

Overview

This meeting consisted of two distinct sessions: a one-on-one discipleship lesson on salvation between Gene and Tyasia, followed by a larger Bible study led by LUCAS focusing on Christ's priesthood and the assurance of salvation. The sessions covered foundational Christian doctrines including the nature of salvation, the work of Christ as High Priest and advocate, and the believer's eternal security. The teaching emphasized understanding salvation as a gift of God's grace, not earned through works, and explored the distinction between relationship with God (which cannot be broken) and fellowship with God (which can be disrupted by sin but restored through confession).

Key Concepts or Theories

Salvation as God's Gift: Salvation is presented as entirely the work of God, requiring the sacrifice of His Son. It includes forgiveness, deliverance, redemption, regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. Believers receive salvation by confessing with their mouth and believing in their heart that Jesus is Lord.

Christ's Dual Role: Jesus serves as both High Priest and advocate for believers. Unlike Old Testament priests who died and had to be replaced, Christ's priesthood is eternal and unchangeable. He intercedes continuously for believers and sympathizes with their weaknesses.

Kenosis (Self-Emptying): Christ veiled His full glory by emptying Himself and taking human form (Philippians 2:7), which was necessary for Him to accomplish salvation and relate to human experience.

Propitiation: Christ became the propitiation—the satisfaction of God's justice—through His sacrifice, fulfilling what the Old Testament sacrificial system could only foreshadow.

Eternal Security vs. Fellowship: The relationship between God and believers is permanent and cannot be broken, but fellowship can be disrupted by sin and must be restored through confession (1 John 1:9).

Important Questions Raised

How did God accomplish salvation for humanity, and what was required?

What is the difference between losing salvation and breaking fellowship with God?

Why can believers be confident they cannot lose their salvation?

How does Christ's priesthood differ from the Old Testament priesthood?

What does it mean that Christ "became sin" for us, and does this mean He was sinful?

Key Takeaways and Summary of Learning Objectives

- Salvation is entirely God's work through the sacrifice of His Son, received by faith, not earned through works
- Christ serves as eternal High Priest and advocate, interceding continuously for believers
- Believers have assurance of salvation based on God's promises and Christ's finished work
- The Old Testament tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices were temporary shadows pointing to Christ's permanent, heavenly ministry
- Fellowship with God can be broken by sin but restored through confession; the relationship itself cannot be severed
- Christ emptied Himself (kenosis) to accomplish salvation while remaining sinless
- Believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption
- The distinction between relationship (permanent) and fellowship (can be disrupted) is crucial for understanding Christian life
- God is glorified when He answers prayers according to His will
- Believers have direct access to God's throne of grace through Christ

Topic 1: The Nature and Components of Salvation

Salvation is defined as the work of God by which He saves humanity from the eternal consequences of sin. It encompasses multiple dimensions: forgiveness of sins, deliverance from the domain of darkness, redemption through Christ's blood, and being ransomed in full. The Hebrew and Greek meanings of salvation imply deliverance, safety, and preservation. To obtain salvation, a person must confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in their heart that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9-10). This salvation is entirely a gift of God's grace, not earned through works (Ephesians 2:8-9), though believers are created for good works that God prepared beforehand (Ephesians 2:10).

Salvation includes several key components: regeneration (being born again spiritually, as Jesus explained to Nicodemus in John 3:3-7), justification (being declared righteous, treated as if one never sinned), sanctification (being set apart for God's holy purposes and progressively transformed), and the promise of glorification (receiving a glorified body). The sacrifice required was God giving His only Son, and Isaiah 53:10 reveals that "the Lord was pleased to crush him severely," demonstrating the depth of God's love. Repentance, meaning to turn away from sin and turn back to God, is part of receiving salvation. The teaching emphasized that good works cannot bring salvation—it is solely by grace through faith.

Relevant Q&A

Tyasia: What must a person do since salvation is a gift of God?

Gene: You have to believe with your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. You don't need a specific "sinner's prayer"—the thief on the cross simply said "remember me when you come into your kingdom" and Jesus assured him of paradise.

Tyasia: What cannot bring salvation according to Ephesians 2:8-9?

