



II. THE CALL AND RESPONSE TO SALVATION

A. The Availability of and Call to Salvation

1. The distinction of these truths
 - a. While much of this may go without being said, it is worthy of our consideration and crucial for our understanding to breakdown the various component parts of our salvation from its provision to its acceptance.
 - b. **The need for salvation demands a provision of salvation.**
 - (1) This salvation has been provided through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary.
 - (2) Without this provision, nothing else matters.
 - c. **The provision of salvation demands availability to men.**
 - (1) The provision of salvation is only of value in accordance with its availability to men.
 - (2) It is not enough for the need of salvation to be recognized. It is not enough for the Lord to pay the price of salvation through the death of Jesus Christ.
 - (3) Without this provision being made available to men, nothing else matters.
 - d. **The availability of salvation demands a call to salvation.**
 - (1) The distinction here will become more obvious as we survey the scriptures pointing out each aspect.
 - (2) However, in the meantime, it should be understood that an available salvation is only good if one is invited to accept it.
 - e. **The call to salvation requires a proper response.** (More will be said of this under the heading of “The Response to Salvation.”)
2. The availability of salvation
 - a. The *general* Saviour versus the *special* Saviour (1 Timothy 4:10)
 - (1) God, the general Saviour
 - a) The problem—Some might interpret this to mean that all men will be saved regardless of their willingness to humble themselves and trust Christ as Saviour.
 - b) The provision
 - i) God is the general Saviour of all men in His provision for salvation. In other words, Christ’s salvation has been provided for ALL MEN.
 - ii) God is the general Saviour of all men in His offer of salvation. In other words, Christ’s salvation is accessible and available to ALL MEN.
 - (2) God, the special Saviour
 - a) Just because salvation is provided for and available to all men does not mean that all men are saved.
 - b) The prerequisite for obtaining the salvation and specifically knowing God as Saviour is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.



- b. The positive and negative of God's will in salvation (1 Timothy 2:4)
 - (1) The positive—It IS the will of God for all men to be saved.
 - a) Demonstrated in God's provision
 - i) Christ came to take away the world's sin (John 1:29).
 - ii) God gave His Son for whosoever (John 3:16).
 - iii) Christ came to save the world (John 4:42; John 12:47).
 - iv) God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19).
 - v) God sent His Son to redeem them that were under the law (Galatians 4:4-5).
 - vi) The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men (Titus 2:11).
 - vii) Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2).
 - viii) The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world (1 John 4:14).
 - b) Demonstrated in God's preference
 - i) "God our Saviour...WILL have all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:3-4).
 - ii) *Will* suggests a determination by act of choice.
 - (2) The negative—It IS NOT the will of God for any to perish (2 Peter 3:9).
 - a) God is longsuffering to us-ward.
 - b) God is NOT WILLING that ANY should perish.
 - c) God is WILLING that ALL should repent.
- 3. The call to salvation
 - a. One would assume that the universal availability of salvation equals the universal call to salvation, but this is only assumed because of the righteous character of God. The truth is that one could exist without the other.
 - b. That being said, the righteous character of God that made salvation available to all men has likewise called all men to salvation.
 - (1) Viewed in God's command
 - a) To publish the gospel—The gospel "is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Romans 16:25-26).
 - b) For men to repent
 - i) God "commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).
 - ii) This truth is also supported in 2 Peter 3:9 which states "The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 - c) For men to believe—"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ..." (1 John 3:23)



- (2) Viewed in God's call or drawing
 - i) The scriptures are filled with examples where men are called upon, either the Lord Jesus Christ directly or by one of His messengers, to repent or believe on the Lord for salvation. These are invitations, appeals, or calls to be saved (i.e., Acts 16:31; Acts 26:29; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Revelation 22:17).
 - ii) Some might suggest that the Bible teaches a call to salvation is offered, but not always a drawing of the Lord to salvation.
 - (a) This is crucial because Jesus stated, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44).
 - (b) Yet, Christ said "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (John 12:32-33).

B. Special Notes on the Order of Events (Ephesians 1:1-14)

1. The promise of a sacrifice—outside of time (Ephesians 1:4)
 - a. Christ "was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20) and "slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8).
 - b. God's purpose and grace "was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Timothy 1:9).
 - c. God promised eternal life "before the world began" (Titus 1:2).
 - d. Before the foundation of the world, God chose that "in him...we should be holy and without blame before him" (Ephesians 1:4).
2. Chosen or predestinated (Ephesians 1:4-6)—promised outside of time, accomplished in time
 - a. Chosen
 - (1) The place of choosing—"in him"
 - a) General truths concerning being in Christ
 - i) Christ was made sin for us; "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).
 - ii) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).
 - iii) Paul wanted to "be found in him," not having his own righteousness (Philippians 3:9).
 - iv) "In Christ," we are blessed with spiritual blessings in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3; see Ephesians 2:6).
 - v) We are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ephesians 2:10).
 - vi) God had an "eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:11).
 - vii) We are called to a holy calling, "according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Timothy 1:9).



