

Session 4 - The Big Picture of Salvation

Building on our previous sessions, *The Big Picture of Salvation* explains that God's saving work includes much more than the escaping the final judgement. Because its source is found in the active grace of God, salvation offers safety, deliverance, and wholeness (shalom) to all who believe. Reading through the Old Testament, one finds salvation themes pictured in Israel's exodus from Egypt, Israel's movement into the Promise Land, the return of a remnant from Babylonian Exile, as well as countless individual stories of those who lived by faith in God (Hebrews 11:1-39). We serve a great Savior! (Jonah 2:10; Acts 4:12).

The New Testament clearly explains the united actions of the Father, Son (Jesus Christ) and Holy Spirit as being central to God's saving work. We discover that **“salvation proceeds from God's loving character, is accomplished by Christ's atoning work on the cross, realized through forgiveness, and applied by the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration, and sanctification, culminating in the resurrection and glorification of all true believers.”**

This session is a study of salvation's big picture that pieces together **Scripture words and phrases, along with a hand-drawn diagram.** As these pieces come together, we are assured that the Trinity's gracious action covers all that is needed for a restored relationship with God.



Ephesians 1:1-14 offers a three-stanza doxology highlighting the work of the Trinity in God's salvation plan. Read the passages and in the space provided summarize how each member of the Trinity is at work.

Read Ephesians 1:3-6: The Father planned salvation – “chose us in him”

Read Ephesians 1:7-13: The Son carries out the plan – “redemption through his blood”

Read Ephesians 1:13-14: The Holy Spirit applies the plan to our lives – “the seal” and the “guarantee”.

New Testament Salvation Words Attributed to the Trinity

The Father

Election
Predestination
Foreknowledge

The Son

Atonement
Redemption
Reconciliation
Propitiation
Expiation
Justification

The Holy Spirit

Regeneration
Conversion
Repentance
Glorification
Fellowship

The remainder of Paul's letter to the Ephesian church instructs Christ-followers on the clear relationship between **belief and behavior**. Always dependent upon God's saving grace, the work of salvation includes God's design for daily life as a Christ-follower (Ephesians 2:1-10). As a result, we discover that God's gracious purpose in salvation is to move one from a childlike faith to maturity as a Christ-follower (Ephesians 4:14-16). God's saving purpose includes the following actions:

- Salvation is from hell to heaven
- Salvation is from guilt to forgiveness, shame to honor, and fear to freedom
- Salvation is from death to life
- Salvation is from unrighteousness to righteousness

