



World Hope Bible Institute

SAMPLE

**Soteriology:
Doctrine of Salvation**

Instructor's Manual

Session 1.1: Class Notes **The Nature of Salvation**

➤ **Key Point: Humanity is sinful and deserves the judgment of God.**

➤ **The Problem of Good and Evil**

- God alone is good --Mark 10:18; “*No one is good except God alone...*”
- God is the source of all goodness in creation. --**Genesis 1:4ff, 31**; “*God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.*”
- God is not the origin of sin/evil. -**Deuteronomy 32:4**; “*The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just;*”
- A God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He.
Job 34:10- “*Therefore, listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God to do wickedness, and from the Almighty to do wrong.*”
James 1:13 - “*Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.*”
- Sin/evil entered humanity through Adam and Eve. -- **Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12,16**- “*through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin...*”; “*The judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation...*”

➤ **Definition of Sin**

- **James 4:17** – “*So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.*”
- Alternatively, “Sin is any failure to conform to God’s purpose for us; namely, failure to intentionally and faithfully love and glorify God in all that we are, think, feel, or do.”

➤ **Effects of Sin: Corruption and Depravity**

The significance of sin is that the human problem lies in our nature not just in our behavior.

- **Psalm 51:1-5**
- **Jeremiah 17:9**- “*The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?*”
- **Romans 8:8**- “*...those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*”
- **John 8:34**- “*Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.*”
- **Ephesians 2:1-2**-- “*And you were dead in your trespasses and sins...*”
- **1 Corinthians 2:14**- “*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.*”

“Man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostasy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do anything that is truly good (such as saving faith eminently is); but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through His Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, according to the Word of Christ, John 15:5, ‘Without me ye can do nothing.’”

Article 3, Articles of Remonstrance

➤ **God judges sin and those who commit sin.**

- **Matthew 10:28**- “*Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*”
- **Romans 1:18**- “*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.*”
- **Ephesians 5:6**- “*Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.*”

Session 1.1: Issues in Instruction

➤ **Apologetic Context of the Doctrine of Salvation**

An excellent way to introduce the doctrine of salvation is to set it in its apologetic context: human pride, particularly as expressed through religion. Other religions offer the path of human effort to address human behavior in order to earn God's favor- they do not offer a Savior. Christianity, however, presents a free offer of divine favor based on God's action to address not only behavior, but fallen human nature and its consequences. Most fundamentally, Christianity offers Christ.

➤ **Evil is the absence of goodness in a person, thing, or situation.**

Heretics have traditionally challenged what they saw as a contradiction in Christian theology. Scripture teaches that God is the Creator of all things ("heaven and earth"), but that God is not the author of sin. They then point out that if God did not create sin/evil, then He did not create everything. On the other hand, if He created everything, then He is the author of sin. Christians have answered this by noting that evil is not an actual thing, but rather the word "evil" is the label we use to describe the absence of goodness in a person, thing, or situation. In this sense, the word "evil" or "sinful" is like the word "darkness"—where darkness is not an actual thing, but the word we use to describe the absence of light.

➤ **Sin/evil is always ultimately irrational.**

Sin does not make sense. The definitive example is Genesis 3. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they acted irrationally. They tried to secure by their own efforts (rebellious and sinful efforts!) a righteousness that could only come from God. In order to secure their own righteousness, they became unrighteous.

➤ **"Total Depravity"**

The understanding of the impact of sin offered here is one version of "total depravity." Sin affects every part of the human person (reason, will, desires, spirit/soul, body, etc.). The problem is not so much that people *cannot* make spiritually significant choices... they do so all the time. Rather, they *won't* make spiritually pure and righteous choices on their own. It is in this sense that they "can't." Instructors should note that this is not a distinctively "Reformed" or "Calvinist" view, as indicated by Article 3 of the Articles of Remonstrance (the founding document of Arminianism).

