

Session 1: Assurance of salvation

Introduction

Every human needs salvation from sin.

The terrible consequences of sin are evident in this world.

Sin will lead to separation from all that is good, forever. This is eternal death.

Jesus is the only Person who can save us from sin because He took on the punishment for the sins of all mankind.

Jesus Christ is and has always been fully God, equal with God, the Father, and God the Holy Spirit*^{see footnote}.

He added humanity to His divinity and entered His own creation, fully God and fully Man. He lived as every human is supposed to live, fully doing the will of God; He died the death that every human deserves, paying the full price for the sins of all mankind, so that those who put their trust in Him can receive, forgiveness, salvation, and reconciliation with God.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16^{NIVUK}

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!'

Mark 1:14-15^{NIVUK}

Anyone who **repents** of their sins and **believes** in Jesus will be saved.

We often hear the process described as:

- **being born again**
- **giving your life to Jesus**



*To resolve issues about the truth that there are three distinct Persons, but one GOD go to: <https://youtu.be/gGD1yTipdcQ>

Course: Laying foundations, Session 10, One God Three Persons

Repentance:

Why is repentance a key step in the process of salvation from sin and its consequences?

Reflection/discussion

Isaiah 53:6

Luke 13:1-5

Luke 3:1-9

Sin is the problem. Sin is thinking and behaving in ways contrary to the will of God, going our own way instead of God's way. Sin is rebellion against God.

Without genuine repentance there is no forgiveness of sins and therefore no salvation.

In line with the ministry of John the Baptist, preparing the way for reconciliation with God, salvation, is to do with repentance. Repentance must come first.

In Jesus's words, "repent, or perish".

What does repentance include?

Reflection/discussion

Isaiah 55:6-8

Proverbs 14:12

2 Corinthians 7:10

Luke 3:10:14

Luke 19:1-10 - The example of Zacchaeus

Recognising that one is a sinner by God's standard is the beginning of the process of salvation. This is described as godly sorrow^{*see footnote} for sin that leads to repentance and then to salvation.

Repentance therefore must include the following:

- Being deeply sorry for doing things contrary to the will of God.
- Asking for and receiving forgiveness.
- Resolving to intentionally live according to the will of God.
- Showing evidence of change in inward thinking and outward behaviour.

Isaiah 66:1-2

A repentant attitude is essential for an on-going relationship with God.

*Godly sorrow is based on the recognition of sin against God. Worldly sorrow is based on self-centred regret and does not lead to repentance.

Faith/trust/ belief in Jesus

What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

Reflection/discussion

John 3:16-21

Ephesians 2:1-10

James 2:14-19

Luke 9:23

1 John 5:11-13

Belief in Jesus is an on-going state of faith (trust) in Him. He is the One who paid the full price for rebellion and resulting sins so that those who put their trust in Him alone can receive forgiveness and salvation.

It is not a one-off event or declaration.

It depends entirely on the grace of God*, accessible to us through Jesus Christ.

Genuine belief in Jesus will result in obedience, as He demands of His disciples.

Romans 8:14-17

Those who demonstrate their belief in Jesus by obediently following the leading of His Spirit are the ones who receive the assurance of salvation.

Reflection/discussion

***The grace of God**

Romans 6:1

Titus 2:11-14

The grace of God does not give us permission to continue in sin, rather it helps us to continue to reject sin and maintain a humble, contrite attitude that leads to repentance, faith, and salvation.

What does "being born again" mean?

John 3:3-7

1 Peter 1:23-25

James 1:17-18

2 Corinthians 5:14-17

What does "giving your life to Jesus" mean?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Matthew 7:21

2 Timothy 2:19

Session 2: Baptism

Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

Matthew 28:18-20_{NIVUK}

Jesus commands that His disciples be baptised. He demonstrated the importance of baptism by submitting Himself to baptism, even though He did not need to as He was sinless and did not need to repent.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, 'I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?'

Jesus replied, 'Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness.' Then John consented.

As soon as Jesus was baptised, 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 alighting on him. ¹And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'

Matthew 3:13-17_{NIVUK}



Baptism means to dip, immerse, or submerge.

In the Bible, people are baptised by total immersion in water.

Baptisms may be carried out in rivers, pools, or baptisteries.

It is usually a time of great celebration when people rejoice over a new life born into the Kingdom of God.

Who qualifies for baptism? *

Acts 2:37-41

Acts 8:35-38

Acts 16:29-34

The significance of baptism

Romans 6:1-14

Galatians 3:26-29

Galatians 2:20

Galatians 5:16-26

Baptism by immersion in water, in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is a direct command of our Lord Jesus. It is an essential part of following Jesus. It is not optional.

By being baptised we declare to God, to ourselves and others that we believe in Jesus and that He is now the Lord of our lives. It is an outward demonstration of what we have already done in our hearts.

Those who truly repent and believe in Jesus should get baptised at the earliest opportunity, demonstrating that they are dead to their old life of sin and rebellion and now have a new life of obedience to God.

