

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

WEEK 4 - SOTERIOLOGY (PART 1)

Definition of Soteriology: The Doctrine/Study of Salvation (Christ's work) Salvation - from Hebrew "Yeshua" (Joshua) meaning sufficiency, deliverance, safety.

- from Greek "soteria" meaning rescue, redemption, cure.

Definition of Salvation: bringing someone from captivity to sin into the fullness and freedom of God.

* A word central to the idea of salvation: Atonement

Definition of Atonement: At / one / ment - making at one or bringing together into unity those who have been separated. . . in the Scriptures it has these meanings: to pay the price ,to ransom ,to cover over ,to wash away , to turn aside anger, to reconcile.

Biblical View of the Atonement: PENALTY SUBSTITUTION - Humanity disobeyed and sinned against God; the penalty for sin is death; God in His love provided a way to pay the full price for our sins and yet forgive us; Jesus the Sinless Son of God, paid our penalty by dying in our place as our substitute (Rom. 3:25-26; Deut. 27:26; Rom. 6:23; Gal. 3:21).

TWO THEORIES OF ATONEMENT:

1) Jesus was the substitute for our penalty - humanity's guilt was given to Him, so that He bore the punishment that we rightfully deserve (1 Cor. 6:20; Mark 10:45).

2) Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice - He fulfilled all that was demanded by the Old Testament sacrificial system, became the victim in place of the offenders (us), and shed His blood -- He died (John 1 :29; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:26-28).

HUMANITY AND OUR SIN:

1. Modern Attitude towards Evil and Sin: Evil is only a relative social idea that which damages the normal operation of society; sin is a primitive idea that causes unnecessary guilt .

2. Biblical View of Evil and Sin: Satan is a real being who seeks to destroy God's creation and people; evil has so penetrated our world that every aspect of society is tainted with it; sin is real and is a violation against God.

a) The Image of God: Humans are created in the image of God (Deut. 4: 15; John 4:24) -- not a physical image, but:

1. a MENTAL image - we have intelligence, memory, imagination.
2. a MORAL image - we have the ability to choose what is right.
3. a SOCIAL image - we were created to live in relationships.

b) The Nature of Sin: Sin is anything that destroys God's image in us:

1. it is MENTAL - wilful disobedience to God's will.
2. it is MORAL - violation of that which God demands of us (HOLINESS).
3. it is SOCIAL - destruction of personal relationship between God and us.

3. Humanity's Present Condition: We are sinful because of Adam's original sin - the inborn tendency to sin in all human beings ... therefore humanity is totally depraved - sin has pervaded every aspect of our nature, and we are totally unable to achieve our own salvation.

THE NECESSITY OF PUNISHMENT:

1. God's nature demands that sinners be punished - He must react against anyone who rebels against His nature.
2. God must punish sin to uphold His Laws - He has 2 choices:
 - a) make all mankind pay the price for sin by wiping them out.
 - b) find an alternate way to pay the price - Jesus Christ.
3. God punished Jesus for our sin - the punishment for sin is death; God loved us so much that He sent Jesus to be punished for our sins.

FOUR PROBLEMS OF HUMANITY:

1. Humans are guilty
2. Humans are objects of God's wrath
3. Humans are enemies to God
4. Humans are slaves to sinning

JESUS CHRIST AS THE ANSWER TO HUMANITY'S PROBLEMS:

1. SACRIFICE - Christ is our High Priest, but He offered Himself as the victim of sacrifice; He was the spotless Lamb of God, the ultimate sacrifice offered once for ALL, that would wash away all sins, not just cover them up (Heb. 9:25-26) ... this solves problem # 1 of humanity.
2. PROPITIATION - this means to turn aside God's wrath in order to reconcile God with man ... Jesus became the propitiation for our sins by: 1) turning aside God's wrath against us, and 2) removing the barrier of sin, so that we could have fellowship with God (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 4:10) - this solves problem # 2 of humanity.

3. RECONCILIATION - this refers to God restoring humanity to friendship, harmony and fellowship with Him ... because Jesus turned aside God's wrath, He made it possible for us to be reconciled with God and have real , eternal fellowship with Him (Heb. 5:10-11) ... this solves problem # 3 of humanity.

4. REDEMPTION - this means to buy back (PURCHASE) and loose from bondage (RELEASE) by the paying of a price ... Jesus purchased us with His blood (1 Cor. 6:19-20) and freed us from bondage to sin (Rom. 8:15), the price being His LIFE ; He therefore provided the way for us to be FREE forever, so we would never have to be SLAVES to sinning again ... this solves problem # 4 of humanity.