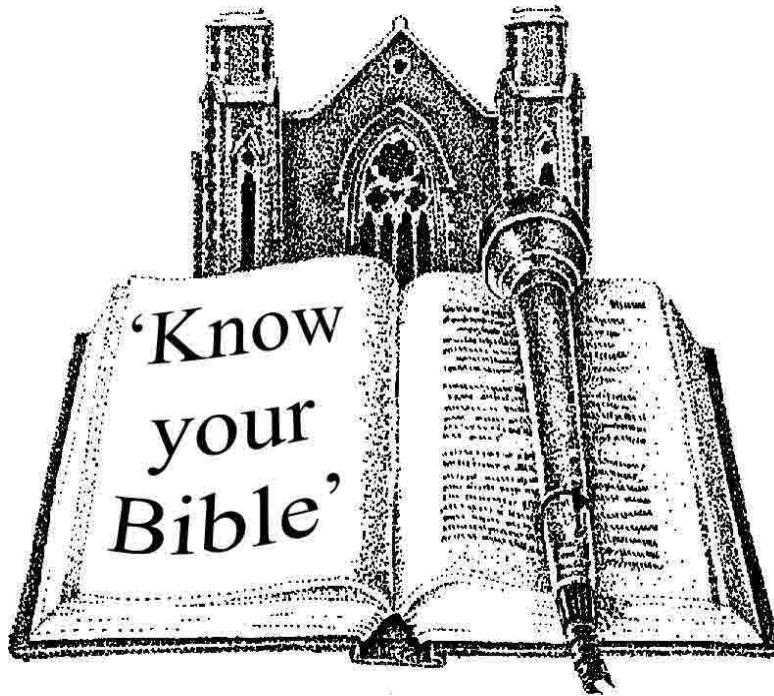


The Order of Salvation

Study Notes by Stuart Olyott



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The Order of Salvation

Christ died to save those whom His Father had given Him

But how are they brought into the actual enjoyment/experience/possession of salvation?

The Scriptures teach that God works in their lives, doing certain things in a certain order. The very first of these (Romans 8:28-30) is:-

CALLING

The outward call

- God addresses all men in what we call 'natural revelation' - Psalm 19:1-3, Romans 1:18-23, 32, 2:14-15, 10-18.
- But He has chosen to save His people through the preaching of the Gospel. 1 Corinthians 1:21, Romans 1:16, 10:17
- But not everybody who hears the Gospel accepts it.

Why some accept the Gospel when they hear it, and some do not

The reason is not in the Gospel itself

- the same message is preached to all Romans 10:13.
- there is nothing in the message itself which stops a man from accepting it

The reason is not in the nature of the hearers:-

- all of them are equally dead, spiritually Ephesians 2:1
- all of them are naturally anti-God Romans 8:7-8
- all of them, left to themselves, would certainly never accept the saving Gospel, but would perish in their sins 1 Corinthians 2:14.

The reason IS that some are effectually called, and some are not Matthew 22:14

- all are called by the same message but not all are 'called out' by it
- only some receive the call which actually united them to Christ Colossians 1:9
- it is a miracle - like Lazarus they hear the Divine summons, and are actually brought to Christ by it (GOD calls!)
- another illustration and example of this call is Zaccheus
- to be called is to be a Christian Romans 1:6-7, Ephesians 4:1

The effectual call

- this special and inward call is referred to in Romans 8:30, 1 Corinthians 1:9, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, 2 Peter 1:10,
- it is an act of God, and of God alone 1 Corinthians 1:9, 2 Timothy 1:8-9
- it is specifically attributed to God the Father - Romans 8:30, 1 Corinthians 1:9, Galatians 1:15, Ephesians 1:17-18, 1 John 3:1
- it is given in time because it was planned in eternity Romans 8:28-30, 2 Timothy 1:9, Ephesians 1:4 it is all part of God's purpose in Christ.
- once it is given, it is never withdrawn Romans 11:29
- it is high, holy, and heavenly - Philippians 3:14, 2 Timothy 1:9, Hebrews 3:1

This does not make men and women into mere pawns

- No-one is lost or saved against his will. Natural men do not want the Gospel, and called men do!
- Effectual calling is not an act of forcing, but an act of creation. A new nature and a new will are given The called person WANTS to do what he did not want to do before.
- he sees the Gospel as true, as a blind man sees the sun 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14
- he sees his unworthiness and guilt before God. Acts 2:37
- he is drawn to the Saviour. John 6:44.
- he turns from his sin to this Saviour. Ezekiel 11:19, 36:26-27. Acts 26:18.