- b) Evidence that this takes place in time
 - i) Paul told of some in Christ before him (Romans 16:7).
 - ii) Paul spoke of “babes in Christ” which indicates a beginning (1 Corinthians 3:1).
 - iii) Paul said, “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- (2) The time of choosing—“before the foundation of the world”; Simply put, before the world began, God had a purpose and set forth a plan for those who, within time, got in Christ at salvation. If a man failed or fails to get “in Christ” or “in him” these truths or benefits do not apply (see Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2; 1 Peter 1:20-22).
- (3) The result of choosing—“that we should be holy and without blame before him in love”
 - a) In short, those who get in Christ benefit from God’s eternal purpose in Christ.
 - b) Part of that eternal purpose or plan is that those who trust Christ as Saviour will be presented before God “holy and without blame.”
- b. Predestinated
 - (1) The grounds of predestination—Predestination is based on the God’s foreknowledge (Romans 8:29), is by Christ (Ephesians 1:5), and is set forth when we are in Him (Ephesians 1:10-11).
 - (2) The product of predestination
 - a) We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God’s Son (Romans 8:29).
 - b) We are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself (Ephesians 1:5).
 - c) We are predestinated to receive the inheritance of the believer (Ephesians 1:11).
- 3. The offer of a sacrifice—within time (Ephesians 1:7-10)
 - a. Christ came “when the fulness of the time was come” (Galatians 4:4).
 - b. He appeared “once in the end of the world...”to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 9:26).
 - c. While He was “verily foreordained before the foundation of the world,” He “was manifest in these last times” (1 Peter 1:20).
- 4. Faith
 - a. Salvation is the result and product of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16:31; Romans 1:16; Romans 10:9).
 - b. Imputed righteousness is the result of believing “on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Romans 4:23-25).
 - c. Justification is the result and product received when “we have believed in Jesus Christ” (Galatians 2:16).
 - d. We “heard the word of truth,” believed and then “were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise” (Ephesians 1:13).
- 5. Salvation



C. The Response to Salvation

1. Faith

a. What is faith? (Hebrews 11:1)

(1) The simplistic definition

- a) Many give Hebrews 11:1 as the definition for faith and leave it at that. However, one already needs a basic understanding of faith to grasp the truth set forth by this verse.
- b) A short definition of faith could be: taking God at His word. This faith refuses information, regardless of how seemingly reliable, that deters one from fully accepting the words of God as true.

(2) The aspects of faith

a) Knowledge

- i) Faith begins with a knowledge of what it is that should be believed.
- ii) If one knows the gospel of Christ is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ according to the scriptures (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4), he has knowledge.
- iii) However, it is possible for someone to know what the gospel is without believing it to be true.

b) Assent

- i) Knowledge is not enough.
- ii) The person must also believe that the object of faith is true.
- iii) To reach this aspect of faith, the person must know what the gospel is (knowledge) and believe it to be true (assent).
- iv) But this is still not enough for salvation.

c) Trust

- i) Trust refers to a personal commitment to and reliance upon an object of faith.
- ii) In salvation, the sinner must know that Jesus died for him and rose again from the dead (knowledge) and he must accept that these facts are true (assent).
- iii) However, he is still not saved until he relies on these facts as the basis for his personal salvation.

d) The aspects illustrated

- i) Let us say that you are visiting someone's home and they ask you to sit down.
- ii) First, you look over and acknowledge that there is indeed a chair. This is knowledge.
- iii) Second, you accept the fact that you could sit in this chair and it would hold you up. That is assent.
- iv) Finally, you walk over to the chair and sit down in it. That is trust. It is in this third aspect of faith that you exercise and complete your faith.



