

Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology

With a Focus on Its Very Practical Dimensions, Including God's
Answers to Our Great Questions of Life—for Now and Eternity

Lesson 6: Soteriology—The Doctrine of Salvation (Abridged Overview)

Who is the Holy Spirit, and what does he do?

How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied?

Abridged Overview for Class Lecture/Discussion

Note: Highlighted subjects are the minimum to be addressed in classes with time constraints.

Ask the class to read the overview prior to the class meeting.

Rev. Edward D. Seely, Th.M., Ph.D.

Remember where Soteriology fits
within systematic theology.

Review the logic of the loci in the next slides.

Before Looking at the Next Slide...

Let's say together the six loci of historic Christian systematic theology. To help us start, what is the necessary first one from whom the others come?

The Six Loci of Historic Christian Systematic Theology

1. **Theology:** What the Bible Reveals about God
2. **Anthropology:** What the Bible Reveals about Mankind
3. **Christology:** What the Bible Reveals about Jesus Christ
4. **Soteriology:** What the Bible Reveals about Salvation (This doctrine is also called **Pneumatology** and **The Application of Christ's Redemption**, What the Bible Reveals about the Holy Spirit, the key agent in applying Christ's redemption for our salvation)
5. **Ecclesiology:** What the Bible Reveals about the Church
6. **Eschatology:** What the Bible Reveals about the Last Things or The End Times

The Integration of the Six Loci of Historic Christian Systematic Theology

The Logic of the System and a Summary of the Six Main Doctrines of the Bible

- 1. Theology:** Everything starts with God. Essential aspects of God include his triune being; that he is creator; owner; most holy, righteous, and just, such that nothing unholy ever enters his presence; steadfast love to the core of his being; and for his being completely perfect in every way.
- 2. Anthropology:** God created humans perfect, even to a limited extent in his image, but the first ones disobeyed God; this sin, which has resulted in cosmic disharmony, so corrupted themselves and their posterity that we cannot come into God's presence and have eternal life without his help. In love, God gave his law to teach his will, his plan of restoration, and to restrain sin to prevent chaos in the now sinful and evil world. What's his plan?
- 3. Christology:** Since God is love, he is unwilling to destroy sinful humans who bear his image, but to preserve his holiness, righteousness, and justice, he instituted his plan to have one perfect human being represent all others, fulfill all the law, and credit that righteousness to all people who believe in and follow him. To accomplish God's perfect will for human beings, that one righteous human also had to be divine; the only One who could fulfill all God's law is his only begotten Son, the Redeemer, Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, who did so in his First Coming to earth in his life, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension. The whole Bible focuses on Jesus Christ. Thus, Jesus, and only Jesus (John 14:6), makes salvation, living forever in the presence of God, possible. How?
- 4. Soteriology:** This explanation of salvation explains how the Third Person of the triune God, the Holy Spirit, applies the redemption and salvation Christ has provided to all individuals who believe in and follow Jesus.
- 5. Ecclesiology:** This doctrine explains how God calls out, sets apart, brings together, and equips those whom he has redeemed in a new (i.e., renewed) covenant, the church, all those from every race and nation, to work together to most effectively bring to and implement the Good News of salvation throughout the whole world.
- 6. Eschatology:** When the time is right in God's sight, he will bring the present age to a conclusion and restore his original plan in a new (i. e., renewed) heaven and new (renewed) earth. How he has already begun to do so, is seen in what the Bible reveals about the Last Things, or The End Times, including what occurs when we die and what occurs at the end of history, when Christ Jesus returns in his Second Coming.

Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation
also called

Pneumatology: The Doctrine of the Holy
Spirit
and

The Application of Redemption

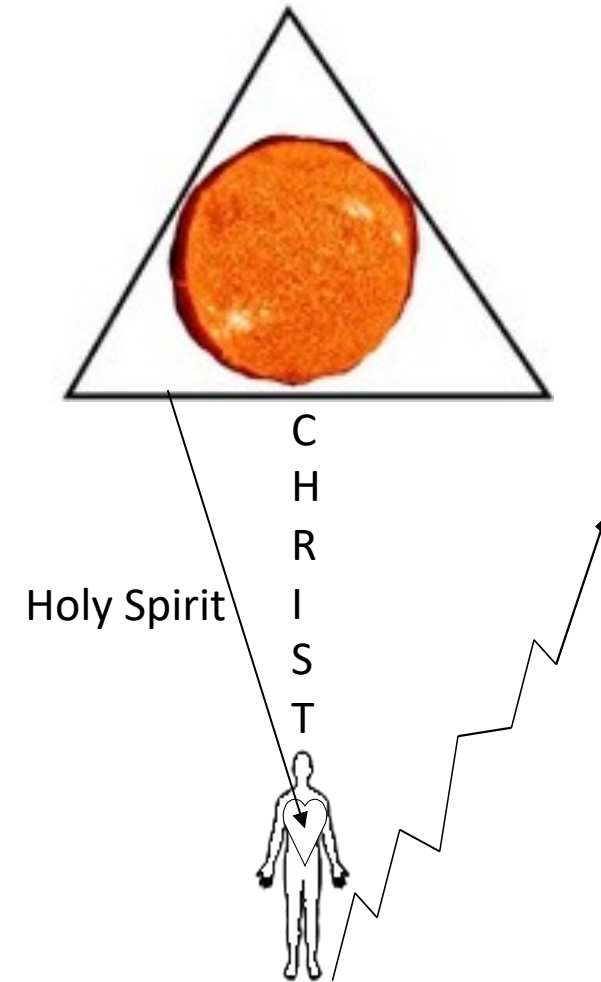
Who is the Holy Spirit, and what does he do?
How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied?

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

Soteriology is a study of all the Bible teaches about how the redemption Christ provides, is applied to, and becomes operational in human beings. Soteriology explains the process of salvation (< Greek, σώζω [sōzō], save), including the application of Christ's work in the lives of individual people by the operation of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the triune God (e.g., providing the regeneration, the new birth in Christ that brings a human being out of spiritual death into eternal life and helping the believer grow in sanctification, i.e., becoming holy and maturing in Christ-likeness), and the Spirit's provision of specific gifts for and fruit of ministry that glorifies God and accomplishes his purposes. Part of what this means for those who've been struggling with sin is that they have a new nature; the old has gone, the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17) including a new identity and freedom in the power of the risen and reigning Christ! This doesn't mean for any of us that we instantly become all we should be; sanctification is a life-long development in Christ-likeness. Belief in Christ Jesus as our Savior and Lord places us in a new position, holy to God, but we need to develop in that holy state in cooperation with the Holy Spirit in a life-long maturation process in Christ. Is it easy? Not always. Is it possible? Yes with God's help! He helps us directly through his Holy Spirit, who intercedes for us with God the Father, and also indirectly through his church. This section comprises highlights, implications, and very practical applications of the Biblical doctrine of Soteriology. Since the Holy Spirit is actively involved in the other loci of systematic theology be sure to see those sections as well, in particular the section in Theology pertaining to the Trinity.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

- This fourth doctrine, the fourth main theme in God's plan of redemption, taught in the Bible is called by three different terms:
 1. Soteriology, the doctrine of salvation
 2. Pneumatology, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the triune God
 3. The application of Christ's redemption
- All three terms are accurate, for all describe the work of the Holy Spirit, the main agent in the process of making Christ's redemptive work operative in the lives of human beings. Thus, the human figure in the graphic is now white, cleansed by Jesus' shed blood applied to the believer by the Holy Spirit.



Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

He dispenses...

Grace

Soteriology, our salvation, is all about God's grace to us in Jesus Christ.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

- This subject is all about God's grace to us in Jesus Christ.
- Grace is most parsimoniously defined as unmerited favor. Not only have we done nothing to earn his favor, we couldn't and wouldn't. We wouldn't even be motivated to do so, i.e., be receptive to opening the door to Him who "stand[s] at the door and knock[s]." (Revelation 3:20)
- The very faith that saves us, our faith wherein God credits us with Christ's righteousness, is a gift from him through the Holy Spirit. (John 6:44; 1 Corinthians 12:3)
- Even the good works he expects and requires of us, are enabled by his grace; thus, we are saved for good works, not by good works. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Preface to Soteriology/Pneumatology

- The focus of the doctrine of soteriology is God's ***special grace***, the unmerited favor of God in the Holy Spirit's application of the work of Jesus Christ to individuals, wherein they are enabled to have saving faith and become believers in the Lord. Since the Holy Spirit is the key agent in the application of the work of Christ in the salvation of human beings, this doctrine is often also referred to as pneumatology, the study of the Holy Spirit.
- Yet, since the Holy Spirit is often the Person of the Trinity through whom God the Father grants blessings to unbelievers, even to those who will not come to faith and be saved, a prefatory observation on God's ***common grace***, the unmerited favor of God to all people, believers and unbelievers (cf. e.g., Matthew 5:44-45; 6:2,5,16), should be made and remembered.
- God blesses all people, throughout their whole lives, even those who neither acknowledge God nor their blessings from God. In order to teach and to witness most effectively, we need to be able to recognize and explain God's common grace to all human beings.

Preface to Soteriology/Pneumatology: Common Grace

Means by Which God's Common Grace Functions

- “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” (James 1:17)
- ⁶“Scripture says: ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’... ¹³Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.’ ¹⁴Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵Instead, *you ought* to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.’ ¹⁶But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.” (James 4:6; 13-16)
- Jesus said, “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.” (Matthew 6:2)
- See also Luke 12:16–20.

Means by Which God's Common Grace Functions

1. God's ***common grace***, his unmerited favor that he gives to all people, the righteous and the unrighteous, functions through the light of his general revelation in nature that enlightens everyone and serves to guide the conscience of the unbeliever. (Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:20)

Even the good that unbelievers do is more about God than them. All that is good about them is from God, whether they acknowledge that reality or not. Everything good is from God. (James 1:17) If it's good, it's from God.

Think about it. When someone says “I built all this myself,” we can lovingly ask, “That's very nice, and who gave you the brain to do so? Going back farther, of all the countless eggs in your biological mother and the sperm in your father, who guided the two together to form you? As with all of us, if another sperm fertilized another egg, we wouldn't even exist.” How do we know it wasn't by “chance?” See, e.g., the Bible texts in the left column.

Preface to Soteriology/Pneumatology: Common Grace

Means by Which God's Common Grace Functions

- “For the invisible things of him [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead [Greek: θεϊότης (*theiotēs*), Divinity];...” (Romans 1:20 KJV)
- “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.
²Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.” (Romans 13:1-4)

Means by Which God's Common Grace Functions

1. God's ***common grace***, his unmerited favor that he gives to all people, the righteous and the unrighteous, functions through the light of his general revelation in nature that enlightens everyone and serves to guide the conscience of the unbeliever. (Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:20)
 - a. God's common grace functions through governments that constrain evil and promote good order and decency. (Romans 13:1-4)

Preface to Soteriology/Pneumatology: Common Grace

Effects of God's Common Grace

“(Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.)” (Romans 2:14-15)

Effects of God's Common Grace

- g. The common grace God gives to all people permits a degree of civil righteousness. “Common grace enables man to perform what is generally called civil righteousness or natural good, works that are outwardly in harmony with the law of God, though entirely destitute of any real spiritual quality.” (Louis Berkhof, 228)

Preface to Soteriology/Pneumatology: Common Grace

Effects of God's Common Grace

- “But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:35-36)
- “...your Father who is in heaven...causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.” (Matthew 5:45 NASB)
- “In the past, he let all nations go their own way. ¹⁷Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.” (Acts 14:16-17)

Effects of God's Common Grace

- i. At the same time, we must be very careful to not misapply the Biblically-based, though relatively new, theological concept of common grace. Rightly used, this doctrine helps us understand and explain applications of God's love, patience, and other work in his world. The doctrine provides a bridge for the church to help secular people understand God's involvement in human life and in his creation. Yet, some modern theologians have overemphasized common grace so much that worldliness has impacted the church in the process, including the failure to focus on the far greater Biblical teaching on and importance of God's special grace in Jesus Christ. The same mistake is occurring with an overemphasis by some theologians on general revelation to the detriment of the Bible's main teaching concerning God's special revelation in Christ Jesus.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. (Genesis 1:1-2)
- “When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing.” (Hebrews 9:6-8)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s *special grace* in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, who is the key agent in the application to us of Jesus’ redemption.
 - a. Several names of the Holy Spirit are revealed in the Bible.
 - 1) Paraclete—helper (Greek: not a lesser being than Jesus or the Father)
 - 2) Advocate
 - 3) Comforter
 - 4) Counselor
 - b. In soteriology we see the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 1) The Holy Spirit has always been at work; he did not first appear at Pentecost in the New Testament.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- ““Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.”” (Isaiah 42:1)
- “Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. ¹⁴But John tried to deter him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’
¹⁵Jesus replied, ‘Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then John consented.
¹⁶As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.
¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’” (Matthew 3:13-17)