Gene: Works. You cannot work to earn salvation. Many religions teach works-based salvation, but Scripture is clear that it's not from yourself, not from works, so no one can boast.

Topic 2: Christ as High Priest and Advocate

Christ's priesthood is fundamentally different from the Old Testament priesthood. While earthly priests were many in number because death prevented them from continuing in office (Hebrews 7:23), Jesus lives forever and has an unchangeable, permanent priesthood (Hebrews 7:24). He passed through the heavens to the true tent that the Lord set up, not man (Hebrews 8:1-2), entering the heavenly Holy of Holies with His own blood as the final, perfect sacrifice. Unlike the Old Testament priests who had to repeatedly offer sacrifices, Christ offered Himself once for all time and then sat down at the right hand of God (Hebrews 10:10-12), signifying that His work was complete.

Jesus serves as believers' advocate, one who pleads their case before the Father (1 John 2:1). He ever lives to make intercession for believers (Hebrews 7:25), speaking on their behalf when they fail. Satan is described as the accuser of the brethren who accuses believers before God day and night (Revelation 12:10), but Christ's advocacy ensures believers are covered by His righteousness. Because Christ experienced temptation in every way yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15), He can sympathize with believers' weaknesses. This enables believers to approach the throne of grace with confidence to receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16). The curtain separating the Holy of Holies was torn from top to bottom when Christ died, symbolizing that access to God is now open to all believers.

Relevant Q&A

LUCAS: Why did God the Father exalt Jesus?

Sameerah: Because He humbled Himself and was obedient to death (Philippians 2:8-9). God affirmed Him.

LUCAS: What is Jesus doing now for the believer?

Sameerah: He's interceding for us. He's our advocate speaking on our behalf.

Mike: Did Jesus become sin for us?

LUCAS: He took on the weight of sin as our substitute, but He never sinned. Paul's emphasis in 2 Corinthians 5:21 is not that Jesus was sinful, but that He bore our sins. He was the impeccable sacrifice—without any sin or flaws. The Father had to turn His back because God cannot look on sin, and Jesus carried 100% of God's wrath for us.

Topic 3: Assurance of Salvation and Eternal Security

The teaching strongly emphasized that believers cannot lose their salvation, distinguishing this from breaking fellowship with God. Multiple scriptures support eternal security: John 6:37-39 states that all the Father gives to Christ will come to Him, and Christ will lose none but raise them up on the last day. John 10:28 promises that Christ gives believers eternal life and they shall never perish, with no one able to snatch them from His hand. Ephesians 4:30 instructs believers not to grieve the Holy Spirit "by whom you are sealed for the day of redemption," indicating a permanent seal. The very nature of eternal life means it cannot be temporary—if it could be lost, it would not be eternal (John 3:16).

However, while the relationship with God is permanent, fellowship can be broken by sin. This was illustrated with the analogy of a father and son: even when not speaking due to conflict, the father remains the father and the son remains the son. Similarly, believers remain God's children even when sin disrupts their communion with Him. First John 1:9 provides the remedy: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The teaching emphasized maintaining "short accounts" with God—quickly confessing sin to restore fellowship. God disciplines those He loves (Hebrews 12:6), and sometimes allows difficulties to draw believers back into close fellowship. Believers should not confuse temporary struggles or broken fellowship with loss of salvation.

Relevant Q&A

LUCAS: Can you lose your salvation?

All: No.

LUCAS: Can you break your fellowship?

All: Yes.

LUCAS: How do you know you can't lose your salvation? Give me a scripture.

Sameerah: John 6:37—"All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out." It continues that Christ should lose nothing of all that the Father has given Him but raise it up on the last day.

Mike: John 10:28—"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand."

Cynthia: What's the difference between salvation and fellowship?

LUCAS: Salvation is the permanent relationship—you're God's child. Fellowship is the communion and communication with God that can be disrupted by sin. It's like a married couple in the same house not talking because they're angry—they're still married (relationship intact) but not communicating (fellowship broken).