Two dangers to avoid

Effectual calling may be sudden, or it may be gradual, it may be accompanied by strong feelings, or it may not.

Do not assume that because you have had sudden religious experiences accompanied by deep feelings, that you have been effectually called.

Where is your faith now?

- that is the question to decide whether you have been called or not,
- because TRUE calling always leads to CONTINUING FAITH. 2 Peter 1:10

If you are unconverted, do not sit around waiting for some mystic experience.

- you are COMMANDED by God's Word to repent and believe the Gospel.
- if you do not, you will perish
- if you do, you will be saved
- this will in turn prove that you have been effectually called

you can have no such assurance until you have believed.

The Order of Salvation

Christ died to save those whom His Father had given Him.

By a series of acts. God brings these people to actually possess this salvation

- the first act is calling, God calls, His people come
- but how can dead men hear the call, obey it, and come?
- it would never happen - if it were not for regeneration.

THE NEW BIRTH / REGENERATION

All men and women are spiritually dead

- they are governed by their sins; unable to please God; and consider spiritual things to be foolish. Ephesians 2:1, Romans 8:5-8, 1 Corinthians 2:14.
- they cannot give themselves spiritual life; and have no desire or power to do anything at all about their condition. Titus 3:5, John 6:44, Jeremiah 13:23.

Regeneration is the giving of life to the dead.

- it is spoken of this way in Ephesians 2:1, 1 John 3:14, 4:7.
- elsewhere it is spoken of as birth - the giving of life. John 3:3, 6-8, James 1:18, 1 Peter 1:23.
- or as new creation, or renewal. 2 Corinthians 5:17, Titus 3:5-6.

It is brought about by the Word and the Spirit

- the Word (especially the preached Word) is the means God uses. See how calling and the new birth are intimately linked! 1 Peter 1:23,25, 1 Corinthians 4:15
- The Holy Spirit accompanies this with life-giving power in the hearts of the elect. 1 Corinthians 2:2-5, 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6

It is a sovereign act of God

- God regenerates whom HE wills. John 1:12-13, James 1:18, 1 Peter 1:3.
- Man has no understanding of the process, and no control whatever over it. John 3:1-13.
- Yet the new birth is absolutely essential to salvation, and all spiritual graces flow from it. John 3:3, 5-7, 1 Peter 1:3.

Regeneration ALWAYS brings a person to Christ.

- all who are regenerated are given saving faith John 1:12-13, Ephesians 2:1-10, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 1 John 5:1, 4.
- all who are regenerated are inwardly changed and outwardly different (This is because regeneration is the implanting of the new nature, which inevitably asserts itself increasingly in sanctification). Ezekiel 36:25-26, 2 Corinthians 4:6, 5:17, 1 John 2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:18

It is patterned on Christ's resurrection

- this is taught in 1 Peter 1:3.
- the power which worked in Him is the same power which works in every believer Ephesians 1:19-20.
- all for whom He died are certain to experience this divine miracle of regeneration. Ephesians 2:5, Titus 3:5-6.

* Salvation is thus seen to be entirely of God's grace. *

* And much modern 'Gospel preaching' is seen to be erroneous. *

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By a series of acts, God brings these people to actually possess this salvation

- the first act is calling God calls His people outwardly & inwardly
- they come; for although they are dead, God gives them life (regeneration)
- they come from sin (repentance) to Christ (faith)
- this happens to all who are regenerated, John 6:37-40 1:12-13, and cannot happen without regeneration, John 6:44, 65.