Meaning and Practical Benefits



The dove represents the Holy Spirit. The trefoil orb indicates the Holy Spirit is part of the triune God. (Cf. Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 3:16-17)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. (John 14:15-17)
- “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.” (John 16:12-15)
- “For there will be a time when people will not bear with sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts will accumulate teachers, tickling their ears.” (2 Timothy 4:3, Greek. Sound familiar?)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. The Holy Spirit works in the life of individuals.
 - 2) The major function of the Holy Spirit is to point to Christ, which is why the church for 1900 years did not write or speak much, did not emphasize, the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - 3) An overemphasis on the Holy Spirit can and does take away from Christ and the main teaching of the Bible, which is ironic because the Holy Spirit’s primary work is to reveal Christ, make faith in him possible, and apply Christ’s work in and through his believers.
 - 4) Focusing more on feelings than facts, pleasure over principle, they want their ears tickled.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21)
- “When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.” (Psalm 104:30)
- “like cattle that go down to the plain, they were given rest by the Spirit of the LORD. This is how you guided your people to make for yourself a glorious name.” (Isaiah 63:14)
- ““This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.” (Haggai 2:5)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We here see the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 5) He specially inspired those who wrote the Word of God and protected them from sin, including error, as they wrote, so with confidence we have in the Bible the true Word of God. (2 Samuel 23:2; Nehemiah 9:30; Isaiah 59:21; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:16)
 - 6) He brings into effect God’s purposes in creation. (Genesis 1:2; Psalm 104:30; Job 33:4)
 - 7) He brings into effect God’s purposes in redemption. (Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; 63:11, 14; Jeremiah 24:7; Ezekiel 11:19; Haggai 2:5)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21)
- “When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.” (Psalm 104:30)
- “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.” (Psalm 139:13)
- “Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.” (John 3:6)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God's special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We here see the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 8) He equips his servants for their God-given tasks. (Exodus 31:3; Judges 3:10; 1 Samuel 10:6; 16:13; Isaiah 11:2)
 - 9) He directs the ministries of his prophets. (1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16; Isaiah 48:16; Ezekiel 2:2; 3:14)
 - 10) He is the Giver of life to live by God's will. (Jeremiah 24:7; Ezekiel 11:19; 18:31; 36:26-27; Psalms 104:30; 139:13; John 3:5-6)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus be cursed,’ and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:3)
- “How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!” (Hebrews 9:14)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We here see the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 11) Relationship with Christ (John 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Hebrews 9:14)
 - 12) The Holy Spirit works in the life of the Christian.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” (Romans 8:28-30)
- “God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Corinthians 1:9 NASB)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an *order of salvation*, also called by a Latin term, *ordo salutis*. This is not necessarily the same exact order in which the Spirit works in all people, but it is generally the process of the Spirit. Notice the logic in the process. The Biblical basis of the order is seen in Romans 8:28-30ff. The order is as follows.
 - 1- **Predestination** and its components, including **election** have been presented in [Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology](#). The following slides review essential aspects of predestination and election for our study of Soteriology. See [Essential Christianity](#) for more information.

Theology: Who is God; what is he like; what has he done; and what is he doing?

God's Election and Predestination

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

¹¹In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,” (Ephesians 1:3-13)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- *Predestination* refers to God's purposes pertaining to his rational, moral, creatures, including all humans, individually and in groups. His predestination concerning the angels is somewhat different. The focus here is on humans. Predestination consists of two aspects: election and reprobation.
- *Election* may be defined as “the eternal act of God by which from eternity out of pure grace for Christ's sake He has decreed to bestow those blessings on the Christians which through His call they now enjoy—conversion, justification, sanctification, and preservation in faith.” (Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. 3)

Election is one of what Biblical scholars refer to as a major motif or theme that occurs in many places throughout the whole Bible.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” (Romans 8:28-30)
- “God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Corinthians 1:9 NASB)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity .
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) **The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.**
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation, also called by a Latin term, *ordo salutis*. This is not necessarily the same exact order in which the Spirit works in all people, but it is generally the process of the Spirit. Notice the logic in the process. The Biblical basis of the order is seen in Romans 8:28-30. The order is as follows.
 - 2- **Calling**—God’s gracious invitation to sinners to accept the salvation that Christ Jesus alone provides and offers. See also e.g., Luke 5:32; John 7:37; Romans 1:6, and 1 Thessalonians 2:12.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” (Matthew 28:19)
- How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching [$\kappa\eta\rho\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\omega$ (*kērussō*), also tell, declare] to them? ¹⁵And how can they preach unless they are sent? (Romans 10:14–15)
- “But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand, ²⁵since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke, ²⁶I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you” (Proverbs 1:24-26)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation.
 - 2- **Calling**—God’s gracious invitation to sinners to accept the salvation that Christ Jesus alone provides and offers.
 - a- **External calling**—is the presentation and offer of salvation in Christ alone to all who hear from every nation, tribe, people, and language (Revelation 7:9) together with an urgent exhortation of the need to repent and believe in Jesus Christ as one’s only Savior and Lord by faith alone in order to obtain forgiveness of sins and eternal life. **All Christians** are to *kērussō*, not just pastors, **especially in conversations.**

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:23-24)
- “When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.” (Acts 13:48)
- ““For many are called, but few *are* chosen.”” (Matthew 22:14 NASB See the section on predestination and election in the doctrine of theology above for an explanation of this text.)
- “...Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.” (Hebrews 9:15)
- “...no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:3)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation.
 - 2- **Calling**—God’s gracious invitation to sinners to accept the salvation that Christ Jesus alone provides and offers.
 - a- **External calling**
 - b- **Internal or effectual calling**—is the same word heard in the external call from God but that is made effective for salvation in the hearts and minds of some through the operation of the Holy Spirit. “The Spirit of God operates through the preaching of the Word by making its persuasions effective, so that man listens to the voice of his God.”(Berkhof, p. 235)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:23-24)
- “I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” (1 Corinthians 2:2)
- know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.” (3:19)
- “When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.” (Acts 13:48)
- “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he [generic: includes her] is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” (John 14:21)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation.
 - 2- **Calling**—God’s gracious invitation to sinners to accept the salvation that Christ Jesus alone provides and offers.
 - b- ***We need to know Christ, that is, to have a relationship with him, not just know about him, which involves the sincere and ongoing desire and goal to please our Lord (2 Corinthians 5:9), listen to his Word, obey him (John 14:21), talk with (pray to) him, and tell (make him known to) others. This is who we are, our identity and our calling, our vocation (op cit.). Obeying Jesus greatly strengthens our witness for him and draws people to Christ and his church.***

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:23-24)
- “When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.” (Acts 13:48)
- ““For many are called, but few *are* chosen.”” (Matthew 22:14 NASB See the section on predestination and election in the doctrine of theology above for an explanation of this text.)
- “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation.
 - 2- **Calling**—God’s gracious invitation to sinners to accept the salvation that Christ Jesus alone provides and offers.
 - c- **Calling to serve**—God calls the church and individuals within the church to serve him, both in the church and in the world. We’ll reflect on this aspect of God’s calling when we examine the fifth of the loci, the doctrine of the church, ecclesiology. As we saw in the beginning of our study, the root word for church means to call out (ἐκ, [ek] + καλέω [kaleō] > ἐκκλησία [ekklēsia] = those who are called out) to serve God.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:23-24)
- “When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.” (Acts 13:48)
- ““For many are called, but few *are* chosen.”” (Matthew 22:14 NASB See the section on predestination and election in the doctrine of theology above for an explanation of this text.)
- “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation.
 - 2- **Calling**—God’s gracious invitation to sinners to accept the salvation that Christ Jesus alone provides and offers.
 - c- Calling to serve—In historic Christian theology, **calling is also referred to as vocation**
< Latin *vocare* (*vocāre*), to call.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “And the LORD God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.’” (Genesis 2:16-17)
- “In reply Jesus declared, ‘I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.’” (John 3:3)
- “Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.” (John 3:6)
- “Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:3)
- “You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.” (Romans 8:9-10)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation.

2- Calling

3- **Regeneration—The New Birth:**

- a- We are not Christ-like by nature. Since the fall of Adam and Eve, all human beings are sinners by nature, (cf. Psalm 51:1-5; Romans 3:23) and to come into the presence of God, who is Most Holy, Jesus said we need to be born again with a new nature.
- b- Berkhof defines regeneration as “that act of God by which the principle of new life is implanted in man, and the governing disposition of the soul is made holy.” (236)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. ²⁰Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God.” (Ezekiel 11:19-20)
- “children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” (John 1:13)
- “One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.” (Acts 16:14)
- “It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.” (Romans 9:16)
- “for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God's special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation.
 - 2- **Calling**
 - 3- **Regeneration**—The New Birth: We are not Christ-like by nature. Jesus said we need to be born again with a new nature.
 - c- **Regeneration is totally the work of God; humans do not cooperate.** The Bible teaches that regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit apart from man's cooperation, **for unregenerate man is oriented away from God.**
 - d- Arminians disagree and wrongly teach that man does cooperate with God in regenerating himself.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “I will give them an undivided heart and put a new [LXX: > *καίνος* (*kainos*)] spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. ²⁰Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God.” (Ezekiel 11:19-20)
- “children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” (John 1:13)
- “One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.” (Acts 16:14)
- “It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.” (Romans 9:16)
- “for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God's special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - a) Theologians see an order of salvation.
 - 2- **Calling**
 - 3- **Regeneration**—The New Birth: We are not Christ-like by nature. Jesus said we need to be born again with a new nature.
 - e- The essential nature of regeneration can be described in the following ways.
 - 1] **It is a profound and fundamental change in a person's soul.** As Berkhof says, God implants the principle of the new spiritual life in man, in a radical change of the governing disposition of the soul” that affects the person's whole being. (236)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “I will give them an undivided heart and put a new [LXX: < *καίνος* (*kainos*)] spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. ²⁰Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God.” (Ezekiel 11:19-20)
- “So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new [< Greek: *καίνος* (*kainos*)] creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:16-17)
- “children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” (John 1:13)
- “It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.” (Romans 9:16)
- “for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13)
- I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- 2.b.12)a)3- God's special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- e- The essential nature of regeneration involves transformation from spiritual death to spiritual life.
- 4] The reference in Ezekiel and in 2 Corinthians to the new heart and the new creation as being *καίνος* (*kainos*) new, indicates the believer in Christ is a new person in the most important sense: being spiritually renewed, not a totally different person. The believer's very being, soul, is renewed in the vital transformation of his or her mind and heart, to now exist with God, who now dwells with the believer as in God's original creation of Adam and Eve before they sinned and died spiritually, separating themselves from God. Sometimes a person will unwittingly say to another, “Get a life!” Well, in an infinitely greater sense, that is what God does for one who believes in Jesus Christ as his or her Savior and Lord, moving from spiritual death to becoming spiritually alive in Christ through the operation of the Holy Spirit within the believer.

This dwelling is referred to theologically as the mystical union with Christ. Herein is another way Jesus fulfills his promise to be with us always. (Romans 8:9-10; Galatians 2:20; Matthew 28:20)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.” (Job 42:6)
- “Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?’” (Ezekiel 33:11)
- “Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” (Acts 2:38)
- “In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.” (Acts 17:30)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2.b.12)a)

4- **Conversion.** Since unregenerate man is turned away from God, he needs to be converted, i.e., turned around toward God. (Conversion < Latin: *convertere* [turn around] < *con* [against] + *vertere* [to turn])

a- Thus, with proper etymology, the Biblical and English words meaning to convert all involve the concept of turning around.

1] The Old Testament uses two words, emphasizing two aspects of conversion,

a] נָחַם (*nācham*), repentance typically involving a change of plan and action (Job 42:6)

b] שׁוּב (*shûv*), a turning about, especially with a return after a departure. (Ezekiel 33:11)

2] The New Testament uses two main words for conversion.

a] μετάνοια (*metanoia*), repentance, turning away from (Acts 2:38; 17:30)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” (Acts 2:38)
- “In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.” (Acts 17:30)
- “Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,” (2 Timothy 2:25)
- “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,” (Acts 3:19)
- “The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.” (Acts 11:21)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- 2.b.12)a)4- **Conversion.** Since unregenerate man is turned away from God, he needs to be converted, i.e., turned around toward God.
- a- Hence, with proper etymology, the Biblical and English words meaning to convert, all involve the concept of turning around.
- 2] The New Testament uses two main words for conversion.
- a] **μετάνοια (*metanoia*)**, repentance turning away from sin, primarily one's changing mentally and morally. (Acts 2:38; 11:18; 17:30; 2 Timothy 2:25) This word emphasizes repentance.
- b] **ἐπιστρέφω (*epistrephō*)** turn, turn back, return, turning to God. (Acts 3:19; 11:21) This word always contains the two elements of conversion: repentance and faith (see below).

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)
- “For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:40)
- “Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus be cursed,’ and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit. “ (1 Corinthians 12:3)
- “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ¹¹As the Scripture says, ‘Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.’” (Romans 10:9-11)
- “And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.” (1 Corinthians 15:14)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 5- **Faith** (John 6:40)
 - a- The author of faith is God through his Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:3)
 - b- The basis of faith is Jesus' resurrection. (1 Corinthians 15:14) See also the Timothy Keller quote below.
 - c- The means of faith is the operation of the Holy Spirit on human hearts and minds who hear the Word of God proclaimed. (1 Corinthians 12:3; Romans 10:4,9-11,13-14; Revelation 3:20) But some will refuse to believe: some for a while, and some will never believe. (Romans 10:16-21) As we saw above in the Theology section, **God** is patient, but he doesn't force people to believe.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.’
²⁶A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’
²⁷Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’
²⁸Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’
²⁹Then Jesus told him, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’
³⁰Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20:24-31)
- “For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:40)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)

5- **Faith** (John 6:40)

d- Three main elements of faith are evident.

