



INSIDE

MEMBER QUOTE

Doug Lamborn 2
*U.S. Representative, Colorado
 5th Congressional District*

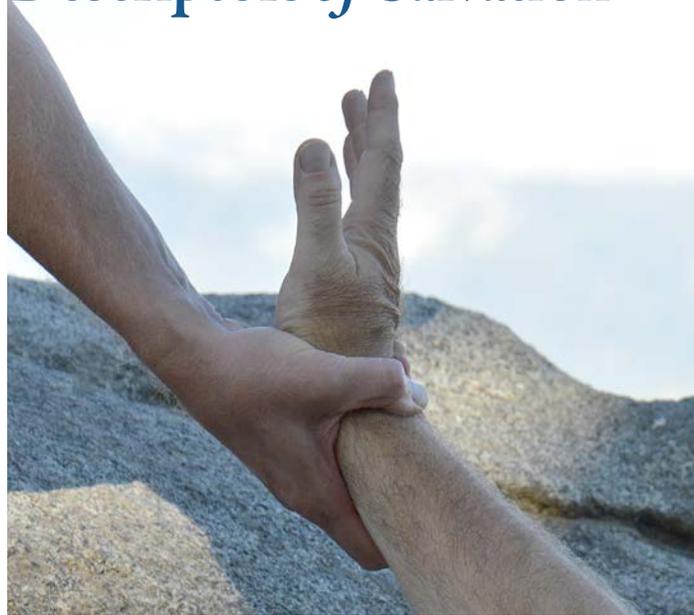
VERSE OF THE WEEK

Romans 10:9-10 3

ABOUT

Capitol Ministries 12

Understanding *All the Biblical* Descriptors of Salvation



THE PRIMARY PURPOSE of the New Testament book of Romans is to communicate the specifics regarding our salvation. These surrounding truths and the words Paul uses to describe them—words like justification, propitiation, atonement, and reconciliation—are important to grasp and understand. They are also profoundly illuminating once you digest them! The writer of Hebrews (2:3) put it this way: ***So great a salvation!*** You will see what I mean as you study what follows.

Herein are the explicit details related to your assurance that you are at peace with Him. The book of Romans provides a precise, progressive outline of God’s plumb line relative to how it is that one is saved.

Lastly, this week’s study is nothing less than a lesson in theology; most people today in our dumbed-down society are not reading or studying theology. I challenge you to gain an inquisitiveness appetite for such.

Read on, my friend.


 Ralph Drollinger

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Continued on last page

Weekly Bible Studies

CABINET: 7:00 AM Wednesdays, Location Undisclosed. *Light Refreshments Served.*

SENATE: 8:00 AM Tuesdays, Rotating Offices of Senators. *Hot Breakfast Served.*

HOUSE: 9-10 PM Tuesdays Capitol Hill Club, Main Dining Room. *Dessert Served.*





MEMBER QUOTE

Doug Lamborn

U.S. Representative, Colorado
5th Congressional District



“WHEN I CAME to understand firsthand the Gospel of John, I became a believer. I was 18 years old. I had gone to college to be independent and do things that you do not have the freedom to do in your parent’s home. I wanted to do whatever I wanted and was actually starting to go down that road. Fortunately, I didn’t have the opportunity to go too far, but left to my own devices, I am sure I would have.

Ever since that time, and that has been more than 40 years ago, I’ve done my best to be a sincere follower of Christ and a servant of God. I’ve been growing closer and studying the Word of God, and seeking to serve Him ever since. Whatever mission He gives me, I want to carry out. I know I will stand before Him after my life is over. I want nothing more than for Him to say my life was pleasing to Him.

On the surface it may sound appealing to do whatever you want and to think that leads to freedom, but actually that leads to bondage. A person doesn’t find true freedom until he commits his life to God.” **cm**

I. INTRODUCTION

PERHAPS THE BEST WAY to gain the most profound insight into all that Scripture conveys regarding salvation is through the use of a metaphor. Imagine throughout this study that you are a lawmaker who has been convicted of breaking the very traffic laws that you had authored and enacted—laws that were, so to speak, “written in your heart.” This perspective exemplifies what Paul states at the beginning of his epistle to the Romans, relative to man’s perilous condition before God. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he writes in 1:19-20:

. . . That which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them . . . so that they are without excuse.