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

FAITH

Faith is God's gift

- this is clearly stated in Ephesians 2:8-10.
- yet you must have it to be saved. John 3:16, 18
- this proves that all salvation is by God's free grace

What faith is

- it is the believing of certain facts. Romans 4:24-25, 10:9-10, 1 Corinthians 15:1-5.
- the person believing the facts puts his personal trust in the Lord Jesus Christ ALONE for his salvation. Acts 15:11, 16:31. John 1:12, 3:16, 4:42. Galatians 2:20. 2 Timothy 1:12.

Remember!

- The sinner is active, not passive He acts as a person, not a robot He believes, He cries, He rests. Faith is the first conscious act of the Christian life.
- His faith is in God's promises which freely invite all to salvation in Christ; not in God's decree of election. He comes because he is invited, not because of prior knowledge that God chose him.
- He has confidence in the facts, not just a knowledge of them. He is convinced that he is a great sinner, and that Christ is the Saviour of sinners -. so he goes to HIM to be saved.

REPENTANCE

Repentance is God's gift

- this is clearly stated in Acts 5:31, 11:18, 2 Timothy 2:25.
- yet you must have it to be saved. Luke 13:3, 5.
- this proves that all salvation is by God's free grace.

What repentance is

- something done, not felt. It is turning. Acts 3:19, 26,20
- it is turning from sin 2 Chronicles 7:14. Hebrews 6:1
- it is turning to the living God, by faith in Christ. Acts 14:15, 1 Thessalonians 1.9, Acts 20:21, Mark 1:15.

Remember!

Repentance and faith always go together. You cannot and do not have one without the other

- Faith looks to Christ for salvation But why should it want to be saved? Because it wants to finish with. sin.' This is repentance I
- Repentance is turning from sin But where is it going to turn? To Christ! This is faith.'
- 'Believe' means 'repentantly believe'. 'Repent' means 'believingly repent'
 - To see this clearly, look at .the following pairs of verses. Acts 3:19-4:4, 10:43-11:18, 17:30-17:34, 26:18-26:20.
- It is plain that one term includes the other.

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By a series of acts, God brings these people to actually possess this salvation

- the first act is calling God calls His people outwardly & inwardly
- they come; for although they are dead, God gives them life (regeneration)
- they come from sin (repentance) to Christ (faith)
- and are immediately clothed in a robe of righteousness (justification).

JUSTIFICATION

Justification is a declaration

Look at Deuteronomy 25:1.

When a judge justifies a man, he is declaring that innocent man to be righteous
The opposite is condemnation

But we are guilty (Romans 3:23).

How can the righteous Lord declare the guilty to be righteous?

The answer lies in imputation

Imputation

Imputation means that God has reckoned or credited to one person what originally belonged to another person

- for instance, the sin of Adam is imputed or 'laid to the account' of all Adam's race. We receive from him. He receives nothing from us
- In the case of Jesus Christ and His elect people there is a double imputation :-
- my sin is laid to His account - and He is treated as if He had sinned my sin. 2 Corinthians 5:21.
- His perfect righteousness is laid to my account. God treats me as if I had never sinned. I am treated as if I had lived Christ's perfect life. 2 Corinthians 5:21

GOD is the Author of justification

"It is GOD that justified" (Romans 8:33). He declares us righteous.

- do not think that it is your faith which makes you righteous. Faith is not a 'good work' which commends us into God's favour. Faith is not the ground of righteousness
- the work of Jesus Christ alone is the ground of righteousness. Romans 3:24. There is no other sin-bearer.
- Faith is an INSTRUMENT ONLY
- the hand by which we receive the righteousness of God - NOT the source of that righteousness.
- so faith in any other will not do -none but Christ alone is righteous.

Some other important points to grasp

Justification is an ACT completed in a moment, NOT a process which is only gradually completed.

- you are either justified or you are not.
- once justified, you cannot be Unjustified! You are legally righteous with God for ever, and free from wrath & condemnation. Romans 8:1.

No man is justified until He repents and believes the Gospel.

