

Devotional Guide
August 10 - 16, 2020
How We Are Saved
2 Corinthians 5:14 – 21

Monday

Genesis 22:8 - 13; Leviticus 17:11

Underlying all the images of salvation is the principle of substitution, which was revealed in the Old Testament in God's supplying of the ram for the sacrifice as a substitute for Isaac, and in the very elaborate Old Testament sacrifice system. The sacrifice system included the practice of the one bringing the offering laying his hands on the animal before it was killed, indicating the animal was a substitute. After the sacrifice, the blood of the animal was sprinkled around, symbolizing that the life of the innocent victim given for the life of the sinner making the offering.

Think About It: Pagan sacrifices involved the supplicant providing something of his own in order to placate or gratify the god or idol to whom the sacrifice was made. According to Leviticus 17:11, who supplied the life blood which made atonement on the altar? How then do Old Testament sacrifices differ from pagan sacrifices?

Prayer: Thank God He provided a way to make atonement for my soul.

Tuesday

Hebrews 10:4; 1 Corinthians 5:7, John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:24; Hebrews 9:28.

The concept of substitution was fulfilled in the New Testament. "Jesus Christ our Lord, moved by a love that was determined to do everything necessary to save us, endured and exhausted the destructive divine judgment for which we were otherwise inescapably destined, and so won us forgiveness, adoption, and glory." – J. I. Packer.

Think About It: According to the Scripture references for today, can the blood of bulls and goats take away sin? If not, what was the purpose of the Old Testament sacrifices? If the Old Testament sacrifices were symbolic, what did they symbolize? Who is the true Passover Lamb? Anselm wrote "only God could make reparation for sins; only man should make reparation for sins." Why does Anselm's remark imply that Christ is the perfect Savior from sins? Why is it biblically correct to sing "amazing love, how can it be, that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me" (see Colossians 1:19 – 20)?

Prayer: Praise God for His amazing love.

Wednesday

Romans 3:24 – 25; 1 John 2:1 – 2; 4:10; 2 Corinthians 5:14

There are four main images of atonement in the New Testament, each based on the principle of substitution. Propitiation is an image from the Tabernacle and Temple rituals, emphasizing our need to escape the wrath of God. Propitiation implies the appeasement of anger; the image recognizes the reality of God's holy, righteous, legitimate wrath, as well as His loving action in the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ.

Think About It: Why are some people uncomfortable with the concept of propitiation? What arouses the wrath of God? Do I deserve to experience God's wrath? How is God's wrath different from our wrath? What motivated God in Christ to be the propitiation for our sins (Romans 5:8)?

Prayer: Thank God He has provided a way of escape from His dreadful wrath.

Thursday

John 8:34; Mark 10:45, 1 Timothy 2:5 – 6

Redemption or, more appropriately ransom, is an image from the ransom of slaves and prisoners, emphasizing our need to escape from slavery to sin. Redemption implies buying back from slavery or imprisonment; it emphasizes our captivity to sin. Ransom was paid by the kinsman-redeemer in Old Testament days to redeem property and persons in order to keep them in the family. Ransom involved costly and personal intervention. God ransomed Israel from Egypt at the cost of exerting Himself in signs and wonders. In the New Testament, the bondage from which we are set free is spiritual and the price of the ransom is infinite—the death of God's Son.

Think About It: Why is it important to affirm that although the complete price for our ransom has been paid, our redemption is not yet complete? When will it be complete? How do I know I'm going to "make it" to that day (Ephesians 4:30)? The kinsman-redeemer of the Old Testament had proprietary rights over his purchase – how does that principal apply to my relationship with Christ?

Prayer: Praise God for freedom from the bonds of sin.

Friday

Isaiah 53:11; Luke 18:14; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 3:24 - 25

Justification is an image from the proceedings in a court of law, emphasizing our need to deal with the guilt of sin. Justification is the verdict of "not guilty" pronounced by the judge on the accused, cancelling liability to punishment and bestowing righteous standing. Justification is God's declaration of righteousness to those who have faith, on the basis of Christ's substitutionary death – it is complete and instantaneous.

Think About It: What are some contrasts between sanctification and justification? 1 John 1:9 states that God is righteous to forgive our sins. Why makes God's action of declaring guilty sinners "not guilty" a righteous action? Why is it important to maintain that our justification has its source in God's grace, is grounded in the shedding of Christ's blood, has its means through faith, and brings about a personal relationship with Christ?

Prayer: Praise God for His undeserved favor bestowed on me.

Saturday

Romans 5:1, 11; Ephesians 2:11 – 22; 2 Corinthians 5:18 - 21

Reconciliation is an image from home and family, emphasizing our need to end our state of enmity with and alienation from God.

Reconciliation means the end of alienation through having peace with God. Reconciliation means the restoration of our personal relationship with God as our Father, because of which we have access to the Father through the Son by the Spirit, having the privileges of sons and the expectations of heirs, being reconciled together with all of those who are in Christ, as the one new humanity in Christ.

Think About It: What are some side effects in the life of a person who is alienated from God? Who initiated our reconciliation to God? How was that reconciliation brought about according to 2 Corinthians 5:21? How does reconciliation to God bring about reconciliation between people who were formerly enemies?

Prayer: Praise God that He made it possible for me to be at peace with Him.

Sunday

2 Corinthians 5:14; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18 – 19; Ephesians 2:8 - 9

Because of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice for us on the cross, God's wrath against our sin is propitiated, we are ransomed from slavery to sin, we are pronounced not guilty and delivered from the penalty of our sin, and we are reconciled with God and with one another.

Think About It: What should response is required of me regarding:

Propitiation (2 Corinthians 5:14):

Redemption (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:17 – 19):

Justification (Ephesians 2:8 – 10):

Reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:20; 13:11):

Prayer: Jesus, because You died for me, I want to live for You.