1] **HEAD: Knowledge of God and his promises, including the Resurrection of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, is essential,**

e.g., Romans 10:9. A sinful person with this knowledge, even though limited, understands the basic truths of the Gospel of Christ that with the Holy Spirit's help resonate in the heart of the sinner who believes.

- In his book, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*, Timothy Keller asserts, “If Jesus rose from the dead, then you have to accept all that he said; if he didn't rise from the dead, then why worry about any of what he said? The issue on which everything hangs is not whether or not you like his teaching but whether or not he rose from the dead.” (P. 202)

Sound reasons for believing Jesus rose from the dead exist. See the Prolegomena section at the beginning of this PPT course.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

“Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.’

²⁶A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’

²⁷Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’

²⁸Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’

²⁹Then Jesus told him, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’

³⁰Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”
(John 20:24-31)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)

5- **Faith** (John 6:40)

d- Three main elements of faith are observed.

2] **HEART**: Reflection on this knowledge, produces an emotional element that emerges as a result of the conviction of the huge importance of faith in Christ Jesus, which Berkhof describes as gripping one’s soul; which Arthur DeKruyter refers to as confidence in God and his promises, resulting in assent; and which I also sense as a daily desire motivated by love to express gratitude to God for our redemption in Jesus Christ at such great cost to himself in the most wonderful demonstration of love ever! Other motives for doing works are joy and gladness. If at first those feelings are not manifest or experienced, keep doing the works, while thinking about all you count as good. Think about where all that good ultimately comes from. Over time, the joy and other feelings will arise.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

“Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.’

²⁶A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’

²⁷Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’

²⁸Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’

²⁹Then Jesus told him, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’

³⁰Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

³¹But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20:24-31)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)

5- **Faith** (John 6:40)

d- Three main elements of faith are identified.

3] **HANDS**: A volitional element constitutes the third component of faith. This part comprises the will which sets the direction of one’s orientation to life, involving his or her desire to please and to obey God. It involves a personal trust in Christ Jesus as one’s Savior and Lord and, Berkhof writes, “a surrender of the soul as guilty and defiled to Christ, and a reception and appropriation of Him as the source of pardon and spiritual life. It naturally carries with it a certain feeling of safety and security, of gratitude and joy. Faith, which is in itself certainty, tends to awaken a sense of security and a feeling of assurance in the soul.” (252) These emotions that accompany our cognition and motivate our actions, indicate that the these three elements of faith are not discrete categories but are interrelated on a continuum comprising our whole being in relationship with God forever!

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)
- “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹not by works, so that no one can boast.¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)
- “In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” (James 2:17)
- “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Romans 5:1)
- “...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵whom 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;” (Romans 3:24-25 NASB. See also 3:22-23.)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)

5- **Faith** (John 6:40)

e- The object of saving faith can be seen in a general sense and in a specific sense.

1] In general, saving faith involves believing in the whole of God's revelation as disclosed in the Bible. Also included is that which can be deduced from God's Word by accurate and necessary inference from the Bible, such as the doctrine of God as triune, the words triune and trinity not appearing in the Bible, but the revelation that God subsists as three personal distinct beings who share one substance, one essence, is revealed throughout both testaments. (Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 61:1; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2. See the section above on Theology.)

+ The focus of the whole Bible is on the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the meaning of what he did.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

Good Friday is called Great Friday in the Eastern Orthodox tradition because of the difficulty of seeing the good in Good Friday. However, the incalculable goodness is strikingly evident when thinking about what occurred on Good Friday. In the light of God being most holy (i.e., holy, holy, holy as he reveals in Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4:8), God's love, the core of his being (1 John 4:8) from which all his other multitudinous blessings flow, is plainly evident and clearly observable. Without the death of God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, no one would have forgiveness of his or her sinfulness and sins; no forgiveness would be possible. There was, still is, and forever will be no other way for the sufficient satisfaction of Divine justice, and therefore no relationship with God was, is, or forever will be available apart from faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus himself said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) God does not change; he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17) "For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:40)

Believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, because of him, are able and prefer to focus on the positive rather than the negative. As noted above, the mighty act of love that Jesus did in his suffering in our place, thus making atonement or propitiation for our sins (Romans 3:25; 5:11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-18; Hebrews 2:9,17), powerfully demonstrates that God brings good out of evil, and at great cost to himself in the most wonderful demonstration of love ever! "Propitiation" comes from the Greek verb, **ἱλάσκομαι** (*hilaskomai*), which means propitiate. What does propitiate mean? (In addition to the following, review the information in the Theology section above pertaining to the fear of God.)

"To propitiate God' (to find His favor and thus avert His wrath) is to reestablish the communion with God which was shattered because of sin. According to the Bible this can only take place through propitiation. Such a condition is realized through the substitutionary punishment of a sacrifice. The atonement is effected when an innocent life is given in exchange for a guilty life; it redeems that which is otherwise condemned. The innocent life is offered (sacrificed) on behalf of the one deserving punishment. As a consequence of the sacrifice the guilty party is freed from guilt since payment has been made to God by the offering. The sinful acts are not nullified (expiated); rather, God's wrath is executed upon the substitute." (WORDsearch, The Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary – Zeta-Kappa)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

Here is a good starting place in our witness for Jesus Christ. All other religions who believe in a god, and/or other higher beings such as ancestors, are trying to propitiate that god and/or those other beings, that is to avert his, her, or their wrath. *A **huge** difference between all other religions and Christianity, is that all other religions are autosoteristic*, that is, literally self-saving; they are prescriptions for how humans earn their salvation by following a set of rules prescribed by that religion as to how to avert the wrath of their god or goddess, and/or other beings, and earn their own salvation.

In Biblical Christianity, God, out of his own great and steadfast love, takes the initiative and lovingly and justly propitiates his own wrath against sin and evil in the sacrifice of his innocent and perfect only begotten Son, the benefits of which come to us by our faith, not by doing works to try to earn salvation. Works are an essential part of our faith in Christ Jesus, but they are an effect, **not** the cause, of our salvation. As Christians, our motivation to do good works is to express thanksgiving to God for what he has done for us; to show the genuineness of our faith in Christ and the triune God which saves us; to obey God whom we love (cf. e.g., John 14:21); to experience the health, joy, freedom from bondage to the yoke of the Old Testament law (cf. Galatians 5), and other well-being that doing God's will provides; and to be effective in our witness for Christ, indeed for the/our triune God. See, e.g., "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:8-10) Pertaining to health in obeying God, consider if all people would obey the 10 Commandments, they would never experience the 50 sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) that are morphing, growing in number, and some of which are incurable and deadly.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

Thus, since all other religions are autosoteristic, a good starting point for a witness to someone who is in another religion, is to ask these questions:

- “How do you feel about having to earn your own salvation?”
- “What occurs when you fail to live up to your own goals, much less your religion’s?”
- “What do you do with your guilt?”
- Then ask, “How would you like to have complete peace of mind and heart and be relieved of the burden of appeasing your god’s wrath and of trying to earn your own salvation?”

Gladly tell this person about the one true God, including his only begotten Son, Jesus, and what he has done for you and all who will believe in and follow him.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” (John 1:45)
- That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)
- For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:8-10)
- In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:17)
- Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (Romans 5:1)
- ...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵whom 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; (Romans 3:24-25 NASB. See also 3:22-23.)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 5- **Faith** (John 6:40)
 - e- The object of saving faith can be seen in a general sense and in a specific sense.
 - 2] Saving faith in the more specific sense involves more than the necessary intellectual agreement with the whole Bible as God's Word. Such intellectual agreement is not the specific act of faith that justifies one in God's sight and directly saves him or her. The whole Bible points to Christ Jesus, and the object of saving faith is Jesus Christ. (Recall St. Augustine: “The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed.”) The NT completes, it does not delete, the OT. Specifically, saving faith comes, and matures, as the believer, enabled by the Holy Spirit, accepts the doctrines concerning Christ (for example Romans 10:9 and John 14:6) and his work and God's promises that motivate trust in Christ Jesus. “Briefly stated, the object of saving faith is Jesus Christ and the promise of salvation in Him. The special act of saving faith consists in receiving Christ and resting on Him as He is presented in the gospel, John 3:15,16,18; 6:40.” (Berkhof, 253)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1)
- “In him [Christ Jesus our Lord, v. 11] and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.” (Ephesians 3:12)
- “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” (2 Timothy 1:12 KJV)
- “let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.” (Hebrews 10:22)
- “And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end,” (Hebrews 6:11 NASB)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- 2. b. 12) a)
 - 5- **Faith** (John 6:40)
 - f- The assurance of faith is a gift of God that believers can have. Berkhof observes, “...true faith, including, as it does, trust in God, naturally carries with it a sense of safety and security, though this may vary in degree. The assurance which is included in faith is not always a conscious possession, however, since the Christian does not always live the full-orbed life of faith and consequently is not at all times aware of the riches of the life of faith. He is often swayed by doubts and uncertainties, and is therefore urged to cultivate assurance.... Assurance can be cultivated by prayer, by meditating on the promises of God and by the development of a truly Christian life in which the fruits of the Spirit become evident.” (254)
(See also John 6:40; 2 Peter 1:10-11; 1 John 3:9, 10, 18, 19; Romans 5:1 and 3:22-25 NASB.)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1)
- “In him [Christ Jesus our Lord, v. 11] and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.” (Ephesians 3:12)
- “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” (2 Timothy 1:12 KJV)
- “And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end,” (Hebrews 6:11 NASB)
- “Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.” (1 Thess. 4:13)
- “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” (1 Peter 1:3)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 5- **Faith** (John 6:40)
 - g- The Biblical definition of faith, which includes its accompanying assurance and our hope, is clear, e.g., in the book of Hebrews, especially in the original Greek, cf. 1:3; 11:1, that the hope we have is assured (ὑπόστασις [*hupostasis*], substance, underlying essence, assurance, confidence). See also the other uses of *hupostasis*, in the Bible referred to herein.
 - 1} This assurance is accompanied by being certain (Greek: ἔλεγχος [*elenchos*], proof, evident demonstration, evidence [KJV], conviction [NASB]), in which the Holy Spirit enables believers to use their heads (e.g., in knowing and understanding God’s Word, in particular the record of the 500+ who witnessed Jesus’ Resurrection appearances), hearts (openness and receptivity to believe), and hands (responding to their faith with hope and gladly telling others).
 - 2} Hope in Christ is not wishful thinking that is quickly lost when hard times occur. Our hope in Christ is a realized expectation, a present reality, that we will experience in full in the next, the eternal, phase of life.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)
- “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)
- “In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” (James 2:17)
- “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Romans 5:1)
- “...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵whom 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;” (Romans 3:24-25 NASB. See also 3:22-23.)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 5- **Faith** (John 6:40)
 - h- The requirement of faith: works (Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:17; Matthew 7; Luke 3:8; Hebrews 5:7-9; Revelation 20:12) Without works, faith is only empty and ineffective words, one reason some people don't receive that for which they pray; God has not promised to reward disobedience, as the couple above who would have devotions before committing adultery. Works don't save us but give evidence of the genuineness of our true faith that saves. (Cf. Matthew 11:19) Works are what we are saved to do.
 - 1] Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) Professor of the History of Christianity, Lyle D. Bierma, writes, “Our works do not merit salvation, but they are expressions of gratitude to God for our salvation... Good works are not the basis of our salvation but its fruit.” (CTS *Forum*, Spring 2017, p. 11)
 - 2] CTS Professor of New Testament, Jeffrey A. D. Weima, states that “Works may not be a *condition* of being justified, but they are a consequence of being justified.” (CTS *Forum*, Spring 2017, p. 5)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.” (Genesis 15:6)
- “What does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’” (Romans 4:3; cf. 4:9)
- “The words ‘it was credited to him’ were written not for him alone, ²⁴but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.” (Romans 4:23-24)
- “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)
- “In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” (James 2:17)
- “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Romans 5:1)
- “Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.” (Romans 10:4)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 5- **Faith** (John 6:40)
 - 6- **Justification** is by faith in Christ, the genuineness of which is seen by willing obedience to God, including doing what is good. (Romans 5:1; 10:4)
 - a- Definition: A legal, judicial, forensic, act of God whereby he declares the sinner innocent, righteous in God’s sight, on the basis of the believer’s faith in the perfect righteousness of Christ. (Romans 5:1) It is done once for all; it doesn’t need to be repeated. It affects the **state** of the sinner with respect to his or her relationship with God, **not** his or her **condition** (as in conversion).

