

The Fundamental List - Week 5 - Salvation

My family used to live in Colorado, near Denver when I was young, probably 8 years old. One Christmas season, my dad decided to take our family into the woods and cut a live tree. So up into the Rockies we went and started wandering around the woods looking for a tree. It was me, my little brother, who was 4 years younger than me, and my newborn sister. After a while, my dad told us to stay put and he was going to look for a tree. After about an hour, my dad did not come back. I remember my mom being upset, especially when the snow started falling so hard you could hardly see. So we did exactly what you're supposed to do when you get lost in the woods, we started wondering aimlessly. After a couple more hours, we were finally located by a couple of Rangers, and we rode down the mountain in their Jeep to meet my dad, who had obviously gotten lost when he went ahead to look for a tree.

Imagine what may have happened had it not been for those Rangers. We may have been a front-page story in the newspaper. A family lost in woods, freezes to death. We literally needed someone to save us. We needed someone who knew the area, was well equipped and experienced in finding lost people in the woods. We were in a situation in which we could not save ourselves, we needed someone that could save us.

That is a simple picture of Salvation.

Series - The Fundamental List

Wk 1 - What you believe about God and what He has done will determine how you live your life.

Wk 2 - What do we believe about the Bible?

Wk 3 - What do we believe about Jesus?

Wk 4 - What do we believe about Humanity and Sin?

This week: **What do we believe about Salvation?**

1. We need a Savior.

We are lost and need someone equipped to get us out of our mess.

We talked about this last week, that sin entered the human race through Adam and Eve's decision to align themselves with the Father of Lies, rather than their Creator and Heavenly Father. When they turned their back on God, death and sin entered the human race. Prior to Adam and Eve's decision, neither death nor sin were present in the garden. Every human since then was born with a nature to sin and born knowing that someday they will die.

Ps 51:3-5

For I am conscious of my rebellion, and my sin is always before me. Against you—you alone—I have sinned and done this evil in your sight. So you are right when you pass sentence; you are blameless when you judge. Indeed, I was guilty when I was born; I was sinful when my mother conceived me. We are all in the same boat, and it is a sinking boat.

Rom 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God;

Isaiah tells us the result of our sin.

Isa 59:1-2

Indeed, the LORD's arm is not too weak to save, and his ear is not too deaf to hear. But your iniquities are separating you from your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not listen.

The result of sin is separation from God, the result of sin is eternal death, and the result of sin is destruction. We need to be saved from our sin.

But we need a savior because we cannot save ourselves.

Rom 3:20

For no one will be justified in his sight by the works of the law, because the knowledge of sin comes through the law.

Rom 3:23

For all have sinned and (all) fall short of the glory of God;

We need saving. And that is where Jesus has stepped in to be our savior.

Jn 3:16-17

For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to **save** the world through him.

-C. S. Lewis

We are told that Christ was killed for us, that His death has washed out our sins, and that by dying He disabled death itself. That is the formula. That is Christianity. That is what has to be believed.

2. Salvation is by faith alone.

Obtaining salvation is through faith, it is by **believing** Jesus is God's Son and that God sent Him to die in our place for our sins, and that He rose three days later in victory over sin and death.

Jn 3:16

For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who **believes in him** will not perish but have eternal life.

It doesn't say that everyone who lives an exemplary life will have eternal life."

It is not by being a good person, it is not by doing more good things than bad things, it is not by being baptized, or confirmed, and it is not by saying some magic prayer.

It is by placing our faith in or believing in Jesus, who He is, and what He did that brings us salvation.

Eph 2:8-9

For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—9 not from works, so that no one can boast.

Many people get hung up on the simplicity of the gospel. They think surely it is not that easy. Surely, God has some system to try to keep certain people out of heaven.

-C.S. Lewis

Well, you know how it feels if you begin hoping for something that you want desperately badly; you almost fight against the hope because it is too good to be true; you've been disappointed so often before.

Yes, it is simple because God is not trying to keep you out; he wants you in and has done everything short of forcing you in, to get you there.

Rom 5:8

But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.

He has always wanted a relationship with you and that relationship begins by **believing** in the one who did all of the work to have that relationship.

One of the great examples of this is the thief on the cross

Luke 23:39-43

Then one of the criminals hanging there began to yell insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other answered, rebuking him: "Don't you even fear God, since you are undergoing the same punishment? 41 We are punished justly, because we're getting back what we deserve for the things we did, but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.

That thief had no opportunity to redeem himself with good works or baptism and he didn't say any magic prayer. All he had was his belief, expressed in a plea, uttered in the final moments of his life. "Jesus, remember me."

Here is a short video clip of Alistair Begg talking about this passage, I love how he talks about it.