- it is God's plan to justify His people, but they are NOT IN FACT justified until they believe. Until then they are lost. Galatians 2:1.6. Colossians 1:21-22
- yet the moment they believe, they are at once justified. Acts 13:38-39, Romans 3:22.
- as faith is God's gift, and it is impossible to be justified without it, it is right to describe justification as an act of God's free grace. Romans 3:20-24, 4:16.

We are justified by faith alone - no law-keeping is necessary. Yet the faith that justifies is never alone, but is always accompanied by good works. James 2:26.

- these works do not commend us to God.
- but whoever God justifies He sanctifies (as we shall see), and so a believer's life just cannot be the same as it was before.

This doctrine of justification by faith is the VERY CENTRE of the Gospel.

- it is "the article of a standing or falling Church" (Luther).
- in it the power and glory of God's grace shine out brightly.

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- they are immediately clothed in a robe of righteousness (justification).
- they are then received as Sons in God's family (adoption).

ADOPTION

Not all men are the children of God - only believers

- in the OT God is only the Father of Abraham's seed. Exodus 4:22, Hosea 11:1.
- in the NT God is only the Father of those who repent of their sins and turn to Christ as sin-bearer and master, thus becoming Abraham's spiritual seed. Galatians 3:26, 28b-29, John 1:12, 14:6.
- this Sonship is not natural It is a gift of grace - an adoptive sonship Galatians 4:4-7. Romans 8:14-17 Ephesians 1:4. 1 John 3:1-3.

Some important things to know about this adoption

- it is the highest privilege which the gospel offers,
- your sonship is to be the controlling thought at every point of your Christian life :-
- when you think what a disciple is. Mark 3:35, Matthew 28:9-10, John 20:17-18, Hebrews 2:11-13,
- when you want to know how to behave. Matthew 5:43-45a, 48, 5:16, 6:1-18,
- when you pray. Matthew 6:7-18. 7:7-11
- when you worry about material things. Matthew 6:25-32,

The moment you forget you are God's child; you will not be able to live your Christian life so as to please Him.

Some things which happen to a Christian who constantly remembers his adoption

- He is overcome by the greatness of God's grace. 1 John 3:1-3. Luke 1:18. John 17:23
- He longs for heaven.
- Adoption means being a 'chosen heir'!
- He cannot help thinking of what awaits him, Galatians 4:7, Romans 8:14-19
- He Stops seeking second experiences,
- For he is well aware that the basic ministry of the Holy Spirit is not to give us power etc., but to be to us the Spirit of adoption! Romans 8:5, Galatians 4:6
- He longs for personal holiness
- He can see what it is - family likeness
- He has a motive for seeking it - to avoid shaming the Father
- He knows how it will come about - instruction & discipline,

The life of many Christians would be transformed simply by reflecting on this truth of adoption.

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- they come from sin (repentance) to Christ (faith)
- they are immediately clothed in a robe of righteousness (justification)
- they are then received as sons in God's family (adoption).
- they then increasingly take on the family likeness - for this is God's will and purpose for them Ephesians 1:4, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 1 Peter 1:16.

SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification begins with an inward change

- When God saved you, the Holy Spirit entered you. Romans 8:9.
- He made you clean, and renewed you inwardly. Titus 3:5.
- He gave you a new heart - a heart which wants to obey God, Ezekiel 11:19-20.
- You are a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15
- The old nature has been destroyed Romans 6:2-6, 14.
- And you have received a new one Romans 8:2, 2 Peter 1:4, Ephesians 4:24 Colossians 3:10, Galatians 5:16

Sanctification is a process.

- There is still indwelling sin in the believer, and he is not free from sinning, either in heart or life. Romans 7:14-25, 1 John 1:8, 2:1.
- He is at war with it. Romans 7:14-25
- And it does not have the mastery. Romans 6:12-14, 17, 22. 1 John 3:9, 5:18.
- He endeavours constantly to bring holiness to completeness 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 2 Peter 1:5-8, 2 Corinthians 7:1.
- This progressive work has likeness to Christ as its goal Romans 8:29, Philippians 1:9-11
- But entire sanctification will not be ours until our bodies are changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body. Philippians 3:21. 1 John 3:2. Romans 7:24.