God’s laws are written in every person’s heart—so in one sense, it’s not as if any of us can plead ignorance to what follows. Difficult as it is for any citizen to convince a traffic officer of his innocence via the use of naïveté—imagine especially, if the officer knew as you converse through your rolled-down window, that you wrote the law, the very one that you are now attempting to deny! It’s very difficult to act dumb in such a setting! In the much broader sense of denying knowledge of God’s revelation, God can always answer back through the window of your mind: *that which is known about God is evident within them*. This is a good picture (embryonic, you will see, to what follows) to hold in your mind as we study all the following biblical descriptors of salvation. But before we unpack each of these crucial words, we need to first set the stage.

II. MAN’S DESPERATE CONDITION

Because of man’s sinful nature, inherited through Adam at the fall (see Genesis, chapter 3), Paul concludes in Romans 3:23, *all have sinned* (past perfect tense) *and fall short* (present ongoing tense) *of the glory of God*. Romans 5:12 elaborates further on man’s inherited *sin* nature:

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men

The Old Testament books of 1 Kings and Ecclesiastes reinforce the idea of the desperate, endemic *sin* nature of man: (*for there is no man who does not sin*); and, *indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins* (8:46 and 7:20 respectively). In fact, man’s sinful nature is so infective and spiritually debilitating that Paul exclaims in Romans 3:11 that this is what results:

THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD

Man’s condition is so desperately wicked that he cannot reason his way out of it and find God: Scripture teaches that it is actually God who reaches down to—does the finding—and saves man! I so love the picture on the cover of this study because it precisely depicts the idea of this truth! In John 15:16 Jesus precisely and unmistakably communicates this truth:

“You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain”

Echoes Ephesians 1:4-5:

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In



love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will....

Scripture is perspicuous regarding this truth, not only in what it says in the aforementioned passages, but also by the many illustrations of man's depraved nature. That man is depraved and cannot from his dead spiritual state find or reason his way to God is replete throughout the Word of God. That's how dead he is; he is fallen. The Bible teaches repeatedly and clearly that:

**FROM THE MOMENT
OF CONCEPTION
(PSALM 51:5)**

**MAN IS SPIRITUALLY
DEAD IN HIS SIN
(EPHESIANS 2:1-3)**

**AND AS A RESULT HE IS
ALIENATED NOT ONLY
FROM GOD (LUKE 15:18)**

**BUT ALSO FROM OTHERS
(1 CORINTHIANS 8:12)**

**AND EVEN FROM SELF
(HABAKKUK 2:10)**

Man is spiritually dead and fractured in his *sin* and needs salvation from God in order to be made whole. It follows that it is no surprise that the various New Testament Greek words for *sin* mean "falling short of the mark." *Sin* is any personal lack of conformity to the moral character and desire of God. In other words, it is rebellion—either passively or actively—regarding what we know from our hearts to be right. Most concisely, *sin* at its root is a

"deification of self and a dethronement of God."¹ We *sin* because our very nature is an imputed *sin* nature, for which the consequences are stated in Romans 6:23: *For the wages of sin is death.* All of the foregoing is profoundly important to the biblical doctrine of salvation and basic to the Christian worldview. Man is spiritually desperate! Only God can save him!

III. THE GOOD NEWS

Even though we all are sinners, Romans 5:8-9 unfolds the tremendous grace and mercy of God to save us sinners from our spiritual death and separation via the work of Jesus Christ, who paid the penalty for man's *sin*:

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

This is the magnificent good news of the Gospel: *while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* This act of salvation is described by many specific words in Scripture. These are the profound components of the believers' biblical doctrine of Salvation, formally known as the doctrine of Soteriology. *Soterios* is the Greek verb that means "to save." The following study of these related words will bless you in a special way—trust me—as you learn about all that God has done for the believer on his or her behalf.

SCRIPTURE PROVIDES

♥ VERSE OF THE WEEK

Romans 10:9-10

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.



A repentant heart that gladly desires a new Lord is characteristic of true, real conversion of the soul. Amen!





John Witherspoon



“I shall now conclude my discourse by preaching this Savior to all who hear me, and entreating you in the most earnest manner to believe in Jesus Christ; for ‘there is no salvation in any other’ [Acts 4:12].”

— John Witherspoon, signer of the Declaration of Independence; ratifier of the U.S. Constitution; member of the Continental Congress; President of Princeton.