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.” (Genesis 15:6)
- “What does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’” (Romans 4:3; cf. 4:9)
- “The words ‘it was credited to him’ were written not for him alone, ²⁴but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.” (Romans 4:23-24)
- “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)
- “In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” (James 2:17)
- “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Romans 5:1)
- “Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.” (Romans 10:4)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 5- **Faith** (John 6:40)
 - 6- **Justification** is by faith in Christ, the genuineness of which is seen by willing obedience to God, including doing what is good. (Romans 5:1; 10:4)
- b- The Biblical words mean both justice and righteousness.
 - 1] צדקה (*tsedheq*), righteousness, justice (Genesis 15:6)
 - 2] δικαιοσύνη (*dikaioṣunē*), righteousness, equity, justice (Romans 1:17; 4:3)
 - 3] The words refer to God as Judge declaring human beings righteous, just by faith in Him. As Berkhof clarifies, “in Scripture ‘to justify’ does not mean to *make* but to *declare* righteous.” (256)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Romans 5:1)
- “know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.” (Galatians 2:16)
- “and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.” (Philippians 3:9)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 6- **Justification** means that God looks at me as justified, i.e., “Just-if-I’d” never sinned, due to being credited with the righteousness of Christ.
 - c- Characteristics of justification include the following.
 - 1] God’s declaration forgives us, removes our guilt, and restores (rights as heirs) to those who believe in Jesus Christ as their only Savior and Lord.
 - 2] Justification is an objective act related to state of the sinner, not to his or her condition.
 - 3] Justification is a single final act of God; it is not a continuous process in the believer as in progressive sanctification.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “...justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation ^bin His blood through faith. *This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;*” (Romans 3:24-25)
- “since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.” (Romans 3:30)
- “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- 2. b. 12) a)
 - 6- **Justification**/justified: “Just-if-I’d” never sinned
 - d- The only means of justification is by faith in Jesus Christ as one’s only Savior and Lord. (Romans 3:25,28,30; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9) This reality does not at all mean works are unimportant—far to the contrary, as we saw in our previous discussion of faith! We are **not** saved **by** good works **but for** good works. (Ephesians 2:8-10)
 - + Illustrate with a coin. Justification is heads, and works is tails. But if one reverses the matter in his or her thinking, and makes works heads and faith tails, then one has the unbiblical concept of works righteousness. Biblically, works follows faith and shows the faith is real and bearing the fruit the Lord requires. (Matthew 7:20)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.” (Galatians 2:16)
- “and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.” (Philippians 3:9)
- What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ²By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? (Romans 6:1-2) [Good works must follow saving faith, but the desire and the doing are from God’s grace.]

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- 2. b. 12) a)
 - 6- **Justification**/justified: “Just-if-I’d” never sinned
 - d- The only means of justification is by faith in Jesus Christ as one’s only Savior and Lord. (Romans 3:25, 28, 30; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9) This reality does not at all mean works are unimportant—far to the contrary, as we saw in our previous discussion of faith! We are **not** saved **by** good works **but for** good works. (Ephesians 2:8-10)
 - + Illustrate with a coin. Justification is heads, and works is tails. But if one reverses the matter in his or her thinking, and makes works heads and faith tails, then one has the unbiblical concept of works righteousness. Works follows faith and shows the faith is real and bearing the fruit the Lord requires. (Matthew 7:20)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:22-24)
- “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.” (Romans 4:25)
- “Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!” (Romans 5:9)
- “For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.” (Romans 5:19 [See also vss. 17-18.])
- “that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.” (2 Corinthians 5:19)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 6- **Justification**/Justified: “Just-if-I’d” never sinned
 - e- The ground of justification is seen only in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ that is credited, or imputed, to those who believe in him. Christ has done what we ourselves could never do. This faith, recognition, acknowledgement, and testimony is the firm foundation of our justification.
- + Notice what this reality means!
It is the basis of our confidence in our justification, indeed our salvation, if and when we are ever tempted to doubt our salvation. The assurance we have that we are justified and saved is not in ourselves but in Christ Jesus!

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. ³⁹Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.” (Acts 13:38-39)
- “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,” (Romans 8:1)
- “that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.” (2 Corinthians 5:19)
- “and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.” (Philippians 3:9)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 6- **Justification**/justified: “Just-if-I’d” never sinned
 - f- The elements of justification include a negative dimension and a positive dimension, yet both are good news!
 - 1] The negative element, concerning one’s sin, involves the forgiveness of sins on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ that has been credited to him or her who believes in Christ.

On the next slide, Berkhof explains well the very practical and eternal blessings God grants to us in forgiving our sins when he justifies us in Christ.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

Berkhof offers comforting commentary on the forgiveness of sins in justification. Notice again the hugely practical application of this rich historic Christian theology!

The pardon granted in justification applies to all sins, past, present, and future, and therefore includes the removal of all guilt and of every penalty. This follows from the fact that justification does not admit of repetition, and from such passages as Rom. 5:21; 8:1, 32-34; Heb. 10:14; Ps. 103:12; Isa. 44:22... It may seem to be contradicted by the fact that Christ taught His disciples to pray for the forgiveness of sins, and that Bible saints are often found pleading for pardon and obtaining it, Matt. 6 :12; Ps. 32:5; 51:1-4; 130:3,4. The explanation for this lies in the fact that the sins of believers in themselves still constitute guilt (though it is already covered), and as such call for confession; that the consciousness of guilt still remains and naturally urges the believer to confess his sin and to seek the comforting assurance of forgiveness; and that the consciousness of pardon, which is repeatedly obscured by sin, is again quickened and strengthened by confession and prayer, and by a renewed exercise of faith. (257-258)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” (John 1:12-13)
- “For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’ ¹⁶The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,” (Romans 8:15-16 NASB; cf. KJV and Greek)
- “so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Galatians 4:5-6 NASB; cf. KJV and Greek)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 6- **Justification**/justified: “Just-if-I’d” never sinned
 - f- The elements of justification include a negative dimension and a positive dimension, yet both are good news with great comfort!
 - 2] The positive element, contains two parts, God’s adoption of the believer and the privilege of eternal life.
 - a] When we are justified, God adopts us as his child, “that is, places him in the position of a child and gives him all the rights of a child. This sonship by adoption must be distinguished from the moral sonship of believers, which results from regeneration and sanctification. Believers are not only children of God by adoption and therefore in a legal sense, but also by virtue of the new birth and therefore in a spiritual sense. This twofold sonship is mentioned together in John 1:12,13; Rom. 8:15,16; Gal. 4:5,6.” (Berkhof 258-259)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” (John 1:12-13)
- “For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’¹⁶The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,¹⁷and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.” (Romans 8:15-17 NASB; cf. KJV and Greek)
- “so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Galatians 4:5-6 NASB; cf. KJV and Greek)

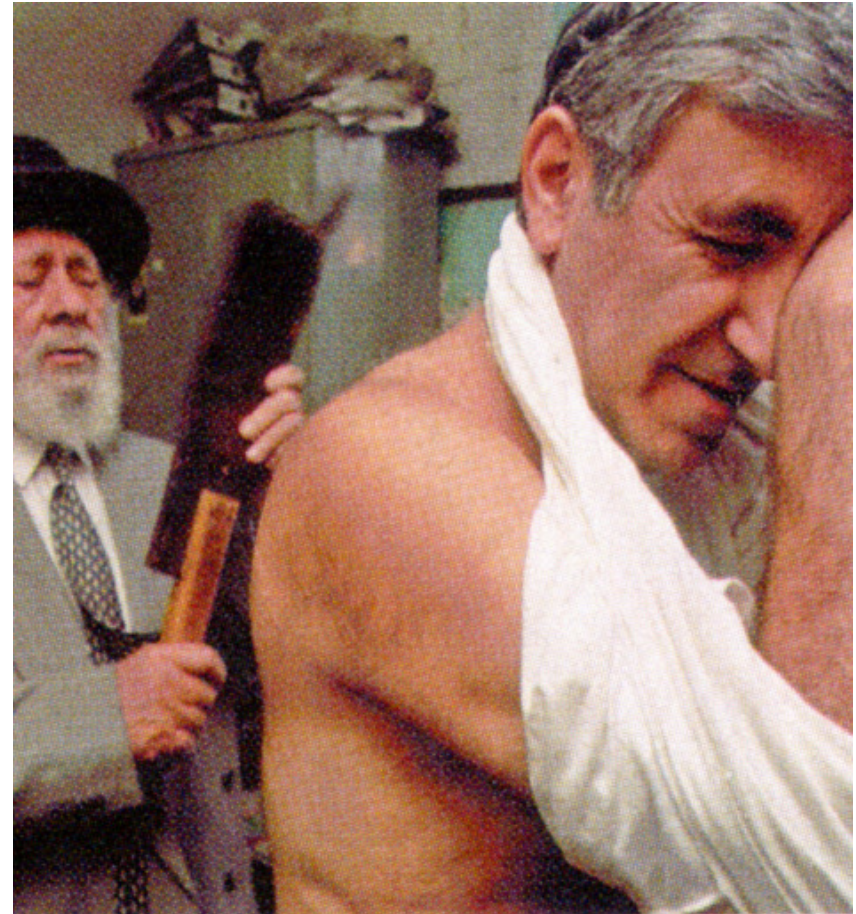
Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 6- **Justification**/justified: “Just-if-I’d” never sinned, due to being credited with Christ’s righteousness
 - f- The elements of justification include a negative dimension and a positive dimension, yet both are good news with great comfort!
 - 2] The positive element, contains two parts, God’s adoption of the believer and the privilege of eternal life.
 - b] The privilege of having eternal life is essentially part of our adoption. Berkhof explains it well: “When sinners are adopted to be children of God, they are invested with all the legal rights of children, and become heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, Rom. 8:17. They are constituted heirs of all the blessings of salvation in the present life, and in addition to that receive a title to ‘an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away,’ reserved in heaven for them. I Pet. 1:4.” (259)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Contrast All Other Religions Where People Try to Save Themselves By Appeasing a False god

All other religions prescribe ways for adherents to save themselves. Thus, they are called autosoteristic (literally, self-saving). Sadly, these people can neither achieve salvation nor assurance of salvation and forgiveness of their sins by themselves. They can have salvation by believing in and following Jesus Christ. (See, e.g., John 14:6; Romans 10:9; Matthew 7:21; James 2:26.)

- Jews to this day still struggle with what to do with their guilt. In this photo a rabbi strikes the back of a Jewish sinner who hopes to atone for his sins on Yom Kippur. Similar flagellation and also cutting occurs in Islam. This lashing is nothing like the scourging perfect Jesus went through, and crucifixion, on our behalf.
- Jews don't worship the same God Christians worship. See what Jesus said: John 8:19-59, esp. vss. 42-44; 47; 54-59.



Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Contrast All Other Religions Where People Try to Save Themselves By Appeasing a False god

Hindu's try to wash away their sins and remove their guilt by washing in the Ganges River, which they believe is the holiest river in India.

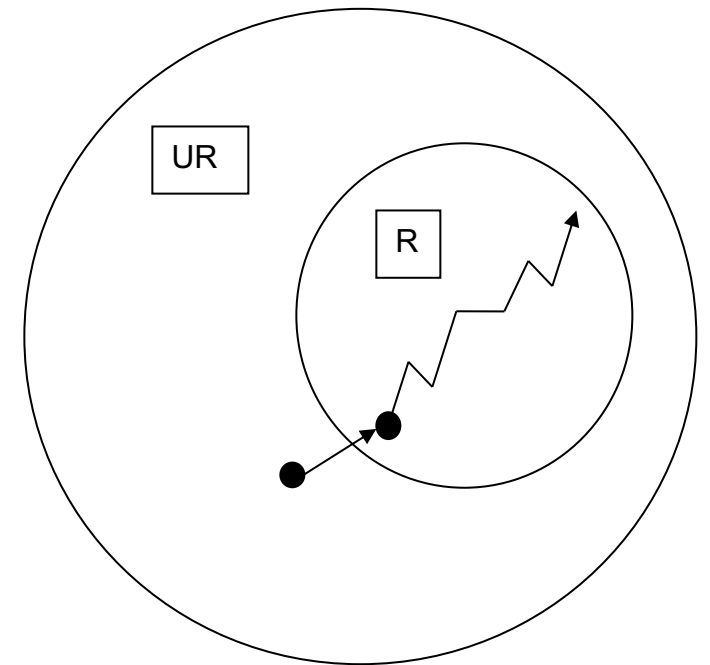
- An estimated 70 million people participated in this six-week festival held once every 12 years.



Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do? Regeneration, Justification, and Sanctification

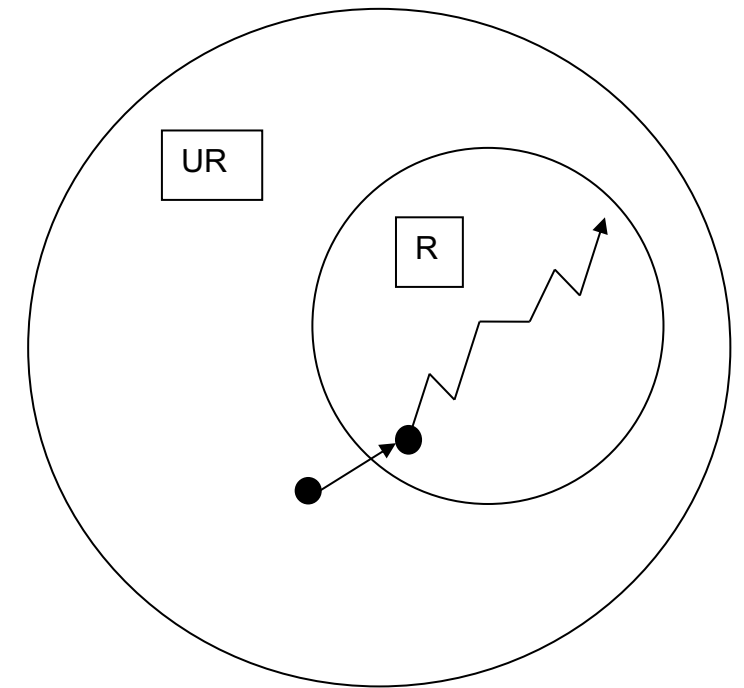
The large circle represents the world's population. When a person has been regenerated, or given the new nature by the operation of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3; Titus 3:5), faith is made possible. This faith is what justifies a person in God's sight. (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17) God declares the person is just (justified) or righteous in his sight.