- b. The relationship of faith and salvation
 - (1) Faith is a requirement; Note: This is that which is identified above as the trusting aspect of faith.
 - a) Belief is required for everlasting life (John 3:14-18, 36).
 - b) Paul spoke of faith toward our Lord Jesus (Acts 20:21).
 - c) Christ is our propitiation through faith in His blood (Romans 3:25).
 - d) Faith is counted for righteousness (Romans 4:4-5).
 - e) We are justified by faith (Romans 5:1).
 - f) We have access into grace by faith (Romans 5:2).
 - g) We are the children of God by faith (Galatians 3:26).
 - h) We are saved through faith (Ephesians 2:8).
 - i) Faith imputes the righteousness of Christ (Philippians 3:9).
 - j) Faith and scripture make us wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3:15).
 - (2) Faith is a gift (Romans 12:3)
 - a) God must give man the ability to believe.
 - b) Unbelief is disobedience which means that God has offered faith to all (1 Peter 2:7).
- 2. Repentance
 - a. The scripturalness of repentance
 - (1) Repentance in the Old Testament (Job 42:5-6; 1 Kings 8:41-52; Jeremiah 31:18-19; Ezekiel 14:6; Ezekiel 18:30-31; Matthew 12:41; Luke 11:32)
 - (2) Repentance in the gospels by John (Matthew 3:1-2, 7-12; Mark 1:4-5; Luke 3:1-14; Acts 13:24; Acts 19:4-5), by Jesus (Matthew 4:12, 17; Matthew 9:9-13 w/ Mark 2:17 and Luke 5:31-32; Matthew 11:20-21; Luke 13:1-5); Note: Even suggested to continue (Luke 24:36-49), and by disciples (Mark 6:7, 12)
 - (3) Repentance in the church age
 - a) Repentance in the early church (Acts 2:37-38; Acts 3:12-21; Acts 5:29-31; Acts 8:18-23)
 - b) Repentance in the ministry of Paul (Acts 17:30; Acts 20:21; Acts 26:20; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:8-10)
 - c) Repentance later in the ministry of Peter (Acts 11:1-3, 15-18; 2 Peter 3:9)
 - d) Repentance later in the ministry of John (Revelation 2:5, 16, Revelation 2:21-22; Revelation 3:3, 19)
 - b. The common thoughts on repentance
 - (1) Turning from sin (1 Kings 8:47; Job 42:6; Jeremiah 8:6; Ezekiel 14:6; Ezekiel 18:30; Matthew 9:13; Luke 15:7, 10; Acts 8:20-22; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Revelation 9:20-21)
 - (2) Change of direction (Exodus 13:17; Acts 26:18, 20; Revelation 2:1-5)
 - (3) Change of mind (Exodus 32:14; Jeremiah 18:8; see Numbers 23:19; Psalm 110:4; Jeremiah 4:28; Ezekiel 24:14; Jonah 3:9-10; Zechariah 8:14; Matthew 21:28-29)



- (4) Concluding thoughts
- a) To suggest that repentance is turning from sin borders on the line of suggesting that repentance is a work. While this may seem insignificant at the onset, it would eventually cause one to entertain the thought that salvation requires works (Ephesians 2:8-9).
 - b) To suggest that repentance is turning from sin suggests that God is a sinner and in need of turning from His sinful behaviour (Genesis 6:6-7; Exodus 32:12, 14; Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 32:36; Judges 2:18; 1 Samuel 15:11, 29, 35; 2 Samuel 24:16; 1 Chronicles 21:15; Psalm 90:13; Psalm 106:45; Psalm 110:4; Psalm 135:14; Jeremiah 4:28; Jeremiah 15:6; Jeremiah 18:8, 10; Jeremiah 20:16; Jeremiah 26:3, 13, 19; Jeremiah 42:10; Ezekiel 24:14; Hosea 11:8; Hosea 13:14; Joel 2:13-14; Amos 7:3, 6; Jonah 3:9-10; Jonah 4:2; Zechariah 8:14). In fact, out of the forty-five verses in the Old Testament using a form of the word *repent*, thirty-six of them (80%) are referencing the Lord as the One either repenting or refusing to repent.
 - c) To suggest that repentance is either a change of direction or of thoughts seems to come short of the fullest reach of the biblical usage (Genesis 6:6; Judges 2:18; Job 42:6; Jeremiah 8:6; Jeremiah 15:6; Jeremiah 31:19; Acts 26:20; 2 Corinthians 7:8-10; 2 Timothy 2:25; Hebrews 12:16-17; Revelation 2:22).
- c. The confusion concerning repentance
- (1) Scriptural associations
 - a) It **repented** the LORD that He had made man, and it **grieved** Him at His heart (Genesis 6:6). After it **repented** the LORD, He said, "I will destroy man whom I have created" (Genesis 6:7).
 - b) When the LORD judges His people and sees that their power is gone, He will **repent** Himself for His servants (Deuteronomy 32:36).
 - c) The oppression of God's people and their ensuing groanings **repented** the LORD (Judges 2:18).
 - d) The people **repented** them for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a breach among them (Judges 21:15).
 - e) Saul turned back from following the LORD, and it **repented** the LORD that He set up Saul to be king (1 Samuel 15:11, 35). When Samuel heard that it **repented** the LORD, it **grieved** Samuel (1 Samuel 15:11).
 - f) The LORD sent an angel to judge Israel, but **repented** Him of the evil when He saw the destruction of the people (2 Samuel 24:15-16; 1 Chronicles 21:14-15).