***At what age should people be baptised?**

Only those who are old enough to repent of their sin and willingly put their faith in Jesus and are resolved to obey Him for the rest of their lives qualify for baptism.

Babies cannot yet do that.

As was the case in the Bible, babies should be dedicated to God. They are not yet able to acknowledge their sins and rebellion and so choose to repent and follow Jesus for the rest of their lives.

Session 3: Be filled with the Holy Spirit

It is impossible to live a successful Christian life without being filled with the Holy Spirit.

You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.

Romans 8:9 NIVUK

Reflection/discussion

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Genesis 1:1-2

Isaiah 11:2

Acts 16:6-8

The Holy Spirit is one of the three distinct Persons in the one GOD. He is fully God. He is described as the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

The work of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-26

John 16:4-15

Ephesians 1:17

Acts 1:8

Romans 8:1-17

Romans 8:26-27

It is the Holy Spirit that gives us the assurance of salvation. He enables us to truly believe that we are now adopted into God's family and can relate to Him as our Father. True repentance which includes a resolution to obey God and be led by His Spirit are essential to prepare our hearts to receive the Holy Spirit and be assured that we have started the process of salvation*.

*The process of salvation

Saved - justification

Repentance leading to receiving forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God and being credited with the righteousness of Jesus.

Being saved - sanctification

On-going transformation to conform to the word of God in obedience to the Holy Spirit.

Will be saved - glorification

The glorious hope of full salvation

Be filled with the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5:18-20

Acts 2:1-4

Acts 8:14-17

Acts 10:44-46

Luke 11:9-13



The gift of tongues

1 Corinthians 14:1-19

Extra resources:

Baptised with the Holy Spirit

<https://youtu.be/cCmmSY1T4Uc>

How may I be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Eagerly desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit.

Believe that God has filled you with His Holy Spirit because He has promised to give His Holy Spirit to those who obey Him.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Romans 12:6-8

Galatians 5:16-26

Extra resources:

The parable of the talents

<https://youtu.be/OMvu6w1yOfk>

Spiritual gifts and service

<https://youtu.be/w65HYJrePMg>

Powerful witnesses

<https://youtu.be/i3vEZoy59Jo>

Session 4: Relationship with God

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

John 17:3 NIVUK

When you become a true believer in Jesus, you enter two new relationships: a relationship with God and a relationship with God's family (the Church).

The life of a believer can be seen as a journey of getting to know God and growing in your relationship with Him.

How may we intentionally grow in our relationship with God?

Reflection/discussion

The right attitude

Psalm 100

Isaiah 66:1-2

Hebrews 4:14-16



How should I approach God?

- With thanksgiving and praise in my heart, expressed in words.
- In humility and repentance.
- With confidence that I will receive mercy despite my short comings because of what Jesus has done for me, since He is now my High Priest.

Communication/prayer

Communication is essential for building and maintaining a relationship. Effective communication is a two-way process. It is important to listen to God and speak to Him.

Listening to God

Luke 11:28

John 10:27-30

James 1:19-25



God has spoken to all of us through His word, as recorded in the Bible. Study the Bible to know God better, and to find out what He wants you to do. Choose to obey Him. Those that love God obey Him.

God also speaks to us inside our hearts because His Holy Spirit now lives in us. His voice in our hearts may come as words, good thoughts and ideas, feelings, impressions, and pictures or visions. God never contradicts His own words, as recorded in the Bible.

Speaking to God

Psalm 34:1

John 15:1-8

1 John 5:13-15

Philippians 4:6-7

Although you can speak to God at any time, it is important to make time every day to focus on God without distractions. Some people go for a walk; others have a special place where they can focus on listening to and praying to God. You can thank God for what He has done and praise Him for who He is. You may also bring your requests to Him, believing that He will grant them.

He answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, "Love your neighbour as yourself."

Luke 10:27 NIVUK

What does loving God mean?

John 14:15-24

1 John 2:3-6

Session 5: Relationship with God's children

God's children are the Church of Jesus Christ, also described as the body of Christ.

Reflection/discussion

What is the Church?

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

Acts 14:21-23

Ephesians 1:15-23

1 Peter 2:1-10

The church is not:

- A building
- Meetings and events
- A particular denomination



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The family of God

Romans 8:12-17

God's expectation of His family

Fellowship: Hebrews 10:19-25, 1 Corinthians 14:26

Edification: Ephesians 4:29-32

Love: John 15:12-17

Unity: Ephesians 4:2-6

More about loving one another

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

1 John 2:9-11

1 John 4:7-12



God wants unity in His family of believers.

Relationships between imperfect people can be fraught, but the Bible makes it clear how we are to be intentional about meeting God's expectation for His family.

Fellowship between believers is commanded by Scriptures.

Commitment to Churches in homes and teams etc., where God's people interact and build one another up, is not optional.

Extra resources:

The audience of One - Part 2 - All for One

<https://youtu.be/OKWo1XzbpV8>

Unique and connected

<https://youtu.be/kMRWaHXIAY0>