➤ **God judges sin and sinners.**

It has become common-place among evangelicals to avoid and minimize the idea that God's Holiness prompts Him to display wrath and judge sin, let alone expose actual persons to His wrath and judgment. Many will say "God never sends anyone to hell." While it is true that God does not send people to hell apart from their own sin, Scripture clearly teaches that Christ is the eschatological judge who will say "Depart from me, I never knew you." The discomfort arises, in part, because we have trouble seeing the holiness and love of God together. The best example of God's judgment on sin and sinners in Scripture is actually the cross of Christ. Here you see the wrath and judgment of God poured out, not on a concept "sin," but on a person. Yet this Person is the One who takes our place by the will of God, to bear the judgment in our place.

Session 1.1: Ideas for Application

- **God as the Source of Goodness**-- If God alone is good in-Himself and is the source of goodness in Creation, then human effort will always be only "filthy rags" apart from God's working in human beings. This reality undercuts any appeal to works or merit as a source of goodness. There is no place for pride in the Christian life.
- **Gospel Presentations** -- 1 Tim. 1:15 says that God saves sinners, and Mark 2:17 affirms that this means people who know they are sinners. As a result, a presentation of the Good News must include a presentation of the "Bad News" of sin and judgment in order to convict people of sin and accept the salvation offered in Christ. God does not save "good people" (people who think they are good), only sinners.

Session 1.2: Class Notes

Key Idea: Christ's death and resurrection secure salvation in Himself.

Definitions: Atonement- the price paid by Christ through His death on the cross to secure our salvation in Himself. (see Mk 10:45; Jn 3:17, 2 Cor 5:21; Tit 2:14)

Resurrection- Christ's return to life in a glorified, physical body which occurred as an event in history, the Sunday after His crucifixion (Easter). (see Matt 28; Mk 16:1-13; Lk 24; Jn 20-21)

➤ **Sacrifice**

- Key OT Events Which Relate to the Concept of Atonement:
 - Exile from Eden – Genesis 3:21 (God offered the first sacrifice)
 - Abraham & Isaac – Genesis 22 (Freely offered first-born son)
 - Passover – Exodus 12 (Shedding of blood to preserve life)
- **Vicarious- for me (for my benefit)**
 - **Romans 5:7-8-** *“For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”*
 - **1 Corinthians 11:24-** *“This is My body, which is for you;”*
- **Substitutionary- in my place (on my behalf)**
 - **Leviticus 1:4-** *“He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf.”*
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21-** *“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”*
- **Propitiation-**To calm, appease, soothe
 - **1 Samuel 2:25-** *“If one man sins against another, God will mediate for him; but if a man sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?”*
 - **Romans 3:25-** *“whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed”*
 - Not only does the Son appease the wrath of the Father, it is the Father who sent the Son to be our propitiation!
- **Conquest**
 - **Hebrews 2:14-** *“Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He, Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,”*
 - **1 John 3:8;** *“The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.”*
 - What seemed like Satan's greatest victory, the crucifixion of Christ, was actually his greatest defeat. For at the cross, Christ conquered Satan, sin, death, and the rebellious heart of every believer.

➤ **The Resurrection is Essential to Christianity:** (see esp. 1 Cor 15:16-19)

- Expresses the salvation which Christ secured in Himself. (Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 15:20, Col 1:8)
- Secures, together with the crucifixion, the salvation of all who believe in Him. (Rom 5:15-19)
- Validates Christ's teaching about His deity and mission. (Jn 10:18; Acts 2:24-36; Heb 10:12)

➤ **Union with Christ**

The distinction between saved and lost comes at the point of faith and union with Christ. God's intent was to secure salvation through Christ's death and resurrection. All the benefits of salvation are secured in Christ, so that He is our salvation. The death of Christ makes Him the Savior of the world and our Salvation. Yet as long as a person is separated from Christ by unbelief, He is not yet their Savior. A person is united with Christ and shares in the benefits of His death through faith and faith alone.

