



## **Salvation**

Probably one of the worst experiences in church is big words. Imagine sitting in a church for the first time. I have done that several times. A new person sitting in an unfamiliar place can be daunting if you don't know what they say or do. I had to write an experience about a different church. It was designed to give me perspective. I chose to visit a catholic church. The experience was very interesting. Certainly, people looked at me. Who is this man? I intern observed them doing certain customs I had never seen before. It was awkward and fun.

I want to introduce some Christian words you may have never heard before. Are they life changing? That all depends. Big words in church tend to fly over our heads. They are considered Christian speak. If you ever have visited a church you might hear them from time to time. Big words like sanctification, theology, and the Holy Spirit mean something to the church. To the normal person they might just be big words we don't need to know. However, the foundation of what Christians believe are found within these words. We may not speak them very often, but it's not a terrible idea to know what they mean. Their explanation could be meaningful and life changing instead of just big words.

This brings me to the word Salvation. I love this word directly because all of our Christian beliefs hinge on it. Salvation could be whittled down to being saved or another big word redemption. In Christian circles we say that Jesus saves. That we are redeemed by the grace

of God. A new church attendee might fall asleep at this point. Who cares about words I don't understand? Let's take a small look at salvation to hopefully make it clearer what this word means.

In most cases words spoken by Jesus or New Testament writers come from their Jewish heritage. We need to remember that the books we read today were written thousands of years ago. Far too often people make application in today's understanding and culture. It's just not smart reading. The writers of the Bible wrote their words to Jewish culture over 2000 years ago. The Bible is understandable but the meanings have changed over the years. Salvation is deeper than just being saved. To the Jewish reader it is what is called a promise of God. They hold dear a promise to Eve that her (offspring) seed that would restore their relationship with God. A promise to Abraham of an everlasting nation. To David of kingship lines forever. Just look at these few verses below.

Psalm 18:46 *"The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted."*

Isaiah 25:9 *"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."*

The Old Testament writers believed in God saving them. Sometimes it was from enemies. Yet, over and over they repeat that the rest or hope they have is in God's salvation. That word is their promise. At times, people would die in the Bible. They usually wanted to be buried in the promised land of God. Yes, it's good to be buried in your homeland. Yet, they held dear that God would redeem those bones one day and bring them back to Eden.

When Jesus appeared on the scene, that is how the Jewish mind thought about salvation. They believed in being rescued from enemies and rescued from death. Look at two New Testament verses.

Luke 2:30 *“For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”*

Acts 13:26 *“Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.”*

The New Testament Jews were still looking for this salvation. Jesus told the people “yes” God will save them. Yet, he added a twist. Adam and Eve fell in Eden by disobeying God. They did what is called sin. Jesus did teach that salvation is a rescue from earth to heaven. However, he added a new wrinkle: it’s also a rescue from sin. In modern church they use the word sin and salvation together. God required payment for sin in the old testament. That came in the form of an animal sacrifice. In modern terms Jesus sacrificed himself as the last payment for all our sin. That is why you might hear the term “Jesus is the salvation of the world.” Ponder these two verses below in the light of your clearer understanding of Salvation.

John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

John 14:6 *“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”*

Salvation is of the Lord God (Father) in Heaven. He redeems us because he has always loved his creation. Just because Adam and Eve disobeyed, God still wanted us (their seed) to be with him. God is holy and hates sin, yet he does not hate us. That makes salvation real. God wanted to make a way to offer us salvation. His love (Grace) is an offer. Belief in Jesus sacrifice and salvation is ours. He still wants to rescue us. To redeem his children by Salvation through Jesus death and resurrection. Ponder these two words below.

Redemption- *the action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil.*

Salvation- *the act of saving or protecting from harm, risk, loss, destruction.*