

# The Greatest Gift...Salvation

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In John 3:16 the Lord Jesus Christ told the Jewish leader, Nicodemus: "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."

There is no greater gift that one can receive than that of salvation. One may ask; what is salvation? Salvation is God's love in action. Two places in the Bible that we see a good definition of this word and both are in Luke 2:25-38. When Jesus was brought to the temple by Mary and Joseph as she came to be purified as set forth by the Law, Luke tells us that there were two people present that day: Simeon and Anna. These were not two ordinary people, but two people who had been faithful to God. When Simeon took the baby Jesus up in his arms verses 28-30 states, "Then he took him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation," verse 38 tells us that what Anna the prophetess said when she saw the baby Jesus, "And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Salvation is in none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

What salvation is not: salvation is not merely deliverance from future punishment; it also does not include freedom from sin as a present power. Salvation does produce a deliverance which makes the future possible.

The word "salvation" comes from the Greek word "Soteria" meaning: a savior, deliverer, safety, deliverance, and preservation from danger or destruction. This word was used only twice in the Bible by the Lord Jesus Christ: First, it was when He confronted Zaccheus in Luke 19:9. It was at this place that Jesus sought him and found him and saved him. The second place that Jesus used this form of the word salvation was to the women at the well in John 4:22.

So, what is the source of my salvation? Salvation has a three-fold source: First of all God's Grace. Ephesians 2:8, 9 states, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." This comes in the form of God the Father who planned my salvation.

Secondly, God's Love. Romans 5:8 states, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." This comes in the form of God the Son who provided my salvation.

Thirdly, God's Mercy. Titus 3:5 states, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." This comes in the form of God the Holy Spirit who presented to me my salvation. As Dr. James Alexander Stewart puts it in his book "The Heavenly Executive:" "Redemption is planned by the Father; provided by the Son; and applied only by the Holy Spirit." So let us look farther at these three points concerning my salvation.

God's Grace planned my salvation within Himself. Ephesians 2:5 states, "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." This along with what the apostle Paul has already mentioned in Eph. 2:8, 9 shows that God in His Omniscience saw my need, and not mine only but also the need of the whole world. God has perfect knowledge and has never been taken by surprise. God told Jeremiah in Jer. 1:5, "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the

nations.” God has never been embarrassed because He did not have the solution for the problem at hand.

Even though God the Father knew how you and I was going to live and the things that you and I were going to do even before we ever came into existence, He still went through with His plan of salvation for mankind.

God’s Love provided my salvation through His Son Jesus Christ. Remember what we said earlier about Romans 5:8, “But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Jesus Christ the Son of God came to this earth for one reason: that He might go to the Cross and pay the sin-debt for me. And not only for me, but also for the sins of the whole world; “for God so loved the world” (John 3:16). There is an old song that says, “Living He loved me, dying He saved me, buried He carried my sins far away, rising He justified freely forever.” It was God’s love for me that led Jesus to the Cross. It was God’s love for me that held Jesus to the Cross. It was God’s love for me that Jesus said, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34). Yes it was the love of God in the form of His Son that provided my and your salvation.

God’s Mercy presented me my salvation in the form of the Holy Ghost as mentioned earlier in Titus 3:5. The Spirit’s supreme business in this Dispensation is to make known the Son of God.

As Dr. Stewart again puts it in his book “The Heavenly Executive,” the Holy Spirit “Investigates,” “Interrogates,” and “Incriminate.”

The first task of the Holy Spirit is to inform the sinner of the good news, the gospel concerning God’s plan of redemption. Secondly, He the Holy Ghost applies our salvation and seals us to the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30 says, “And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” There are three ways that the Holy Spirit presents salvation to the sinner: First of all the Holy Spirit enters into every detail and thought of our lives and brings out the awful realities that we did not know existed. This is what is known as “Investigation.” This speaks of an investigating; careful search; a systematic inquiry.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit reproves or convicts the sinner of their sin. Jesus said in John 16:8, “And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” What the Spirit does is cross-examines the sinner and proves their guilt. This is known as “Interrogation.” This means to ask questions.

Thirdly, the Spirit passes judgment on what He has discovered about them through investigation and interrogation, and upon proving them guilty, he incriminates them. It is at this point that the sinner can say nothing but guilty. This is known as “Incrimination.” This means to accuse of a crime; to involve in, or make one appear guilty of a crime or fault.

But before judgment could be carried out Mercy stepped in at that moment and over rode justice and at the same time the Spirit introduced me to the Lord Jesus Christ;  
He invited me to come to the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;  
He impregnated me with the Word of God, the “good seed” which He planted in the ground of my soul that He had ploughed up during the time of conviction;  
He incorporated me into the family of God;  
He indwells within me;  
He insures me of my salvation.

DO YOU HAVE THIS WONDERFUL GIFT OF SALVATION? IS GOD TALKING TO YOU TODAY?

Romans 3:23 states, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Also Romans 6:23 states, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

I'm glad to know that my sins have been covered by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and that His Grace keeps me saved day in and day out.

What a wonderful gift to have received: the gift of salvation.