*

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? ³³Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies... *Romans 8:31-33*

...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. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? *Romans 8:34-35*

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8:37-39*

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰"I and the Father are one."
John 10:27-30

GOD...

The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
working together.

FATHER | Elects

SON | Redeems

SPIRIT | Regenerates

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

What did he say?

Is it true?

So what?

- 4 Are you trusting in your own power to keep on believing in Christ, or in God's power to keep your faith active and alive? What difference does it make?
- 5 How should the truth that God will preserve His people help them endure suffering and difficulty?
- 6 If regeneration is entirely a work of God and humans can do nothing to bring it about, then what good does it do to preach the gospel to people at all?

STUDY FOR SESSION #7:

Acts 13:44-52; Acts 16:13-14; 1 Thessalonians 1:4-10

Summary & Conclusion



The final message in this series summarizes the doctrines of grace and answers some important questions regarding the responsibility of man, the importance of evangelism, and the source of a Christian's humility. We'll see that embracing the doctrines of grace has huge practical application to daily life.

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

What did he say?

Is it true?

So what?

GOD SAVES SINNERS

GOD... The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together.

SAVES... Does everything, first to last, to bring man to glory.

SINNERS... People guilty before God, helpless, powerless, unable to do God's will.

God...

The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together.

FATHER | Elects

SON | Redeems

SPIRIT | Regenerates

WHAT DID HE SAY?

Natural man does not understand any spiritual thing including the gospel. God determined according to His good pleasure to intervene and save His people from their sin. Jesus' substitutionary atoning death satisfied the wrath of God against the elect. The Holy Spirit regenerates, washes and guarantees the believer's salvation.

IS IT TRUE?

Natural man does not understand any spiritual thing including the gospel.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. ¹ *Corinthians 2:14*

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins. *Ephesians 2:1*

"There is none righteous, not even one; ¹¹there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; ¹²all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one." *Romans 3:10-12*

GOD determined according to HIS good pleasure to intervene and save HIS people from their sin.

...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. *Ephesians 1:4*

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹²to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. *Ephesians 1:11-12*

...knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you; ⁵for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. ¹ *Thessalonians 1:4,5*

BOOKS:

CHOSEN BY GOD

R.C. Sproul

EVANGELISM & THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

J.I. Packer

REFORMED DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

Loraine Boettner

THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE:

REDISCOVERING THE ESSENTIALS OF EVANGELICALISM

James Montgomery Boice and Philip Graham Ryken

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM: DEFINED, DEFENDED, DOCUMENTED

David N. Steele, Curtis C. Thomas, and S. Lance Quinn

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

A.W. Pink

WHAT IS A TRUE CALVINIST?

Philip Graham Ryken

ONLINE:

A Defense of Calvinism by Charles H. Spurgeon

<http://www.graceonlinelibrary.org/articles/full.asp?id=1112167>

God's Sovereignty and the Human Will by Arthur W. Pink

<http://www.graceonlinelibrary.org/articles/full.asp?id=11101255>

How to Teach and Preach "Calvinism"

http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/doctrines_grace/calvinism.html

Practical Implications of Calvinism by Albert Martin

<http://www.graceonlinelibrary.org/articles/full.asp?id=11121222>

Summary of the Sovereignty of God in Salvation

http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/doctrines_grace/summary.html

Ten Effects of Believing in the Five Points of Calvinism

http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/doctrines_grace/ten_effects.html

The Sovereignty of God and Prayer

http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/prayer/sovereignty_and_prayer.html

What We Believe About the Five Points of Calvinism

http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/doctrines_grace/tulip.html

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Resources for Additional Study



- 4 History shows that some of the greatest evangelists of all time believed the doctrines of grace (i.e. Charles Spurgeon, George Whitefield, John Paton, David Brainerd, Adoniram Judson). Do you think there's a connection between believing this doctrine and living as a missionary for Jesus in your world?
- 5 Would you agree with the doctrines of grace? Why or why not?
- 6 Has this study impacted the way you share the gospel (how often, how intentionally, how boldly, etc.)? If not, why not?

- 1 In what ways has God become bigger in your heart and mind through this study of **GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION**?
- 2 Do the choices that you make on a daily basis really make a difference? Why or why not?
- 3 Should understanding the doctrines of grace make you more or less bold in sharing the gospel with those who don't know Christ? Why?

DANGERS

- 1 Double predestination
- 2 There are some condemned to hell who desire to come to Christ.
- 3 Man cannot be held responsible for his actions.
- 4 People come "kicking and screaming" to Christ.
- 5 Eliminates the need for evangelism.

It is God who brings men and women under the sound of the gospel, and it is God who brings them to faith in Christ. Our evangelistic work is the instrument that He uses for this purpose, but the power that saves is not in the instrument: it is in the hand of the One who uses the instrument. *J.I. Packer, Evangelism & The Sovereignty of God*

- 6 Creates arrogance in a believer.

SO WHAT?

GOD is magnified

They affirm, again and again, that God is on the throne of the universe; that the sceptre is in His hands; that He is directing all things "after the counsel of His own will". They affirm, not only that God created all things, but also that God is ruling and reigning over all the works of His hands. They affirm that God is the "Almighty", that His will is irreversible, that He is absolute sovereign in every realm of all His vast dominions. And surely it must be so. Only two alternatives are possible: God must either rule, or be ruled; sway or be swayed; accomplish His own will, or be thwarted by His creatures. Accepting the fact that He is the "Most High", vested with perfect wisdom and illimitable power, and the conclusion is irresistible that He must be God in fact, as well as in name.
A.W. Pink, The Sovereignty of God

Man is minified.

The believer finds security.

The believer is encouraged.

JESUS' substitutionary atoning death satisfied the wrath of GOD against the elect.

"And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins." *Matthew 1:21*

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. *1 John 4:10*

(Jesus) who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. *Titus 2:14*

The HOLY SPIRIT regenerates, washes and guarantees the believer's salvation.

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. *Titus 3:5*

...you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory. *Ephesians 1:13-14*

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. *Philippians 1:6*