John Witherspoon, *The Works of John Witherspoon* (Edinburgh: J. Ogle, 1815), Vol. V, p. 276, Sermon 15, “The Absolute Necessity of Salvation Through Christ” January 2, 1758.

MANKIND WITH MANY STRONG AND VIVID WORDS THAT FURTHER DESCRIBE SO GREAT A SALVATION

What follows are the definitions—the biblical descriptors—of each of them.

IV. SUBSTITUTION

In Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45 the Gospel writers state the following respectively:

“ . . . The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

These passages indicate in classic biblical Greek that the life of Christ was in essence a **substitution**, or, as stated in the above NASB text, *a ransom (Lutron)* meaning, “instead of” or “in the place of.” In other words, Christ gave His life—in place of ours—to pay the penalty for our *sin*. Herein is the idea of a **substitution**, and as we will see next, for the purpose to atone for us.

But before we unfold the salvific idea of **atonement**, in our illustration of the traffic officer and the lawmaker, the idea of **substitution** is akin to the lawmaker later standing before the judge, and after sentencing him with a penalty, the judge taking off his robe, stepping down from the bench, and paying the bailiff the amount required. Jesus Christ Himself was God’s **substitutionary** payment—the *ransom* if you will—who stood in our place for our *sin*.

V. ATONEMENT

In Colossians 1:19-20 the Apostle Paul speaks about the way in which the Holy

God of the universe took the initiative to make peace with sinful man:

For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him . . . having made peace through the blood of His cross . . .

The God of the Bible has provided and ordained **blood**, which is the actual essence and depiction of life as the means of **atonement** for sin. Jesus’ life, depicted by the essence of life itself, blood, is what atoned for man’s sin. **Atonement** means, “to cover” “to wash away.” Accordingly, Christ, the second person of the Trinity, i.e., *the Father’s fullness dwelling in Him*, is both the sacrificial **substitution** victim (per the previous descriptor), and the sacrifice-offering, **atonement Himself!** Christ has expiated (“to extinguish the guilt incurred by”) our *sin!* He took His own loving initiative to appease His own righteous anger relative to man’s rebellious, sinful nature!

As it relates to our illustration, God, the courtroom Judge, has personally covered the cost and washed away all the penalties associated with the lawmaker’s legal infractions.

Christ paid it all on our behalf! It is the loving Judge Himself who covers over the findings of His own courtroom! Think of it this way: The Judge has torn up His own writ! He did this, Paul goes on to say in Colossians 1:22:

. . . in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach . . .

Summarily to this point in our outline, God has sent His Son as a **substitutionary atonement** for your *sin*.



VI. PROPITIATION

Leon Morris in his classic book *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* states regarding *propitiation*, “It is the combination of God’s deep love for the sinner with His uncompromising reaction against *sin* which brings about what the Bible calls *propitiation*.”² *Propitiation* (*hilasmos*) is the “averting of wrath by means of an appropriate transaction or sacrifice.”³ It is the satisfaction of violated justice. Morris further states:

“IT IS GOD HIMSELF WHO IN HOLY WRATH NEEDS TO BE PROPITIATED, GOD HIMSELF WHO IN HOLY LOVE UNDERTOOK TO DO THE PROPITIATING, AND GOD HIMSELF WHO IN THE PERSON OF HIS SON DIED FOR THE PROPITIATION OF OUR SINS...”

“God took his own loving initiative to appease his own righteous anger . . .”⁴ *Propitiation* is God responding in mercy, when we are due His wrath. Note 1 John 4:10 in this regard:

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.

The courtroom judge has every right to punish the lawmaker for his wrongdoing, but instead his response is one of mercy, personally satisfying the demand of his own court. It is as if the judge himself is calling off the officer who justifiably is handcuffing the lawmaker. First John 2:2 puts it this way:

And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

VII. REDEMPTION

Not only is Man born into and manifesting of *sin*, the Scriptures teach that he is in bondage to *sin*—and in desperate need of being bought out of his bondage! The Greek term here for *redemption* (*agorazo*) means “to buy in the marketplace; to purchase.” *Redemption*, then, is a beautiful picture of Christ buying my freedom from my bondage to *sin*. *Agorazo* is God’s act “to set free by the payment of a price.” The analogous word Paul chose here under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit communicated vividly and powerfully in and from a decadent Roman slave-market world. In addition, and very important in terms of application is this: implied by the use of this word and throughout the book of Romans, chapter six, is this idea:

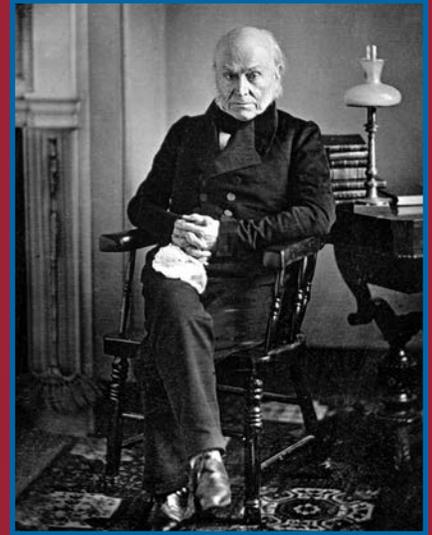
DIVINE OWNERSHIP RESULTED WHEN GOD PURCHASED ME OUT OF THE SLAVE MARKET OF SIN

The believer is bought with a price and set free from *sin*—yes!—but as denoted by Paul’s choice of words, he becomes simultaneously a *slave* to his new owner and master! Morris’s statement is so very apropos:

Believers are not brought by Christ into a liberty of selfish ease. Rather since they have been bought by God at a terrible cost, they have become God’s slaves, to do His will.⁵

This *profound, profound, profound* insight and understanding of my

John Quincy Adams



“The hope of a Christian is inseparable from his faith. Whoever believes in the Divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures must hope that the religion of Jesus shall prevail throughout the earth. Never since the foundation of the world have the prospects of mankind been more encouraging to that hope than they appear to be at the present time. And may the associated distribution of the Bible proceed and prosper till the Lord shall have made ‘bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God’ [Isaiah 52:10]. In the chain of human events, the birthday of the nation is indissolubly linked with the birthday of the Savior. The Declaration of Independence laid the cornerstone of human government upon the first precepts of Christianity.”

— John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States; diplomat; Secretary of State; U.S. Senator; U.S. Representative; “Old Man Eloquent”; “Hell-Hound of Abolition.”

John Quincy Adams, *An Oration Delivered Before the Inhabitants of the Town of Newburyport at Their Request on the Sixty-First Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1837* (Newburyport: Charles Whipple, 1837), pp. 5-6.



John Jay



“By conveying the Bible to people . . . we certainly do them a most interesting act of kindness. We thereby enable them to learn that man was originally created and placed in a state of happiness, but, becoming disobedient, was subjected to the degradation and evils which he and his posterity have since experienced. The Bible will also inform them that our gracious Creator has provided for us a Redeemer in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed – that this Redeemer has made atonement ‘for the sins of the whole world,’ and thereby reconciling the Divine justice with the Divine mercy, has opened a way for our redemption and salvation; and that these inestimable benefits are of the free gift and grace of God, not of our deserving, nor in our power to deserve. The Bible will also [encourage] them with many explicit and consoling assurances of the Divine mercy to our fallen race, and with repeated invitations to accept the offers of pardon and reconciliation. . . . They, therefore, who enlist in His service, have the highest encouragement to fulfill the duties assigned to their respective stations; for most certain it is, that those of His followers who [participate in] His conquests will also participate in the transcendent glories and blessings of His Triumph.”

— John Jay, President of Congress; diplomat; author of *The Federalist Papers*; original Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court; Governor of New York.

John Jay, *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay, 1794-1826*, Henry P. Johnston, editor (New York: Burt Franklin, 1890), Vol. IV, pp. 494, 498, from his “Address at the Annual Meeting of the American Bible Society,” May 13, 1824.

salvation must motivate me to the highest level of obedience and intensity relative to every assignment my Master gives me! It’s all about pleasing my Master—the one who paid a huge price to **redeem** me from an otherwise horrible existence of bondage to **sin!** “How can I say thank you for the things you have done for me . . . Things so undeserved yet You give to prove your love for me The voices of a million angels could not express my gratitude All that I am and ever hope to be, I owe it all to Thee!” is the most appropriate response as depicted by the brilliant hymn writer, the late Jack Hayford. Paul states and admonishes believers with this same weighty sense of understanding, identity, being and purpose when he writes succinctly in 1 Corinthians 6:20:

For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

As the lawmaker begins to follow the judge out of the courtroom, sensing the reality of his liberation from his bondage to **sin**, he suddenly sobers, realizing his deep sense of gratitude and ensuing obligation—what a debt he owes the loving judge! Romans 6:18 underscores and crystalizes the unavoidable conclusion of all **redeemed** persons:

And having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

This huge theological insight is vastly overlooked by most American believers—thinking their salvation is a ticket to selfish fulfillments versus what it really means: becoming an indentured **slave** assigned with the task of helping to fulfill the Great Commission. Divine

purchase and ownership must greatly impact and govern the direction of your life and mine in terms of what we do with our time, talent and treasure post-salvation.

VIII. RECONCILIATION

When someone is **redeemed**, or bought out of the in-bondage-to-sin marketplace, they are simultaneously being **reconciled** (*katallasso*), being brought back, realigned with God (as was mankind’s standing prior to the fall into **sin** per Genesis 3). Throughout Scripture the unsaved man is called an “enemy of God,” bespeaking of man’s latent hostility toward his Creator that both perpetuated and resulted from the fall. The classic sermon, preached by one of the world’s foremost Christian thinkers of all times, America’s Jonathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, is an apt summary title of biblical pronouncement: The Bible is clear, there is enmity between God and man and there is a need for the two to be **reconciled**.

It is interesting to note that in the same verse or near every major reference to **reconciliation** in the NT, there is mention of God’s wrath. The point being, when you are **reconciled** to God you are delivered from the wrath of God and into the peace of God—you pass from one place to the other! **Reconciliation** occurs when God takes the initiative to absolve the alienation—from enmity to amity via His **substitutionary, atoning, propitiatory, redeeming** purchase, i.e., Christ’s **reconciling** payment on the cross!

This theological realignment is so profound that Paul states in Romans 5:11 and 5:10 (I’ve reversed their order to punctuate what I am emphasizing) that such will create an overwhelming



response in the heart of the believer:

We also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

You get the idea. What wonderful, profound passages! In view of our ongoing, analogous illustration, the lawmaker, seeing all that the courtroom judge has done for him, based on absolutely no merit of his own, recognizes he has been set free from his infractions and resultant bondage: Instead of a justifiable punishment for his recorded infractions—to his sheer amazement!—he has been made a friend of the judge, all by the judge’s endearing hand of grace!

The righteous judge is beckoning for the lawmaker to follow him, as he once again instructs the peace officer holding the handcuffs to back off. The lawmaker’s heartfelt gratitude cannot help but congeal into desires of responsive, appreciative dutifulness as he follows the gracious and merciful judge from the courtroom. 2 Corinthians 5:19 encapsulates the **redeemed, reconciled** prisoner’s spirit:

Namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them

IX. REGENERATION

In Titus 3:5-6 Paul uses this word when describing salvation:

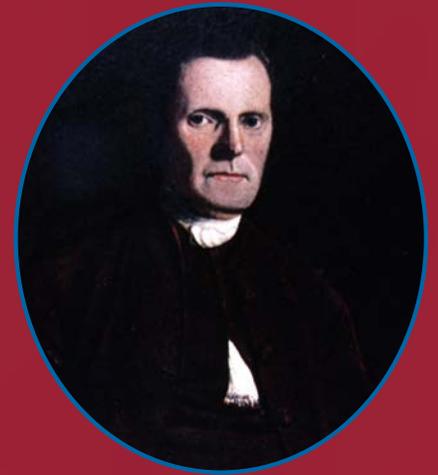
He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Regeneration is an act instantly done and completed by God upon the sinner’s willful desire to turn from his *sin* and respond in faith to the free gift of salvation offered by Christ. Herein God imparts life to the one who believes. New Testament terms such as **brought forth** (James 1:18); **made alive** (Ephesians 2:5); and a **new creature** (2 Corinthians 5:17) denote what happens in **regeneration**. This is the new birth that Jesus told Nicodemus about in John chapter 3:3 **Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.** In a summary of synonyms, the idea of **regeneration** is referred to as the following throughout the NT:

BIBLICAL SYNONYMS for REGENERATION

- Brought Forth James 1:18
- Made Alive Ephesians 2:5
- New Creature 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Being Born Again John 3:3
- Spiritual Revivification Ephesians 2:4-6
- Re-Creation Ephesians 2:10
- Circumcision of the Heart Colossians 2:11
- Washing From Former Sins Ephesians 5:26
- New Spiritual Birth John 1:13

Roger Sherman



“God commands all men everywhere to repent. He also commands them to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and has assured us that all who do repent and believe shall be saved... [G]od... has absolutely promised to bestow them on all these who are willing to accept them on the terms of the Gospel – that is, in a way of free grace through the atonement. ‘Ask and ye shall receive [John 16:24]. Whosoever will, let him come and take of the waters of life freely [Revelation 22:17]. Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out’ [John 6:37].”

— Roger Sherman, signer of the Declaration of Independence; signer of the Constitution; “Master Builder of the Constitution”; judge; framer of the Bill of Rights; U.S. Senator.

Correspondence Between Roger Sherman and Samuel Hopkins (Worcester, MA: Charles Hamilton, 1889), p. 9, from Roger Sherman to Samuel Hopkins, June 28, 1790.



James Kent



“My children, I wish to talk to you. During my early and middle life I was, perhaps, rather skeptical with regard to some of the truths of Christianity. Not that I did not have the utmost respect for religion and always read my Bible, but the doctrine of the atonement was one I never could understand, and I felt inclined to consider as impossible to be received in the way Divines taught it. I believe I was rather inclined to Unitarianism; but of late years my views have altered. I believe in the doctrines of the prayer books as I understand them, and hope to be saved through the merits of Jesus Christ. . . . My object in telling you this is that if anything happens to me, you might know, and perhaps it would console you to remember, that on this point my mind is clear: I rest my hopes of salvation on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

— James Kent, Judge; Law Professor; “Father of American Jurisprudence.”

William Kent, *Memoirs and Letters of James Kent* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1898), pp. 276-277.

Regeneration is an all-encompassing “view from the blimp” if you will, beneficial summation of salvation. It is the distinct work of God to transform the heart. It is specifically spiritual, aimed at the inner man, the heart, his soul. In terms of our analogy the biblical meaning of regeneration can be equated to the judge providing the lawmaker with a right standing, expunging and forever sealing all misdemeanors and felonies from his record. 2 Corinthians 5:17 summarizes this idea:

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

X. ADOPTION

As if all of the aforementioned were not enough of an illustration of *so great a salvation*, let’s now examine the meaning of the biblical word **adoption** (*huiiothesia*). It was a Roman custom and legal ceremony whereby the **adopted** was given all the rights of a natural-born member of the family; the word literally means, “placing as a son.” It is the giving of place and condition of a son to someone to whom it did not belong. It is the judicial bestowal of a new status. Paul put it this way to the believers at the Church of Ephesus (1:5):

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

Not only does the gracious judge give the lawmaker a hall pass and remove the old things from his record, he decides to go a step further; he **adopts** him! Unbelievable! He takes the lawmaker into his home—bestowing

upon him all the rights and privileges reserved for natural-born members of his household! This is precisely what Jesus has done in a spiritual sense to all believers! States Paul to the Church at Rome (8:15) in regard to the **adopted**:

For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

XI. JUSTIFICATION

Justification is the legal act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous on the basis of the **substitutionary, atoning, propitiatory, redeeming, reconciling, regenerating, adoptive** work of Christ. It is that “act of God whereby He acquits the gospel believer of the divine verdict of condemnation and declares him to be righteous.”⁶ Importantly, it is more than a pronouncement of innocence, it is a declaration of righteousness; the believer is now in good standing with God, and God treats him accordingly! States Paul in this regard to the Church at Corinth (6:11):

Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

Relative to our illustration, this is best understood as the courtroom judge going to the public square and proclaiming the lawmaker as his close friend—bequeathing to him his righteousness, character and credibility! Paul put it this way to the Church at Rome (3:24):



Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

XII. SUMMARY: MAN'S RESPONSE

The aforementioned biblical descriptors of salvation vividly illustrate the tremendous love, grace, and mercy that God bestows in converting the dead-as-a-doornail soul of an individual (cf. Ephesians 2:1-10). Indeed, it is a *great salvation* (Hebrews 2:3). These truths raise the question: *what need be your response to God's offer?*

HOW DOES ONE ENACT GOD'S REGENERATION IN HIS OR HER LIFE? WHAT FOLLOW ARE SOME PASSAGES FROM SCRIPTURE THAT INFORM US AS TO WHAT GOD SPECIFICALLY EXPECTS IN RESPONSE

A. REPENTANCE

In Luke 15:7 Jesus states:

"I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine [seemingly] righteous persons who [mistakenly think they] need no repentance."

