

# UNDERSTANDING WHAT CHRISTIANS BELIEVE

## Part 7: The Doctrine of Salvation (Soteriology)

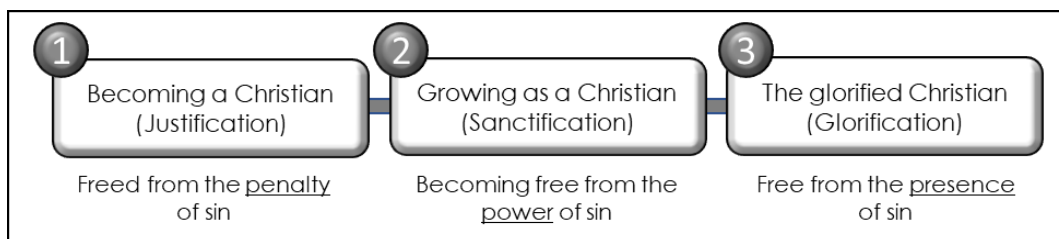
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The study of salvation is one of the grandest themes in the Bible. It addresses all of time as well as eternity past and future. In this subject, we discover God's divine plan in bringing man to enjoy his divine purpose for existence.

Salvation is a broad term referring to God's activity on behalf of creation, especially humans, to bring all things to God's intended goal.

Salvation is the transformation of a person's individual nature and relationship with God as a result of repentance and faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the cross. All humanity stands in need of salvation, which is only possible through faith in Jesus Christ.



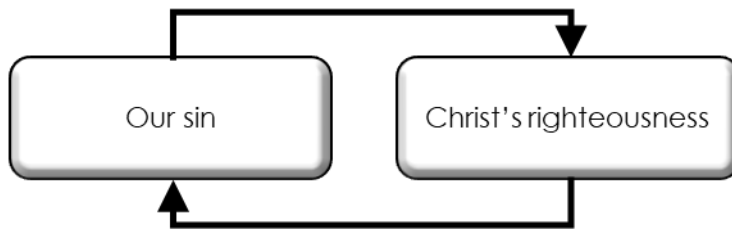
### I. BECOMING A CHRISTIAN

#### A. A born-again Christian is \_\_\_\_\_

- It means to be declared righteous ("not guilty") by God.
- Justification is God's declaring those who receive Christ to be righteous, based on Christ's righteousness being imputed to the accounts of those who receive Christ (2 Cor. 5:21).
- It is an instantaneous legal act of God in which he 1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Jesus Christ's righteousness belonging to us, and 2) declares us to be

righteous in his sight.

- Because as believers, we are in Christ, God sees Christ's righteousness when He looks at us. This then meets God's demands for perfection; thus, He declares us righteous—He justifies us.
- We are justified, declared righteous, at the moment of our salvation. Justification does not make us righteous but instead pronounces us righteous.



**B. A born-again Christian is \_\_\_\_\_**

- It is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family (John 1:12; Eph. 1:5; 2:1-3; Gal. 3:23-26; 4:4-7; Romans 8:14-17).
- The New Testament connects adoption with saving faith and says that in response to our trusting in Christ, God adopts us into his family (Gal. 3:23-26).
- The privileges of adoption include being able to speak to God and relate to him as a good and loving Father.

## II. GROWING AS A CHRISTIAN

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**A. A born-again Christian is being \_\_\_\_\_**

- Sanctification is a progressive work of God and man that makes us freer and freer from sin and more like Christ in our actual lives.

**B. It is the process where the believer's \_\_\_\_\_ is progressively brought in line with his \_\_\_\_\_.**

- God then begins to gradually make us more like His Son Jesus Christ as we *cooperate with* the Holy Spirit (Rom.

8:29; II Corinthians 3:18).

- The believer is set apart *from* his old sinful ways and set apart *to* mature spiritually and take on Christ's qualities.
- Progressive sanctification depends upon the believer setting himself apart by an *act of his will* so that he is controlled by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-17).
- Progress comes from the Holy Spirit, the truth of the Bible, and life's problems.

JUSTIFICATION	SANCTIFICATION
Legal standing	Internal condition
Once for all time	Continuous throughout life (maturation)
Entirely God's work	We cooperate
Perfect in this life	Not perfect in this life
The same for all Christians	Greater in some than in others

### III. THE GLORIFIED CHRISTIAN

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**A. A born-again Christian will be \_\_\_\_\_.**

- This is God's final removal of sin from the life of the saints (i.e., everyone who is saved) in the eternal state (Romans 8:18; Phil. 3:20-21, 30; 1 John 3:2; 2 Corinthians 4:17).

**B. Glorification is the final step in the application of \_\_\_\_\_.**

- It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like his own. (1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 John 3:2)

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