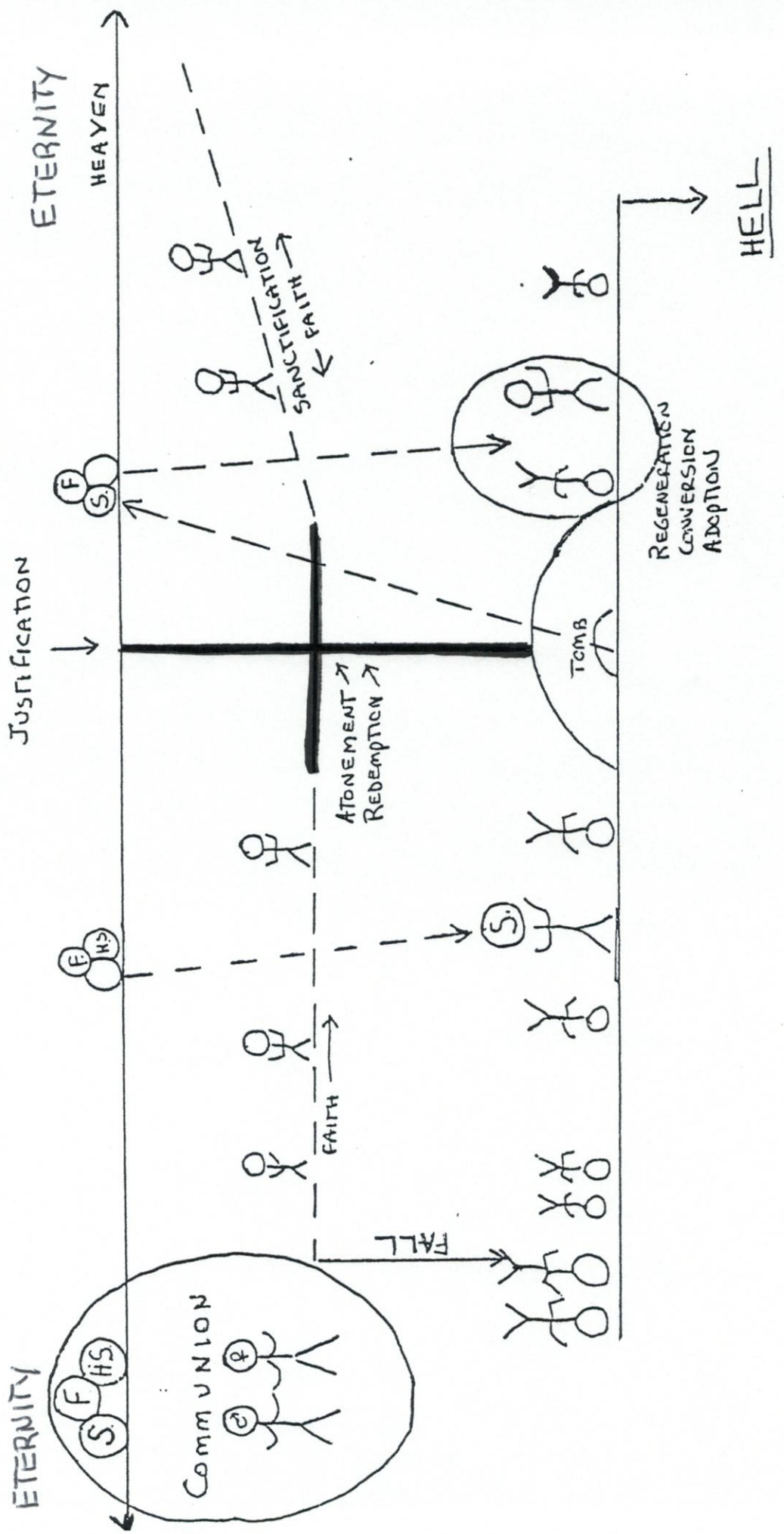
Large Group Discussion Question - How do these explanations of God's saving purpose strengthen our proclamation of the gospel to non-believers, as well as believers?

Watch the YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/xixRrD9FdDQ> **The Big Picture of Salvation.**

Seeing the Big Picture - Thanks to Pastor Ralph Wetherington, the next page offers a look at salvation's themes in a creative diagram. Particular attention is paid to biblical words describing the full extent of God's gracious saving work. Take time to view the YouTube link as you get ready to as you study the diagram together. keep these thoughts in mind:

- Above the top line is the Triune God's eternal presence from whom all blessings flow
- Genesis 1,2 describes God's creative work establishing a holy relationship with humans
- Genesis 3 speaks about our fall into sin. Everything is turned upside down
- The Bible describes God's relentless pursuit of mankind to restore relationships with us
- Some people respond by faith others live in rebellion to God's revelation
- **All of God does all that God does and we respond by faith to his saving grace**

SALVATION



Salvation Words on the Diagram

Communion -The eternal sinless relationship that exists in the Trinity was relationally experienced by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden at God's initiative. (Genesis 1:26-27)

Fall - Sin entered the world through the disobedience of Adam and Eve and the effect of their action has been passed on to all humanity. Sin turns everything upside down from the way God designed life to be lived. (Genesis 3)

Faith involves a turning to God. Saving faith (Ephesians 2:1-10) is a positive conviction as to the truth of the gospel of Christ and a heart-filled reliance on the promises of God in Christ.

