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Introduction

We are moving into the **last stage** in our series on ‘what is the gospel’, and we are looking at a couple of important concepts that we all need to understand so that we can grow in faith.

Last time we saw that in the light of all God has accomplished for us in removing the **barrier**, with the **issues** of God’s holy character, broken spiritual law and the debt of sin, and in addition putting us in **credit** with the righteousness of Christ, that there was a gift of salvation, paid for, **freely offered** and intended for us, but that we have a response to make, namely to receive it – this we saw was the first message Jesus ever preached: **repent and believe** the good news.

Having seen all we have seen there are still a couple of important questions

- What is salvation
 - Can I lose salvation / what if I fail
 - How can I enjoy forgiveness and forgive myself
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1. First we must define what **salvation** is; it is another of the big Bible words which we need to know about – it is the name of the gift that is freely offered, so what is it?
 - a. **Definition:**
 - ❖ The Hebrew, and (Greek, "sōtēria", meaning "safety", "preservation", "healing", and "soundness").
 - ❖ The root word is sozo which is variously translated in the gospels ‘your faith has saved you / healed you / made you whole’ and even the incident with the disciples in the stormy sea ‘Lord save us’. This shows the scope both temporal and eternal, both physical and spiritual.
 - ❖ Salvation is the great inclusive word of the Gospel, gathering into itself all the redemptive acts and processes: as justification, redemption, grace, propitiation, imputation, forgiveness, sanctification, and glorification.

- ❖ Great, so far so good, but sometimes people get muddled about when we are saved – I mean if we are saved now, how come we still have problems, get sick, sin and feel guilty – is there something wrong with us? The answer is found in the fact that...
- ❖ Salvation is in **three tenses**:

We can understand this using the very theological ‘spaghetti principle’

1. You have the spaghetti
2. There’s more to come
3. You have it all

Like wise the Bible teaches that

(1) The believer **has been** saved from the guilt and penalty of sin Luke 7:50, 1Cor 1:18, 2Cor 2:15, Eph 2:5, Eph 2:8, 2Tim 1:9 and is safe. This is past tense, you have it.

(2) The believer **is being** saved from the habit and dominion of sin; Rom 6:14, Phil 1:19, Phil 2:12, Phil 2:13, 2 Thess 2:13, Rom 8:2, Gal 2:19, Gal 2:20, 2Cor 3:18. This is present tense, your experience right now.

(3) The believer **is to be** saved in the sense of entire conformity to Christ. Rom 13:11, Heb 10:36, 1Pet 1:5, 1John 3:2. This is still future, we will have resurrection bodies and be free from the effects of sin.

Remember,

Salvation is by **grace** through faith, we **cannot earn** it or deserve it, it is a **free gift**, and wholly without works; Rom 3:27, Rom 3:28, Rom 4:1-8, Rom 6:23, Eph 2:8.

This actually helps us understand some of the passages in the Bible that have frightened believers in the past: we need to understand that because of what has been done once and for all in the past, that our future is certain and secure, however our daily experience of walking with God, free and joyful, can be affected by

our present behaviour. If you [imagine being on the QE2](#), the ship sets sail and you are on it, the navigation computer ensures that you will certainly reach the destination – but you can be at odds with the captain and all the passengers, you can hide in the hold and be as miserable as sin, or alternatively you can walk in the light – enjoying the companionship of the captain, and passengers, enjoying every activity and making the most of the journey. It is only present experience that is affected, once the beginning is made, the end is guaranteed.

2. Therefore security but no complacency

- a. Living in the good: David experienced Gods forgiveness, and he gives us a vivid description of how [miserable](#) it is to live in guilt, Psalm 32.
- b. Living in the light of the [cross](#): this means we remember that the solution for our sin is already provided, we don't have to guess whether God will forgive us – he has forgiven us, he has done it all on the cross.

3. Experiencing Gods love & forgiveness: 1 John 1.5-2.2

- c. What stops us from experiencing the joy and peace which come from walking with God? Sin acts like a short circuit, all of God's power and love are there for us, but sin prevents us from experiencing them.
- d. Remember, Gods part is done once and for all time, Jesus has already completely removed the barrier, it's like the...
- e. Our family connection; you remember the story of the prodigal son, even when he was living like a pig he was still his fathers son, he just needed to come to his senses and [come back](#) to his father and the relationship was restored.
- f. What we must do; [speak to our advocate](#) - remember this is one of Jesus present day ministries, - how it works, our sin breaks our sense of fellowship, we have to be totally honest and trust entirely in his work, and he points to his work on the cross and restores our position with the Father. The seat of judgment has become our throne of grace.

- g. **Confess** 1 John 1.9, we own up to our sin, because we know our advocate has already paid the penalty and it has been accepted for all time.
- h. This will include repentance which we saw previously was a change of mind, direction & purpose.
- i. But then we find the sure **promise** that God forgives us and cleanses us completely, then we are walking in the light, we have fellowship with God and with each other, and we are free to continue to **grow**.
- j. Before we share communion together lets pause for a moment to speak with our advocate, confess any sins, and move on with assurance of Gods word that we are forgiven, even if our feelings tell us otherwise... lets pray.