Justification moves the believer from the realm of those who are unregenerated (UR in the graphic) to a new state or relationship with God. The justified person becomes part of God's covenant community (those who are regenerated, having received the new nature, i.e., been born again, represented in the graphic by R), existing within the world but not part of the world.



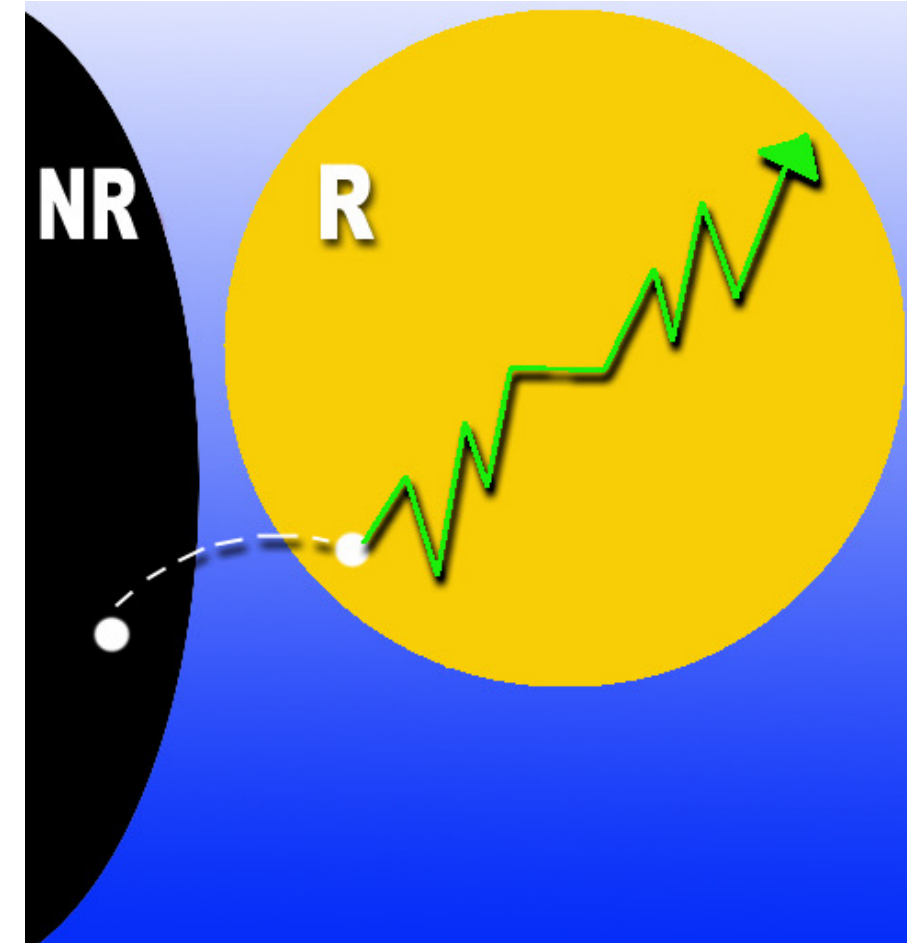
Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do? Regeneration, Justification, and Sanctification

Historic Christian systematic theology also incorporates the Bible's use of the word covenant in a broader sense that refers to a legal relationship between God and humans, including both believers and those connected with believers who are unregenerate and therefore who do not believe, e.g., the reprobate sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas. (1 Samuel 2-4) Within the covenant community are some who are unregenerate, wolves in sheep's clothes and weeds in the garden. (Matthew 7:15-23; 13:24-43) Understanding that unregenerate are within the covenant community helps explain the phenomenon mentioned in Hebrews 6:4-6, "It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace." This is why we say the church is the visible manifestation of the covenant and why we DO NOT say it is a visible manifestation of God's kingdom. Members of God's kingdom are true believers in Christ Jesus.



Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do? Progressive Sanctification

As this graphic shows, in one sense a believer in Jesus Christ is separated from the evil of the world (e.g., John 15:18-19; Colossians 2:20; James 4:4; 1 Peter 2:11) and becomes holy, i.e., separated to God. Once a believing part of (not just associating with [cf. Hebrews 6:4-6, *op cit.*]) the covenant community, the regenerated person begins the process of progressive sanctification, which continues throughout his or her life. This process is not a straight, smooth, onward and upward line but one that is up and down with level (stagnant) periods, yet all of which are generally headed upward, though on occasion in a “two steps forward, one step backward” progression. Sometimes in our progress we’re on a spiritual mountaintop and at others in the valleys (the peaks and the pits) of life; sometimes we’re just existing, “spinning our wheels,” and not growing in Christ. Then after a period of time growth continues, albeit in this phase of life, in this age, still with ups and downs but progressing with purpose. It is a work of the Holy Spirit in which the believer willingly cooperates in the desire to grow ever more Christlike.



Graphic: NR = Non-regenerate (unregenerate); R = Regenerate

The Holy Spirit dwells within us.

“your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God.” (1 Corinthians 6:19 [*context is singular, referring to individual believers in Christ*])

Therefore, **we are never alone.** As we nurture this understanding by daily reading God’s Word and in prayer throughout the day, we sense that the Spirit is always with us. Operating directly in our very being and indirectly through the church, we can avoid one of the most common and serious of human problems today: loneliness.

FROM ACORN TO OAK 12

Becoming Oaks of Righteousness Maturing in Christ Jesus (Isaiah 61:3, Ephesians 4:13)



- The number 12 is the Biblical number for the church: God’s covenant with the 12 tribes of Israel becoming in Jesus Christ the new covenant with the church, New Testament Israel, beginning with the 12 apostles and extending to “every nation, tribe, people and language.” (Revelation 7:4-9; 21-22; Genesis 12:3; James 1:1; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Galatians 3:26-29)
- For resources to facilitate maturing in Christ Jesus, which in Christian theology is called sanctification, see <https://fromacorntooak12.com>; cf., <https://seelyedward.academia.edu>.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- ““Say to the Israelites, “You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy [sanctifies you, NASB].””” (Exodus 31:13)
- “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17)
- “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)

7- **Sanctification** (Progressive) Refers to the Maturing of the Christian in Christlikeness over Time.

a- Definition: Sanctification is the gracious and continuous work of the Holy Spirit by which he purifies and delivers the sinner from the pollution of sin, renews his or her nature in God’s image, and enables him or her to perform good works. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

+ Thus, in sanctification man cooperates with God in growth toward Christlikeness.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.” (Romans 8:26-27)
- “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.” (Philippians 3:12)
- “Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)
- “and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” (Colossians 3:10)
- “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)
 - 7- **Sanctification** Refers to the Maturing of the Christian in Christlikeness over Time.
- c- Notice the Characteristics of Sanctification.
 - 1] The Holy Spirit intercedes for us with God the Father. (Romans 8:26-27)
 - 2] God, not human beings, is the author of sanctification, but humans cooperate, unlike in justification, which is all God's doing.
 - 3] Sanctification “is not like justification, a legal act of God, but a moral and re-creative activity, by which the sinner is renewed in his or her inner being and made to conform ever-increasingly to the image of God.” (Berkhof, 267)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,” (Philippians 2:12)
- “But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.” (Philippians 3:20-21)
- “Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)
- “But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,” (Hebrews 12:22-23)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)

7- **Sanctification** refers to the Maturing of the Christian in Christlikeness over time.

c- Characteristics of Sanctification

7] It is a continuous life-long process (Philippians 3:12), and not smooth or even. This process is completed for the soul at death (Hebrews 12:23) and at the resurrection for the body. (Philippians 3:21)
See the previous graphics.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17)
- “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:14-17)
- “and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,” (1 Peter 3:21)
- “Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.” (Hebrews 12:10)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 7-
 - d- Means of sanctification: Individually
 - 1] A prayerful daily reading of God’s Word is the primary means to facilitate sanctification.
 - a] Consider preceding your reading with a prayer requesting God to guide you into how he would have you apply what you are going to read to your own life, what he would have you do.
 - b] In addition to reading, study God’s Word. Compare the text you are reading with other Bible passages. Scripture is its own best commentary. Also use other trusted commentaries and concordances.
 - 2] Pray daily, communing with our triune God.
 - 3] Each day, look for God’s Providence in your life. (Hebrews 12:10) According to James 1:17, God the Father gives every good and perfect gift. When you sense something good, say, “Thank you dear Heavenly Father!” Or “Thank you God!”

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.
²⁰Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.” (John 3:19–21)
- “If you love me, you will obey what I command.” (John 14:15)
- “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” (John 14:21)
- “...God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ and ‘Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.’” (2 Timothy 2:19)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 7-
 - d- Means of sanctification: Individually
 - 4] **Obey God’s Word**, including keeping his commandments and turning away from all wickedness. See John 3:19-21.
 - a] Here and in other passages in God’s Word, we see evidence that behavior is linked to knowledge and emotion.
 - b] Notice the Lord reveals that the reason “men loved darkness instead of light[:] because [emphasis mine] their deeds were evil.” (v. 19) Thus, behavior significantly shapes emotion and knowledge—a vital reason we are to obey God.
 - c] Notice also how all three human learning domains, behavior, cognition, and affect, are mentioned together in John 3:19-21; 14:15,21. **Identify them.** (Answers: Next slide)
 - d] In addition to God’s special revelation, we have evidence on this matter from part of God’s general revelation. Sound human learning research shows the interconnection among cognition, affect, and behavior. They are not discrete categories. See the graphic that follows.
 - 5] Avoid that which is unwholesome and evil, e.g., online videos (e.g., pornography), movies, literature, and “bad ‘friends’.”

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.
²⁰Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.” (John 3:19–21)
- “If you **love** me, you will **obey** what I **command**.” (John 14:15)
- “Whoever has **my commands** and **obeys** them, he is the one who **loves** me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” (John 14:21)
- “...God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ and ‘Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.’” (2 Timothy 2:19)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

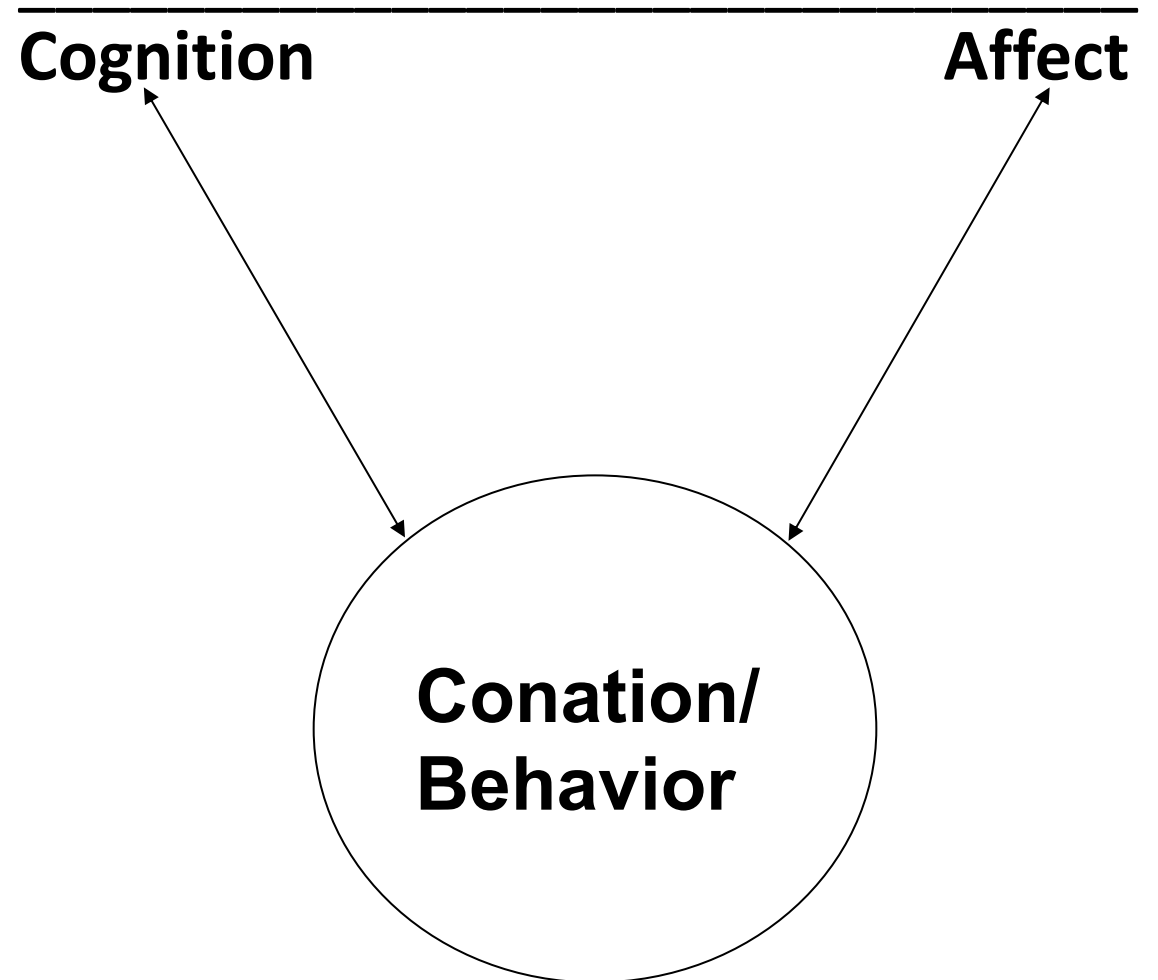
2. b. 12) a) 7-
 - d- Means of sanctification: Individually
 - 4] Obey God’s Word, including keeping his commandments and turning away from all wickedness. See John 3:19-21.
 - a] Here and in other passages in God’s Word, we see evidence that behavior is linked to knowledge and emotion.
 - b] Notice the Lord reveals that the reason “men loved darkness instead of light[:] because [emphasis mine] their deeds were evil.” (v. 19) Thus, behavior significantly shapes emotion and knowledge—a vital reason we are to obey God.
 - c] Notice also how all three human learning domains, **behavior**, **cognition**, and **affect**, are mentioned together in John 3:19-21; 14:15,21. Identify them.
 - d] In addition to God’s special revelation, we have evidence on this matter from part of God’s general revelation. Sound human learning research shows the interconnection among cognition, affect, and behavior. They are not discrete categories. See the graphic that follows.
 - 5] Avoid that which is unwholesome and evil, e.g., online videos (e.g., pornography), movies, literature, and “bad ‘friends’.”