[\(play video\)](#)

So if the only thing that is required for salvation is belief, then where do good works fit in?

3. Salvation by faith without works is dead.

Look at what the Apostle James says

James 2:14-18 (NLT)

14 What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? 15 Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, 16 and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?

17 So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. 18 Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds."

I can say that I believe all day long, but if my life doesn't somehow reflect my belief, do I really believe? At the end of the day, words are not worth much.

-Dale Carnegie

Pay less attention to what men say. Just watch what they do.

How can I say that I believe Jesus is the Son of God and how can I believe that it was because of my sin that he endured the torture of the cross, but ignore what Jesus says?

How can I do that? The reality is you can't. If you love me, you'll obey me, Jesus said.

What James is saying is that good works are the **result** of your faith.

This is where many religions get hung up. They will say that salvation comes by **faith plus works**, and they will point to this verse but that is not what James is saying.

We don't do good works to **receive** salvation, we do good works **because** of our salvation.

This is also where many people who despise Christianity get hung up. They read the words of Jesus, and then they see His family's behavior, and they think, why would I join a family of people who say one thing but do another?

In Matt 16, Jesus said to His disciples, "Take up your cross and follow me."

Because real faith leads to a changed life, to action, and a willingness to follow Jesus and Jesus alone.

4. Salvation is through Jesus alone.

The idea that the only way to abundant life and eternal life is through Jesus alone, is offensive to many people, especially in a world that is obsessed with diversity and subjective truth

But Jesus said it very clearly in Jn 14.

Jn 14:6

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. **No one comes to the Father** except through me.

And then in the Sermon on the Mount in

Matt 7:13-14

Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it. 14 How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.

Other people may object to the exclusivity of the gospel by saying how could a loving God ever send someone to Hell?

Let me say this, and I want you to hear and understand this point, God doesn't send anyone to Hell. There will not be one single soul in Hell because God sent them there. The only people that will find themselves in Hell are the people who choose to be there.

God has done everything He could do, short of forcing us, to help us know and understand His plan to redeem us and forgive us and restore us.

He became one of us in order to tell us, He even made it as simple as believing in Him, and yet millions of people choose to deny Him, to despise Him and to reject His offer of abundant and new life.

2 Peter 3:8-9

Dear friends, don't overlook this one fact: With the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.

That is God's heart, that all would believe and come to repentance. And once you believe ...

5. Your salvation is eternally secure.

Nothing in the Bible says that moral imperfection results in the loss of something that could not be gained by moral imperfection.

If there is nothing you can **do** to earn Salvation then it is completely illogical and not Biblical to believe that you can then lose your salvation because of something you've **done**.

Believing that you can lose your salvation because of something you've done, is flawed thinking and flawed theology. If you want an insight into God's heart on this read Romans 8.

Rom 8:1

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus

Rom 8:33

Who can bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies.

Rom 8:37-39

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But there is a corollary to this. God forces on one to believe. Even though Adam was in the very place that God wanted Him, Adam still chose to rebel.

God will never eradicate a person's free will to turn their back on grace. This is why the NT writers were so concerned about believers falling into unbelief.

Col 1:22-23

But now he has reconciled you by his physical body through his death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before him—if indeed you remain grounded and steadfast in the faith and are not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you heard.

2 Tim 2:11-13

This saying is trustworthy: For if we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

In this last passage, Paul's concern is denying Christ, the rejection of the gospel that must be believed for eternal life.

We might be unfaithful but God remains faithful in His promise of salvation. You can't sin away your salvation but you can decide to turn your back on it as Paul says in these passages.

There is much more we could talk about when it comes to the doctrine of Salvation but once again, what is the most important thing to know?

The most important thing to know is the answer to the question,

Are you saved?

Have you been saved, have you been rescued?

Imagine my mom, wandering the woods, lost in the Rocky Mountains with her 3 small children and a Ranger comes along and says, I'm so glad I found you, come this way, my jeep is over here. Imagine my mom saying, no, I'm sure my husband will be along shortly, thanks anyway. Or imagine her saying, thanks but no thanks, I'm pretty sure we will find our own way out. I think we've got this. Thanks but no thanks.

I know it's silly to think about, but what if she did? I would most likely not be here today. They probably would have found our bodies sometime in the spring. Help arrived but she refused.

If you have never received God's free gift of forgiveness by believing in Jesus, it's like you are lost in a whiteout blizzard in the Rockies, help arrives, but you refuse the offer of help. You refuse to be rescued.

You are drowning in the river and a hand reaches down to save you, but you refuse, no I've got this, I'm okay, I'll figure it out.

You are drowning in your sin and Jesus has reached down and is offering rescue. Won't you take His hand and allow Him to lead you to a place of safety and security?