Repentance means you have a change of intellect, emotion and will. As in the parable of the lost son in Luke 15:21, one must come to the end of the deification of self: *"Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy..."* *Repentance*, then, is an attitude fraught with humility and contrition and impossible to obtain

unless God gifts one with it. Second Timothy 2:25 states this very clearly:

... if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth.

Repentance, then, is also a gift from God. When God does grant *repentance* the benefits are unsurpassed in this life. In Peter's sermon recorded in Acts 3, he states it this way, *"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord"* (3:19). Luke (13:3-5) states the same truth in the opposite way, that those who do not *repent* will not be saved:

"I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

B. FAITH

In Hebrews 11:6 the author states,

Without faith it is impossible to please Him.

"As *repentance* is the one side of the coin of conversion, turning from one's sin, so *faith* is the other side, laying hold upon the promises and the work of Christ."⁷ *Faith*, then, is the total commitment of oneself to Christ. It is volitional acceptance of God's gracious offer; it is the affirmation of the human heart to the work of God previously described herein. *Faith* is the means by which Christ and His work are appropriated.

FAITH IN AND OF ITSELF DOES NOT SAVE, RATHER IT IS THE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH GOD'S ENACTMENT OF HIS GIFT OF GRACE SAVES ME

Charles Carroll



"Grateful to Almighty God for the blessings which, through Jesus Christ Our Lord, He had conferred on my beloved country in her emancipation and on myself in permitting me, under circumstances of mercy, to live to the age of 89 years, and to survive the fiftieth year of independence, adopted by Congress on the 4th of July 1776, which I originally subscribed on the 2nd day of August of the same year and of which I am now the last surviving signer."

— Charles Carroll, signer of the Declaration of Independence; selected as delegate to the Constitutional Convention; framer of the Bill of Rights; U.S. Senator.

Lewis A. Leonard, *Life of Charles Carroll of Carrollton* (New York: Moffit, Yard & Co, 1918), pp. 256-257.



Robert Treat Paine



“I desire to bless and praise the name of God most high for appointing me my birth in a land of Gospel Light where the glorious tidings of a Savior and of pardon and salvation through Him have been continually sounding in mine ears.”

— Robert Treat Paine, military chaplain; signer of the Declaration of Independence; Attorney General of Massachusetts; judge.

Robert Treat Paine, *The Papers of Robert Treat Paine*, Stephen T. Riley and Edward W. Hanson, editors (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1992), Vol. I, p. 48, Robert Treat Paine’s Confession of Faith, 1749.

Follow what I mean here: The above fact is why I do not care for the common label *The Faith Community*. In its politeness and political correctness, it is too broad and misleading of a label. It tends to engender the idea that all people of *faith* are okay with God. But it is possible to have *faith* in a wrong understanding—or no understanding at all of the biblical descriptors of true saving *faith* as illuminated in and by this study. This distinction of *God’s grace* being what saves me via my acceding faith is made clear by Paul in Ephesians 2:8:

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

We are saved *by the grace of God*. This grace is enacted via the conduit of believing by *faith* alone in the Author of Scripture whom therein has revealed the cogent elements of salvation to us to believe in.

C. CONVERSION

In Acts 26:20 Paul is explaining salvation to King Agrippa. Therein he states the following:

“ . . . that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.”

Conversion means, “To turn towards, turn around.” “To change one’s mind and behavior.” In the above passage, Paul is evidencing that true salvation is always characterized by one turning around. One is not really saved if there is no desire to turn around relative to *sinful* ways. Scripture explains **conversion** both in terms of man’s

responsibility to turn, or be **converted**, and God’s turning or **converting** of a man. Relative to the former, Isaiah writes in 55:6-7:

Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have compassion on him He will abundantly pardon.

And to the latter point of man’s responsibility to **convert**, Peter preached in Acts 3:26:

“ . . . God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways.”