Session 1.2: Issues in Instruction

➤ **Flawed Models of the Atonement**

- **Ransom Theory**- Christ paid a ransom to Satan to release sinners. Problems: Scripture teaches that the payment is due to God, not Satan. Implies Satan's ownership of fallen humanity is legitimate.
- **Moral Influence Theory**- Christ died simply to show how much God loves humanity. Problems: Denies that God requires payment/penalty for sin. Ignores the wrath and just judgment of God.
- **Example Theory**- Christ died simply to provide an example of self-less service for us to follow. Problems: While Christ's sacrifice certainly sets us an example to follow, that is not a complete explanation of the atonement (or even the major part!) Denies that God requires payment/penalty for sin. Ignores the wrath and just judgment of God.
- **Governmental Theory**- Christ died to demonstrate the principle that God is the Divine Lawgiver and His laws cannot be violated without consequence. God need not have required a payment / penalty. Problems: Makes God's requirement of a penalty arbitrary, and thus the death of Christ a cosmic version of child-abuse.

➤ **Atonement and the Individual**

The doctrine of the atonement should not end with abstract analysis, but with its personal significance. Christ's death is "for me" (Gal 2:20), covers all my sin (1 Pet 3:18), and aims not only to rescue me from the consequences of my sin, but from my bondage to sin as well (Jn 8:36).

➤ **The Importance of the Resurrection**

The doctrine of the historical, bodily resurrection of Christ is one of the most central of all biblical teachings. Apart from the resurrection, there is no salvation. As the first-born of the resurrection of the dead, Christ is the in-breaking of the eschatological age into the present; the core of the "already" and the guarantor of that which is "not yet." Without the resurrection, the Gospel is a lie and the hope we offer becomes mere delusion.

➤ **Questions for Discussion**

What were the ultimate causes that lead to Christ's coming to earth and dying for our sins?

Discuss the fact that the answer lies in God's character: His love and justice.

Was there any other way for God to save humanity other than sending Jesus to die in our place?

Session 1.2: Ideas for Application

- **Christ's Example:** Despite the flaws in the Example Theory of the atonement, it is the case that Christ set the supreme example of sacrifice and service for Christians (see Mark 10:41-45). Christ served fallen humanity, even though we were His enemies and His creatures. The model of serving others contrasts Christians with those who are not followers of Christ, and use their power to serve themselves. Service to others (undeserving and subordinates!) grounds the Christian vision of political service (serve the needs of constituents) and business (serve the legitimate needs of customers, investors, and employees by means of the product created or service provided).

- **Evangelism:** The cross and resurrection legitimizes and mandates the offer of salvation to every hearer. (Matt 28:19-20; 2 Cor 5:16-21)

Oh, let not the fierce regret sting you like an adder,... I pray you so live, that when you stand over your child's dead body you may never hear a voice coming up from that clay, "Father, thy negligence was my destruction. Mother, thy want of prayer was the instrument of my damnation." But so live, that when you hear the funeral knell, for a neighbour even, you may be able to say, "Poor soul, whether he is gone to heaven or to hell, I know I am clear of his blood." ... Oh, my brothers and sisters in Christ, if sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies; and if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay, and not madly to destroy themselves. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for. - Spurgeon

Session 1.3: Class Notes

- **Key Idea: Salvation is a gift of grace.**
- **Works and the Law**
 - Martin Luther: *“The law says, “Do this,” and it is never done. Grace says, “believe this,” and everything is already done.”* --Heidelberg Disputation, Thesis 26.
 - You must be perfect as God is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)
 - No one measures up to God’s righteousness. (Romans 3:9-18, 23)
 - Attempting to keep God’s law will not save anyone. (Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16; 3:10)
 - All our righteous deeds are like filthy rags. (Isaiah 64:6)
 - Purpose of the law is to show us that we are sinners, and so lead us to Christ (Galatians 3:22-24)
- **God is gracious towards sinners in salvation.**
 - **Romans 3:23-24** *“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus”*
 - **Romans 6:14** *“For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*
 - **Ephesians 2:8-9** *“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*
 - **2 Timothy 1:9** *“who 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.”*
- **Definition of Grace:** Grace is God’s favor, given apart from human acts (good or bad, mental or physical, religious or secular).
 - **Key Factors:**
 - **No Obligations:**
 - Grace is always a gift.
 - God owes grace to no one. Grace is always unmerited.
 - There is no factor external to God, which prompts Him to give grace.
 - Not Debt: Romans 4:4, 16
 - Not Good Works: Romans 11:6
 - Not Works of the Law: John 1:17
 - **No Obstacles:**
 - Grace banishes unworthiness.
 - There is no factor external to God, which prevents Him from giving grace.
 - Not Our Enmity: Romans 5:1-2; 5-8
 - Not Our Spiritual Deadness: Ephesians 1:1-10
 - **Summary: Grace is given freely.**
 - God shows favor apart from external constraints or motivations.
 - God is under no obligation to show favor to anyone.
 - Not related to human action in any way, either good or evil.
 - Motivation for God’s graciousness comes from within Him, not in human action or inaction.
 - **Grace corrects our prideful assumption that we earn by our works all the good things we receive. (Matthew 20:1-16)**