Atonement – This covering of sin leads to a RECONCILIATION between God and man is accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. His death is a completed fact (Hebrews 9:13-26) and Christ is the substitute for the sinner before a holy God (Romans 3:25-26, 5:6-8). Though God is offended by our sin and cannot overlook it, He Himself made provision for the atonement in Christ (John 3:16-17). One's sin is dealt with and the severed relationship is restored through faith in Christ's substitutionary death (Romans 5:8 and 2 Corinthians 5:18ff).

Redemption – Our freedom is PURCHASED by Christ's death (Mark 10:45). People are naturally slaves to sin (Mark 7:20-23; John 8:33-34), but Christ paid the price for our freedom (Psalm 49:7-8; Romans 3:24, Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:12, 10:14; 1 Peter 1:17-19). Redeemed people are set free from being slaves to sin and its present power (John 8:34; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20) and there is a future promise in that one day our bodies will be redeemed (Romans 8:23) on that future day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30; Luke 21:27-28).

Justification – Our change in STANDING before God. It takes place outside of the sinner in throne room of heaven by a legal act of God. God declares one righteous based on the righteousness of Christ (Romans 4:6,25). Justification removes the guilt of sin and is an ACT which is accomplished by Christ once for all time (Romans 5:8-9, 19).

Regeneration- Our change in NATURE by the work of God. "New Birth" is something that only God can do in a person's life (John 3:6-8). God instills spiritual life into souls that were dead to God (Ephesians 2:1-10), resulting in a transformation of the soul (Ephesians 4:23) by the Holy Spirit. By God's work, believers become new people, no longer conformed to this world but transformed by the renewing of one's mind (Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:10).

Conversion – Our RECEPTION AND REST upon Christ alone for salvation. Conversion involves faith (see above) and repentance. **Faith** means to turn to God and **repentance** means to turn from sin involving a change of mind, emotion and will toward the awfulness of sin.

Adoption – Our change of FAMILY by the work of God. The act of God that brings repentant and believing individuals into a new family, the family of God (Ephesians 2:23). As a member of God's family, those adopted have full inheritance and rights to be called children of

Sanctification – Our change in CHARACTER - what God does in us. By the grace of God, believers are being renewed after the image of God. The Holy Spirit enables believers to say NO to sin (Titus 2:11-14) and live to righteousness in good works (Ephesians 2:10). Because one is alive to God (I Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:10,14), our character progressively is being changed (1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 4:1,10) until we become like Jesus when we join him in heaven (1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 John 3:2; Philippians 3:12-14).

Small Group Assignments- Each group is given one of the “faithful sayings” from the Pastoral Epistles. Study your “saying” and describe how both the salvation and gospel themes are connected in the verses. What was Paul emphasizing for Timothy, Titus, and other leaders? **After the small group finishes, return to the larger group and share what your group discovered with the larger group.**

1 Timothy 1:15

1 Timothy 3:1

1 Timothy 4:8-9

2 Timothy 2:11-13

Titus 3:5-8

What new preaching/teaching idea did you learn from the study of these “faithful sayings”?

Seminar Two Wrap-up

As Seminar 2 comes to an end, review your notes and study material. In the spaces below, write the main emphasis you learned from each of the sessions. Then, write one prayer request as you think how you can use this material to teach others in the ministry God has given to you.

Session 1 – The Kingdoms of Man and the Fullness of Time

Main emphasis:

Prayer request:

Session 2 – How the New Testament Fits Together

Main emphasis:

Prayer request:

Session 3 – The Gospel of the Kingdom

Main emphasis:

Prayer request:

Session 4 – The Big Picture of Salvation

Main emphasis:

Prayer request:

Share your results with another person in the Seminar. Pray together before you return home. Thanks for your good work. God bless you as you help others see the glory of God.