Accordingly, **conversion** is both a work of God and an act of man that has tremendous implications:

Conversion leads to a fundamental change of the whole life. It receives a new outlook and objective . . . it involves a complete transformation of his existence under the influence of the Holy Spirit.⁸

Conversion is a turning of the intellect, emotion and will toward God. Paul calls **conversion**, “*turning to God*” in 1 Thessalonians 1:9:

. . . and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God.

D. LORDSHIP

Paul states to the Church at Rome the need to understand in whom *specifically* you are placing your faith, or **converting** to. Romans 10:9 states in this regard:



. . . if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

The Greek word that is translated as **Lord** (*kurios*) is used 747 times in the New Testament. It means “Master, King, or Boss.”

WHEN ONE COMES TO JESUS FOR SALVATION, HE OR SHE MUST COME TO THE JESUS DESCRIBED IN SCRIPTURE IN ORDER TO BE SAVED. THE JESUS OF SCRIPTURE IS THE LORD

One is not saved unless he or she believes in the **Lord** Jesus Christ. As with **repentance, faith** and **conversion**, all carry with them the idea that you must relinquish control of your life to Christ’s **lordship**; it is the surrender of your will for that of another. Akin to the earlier understanding of **adoption** in this study, Jesus Christ becomes your new boss, and you gratefully become His **slave!** If you don’t sober to that reality as you contemplate salvation, then you might be settling for “easy believism”: receiving a Jesus of your own making, or to your own liking. The result would be to delude yourself into thinking you have accepted Jesus—and that you are saved—when in reality you are not; you have received a Jesus of your own definition, versus the one defined in Scripture and history; is it your authority that defines who Jesus is: or is it Jesus’ authority who defines who He is? In 2 Corinthians 11:4, Paul was concerned for the Corinthian church relative to this very thing: That they had received **another Jesus**, one that he had not preached to them.

A REPENTANT HEART THAT GLADLY DESIRES A NEW LORD IS CHARACTERISTIC OF TRUE, REAL CONVERSION OF THE SOUL

The truly converted gladly want to make Christ’s agenda their agenda! Those who are believing in **another Jesus** are always characterized by a lack of obedience to Jesus’ commands; they cling to their own way of doing things. This then is a telltale sign of true or false **conversion: Lordship.** Jesus stated in Mark 8:34-35 this same heartfelt condition as to what connotes true saving faith:

“If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.”

E. COMING TO CHRIST

The Apostle John and the Apostle Paul were very clear in their respective gospels (John 1:12) and epistle (Ephesians 1:13) regarding the need for one to plead for God’s salvation from a contrite heart:

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Notice the caveat to being **sealed** in the

George Washington



“Direct my thoughts, words and work. Wash away my sins in the immaculate blood of the lamb, and purge my heart by thy Holy Spirit, from the dross of my natural corruption, that I may with more freedom of mind and liberty of will serve thee, the ever lasting God, in righteousness and holiness this day, and all the days of my life.”

— George Washington, first President of the United States; Commander-In-Chief of the Continental Army; member of the Continental Congress; President of the Constitutional Convention, “Father of His Country”; judge.

William J. Johnson, *George Washington, The Christian* (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919).



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Holy Spirit: It is belief, or receiving the *message of the truth, the gospel of your salvation*. Begging out to God can and should be done through prayer to Him, which is speaking to God. Pray the following prayer today if it represents the desire of your heart:

“Lord Jesus, I confess that I am a sinner who is in need of a new boss. I repent of being the god of my own life and plead with you to save me. I welcome you into my life as my Lord and Savior. I need the empowering of your Holy Spirit to convert me into the person you want me to be. Thank you for hearing my prayer and coming into my life.”

Having studied these descriptors and the biblical response to the descriptors of salvation, my prayer is this: if you have not asked Jesus into your heart, that your contemplation will prove to be similar to King Agrippa’s, after Paul reasoned with him in Acts 26:28:

Agrippa replied to Paul, “In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.”

I trust that God will use this study to speak to your heart in a profound way about salvation that is found in Jesus Christ alone. Amen! 

(ENDNOTES)

¹Horne, *Salvation* p. 91.

²Ibid, p. 210.

³*Baker’s Dictionary of Theology*.

⁴Stott, John *The Cross of Christ*, p. 175.

⁵Morris, p. 54.

⁶Barackman, *Practical Christian Theology*.

⁷Erickson, *Christian Theology*.

⁸*NIDNTT* 1:355.

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