- g) Solomon prayed that the LORD would extend mercy to captive Israel when they “bethink themselves,” *repent*, confess sins, and return unto Him with all their heart and soul (1 Kings 8:46-48).
 - h) Job *abhorred* himself and *repented* in dust and ashes (Job 42:6).
 - i) The LORD abhorred Israel (Psalm 106:40) and gave them to their enemies (Psalm 106:41), but remembered His covenant and *repented* according to the multitude of His mercies (Psalm 106:45). He made them *also* to be pitied of their enemies (Psalm 106:46).
 - j) The LORD spake of Israel sliding back and refusing to *repent* of their wickedness, saying, “What have I done?” (Jeremiah 8:4-6, 12).
 - k) Ephraim bemoaned himself saying that after he was turned, he repented; and after he was instructed, he smote upon his thigh (Jeremiah 31:18-19).
 - l) The Lord GOD commanded Israel to “*Repent*, and turn” (Ezekiel 14:6; Ezekiel 18:30).
 - m) The Lord said concerning judgment, “*mine heart is turned within me*, my *repentings* are kindled together” (Hosea 11:8).
 - n) The Lord associated *repentance* with mercy rather than sacrifice (Matthew 9:13; see also Proverbs 21:3; Hosea 6:6).
 - o) *Repentance* is a partner to faith in the work of salvation (Acts 20:21).
 - p) Paul preached that people should *repent* AND turn to God AND do works meet for repentance (Acts 26:20).
 - q) Godly sorrow worketh *repentance* to salvation (2 Corinthians 7:9-10).
 - r) *Repentance* precedes the acknowledging of the truth (2 Timothy 2:25).
- (2) Developing definitions
- a) Very few would argue the general thought of repentance equaling a turning.
 - b) It is when the definition seeks to get more specific that folks tend to part ways.
 - c) The frustration seems to be over whether repentance is a turning from thoughts or sins or ways.
 - d) The greater frustration should probably be over where the repentance takes place.
 - i) Is repentance an outward act?
 - ii) Or, is it something that takes place within the heart eventually manifesting itself outwardly?
 - e) Historically, the word *repent* was defined as to regret or make sorry. From the dictionaries, we see:



- i) Repentance is to feel such regret as produces amendment of life.
 - ii) In fact, the distinction between *regret* and *repent* was not present in older periods.
- (3) A doctrinal position
- a) Repentance followed sight or hearing and preceded action (Genesis 6:5-7; Judges 2:18; 1 Samuel 15:9-11, 24-29; 2 Samuel 24:15-17; Psalm 106:44-46).
 - b) Repentance followed self-consideration and preceded supplication (1 Kings 8:47-48).
 - c) Repentance followed an inner turning and was associated with one smiting his thigh, being ashamed and confounded, because of reproach borne for youthful actions (Jeremiah 31:18-19).
 - d) Repentance followed an admonition from the Lord and preceded action (Ezekiel 14:6; Ezekiel 18:30).
 - e) Repentance and faith are partners in salvation (Acts 20:21). In fact, repentance seems to precede acknowledging of the truth (2 Timothy 2:25).
 - f) Repentance preceded turning and demanded outward works fit for repentance (Acts 26:20).
 - g) Repentance is available because of the goodness of God (Romans 2:4).
 - h) Repentance is produced by godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:8-10). Yet, repentance is not merely the outward demonstration of sorrow (Hebrews 12:17).
 - i) Repentance follows remembrance of falling and precedes a change of action (Revelation 2:5).
 - j) Repentance is associated with the turnings of the heart (Hosea 11:8) and the grieving of the heart (Genesis 6:6) and mourning (2 Corinthians 12:21 with 1 Corinthians 5:2).
- (4) Concerns
- a) How could godly sorrow work repentance if they are the same? (Ecclesiastes 1:18; Ecclesiastes 2:23; Isaiah 17:11; Isaiah 53:3, 4; Jeremiah 45:3)
 - b) Is it necessary for an individual to feel remorse for sin? (Psalm 38:18)
3. Confession
- a. Everyone, outside of the cults and unsaved, knows that salvation is by faith. Albeit a smaller number, all who truly believe the scripture know repentance is also necessary. A far smaller number considers the importance or necessity of confession in salvation.
 - b. As to the connection of confession and a relationship with God, we should not be surprised (Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8; Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:11; 1 John 4:2-3, 15; 2 John 1:7).
 - c. What may be surprising is that confession is clearly identified as a requirement for one who desires to be saved (Romans 10:9-13).