Session 1.3: Issues in Instruction

➤ **The Theology of Glory and the Theology of the Cross**

Martin Luther distinguished between the theology of glory (man's glory) and the theology of the cross.

- Uprightness Before the Law (Theology of Glory)
 - Assumes the sinner can do the good thing(s) necessary for salvation: Matt 19:16ff.
 - By this standard, no sin can be overlooked: Deut 6:25; Ex 23:7
 - No one can meet this standard: 2 Chr 6:36; Ps 143:3; Eccl 7:20; Rom 3:23; Gal 2:16
 - Theologian of Glory says, "I passed test 'X' for salvation."
 - Something I did or was caused God to save me.
- Grace (Theology of the Cross)
 - Key Text: Rom 3:21-26
 - Assumes only God can do what is necessary for salvation: Rom 5:6-11.
 - Theologian of the Cross says, "In spite of everything, God saved me."
 - Nothing I did or was caused God to save me.
 - All views of salvation fit into one of these two categories. In short, either one is saved by grace, or one is trying to be saved by works (works of the Law, good deeds, good choices, and good intentions).

➤ **Definition of Grace**

One good, common definition of grace is **God's Riches Available at Christ's Expense**. A more slightly developed expression is "**God giving us what we don't deserve.**" This definition falls short because it is easy to import a disqualifying phrase, "... in exchange for something worthless." Here the concept of merit has not been eliminated, just shifted. Instead of the inherent value of God's provision, value is located in the fact that the recipient (the sinner) has secured the one thing that God required. The high value of God's grace is in the disparity between the value of what was given to purchase it (Jesus' blood) and the one for whom it was given (a meritless sinner). Grace also has the odd effect of making penitent, living faith a worthless thing!

➤ **Pride and Humility**

While it is true that the love of mammon (money/stuff) is the root of all kinds of evil (Matt 6:24), the core of human sin is pride (Ps 10:4; Jas 5:6). Pride leads people to "play God" in their own life and in the lives of others. As the core of sin, God does not save us in a way that affirms pride. Grace forces us to face the fact that we are sinners, worthy of God's wrath and judgment. Grace makes us admit that we cannot save ourselves. Grace brings us to submit to a first-century Galilean carpenter (who was also the Son of God!) as our Savior and Lord. Grace drives us to accept that we cannot do anything to earn or merit our salvation. In short, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble... and uses grace to humble proud sinners so that they can receive grace!

Session 1.3: Ideas for Application

- **Pride and Works:** Pride is the most pernicious of vices. Preachers must consistently guard against it in themselves, their people, and even their language. One example would be the common phrase, "God needs..." something that I can then provide. Instead, say, "God wants..." or "God desires..."
- **Grace and Evangelism:** Salvation by grace means that there is no sinner so far gone that God cannot save them. Christians sometimes assume that someone is so evil that they just will not be saved, and use that assumption as an excuse for not taking the Gospel to them. This is a practical denial of God's grace in salvation. No one is so sinful that God cannot show grace to him or her. Taking the Gospel to those who have hurt you or are your enemies is the most effective display of God's grace. Remember 1 Tim. 1:12-18. If God could save Paul, then He can save anyone.