Key Resources for Church Education

From Human Learning Research: The Three Domains of Human Learning

Jesus said, “They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.” (John 14:21 NRSV)

FOR DISCUSSION OR INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION: Identify references to the three domains in what Jesus said.



Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “If you love me, you will obey what I command.” (John 14:15)
- “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. ¹⁹Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Ephesians 5:15-21)
- “Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.” (Deuteronomy 4:9)
- “...God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ and ‘Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.’” (2 Timothy 2:19)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 7-
 - d- Means of sanctification: Corporately: Family
 - 6] Parents' primary responsibility is to raise their children in the faith by daily doing the above and modeling Christlikeness in their home.
 - a] Engage in a family devotional time (Bible reading, discussion, singing, and prayer). Two good times are at the conclusion of dinner or another meal together and at bedtime. (Recall the preceding head, heart, and hands discussion. In addition, see the other references to prayer throughout this presentation.)
 - b] Both parents must prioritize spending time with each other and with their children. As is said, “Love is spelled TIME.” (See more below on Marriage.)
 - 7] Grandparents must also teach their grandchildren.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “[Christ has given gifts] ¹²to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.
“¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” (Ephesians 4:12-16)
- “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. ¹⁹Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
“²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Ephesians 5:15-21)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 7-
 - d- Means of sanctification:
Corporately, Church
 - 8] Participate at least weekly in corporate worship, including in the Sacraments. (1 Peter 3:21)
 - 9] Keep in regular, at least weekly, fellowship with believers: including with the church, mutual witness, and Christian social relationships.
 - 10] Be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18-21)

DISCUSS OR REFLECT on the above in the light of Ephesians 4:14, which could have been written this morning! It perfectly and most realistically addresses many of our most urgent needs today!

Soteriology, Sanctification: Being Filled with the Spirit

Ephesians 5:18— “Be filled with the Spirit.” Greek: as always the verb is important!

πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι,
plērousthe en pneumati,

- + Greek **present tense** = continuous, repeated, not a once-for-all, experience.
- + Greek **imperative mood** = God commands us to do something: invite Him to take control, to guide and direct us.
- + Greek **passive voice** = we are to be acted upon; we cannot fill ourselves. Our part is to ask God to direct us, to lead us to do what pleases Him (and is thus in our own and others’ best interests).
- + Greek **number** = plural, 2nd person: for the whole church, not just me privately. We are filled with the Spirit together in Christ. Notice the implications for the importance and work of the church, the subject we will take up in the next section, Ecclesiology.

Soteriology, Sanctification: Being Filled with the Spirit

God's Word

¹⁸...be filled with the Spirit;

¹⁹Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

²⁰Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

²¹Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”
(Ephesians 5:18-21 KJV)

God's Word Applied

- The five participles that follow “filled” in Ephesians 5:18 indicate ways to apply, and results of, that filling.
- The participles are speaking (5:19), singing (5:19), making music (NIV) (5:19), giving thanks (5:20), and submitting (5:21).
- DISCUSS OR REFLECT ON examples of each participle.

Soteriology: Distinguishing Justification and Sanctification

Justification

1. The work of God alone
 - a. God declares man just.
 - b. God is active
 - c. Man is passive
2. A state
3. Done once for all time—not repeated
4. Objective
5. Get for nothing
6. Birth
7. Bestowed by grace

Sanctification

1. Man cooperates with God
 - a. Man works to grow in Christ-likeness
 - b. God is active.
 - c. Man is active.
2. A process
3. Continuing process—never completed on earth
4. Subjective
5. Work at
6. Growth
7. Works is fruit (James 2:24,26)

Soteriology: Distinguishing Justification and Sanctification

Justification

8. Two key elements in justification
 - a. Pardon of sin
 - b. Imputation of Christ's righteousness
 - c. While both justification and sanctification are results of the merits of Christ, justification is primarily ascribed to the Father.
9. Removes the guilt of sin and gives the believer in Christ all the rights of a child of God, including an eternal inheritance with God, restoring what was lost in Adam's and Eve's sin
10. Takes place outside the believer in the tribunal of God but is appropriated by faith in Jesus Christ

Sanctification

8. Two key elements in sanctification
 - a. Believer is freed from sin by work of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Holy Spirit enables believer to do the will of God
 - c. While both justification and sanctification are results of the merits of Christ, sanctification is primarily ascribed to the Holy Spirit.
9. Removes the pollution of sin and brings the believer into conformity with the image of God
10. Takes place within the believer, in his or her inner life and gradually transforms his or her whole being

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)
- “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12-13)
- “Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 7-

e- Whereas God alone provides justification, in Sanctification humans cooperate. In so doing, we have several responsibilities.

1] We need to cleanse ourselves spiritually. (2 Corinthians 7:1)

+ REFLECT AND DISCUSS: What are some ways we can cleanse ourselves spiritually? Include not only **what we can do**, e.g., by a stronger commitment and resolution to obeying God’s commandments, but also what we can commit to **not doing**, e.g., avoiding sexually stimulating Websites.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied?

Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)
- “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12-13)
- “Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 7-

e- Human’s responsibility in Sanctification

2] We work out our salvation (Philippians 2:12,13)—work out, not work for.

Lenski clarifies this text.

“The new life is born in us and is nourished by God to develop ever greater spiritual strength, and this divinely imparted strength is to exercise itself constantly in “working out the salvation of ourselves.” Theologians call this the synergism of the new man. Here there is, indeed, a synergism. Saved by the monergism of God’s grace, the danger for the saved is ever that they grow otiose, secure, and thus through their own fault lose the salvation bestowed on them by God. Hence all these admonitions in Scripture to stir up the new man. Κατά in the verb lends it a perfective sense, and the tense is durative: ‘keep on working thoroughly’ so as actually to get the results.” (798)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)
- “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12-13)
- “Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14)
- [Jesus said] ¹⁵“If you [plural] love me, you will obey what I command.... ²¹Whoever [singular] has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” (John 14:15, 21)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 7-

e- Human’s responsibility in Sanctification

3] To obey the Lord’s commands, including following the moral law (Hebrews 12:14; John 14:15,21)

a] Remember our calling to be holy, which includes being separated to God, whereby we function differently from our surrounding culture, which we are to transform, **not** conform to and be like everyone else. One way we function in holiness to God is by obeying his moral laws, e.g., the Ten Commandments.

b] Again, our motivation for obedience is love for and gratitude to God, NOT to try to earn our salvation, which we cannot do. John Cavin said it well: “We are justified not without, and yet not by works.”

+ Jesus uses the verb obey in John 14:15, 21 in a powerful way. The original word is τηρῶν (*tērōn*) < τηρέω (*tēreō*), which means watch carefully, guard; keep, preserve; obey, pay attention to,

+ and it is a present active participle, which means continuous and ongoing, NOT “one and done.”

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, you shall give it to the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied. ¹³Then say to the LORD your God: ‘I have removed from my house the sacred portion and have given it to the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow, according to all you commanded. I have not turned aside from your commands nor have I forgotten any of them.’” (Deuteronomy 26:12–13)
- “Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴²But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. ⁴³Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, ‘I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.’” (Mark 12:35–44)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 7-

f- Responses to and evidence of Sanctification

- 1] By word and in deeds, we offer thanksgiving to God for our salvation and his countless other blessings to us.
- 2] In our prayers we thank him for helping us mature in Christlikeness. We also ask him to continue to help us live more in accord with his Word and his will.
- 3] We ask God to help us help others.
- 4] In gratitude to God for all his unmerited grace to us, including our sanctification, we desire to respond to him in tangible ways to express our gratitude to him.
 - a] We seek to obey his commands.
 - b] We bring our monetary gifts to his corporate worship, gladly giving them during the offering. Give first to your local congregation’s church and outreach ministries, then to faithful denominational and other ministries bringing the Gospel of Christ to the world.
 - c] Teach family and friends to give and why. We have much to do. Only 19% of U. S. Christians give to mission work. (Barna)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰I and the Father are one.” (John 10:27-30)
- “for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.” (Romans 11:29) See also Romans 8:28-39.
- “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)
- “So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! ¹³No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. ¹⁴Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.” (1 Corinthians 10:12-14)
- “He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord....” (1 Corinthians 1:8)
- See also Psalm 121:7 “The LORD...will keep your soul.” (Greek; NASB; KJV)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a)

8- **Assurance** of salvation for those who truly believe in Jesus Christ is clearly taught in Scripture; some of the passages appear in the left column.

- a- This doctrine is understood as the continuous functioning of the Holy Spirit in the mind and heart of a true believer through which, and with the believer's cooperation, he or she matures more and more into Christlikeness until death.
- b- This Biblical doctrine consists of several characteristics.
 - 1] It is primarily a work of the Holy Spirit, since humans would fall away without God's help.
 - 2] The doctrine applies to all who are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, i.e., those who adhere to the defining passages such as Romans 10:9. Jesus says in John 10:27, “I know them, and they follow me.” He uses the Greek verb know, γινώσκω (*ginōskō*), an intimate, relational knowledge, not just knowing about someone. To them he has given eternal life, and they shall never perish; he will enable his true believers to persevere in spite of all challenges in this phase of life.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (2 Timothy 4:18)
- “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them....
“²²Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' ²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’” (Matthew 7:15-16a; 22-23)
- “They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. ²⁰But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.” (1 John 2:19-20)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 8- b-

Assurance of salvation is for those who believe in Christ Jesus as their only Savior and Lord.

3] Bible texts (such as those in the left column, and others such as 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:17-18; and 4:10) do cite actual cases of people leaving the faith, but there is no proof in those texts that these people were ever true believers. In fact, Jesus says to those he refers to that “I never knew [*< γνώσκω (ginōskō)*] you.”

4] Likewise, those referred to in Hebrews 6:4-6, have been in association with the covenant community and have been informed of, and even enlightened by, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but they have not truly believed in Christ, including as their only Savior and Lord, and thus they are not truly saved. They have been in the company of the covenant community (Hebrews 10:29, ἡγιασθη [hēgiasthē]), sanctified, i.e., being with those set apart), but being part of the covenant at one time does not mean at one time being saved. (Cf., e.g., 1 Samuel 2:27-36; 3:11-14; 1 Corinthians 7:14; 2 Timothy 3:1-9.) Covenant inclusion increases exposure, and facilitates receptivity, to the Gospel but does not guarantee genuinely believing and living it. Cf. Luke 8:12; Matthew 7:21ff.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied?

Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

God's Word assures his children of their salvation by truly believing in Jesus Christ.

Many other Bible passages assure believers of salvation, some of which are these:

- ““And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:39–40)
- “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.” (Ephesians 1:13–14)
- “therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.” (2 Thessalonians 1:4 NASB)
- “But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. ⁴ We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. ⁵ May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.” (2 Thessalonians 3:3–5)
- “By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you.” (1 Corinthians 15:2. When people are honest with themselves, they can know whether they believe God's Word. If they truly believe, they have assurance of their salvation.)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied?

Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

God's Word assures his children of their salvation by truly believing in Jesus Christ.