Topic 4: Old Testament Shadows and New Covenant Reality

The Old Testament tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrificial system were temporary shadows and types pointing to the permanent reality in Christ. The earthly tabernacle built by Moses and the temple built by Solomon were copies of heavenly things (Hebrews 9:24). The high priest had to pass through the outer court and inner court to reach the Holy of Holies where the mercy seat was located, and this could only be done once a year with the blood of animals. This was a rehearsal, a shadow of what Christ would accomplish. When Christ died, He passed through the heavens to the true tent that God set up, entering with His own blood to the heavenly mercy seat (Hebrews 9:11-12).

The Old Testament operated under the dispensation of law, which served as a mirror to show humanity their sinfulness and need for a Savior. The law could not save anyone—it only revealed sin. The New Testament ushered in the dispensation of grace through Christ's finished work. Believers now live under a new covenant with a superior high priest and a better sacrifice. The permanent tent is in heaven where God dwells, not the temporary earthly structures. The word "mishkan" (dwelling place of God) referred to the earthly tabernacle, but the true dwelling place is the eternal heavens. Everything in the Old Testament—the sacrifices, the priesthood, the tabernacle—was pointing forward to Christ who would fulfill it all perfectly and permanently.

Relevant Q&A

LUCAS: What does it mean that Christ passed through the heavens?

LUCAS: Just as the Old Testament high priest had to go through the outer court and inner court to reach the Holy of Holies, Christ went through the heavens to reach the true mercy seat in heaven. The earthly tabernacle was just a type, a shadow of the heavenly reality.

LUCAS: What covenant are we under?

Cynthia/Stacia: The new covenant.

LUCAS: What dispensation are we under?

Stacia: Grace. We are under the dispensation of grace.

LUCAS: Why was the Old Testament law given?

LUCAS: The law was a mirror to show us ourselves and our sinfulness. It pointed us to our need for a Savior. The law doesn't save—it reveals our need for salvation.

Topic 5: Prayer, God's Will, and God's Glorification

Prayer should be offered in Jesus' name because He is the believer's intercessor. John 14:13-14 states that whatever believers ask in Jesus' name, He will do "that the Father may be glorified in the Son." God answers prayers to glorify Himself—when He responds to prayer, believers thank Him and He receives glory. However, prayers must align with God's will. First John 5:14-15 emphasizes that believers have confidence that if they ask anything according to His will, He hears them. Not all prayers are answered as requested because some requests fall outside God's will, wrong timing, or wrong motives.

God may not answer certain prayers to protect believers or to help them grow spiritually. Sometimes believers ask for things they are not ready to receive, and God in His wisdom withholds them. The teaching encouraged praying "if it's your will" when making requests, particularly regarding healing or major life decisions, and asking God to provide grace to endure if the answer is different than hoped. God may also be disciplining a believer, and others praying for relief may not understand that God is working through that difficulty. The Holy Spirit was described as an "earnest payment"—like a down payment on a house that demonstrates the buyer is serious—showing that God is serious about His promises to believers and has given the Spirit as a guarantee.

Relevant Q&A

LUCAS: Why does God answer prayers?

LUCAS: So that the Father may be glorified. When God answers prayer, we thank Him and He is glorified. It's always about His glory.

Betty: Does God just give us whatever we want because He loves us?

Betty/LUCAS: No, it has to be according to His will and lined up with what's already written in Scripture. Our motives matter too.

Cynthia: Why doesn't God always give us what we pray for?

LUCAS: Sometimes God doesn't answer to protect you, or because you're not ready for what you're asking. Looking back, you often realize that what you wanted years ago would have wrecked you. God knows the right timing and what you actually need versus what you want.

Actionable Next Steps / Assignments

Continue studying the material on Christ's priesthood, picking up at page 57 in the next session.

Memorize key scriptures on eternal security (John 6:37-39, John 10:28, Ephesians 4:30, Romans 8:38-39) to be equipped when challenged about salvation.

Practice distinguishing between relationship with God (permanent) and fellowship with God (can be disrupted) in personal application and when counseling others.

Maintain "short accounts" with God by quickly confessing sin to restore fellowship rather than allowing guilt to create distance.

Men's retreat scheduled for June (approximately June 12-13) at Pastor Nate's church—decide whether to attend the retreat or the fishing alternative.

Women's ministry event scheduled for the third week—plan accordingly for Bible study schedule adjustments.

Supplemental Resources

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