

Theology Matters

FALL SEMESTER 2025

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Theology Institute

7. Salvation – Part 2

“O merciful Father, regard not what we have done against you, but what our blessed Savior has done for us.” — John Wesley

Brief review:

- There are several primary areas within doctrinal studies. Our Wednesday night class has addressed the following:
 - **The Doctrine of Scripture:** the nature of Scripture—authority, inspiration, inerrancy.
 - **The Doctrine of God:** the Divine attributes and the Trinity.
 - **The Doctrine of Man:** human origins and the image of God.
 - **The Doctrine of Sin:** the nature and consequences of sin.
 - **The Doctrine of Christ:** the person and works of Christ.
 - **The Doctrine of Salvation:** the beginning, continuation, and completion of salvation.
- Other doctrines follow these, but there is a clear logic to this order: God reveals who He is through His Word, shows the special role of humans as His image-bearers, and makes known the problem of sin that separates people from Him.
- Tonight’s lesson shares doctrines from two of the areas listed above:
 - The Doctrine of Christ: the study of the person and works of Christ, God’s Son, the second person of the Trinity.
 - His person: Christ is one person, equally God and man.
 - His work: Christ became human to bring humanity back to God (1 Peter 3:18).
 - The Doctrine of Salvation: From the human perspective, salvation has discernable parts.

Big Idea: God the Father both requires and provides the payment for sin through the work of his Son, Jesus. Repentance of sin and faith in the work of Christ begins a lifelong walk with God that continues into eternity.

Aim: Understanding the work of Christ will lead to heart-felt worship and a life of obedience.

Questions for consideration:

- **What has caused human separation from God?**
 - Genesis 3:22–24
 - Genesis 6:5–8
 - Romans 5:12–14
 - Summary: Sin separates humanity from God. There is a difference between Sin and sins; humans commit sins because they are born into Sin (Psalm 51:5). In other words, we commit sins because at our core, we are sinners by nature.
 - **What does God require in the Old Testament to deal with Sin?**
 - Genesis 3:21
 - Exodus 12:5–8; 12–13
 - Leviticus 16:15–16; 21–22
 - Summary: The Old Testament consistently shows that God requires a blood payment to atone for sin.
 - **What does the New Testament say about atonement?**
 - John 1:29
 - Romans 3:21–26
 - Hebrews 9:11–14
 - Summary: Jesus, the Lamb of God and our high priest, takes away and covers (propitiation) our sin with his blood.
 - **What have theologians thought about the atonement throughout Christian history?**
 - **Ransom Theory of the Atonement:** Christ's death purchases humanity from the Devil (2nd–4th centuries: Origen, Augustine, and others).
 - **Recapitulation Theory of the Atonement:** Christ's obedient life reverses all of Adam's failures (2nd–3rd centuries: Irenaeus of Lyons).
 - **Satisfaction Theory of the Atonement:** Christ, who is uniquely human and divine, restores God's honor that was demeaned in the Fall (11th century: Anselm of Canterbury).
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- **Moral Influence Theory of the Atonement**: Christ's death on the cross demonstrates God's love and enables us to show the same type of love to others (12th century: Peter Abelard).
 - **Example Theory of the Atonement**: Christ's death shows us how to love God (17th century: Faustus Socinus).
 - **Penal Substitutionary Theory of the Atonement**: Christ died on the cross in the place of sinners to pay the penalty of sin and appease the wrath of God (16th century: Martin Luther, John Calvin, and others).
 - **Summary**: Theologians throughout history have struggled to explain exactly what occurred when Jesus died on the cross.
 - **Table discussion**: What is there to like in each of these theories? What is there to be critical about? How does one's view of the atonement impact other areas of the Christian life?
 - **How is a person saved and what are some of the components of salvation?**
 - **Romans 8:29–30**
 - **Beginning**
 - **Foreknowledge/Predestination (election)**
 - "God's knowledge of the future from the beginning" (Morgan and Peterson, 63).
 - "God's choosing people for salvation" (Morgan and Peterson, 53).
 - **Calling**
 - "God summoning people to him in salvation" (Morgan and Peterson).
 - **Conversion**
 - "The first step of the Christian life is called conversion. It is the act of turning from one's sin in repentance and turning to Christ in faith" (Erickson, 864).
 - **Justification**
 - "God's declaring righteous those sinners who believe in Christ" (Morgan and Peterson, 100).

- **Continuation**

- **Sanctification** (“conformed to the image of his Son”)

- “God’s setting us apart from sin to himself, producing holiness in us now, and perfecting us in holiness at Christ’s return” (Morgan and Peterson, 152).

- **Completion**

- **Glorification**

- “Amazingly, glorification means God will enable resurrected saints to see and partake of Christ’s glory and be transformed by it (1 Pet 5:1). Though at death our spirits are ‘made perfect’ (Heb 12:23), in glorification our *bodies* are redeemed (Rom 8:23)” (Morgan and Peterson, 67).

“When the doctrine is understood in the context of its dramatic narrative, we find ourselves dumbfounded by God’s grace in Jesus Christ, surrendering to *doxology* (praise). Far from masters, we are mastered; instead of seizing the truth, we are seized by it, captivated by God’s gift, to which we can only say, ‘Amen!’ and ‘Praise the Lord.” — Michael Horton