Many other Bible passages assure believers of salvation, some of which are these:

- "...in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:37–39)
- "And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. ¹² That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day." (2 Timothy 1:11–12)
- "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:37–40)
- "For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God." (1 Peter 1:23)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.” (1 John 3:9 ESV. The grammar of the Greek verb, ποιᾷ [*poiei*], practice, indicates the lifestyle of the regenerated person, thus a child of God, is not characterized by sin; it doesn’t mean the person will never sin again, only that his or her new birth and the ongoing sanctification process no longer has an ongoing desire to keep sinning, “he doesn’t have it in him.” He or she especially does not want to repeat previous sins; rather the believer is repulsed by doing ongoing sins, repents, asks forgiveness, and does better, further evidence to the believer and to others that he or she is a child of God.)
- “...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9 ESV. The text does not say you may be, might be, should be, probably will, or are likely to be, saved; it says you will be saved. Notably, the verb “will be saved” [σωθήσῃ (*sōthēsē*) < σώζω (*sōzō*)] is in the indicative mood, which refers to an objective fact, and it’s in the passive voice, which refers to our salvation not depending on us—such as earning it—which we can’t. Such views, which characterize all other religions and sow doubt—whether the person has done enough; our salvation is granted to us by our faith in Jesus Christ.)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. b. 12) a) 8- b-
Assurance of salvation is for those who truly believe in Christ Jesus as their only Savior and Lord. (Romans 10:9)
- 3] Bible texts (such as some of those above, and others such as 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:17-18; and 4:10) do cite actual cases of people leaving the faith, but there is no proof in those texts that these people were ever true believers. In fact Jesus says to those he refers to that “I never knew [*γινώσκω* (*ginōskō*)] you.”
- 4] Likewise, those in Hebrews 6:4-6 have been in association with the covenant community and have been informed of, and even enlightened by, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but they’ve not truly believed in Christ, including as their only Savior and Lord, and thus they aren’t truly saved. They’ve been in—but not of—the covenant community, but being in the covenant at one time does not mean at one time being saved. Covenant inclusion increases exposure, and facilitates receptivity, to the Gospel but does not guarantee genuinely believing and living it. Cf. Luke 8:12; Matthew 7:21ff.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit *and* what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” (John 14:16-17)
- “your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God.” (1 Corinthians 6:19 [*context is singular, referring to individual believers in Christ*])
- ““You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.” (Revelation 5:9)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity, the key agent in the application to us of the redemption Jesus the Christ purchased for us at such great cost to himself in the most wonderful demonstration of love ever! As mentioned above, the term redemption, which involves a purchase, comes from the cost of purchasing and freeing a slave, which God did when he freed his people from slavery in Egypt (Deuteronomy 9:26) and which Jesus did when he purchased our freedom from slavery to sin. (Rev. 5:9)
- b. 12) a) 8- b- 5] Covenant inclusion increases receptivity to the Gospel but does not guarantee it. The Holy Spirit enables saving faith, but he does not force people to believe. Forcing people, whom God has made in his image, part of which consists of a limited but genuine freedom, to believe would render them/us puppets, not humans. We would lose a significant part of his image, and God would never undo what he himself did in creating us.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit *and* what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “...we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose... ³⁰those he justified, he also glorified [ἐδόξασεν (*edoxasen*, indicative mood, aorist tense, active voice meaning already done and immediately)].” (Romans 8:28-30)
- “But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.” (1 Peter 4:13–16)
- “I have given them [those the Father gave Jesus] the glory that you gave me,...” (John 17:22)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity, the key agent in the application to us of the redemption Jesus the Christ purchased for us at such great cost to himself in the most wonderful demonstration of love ever!
b. 12) a)

9- Glorification < δοξάζω (*doxazō*) means being adorned or clothed with splendor, honor, bliss, because of our relationship with Christ Jesus. As a result of our justification by our faith, we have been credited with Christ’s merits that puts us in an eternal saving relationship with him, in which we participate in his glory he has shared with us (John 17:22) in that most blessed relationship which links us with the whole triune God in an unsurpassed blessedness, a foretaste of which begins now (see the meaning of *edoxasen* in Romans 8:30) but that we will experience in its fullness in heaven. Glorification includes the destruction of sin’s effects on us and the completion of redemption, an example of the inaugurated eschatology we briefly considered in the section on Theology and will examine further in Eschatology. Here we have more rock solid basis for viewing our life as having great value and dignity, indeed glory!

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” (John 14:16-17)
- ““When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.”” (John 15:26-27)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Key Agent in the Application to Us of Jesus’ Redemption.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals. (1 Corinthians 6:19 and *op cit.*)
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - b) The Spirit guides the believer in Christ into all truth. (John 14:16-17)
 - c) The Spirit applies the Word. (John 15:26-27)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Coming and Work of the Holy Spirit

- “On one occasion, while he [Jesus] was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’
⁸...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:4-5; 8)
- “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- God the Father (John 14:16) and Jesus (John 15:26) send the Holy Spirit to give us the power, including the encouragement, we need to speak up about our belief in and love for Christ Jesus as we carry out his Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) for us to be his witnesses. (Acts 1:8)
- The Holy Spirit enables us to overcome temptations and to obey the Lord’s commandments. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. (Romans 8:12-18)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God's special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Key Agent in the Application to Us of Jesus' Redemption.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - d) The Spirit directs the church through believers. (Romans 8:12-18)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

“When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Key Agent in the Application to Us of Jesus’ Redemption.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - e) The Spirit convicts the world of sin. (John 16:8)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

“And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.” (Matthew 12:31-32)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Key Agent in the Application to Us of Jesus’ Redemption.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - f) What does it mean to offend the Holy Spirit?
 - 1- The sin against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable. (Matthew 12:31-32)

What is the sin against the Holy Spirit?

Other Bible Passages Pertaining to the Unforgivable Sin

- “It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.” (Hebrews 6:4-6)
- “‘I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin.’ He said this because they were saying, ‘He has an evil spirit.’” (Mark 3:28-30)
- “And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.” (Luke 12:10)
- “If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.” (Hebrews 10:26-27)
- “If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that.” (1 John 5:16)

What is the sin against the Holy Spirit?

The sin against the Holy Spirit is blasphemy including rejection and unbelief. It is forever unforgivable because it forever lacks repentance. (Cf. Hebrews 6:4-6) However, believers in and followers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, need not be afraid of committing this unforgivable sin, as New Testament scholar R. C. H. Lenski explains.

“Yet we may say that whoever fears that he has committed the unpardonable sin thereby furnishes evidence that he has not done so. Nor can any man commit it inadvertently or unconsciously. Its commission is possible only when the Spirit through the Word has come upon a man and has been clearly recognized as God's Spirit with his divine power and grace to save. When a man deliberately answers him with blasphemy he forever nullifies even the Spirit's power to change him. His is already then the unalterable condition of the devils and of the damned in hell. It constitutes his *character indelebilis*.”

What is the sin against the Holy Spirit?

Louis Berkhof points out that a study of the relevant Bible passages (e.g., Matthew 12:31, 32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10; Hebrews 4:4-6; 10:26, 27; 1 John 5:16) indicates that this sin, which is commonly called the sin or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit “consists in the conscious, malicious, and willful rejection and slandering, against evidence and conviction, of the testimony of the Holy Spirit respecting the grace of God in Jesus Christ, attributing it out of hatred and enmity to the prince of darkness” and presupposes in those who commit it a thorough understanding but contradiction of the truth.

Berkhof consoles any who worry by explaining that it “is unpardonable, not because its guilt transcends the merits of Christ, or because the sinner is beyond the renewing power of the Holy Spirit; but because it is a sin that excludes all repentance, sears the conscience, and hardens the sinner. In those who have committed this sin we may therefore expect to find a pronounced hatred of God, a defiant attitude to Him and to all that is divine, delight in ridiculing and slandering that which is holy, and absolute unconcern respecting the welfare of their soul and the future life. In view of the fact that this sin is not followed by repentance, we may be reasonably sure that they who fear that they have committed it, who worry about it, and who desire the prayers of others for them, have not committed it.”

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!” (Acts 7:51)
- “when the community rebelled at the waters in the Desert of Zin,…” (Numbers 27:14)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the key agent in the application to us of Jesus’ redemption.
 - b. 12) f)
 - 2- Resist not. (Acts 7:51) The Greek word translated resist, is a strong word, ἀντιπίπτετε (*antiptete*) < ἀντιπίπτω (*antiptō*), that is used only in Acts 7:51 and in Numbers 27:14 in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament Hebrew, ca. 250 BC), and the contexts of both are in reference to unbelievers. This resistance means opposition, a determined and active resistance, which Lenski explains as “hardness of heart or obduracy.” Such opposition cuts one off from the very Being (the Holy Spirit) by Whom alone he or she can receive the regeneration that begins the process of salvation. Resisting the Holy Spirit is thus the counter process of committing the unforgivable sin.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

“Do not quench the Spirit;
do not despise prophetic utterances.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:19-20
NASB)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God’s special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Holy Trinity, the key agent in the application to us of Jesus’ redemption.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - f) What does it mean to offend the Holy Spirit?
 - 3- Quench not the Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 5:19-20)
As Lenski explains exceptionally well, Paul is using a figure of speech (metonymy), where the Spirit is identified with what he produces, in his command that we do not extinguish the work of the Holy Spirit. We cannot quench the Spirit himself, but we can, for example, allow Spirit-given ideas and guidance to be ignored and fail to act on them, thereby quenching them, thus resulting in stagnating our, and interfering with others’, sanctification. We cannot prohibit the Spirit from accomplishing his will and objectives, but we can harm ourselves and others, which we are not to do.

Since the Holy Spirit is the third person of the sovereign and almighty triune God, how can a human being “quench the Spirit”?

The present imperative indicates a course of action. In all five injunctions [beginning with verse 16] the imperative is placed last, thus both object and verb are emphatic, all is striking brevity.

This is scarcely "the spirit" of the new life in the Thessalonians but the Holy Spirit who moves their hearts. The writers of this epistle are not referring to the special miraculous charismata such as speaking with tongues, inspired prophetic utterances, healings, and the like. They are writing about the ordinary and regular work of the Spirit and not about his extraordinary, miraculous manifestations. All that v. 12-18 contain, and all that follows in v. 20-22 deals with nothing exceptional. All of the Thessalonians are addressed, all of them are to let the Holy Spirit guide and prompt them, and none are to squelch these holy promptings.

They must not "extinguish" the Spirit, quench the holy fire and ardor he kindles in their hearts. The expression "to extinguish the Spirit" is concentrated, the Spirit being identified with what he produces; "extinguish" is figurative for putting out the holy fire upon the altar of the heart. Such quenching occurs when the fervor that the Spirit kindles in us is greatly lessened or put out altogether by fleshly, worldly objections. Many a noble, generous, godly impulse dies without producing fruit in action or brings only a fraction of what it might produce. Who has not seen many a good suggestion, plan, appeal, which certainly came from the Spirit, literally extinguished in whole or in part by unspiritual objections of ignorant or hostile brethren? So often some refuse to respond to the Spirit's promptings and yield to the flesh. These are worthy of blame. This occurs both in the individual, in the inner circle of his own motives and impulses, as well as in meetings where united efforts for some plan or work are to be set going.

R. C. H. Lenski, *New Testament Commentary – The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon*, p. 359. WORDsearch.

Since the Holy Spirit is the third person of the sovereign and almighty triune God, how can the apostle Paul say, “Do not quench the Spirit”?

The Doctrine of Salvation

“Do not quench the Spirit;”
(1 Thessalonians 5:19 NASB)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- In addition to what R. C. H. Lenski said in the previous slide, we also observe throughout Scripture that God doesn't force people to do something against their will.
- It was God's will to create humans in his image, which includes a genuine, though limited, freedom of will.
- God marvelously allows people to make decisions and commit acts but in such a way that they do not prohibit the accomplishment of God's will and his purposes.
- While God is always sovereign and in complete control, he allows people to make wrong decisions, but they need to live with the effects of those decisions. (Cf., e.g., 2 Samuel 12)
- Quench does not mean thwart. God will simply get the job done through other people.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “...no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:3)
- “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” (1 Corinthians 12:7)
- “...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22-23)
- “Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.” (Matthew 7:17-18)
- “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.” (Romans 12:1)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God's special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Key Agent in the Application to us Jesus' Redemption.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - g) Paul identifies nine fruits of the Spirit for the building up of the church. (1 Corinthians 12:7)
 - 1- They are love, joy, peace, patience (longsuffering), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. They bless God and humans, and help us accomplish his purposes. By our fruit we discern that we're living by the Spirit instead of the flesh. They help the church discern potential leaders who are maturing in Christ-likeness. (Galatians 5:16-25)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “...no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:3)
- “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” (1 Corinthians 12:7)
- “...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22-23)
- “Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.” (Matthew 7:17-18)
- “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.” (Romans 12:1)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2. God's special grace in Jesus Christ is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Key Agent in the Application to Us of Jesus' Redemption.
 - b. We see in soteriology the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals.
 - 12) The Spirit works in the life of the Christian.
 - g) Paul identifies nine fruits of the Spirit for the building up of the church. (1 Corinthians 12:7)
 - 2- Physical redemption as well as spiritual redemption is part of our salvation. Man was created with a body and a soul, and God intends the two to always be saved. With that salvation comes the responsibility to serve the Lord, which is a form of worship. (Romans 12:1)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)
- “But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.... It was he [i.e., Christ] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,” (Ephesians 4:7, 11)
- “Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.” (1 Corinthians 14:1)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2.b.12)
h)

Paul identifies many of the gifts of the Spirit for the building up of the church to help us accomplish the Great Commission Jesus gave us in Matthew 28:18-20. These gifts are wisdom, knowledge, teaching, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues, interpretation of tongues, administration, hospitality, evangelism, preaching, encouraging, sharing, leadership, showing mercy, special faith, service.

- 1- The gifts are given directly by the Spirit in a believer's life but confirmed by the church.
- 2- A believer may be given more than one gift. (Ephesians 4:7)
- 3- We are to eagerly desire these gifts. (1 Corinthians 14:1)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2.b.12)

h) Paul identifies most of the gifts of the Spirit for the building up of the church to help us accomplish the work the Lord gave us, including the Great Commission that is recorded in Matthew 28:18-20. Some of these gifts are wisdom, knowledge, teaching, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues, hospitality, evangelism, preaching, administration, exhortation, sharing, leadership, showing mercy, special faith, service.