Sanctification is our work, yet God's.

- to us comes the call to be holy, the commands to throw off sinful ways, the direction to be like Christ. See 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7. Colossians 3:1-6. Ephesians 4:17-5:21 etc...
- all sorts of incentives are given to us, to set about this work. See Romans 12:1-2, 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8, 1 Peter 1:17, 1 John 3:3, Romans 8:13, Hebrews 2:14,

WE must work

- from God comes the promise that He Himself is at work in us; and that He will strengthen and assist us. Philippians 2:13, Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, 4:16, 1 Peter 1:2.

HE works I

Sanctification is chiefly brought about by God's Word

- It is declared to be God's chosen instrument. Psalm 119:9, John 17:17, 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- This is why Christ has given to His church men who will enable God's people to be instructed in His Word. Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Timothy 5:17
- So nothing is more important to us in our Christian lives than the proper hearing of the Word of God. Luke 8:18.
- That is our part. God also brings into our lives experiences which are not pleasant at the time, but which lead to greater sanctification. Hebrews 12:10-11.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" Hebrews 12:14.

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- they are immediately clothed in a robe of righteousness (justification).
- they are then received as Sons in God's family (adoption).
- they increasingly take on the family likeness (sanctification).
- and they come at last to the family home!! (glorification). John 6:37-40. Romans 8:28-30. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.

GLORIFICATION

In feet and inches, heaven is no distance at all from us.

- heaven is not to be confused with the physical heaven above us.
- it is an entirely different realm; dimension; sphere of existence - not far away (of - Jacob; Isaiah; Stephen; John; Jesus; believer at death).
- the real world, the holy world, the eternal world. Hebrews 8:5, Psalm 20:6, 89:29.

It is the dwelling-place of God.

- God is constantly said to be 'in heaven'. Matthew 5:16, 6:9, 12:50.
- so are His angels. Matthew 18:20, 22:30.
- He is Lord of Heaven Daniel 4:35, 5:23, Psalm 11:4, Matthew 11:25.
- His presence, glory & majesty fill the place. Jeremiah 23:24, Hebrews 8:1.
- From there He speaks to men and women Hebrews 12:25.
- And from there He sends His judgements. Romans 1:18.

It is where the Lord Jesus Christ can from, and now is.

- He came from there, and returned there. John 3:13. 1 Peter 3:22.
- He is still there, interceding for us, preparing a place for us, and reigning. Acts 7:55, Hebrews 9:24, John 14:2-3, Matthew 28:18.
- He will return from there 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Philippians 3:20.

It is a place beyond our mortal understanding

- Paul was caught up into heaven, and witnessed things which cannot, and must not, be put into words 2 Corinthians 12:1-4.
- Yet God's Word describes it in pictures, to help our understanding, a barn; the Father's house; a city, heavenly Jerusalem, a better country, an inheritance of treasure. Matthew 13:30, 43. John 14:2. Hebrews 12:22, 11:16. 1 Peter 1:4.

It is THERE that Christ's people are certainly going.

They are already:-

- heirs of heaven. Matthew 25: 34
- enrolled in heaven. Luke 10:20.
- citizens of heaven. Philippians 3:20.
- knowingly going to-heaven. Hebrews 13:14.

They are going to:-

- the unveiled blessing of the Father. Matthew 25:34.
- all they ever hoped for Colossians 1:5.
- their reward Hebrews 10:34-35.
- their treasure. Matthew 6:20
- the sight of the Lord.' John 17:24

The present physical heavens and earth will pass away, and will be renewed. Righteousness will dwell in them. Matthew 19:28, Acts 3:21, Hebrews 12:27, 2 Peter 3:13.

Then the new Jerusalem will descend out of heaven from God, and the redeemed will enter into their final joy. Revelation Ch 21 & 22.

The present distinctions of material/spiritual, visible/invisible will be wiped away, and GOD WILL BE ALL IN ALL.

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

(Romans 11:36).