

# SERIOUS QUESTIONS FOR SERIOUS CHRISTIANS



RCF Small Group

6:30-8:00pm

Leader: Randy Glau

October - December, 2022

Week #3 & #4: **How am I saved?**



## Serious Question #2: *How am I Saved?*

My salvation is a direct result of:

- a.) My natural desire to please Him.
  
- b.) My decision to respond to God's grace and personally accept His gift of salvation.
  
- c.) God's decision.

# Serious Question #2: *How am I Saved?*

## **Arminian View: Free Will / Human Ability**

- Each sinner possesses a free will, and his eternal destiny depends on how he uses it.
- Although human nature was seriously affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. God graciously enables every sinner to repent and believe, but He does not interfere with man's freedom.
- Man's freedom consists of his ability to choose good over evil in spiritual matters; his will is not enslaved to his sinful nature. The sinner has the power to either cooperate with God's Spirit and be regenerated or resist God's grace and perish.
- The lost sinner needs the Spirit's assistance, but he does not have to be regenerated by the Spirit before he can believe, for faith is man's act and precedes the new birth.
- Faith is the sinner's gift to God; it is man's contribution to salvation. Faith is a human decision and represents the sinner's own movement toward God.

# Serious Question #2: *How am I Saved?*

## **Calvinist View: Total Inability or Total Depravity**

- Because of the fall, man is unable of himself to savingly believe the gospel.
- The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God; his heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt.
- His will is not free. It is in bondage to his evil nature, therefore, he will not — indeed he cannot — choose good over evil in the spiritual realm.
- Consequently, it takes much more than the Spirit's assistance to bring a sinner to Christ — it takes regeneration by which the Spirit makes the sinner alive and gives him a new nature.
- Faith is not something man contributes to salvation but is itself a part of God's gift of salvation— it is God's gift to the sinner, not the sinner's gift to God.
  - (Ephesians 2:8-10)

# Total Depravity

## ➤ Total Depravity (also known as Total Inability and Original Sin)

- Sin has affected all parts of man.
- The heart, emotions, will, mind, body are all impacted by sin.
- We are sinful. In our natural state we are 'prone to wander'.
- We are completely affected by sin.

## ➤ Human Character

- Man's heart is evil (Mark 7:21-23)
- Sick (Jeremiah 17:9)
- A slave of sin (Roman 6:20)
- Does not seek God (Romans 3:10-12)
- Cannot understand spiritual things (1 Cor 2:14)
- At enmity with God (Eph 2:15)
- By nature a child of wrath (Eph 2:3)
- Nothing good in me (Romans 7:18)

# How I am Saved

- The Calvinist asks the question, “In light of the Scriptures that declare man’s true nature as being utterly lost and incapable, how is it possible for anyone to choose or desire God?”
- If we are ‘sinners by nature’, how can man move toward God and achieve salvation?
- The answer is, “He cannot. Therefore God must involve Himself. He must predestine the decision.” This election took place long ago.

# How I am Saved

- Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works so that no one can boast.
- Salvation is IN Christ alone, By grace alone, THROUGH faith alone. Consider the prepositions!
  - Faith is the instrument by which the grace bestowed by God is appropriated enabling one to put their hope and trust in Christ. It's completely monergistic.

# What is Monergism?

“Shining a light into a blind man's eyes will not enable him to see, since, as we all know, sight requires new eyes or some restoration of his visual faculty. Likewise, reading or hearing the Word of God itself cannot elicit saving faith in the reader (or hearer) unless the Spirit first "germinates" the seed of the Word in the heart, so to speak, which then infallibly gives rise to our faith and union with Christ. Like unto Lydia whom **"the Lord opened her heart to respond** to the things spoken by Paul," (Acts 16:14) He must also give all His people spiritual life and understanding if their hearts are to be open and thus turn (respond) to Christ in faith.”

*A simple explanation of monergism, by John*

*Hendryx*

*Also reference: Eph 1:4,5 ; 2 Tim 1:9; Rom 9:15-18*

# How I am Saved

➤ Isaiah 55:11 ...so is My Word that goes out from My mouth; it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

- His Words will achieve one of two purposes:

- It saves.

or

- It judges.

# How I am Saved

Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God....That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit....The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” John 3:1-9 selected

Jesus refers to the Spirit as ‘the wind’.

The Greek word is *pneuma*, which means "a current of air," "breath," or a "breeze," and in this context “spirit.”

The Holy Spirit. The Breath of God.

He breathes life into whomever He wishes.

So the new birth -- and the new life that comes with it – is the work of the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit of God has free will to “blow where it wishes.”

# How I am Saved

“The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing.” John 6:63

How much impact do we have on where the wind blows....or who the Spirit touches...or who the Spirit will touch tomorrow?

None. God in His Sovereignty decides.

*“The main effect of the wind—the Spirit—is that we are made alive spiritually—born again—and now our wills move. They move to receive Christ and believe on Christ. But our wills move because the wind is blowing, not the other way around. We don’t move first. Our wills are awakened and moved toward Christ because the Spirit blows where He wills and gives life to whom He wills.”* John Piper @2015. Desiring God Foundation

We are saved by God and the grace of the Gospel. Not by our own decision to cooperate with God's Plan.

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**G**race is:

**O**bligatory = Indispensable. Required due to our depravity.

**S**overeign = In Choice. God's choice.

**P**articular = In Redemption. Particular people.

**E**ffectual = In Effect. God's Grace saves people.

**L**asting = Secure. Forever. He perseveres with us.

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- c.) God's decision alone.

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**c.) *God's decision alone. (Ephesians 1:4-5)***

- *God decided to have "the wind blow on me" (the Spirit came upon me and regenerated me). It was a result of God's choice....not mine.*
- *The application of salvation is all of Grace and is accomplished solely through the almighty power of God.*
- ***So did I accept Jesus...or did Jesus accept me?***

Class Answers::

- a. 0
- b. 14
- c. 6

Questions?

# Next week

➤ Why did Christ die?