- 1- The gifts are given directly by the Spirit in a believer's life but confirmed by the church.
- 2- A believer may be given more than one gift. (Ephesians 4:7)
- 3- We are to eagerly desire these gifts. (1 Corinthians 14:1)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.
(Romans 12:6-8)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2.b.12)

- h) Paul identifies most of the gifts of the Spirit to serve and build up the church in order to help us accomplish the Great Commission Jesus gave us in Matthew 28:18-20. Some of these gifts are wisdom, knowledge, teaching, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of Spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues, administration, hospitality, evangelism, preaching, showing mercy, exhortation, sharing, leadership, special faith, service.
- 1- The gifts are given directly by the Spirit in a believer's life but confirmed by the church.
 - 2- A believer may be given more than one gift. (Ephesians 4:7)
 - 3- We are to eagerly desire these gifts. (1 Corinthians 14:1)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Jesus replied, ‘Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. ¹²For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.’” (Matthew 19:11-12)
- “I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord’s affairs—how he can please the Lord. ³³But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— ³⁴and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord’s affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. ³⁵I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 7:32–35)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

2.b.12)

- i) Other gifts of the Spirit also exist, e.g., what is referred to as the gift of celibacy, also called singleness, to which Jesus referred in Matthew 19:11-12. Unmarried people can serve Christ in special ways. (Cf. 1 Corinthians 7:32-35)
- j) The gifts of the Spirit should be confirmed by the church.
 - 1- How do we validate and confirm a person’s spiritual gifts?
 - 2- They are validated by the church, which has been authorized to do so in its nurture and disciplinary functions.
 - 3- The church must help people identify and grow in their understanding of their gifts and in their ability to use their gifts most effectively for accomplishing the Lord’s purposes in their calling from him. Instructional guides are commercially available to help identify spiritual gifts. Those who have these gifts have the responsibility to be open to and seek such instruction. Providentially, most do.

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The Doctrine of Salvation

- “Jesus replied, ‘Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. ¹²For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.’” (Matthew 19:11-12)
- “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)
- “But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.... It was he [i.e., Christ] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,” (Ephesians 4:7,11)

Meaning and Practical Benefits

- 2.b.12) j) The gifts of the Spirit should be confirmed by the church.
- 4- The church must monitor and guard against the abuse of the spiritual gifts, especially the extraordinary gifts, e.g., healing, miracles, tongues, and interpretation.
- 5- A basic way to monitor and guard against the abuse of the spiritual gifts is to remember God’s Word as to their use. The gifts are to glorify and honor God (Acts 2:11; cf. v. 4; 1 Corinthians 12:7,10; 14:2) and, when interpreted, to direct people to God. They are also to edify, comfort, and unite the whole church. Tongues (*op cit.*) in the Bible refers to an unstudied but known language with grammar and syntax; it is not babbling, which does not honor God, direct people to God, or edify, comfort, and unite the whole church. (Matthew 6:7-8)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied?

Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

The church must monitor and guard against the abuse of the spiritual gifts, especially the extraordinary gifts, e.g., healing, miracles, tongues, and interpretation. Highly regarded Biblical and theological scholars believe that the extraordinary gifts were primarily to authenticate and firmly reestablish the church (*op cit.* Ecclesiology section) in the first century A. D. and that in God's Providence those gifts were mostly discontinued at the end of the first century after the church was well established. They reason that the whole of God's Word and the witness of the church is focused on Jesus Christ, and that the continued use of the extraordinary gifts would shift the focus away from Christ and onto the Holy Spirit, which is ironically the opposite of the Spirit's purpose (e.g., John 14:26), and the marvels of these gifts, which, as the following anecdote illustrates is precisely what has occurred; thus for the most part these gifts ceased after the first century. Thus, the extraordinary gifts were largely not emphasized or observed until the late 19th century A. D., with a rise in the holiness movement and especially in Pentecostalism. Biblical theologians raise many serious questions regarding the authenticity of tongues today.

In a course I was teaching in Chicago on 1 Corinthians, a guest in our class the day I focused on chapter 12 was a professor of Hebrew at a nearby seminary. He said he was a guest in a Pentecostal Bible study one day, and the group began speaking in tongues. As each person going around the circle would pray in a tongue, another would interpret. Not having the gift of tongues the Hebrew professor wondered what he would do when it came his turn to pray in a tongue, for he didn't want to be subjected to the Pentecostal disregard for those who don't speak in tongues. Then the idea came to him to pray the Lord's prayer that he had memorized in Hebrew. When he finished, someone in the group jumped up and interpreted, but the interpretation had nothing at all to do with the Lord's prayer! (Contrast 1 Corinthians 14.)

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

Specifically, the church must monitor and guard against the abuse of tongues, and interpretation. The gift of tongues, glossolalia, involves known languages that have grammar and syntax and is meant for the edification of the church. (1 Corinthians 14, esp. v. 26); it is not an unintelligible or even unconscious babbling.

Another anecdote that is widely reported is the account of a church where someone was speaking in a tongue and a guest asked a member of the church, “Why are you letting this person speak like that?” The member asked, “What do you mean?” The visitor replied, “Because he is speaking in my native language, and he is blaspheming Jesus Christ!”

Yet, we should not say that there is no longer any legitimate use of the gift of tongues. A former missionary told a group with whom I was meeting that a foreign guest at an evangelistic crusade in Mexico was invited as a guest speaker. The guest speaker did not know a word of Spanish, so someone was prepared to translate. When it was time for the guest to speak, he approached the lectern and began to speak—in fluent Spanish! He spoke for 20 minutes and then sat down, but from that point on, he was no longer able to speak another word in Spanish.

Practical Implications and Applications of Soteriology Pertaining to Marriage: Respecting God's Command to Marry Only a Believer in Jesus Christ

God's Word on Marriage

- “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” (2 Corinthians 6:14)
- “A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 7:39)
- “We promise not to give our daughters in marriage to the peoples around us or take their daughters for our sons.” (Nehemiah 10:30)
- “Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you...For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.” (Deuteronomy 7:3-4,6)

Meaning and Practical Applications

- God's command to only marry other believers in him must be seen in its total context: the rest of God's Word. Throughout the Bible, the strong teaching that God's people must only marry other believers in the Lord stems from the major motifs (themes) of separation and holiness to God who is Most Holy.
- As we have seen in our study, since God is not only holy, but holy, holy, holy, he requires us to be holy to him. (Leviticus 19:2)

Practical Implications and Applications of Soteriology Pertaining to Marriage: Respecting God's Command to Marry Only a Believer in Jesus Christ

God's Word on Marriage

- “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” (2 Corinthians 6:14)
- “A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 7:39)
- “We promise not to give our daughters in marriage to the peoples around us or take their daughters for our sons.” (Nehemiah 10:30)
- “Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you...For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.” (Deuteronomy 7:3-4,6)

Meaning and Practical Applications

Marriage is a major motif throughout the whole of God's Word. It is about the most intimate of relationships on both the horizontal, human, plane and on the vertical plane, involving our relationship with God. He loves the people who bear his image, and he has called his people to be the main means through whom he is accomplishing his redemptive purposes. In order to do so, we must be holy to him; he will not permit unholiness and corruption to destroy his plan of salvation. Legitimizing an unholy union with pagans would result in the mitigation and destruction of his plan of redemption of his creation. See also Genesis 26:34-35; 27:42-28:1; Exodus 34:16; Malachi 2:11; Ephesians 5:31-32; Revelation 19:7; 21:2,9; 22:17.

The Practical Importance of Obeying God to Not Be Unequally Yoked with an Unbeliever

What Do I Do Where Marriages Are Arranged?

- In many countries in the world marriages are arranged by parents directly or with the help of a matchmaker, either a friend or a professional, contacted by the parents. Young Christians ask me what they should do. They say, “My parents are not Christians, and they bring non-Christians to me that they urge me to marry; what should I do?” Here is my answer.
- Tell your parents that you are a Christian, you must obey God’s Word, and you cannot marry one who does not believe in and follow Jesus Christ. But also say that in his Word one of his commandments is to “Honor your father and your mother.” Therefore, you will honor them by considering the person they want you to marry. Then use the next year or so to explain to this potential spouse that you are a Christian and can marry only another believer in and follower of Jesus Christ. Explain the Gospel of Christ to him or her and use this time to witness for Jesus. You have an exceptional opportunity to do so. Follow the principles in these guidelines, e.g., determining the genuineness of words by track record over time.
- If this person does profess and demonstrate in behavior a genuine faith in Jesus Christ as his or her only Savior and Lord, you can then decide if you would like to marry him or her. If, however, it becomes clear that he or she will not believe in and follow Christ, you can then say this to your parents: “In obedience to God’s Word and will, I honored you by carefully considering the man [or woman] you brought to me. However, since he [or she] will not become a fellow believer in and follower of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I must obey God and not marry someone who is an unbeliever. Please bring me someone else.”

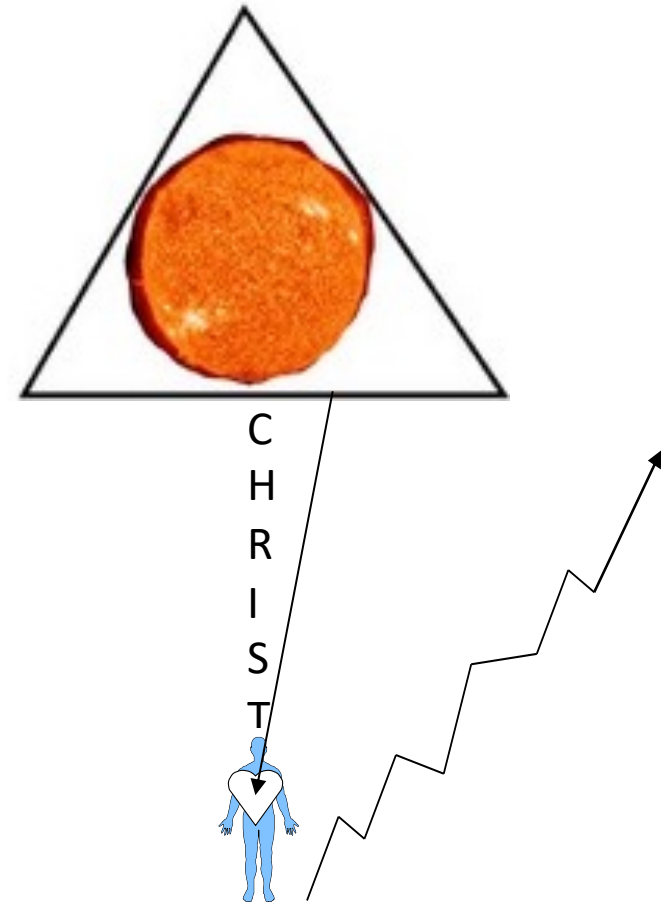
The Practical Importance of Obeying God to Not Be Unequally Yoked with an Unbeliever

- Allow time for the person to make any changes needed and for you to decide if you can love and live with this person's personality the rest of your life. Do you share this person's most important values and goals?
- Don't expect perfection. Remember Romans 3:23; two people struggling with sin under the same roof for 35 days, let alone 35 years, will experience conflict. Your goal is not to find a perfect person, who does live on this earth; your goal is to come to know a potential spouse well enough to decide if you can live with that person the rest of your life. (Malachi 2:10-16) However, keep in mind the reality of sin and its effects on both non-Christians and Christians. Sin motivates deception in the dating period before marriage. People trying to impress a potential spouse tend to hide rather than reveal their less attractive characteristics. You need to know those aspects of their being as well.
- The likelihood of change after marriage is remote; your greatest leverage for motivating change is before marriage, when your potential partner has the strongest motivation to please you. Track record is the most reliable means for detecting whether any change is genuine and lasting, part of the person's internal motivation and character. For example, is the prospective spouse willing to attend worship with you every week without you having to "drag him or her kicking and screaming" into the church? If it is important to you that your spouse not smoke, has he or she given up the habit long enough to assure you that he or she is done with smoking? Is this person you are considering for a spouse maturing in Christlikeness, growing in the sanctification process?

Soteriology: How is the redemption of Jesus Christ applied? Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?

Question for Reflection and Discussion

What would you say to someone who thinks that since salvation is by God's grace alone that he or she can do whatever he or she wants to do and just ask God for forgiveness?



[If time: Start in groups of four, then debrief in the large group. If time is short: begin in dyads, then ask for volunteers to share with the whole group what they think.]

For More Information

In order to facilitate course preparation, the slides in this presentation on Biblical Soteriology have been selected from the larger [overview](#) of Soteriology, which itself has been drawn from the Soteriology section of the original and unabridged version of the PowerPoint program (PPT), [*Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology—With a Focus on Its Very Practical Dimensions, Including God’s Answers to Our Great Questions of Life—for Now and Eternity.*](#)

This abridged PPT is still larger than can be covered in an average one-class session, particularly in the West. Therefore, highlighting of especially essential parts is offered to help when time is very limited.

For further information about the subjects on the Soteriology slides in this abridged program, see the additional slides in the Soteriology section that are on the original and unabridged presentation, which is located on the [Christian Theology](#) page of the author’s free and secure [general Website](#). See also other documents on the Christian Theology page that supply additional information.