

Salvation Rightly Divided

II Timothy 2:15

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Last Sunday we studied seven Bible proofs teaching unconditional eternal life.
 - 1. Man cannot do anything pleasing toward God to fulfill conditions.
 - 2. The Bible expressly cuts out man's will and works in his salvation.
 - 3. Faith and good works are the result of salvation, not the conditions.
 - 4. Jesus Christ saves sinners to eternal life by Himself – by His obedience.
 - 5. The ordinances were never designed or given for eternal life.
 - 6. There are examples of those with eternal life without any conditions.
 - 7. The Lord gets all the glory when man has no role whatsoever.
- B. Salvation is one of the most misunderstood doctrines in the Bible.
 - 1. It is the most important, yet great confusion exists among "Christians."
 - 2. An extreme teaches unconditional salvation but neglects conditional texts.
 - 3. Another extreme makes sinful man responsible to save himself by works.
 - 4. The Scriptures are sufficient to make us wise unto salvation (II Tim 3:15).
- C. The modern emphasis on "salvation experiences" has created much confusion.
 - 1. The recent invention of "invitations" and dating an event create problems.
 - 2. "Have you been saved?" is often asked without defining the salvation.
 - 3. "When were you saved?" is also asked without defining the salvation.
- D. How would Paul have answered the question, "When were you saved?"
 - 1. In Romans 13:11 he says he was not saved but that it was getting closer.
 - 2. In I Timothy 1:15 he said that he was saved when Christ Jesus came.
 - 3. In I Timothy 4:16 he said he could save himself and others by diligence.
 - 4. In II Timothy 1:9 he said his salvation was settled before the world began.
 - 5. In Titus 3:5 he said he had been saved by the Holy Ghost during his life.
- E. We solve this apparent confusion by rightly dividing Scripture (II Timothy 2:15).
 - 1. Israel's priests caused understanding by giving the right sense (Ne 8:7-8).
 - 2. Scriptures need to be divided i.e. Christ's two natures, spiritual and physical Jews, temptation, coming of Christ, hatred of family, etc.
 - 3. "Preach the word" means to publicly teach the word by rightly dividing its words and sentences and giving the right sense that brings understanding.
 - 4. The five phases are a gift from God to help us understand salvation.
 - 5. While many other Scriptures could be referenced, we have but one sermon.

II. The PHASES OF SALVATION

- A. The ETERNAL PHASE is God's purpose and plan of salvation for His elect.
 - 1. God works according to His eternal counsel (Acts 15:18; Ephesians 1:11).
 - 2. Election, or God's choice, is the issue (Ephesians 1:3-6; II Timothy 1:9).
 - 3. Jesus was chosen (Ac 2:23; 4:28; I Pe 1:20) and heaven prepared (Ma 25:34).
 - 4. This phase occurred in eternity past and is as good as done (Ro 4:17; Tit 1:2).

- B. The LEGAL PHASE is Christ's death to satisfy the righteous demands of God's law.
 1. God's righteousness will not allow acquittal of the wicked (Na 1:3; Ex 34:7).
 2. Justification, a legal transaction, is the issue (Rom 3:24-26; Heb 2:14-17).
 3. This phase occurred at Christ's death and resurrection (Ro 4:25; II Cor 5:21).
 4. This phase is usually perverted by making justification only possible.
- C. The VITAL PHASE is the Spirit's application of Christ's death to each person.
 1. Though chosen and justified, our natures must be changed (Ephesians 2:1-3).
 2. Regeneration, or the giving of life, is the issue (Ephesians 2:4-7,10; 4:24).
 3. This phase occurs during a person's life (John 3:5-8 cp Titus 3:3-7).
 4. This phase is usually perverted by making it conditional upon natural man.
- D. The PRACTICAL PHASE is the transformation and obedience of the saints.
 1. Gospel obedience saves men from error, judgment, and despair to fellowship.
 2. Conversion, or conduct transformation, is the issue (Ro 12:1-2; Phil 2:12-13).
 3. It occurs in varying degrees and at different times in life. See Lot and Abram.
 4. The phase is usually perverted by making obedience the means of eternal life.
- E. The FINAL PHASE is the ultimate perfection of the saints for the presence of God.
 1. Regeneration gave a new nature, but bodies must be changed (I Cor 15:51).
 2. Glorification, or total perfection, is the issue (Romans 8:23,30; I Thess 5:23).
 3. It occurs at the final resurrection when body, soul, and spirit are united.
 4. This phase is usually perverted by separating it from God's eternal counsel.
- F. Consider several phases connected together in Romans 8:30 and I Peter 1:2.
 1. Eternal life is assured by God's purpose to work His four phases.
 2. Our degree of conversion is important here but does not affect eternity.
- G. The relationship of the five phases to one another will maximize your understanding.
 1. Only God's elect were in Christ's death (John 6:39; Romans 8:33-34).
 2. Spiritual creation in the inner man follows Christ's redemption (Gal 4:4-6).
 3. Obedience to the gospel results from predestination (Acts 13:48; I Cor 1:24).
 4. The book of life will reveal God's chosen from eternity (Rev 20:15; 17:8).

III. SALVATION TEXTS RIGHTLY DIVIDED

- A. II Timothy 1:9 teaches ETERNAL salvation purposed before the world began.
- B. I Timothy 1:15 teaches LEGAL salvation from the penalty of sin by Christ's death.
- C. Titus 3:5 teaches VITAL salvation by the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost.
- D. I Timothy 4:16 teaches PRACTICAL salvation to godliness by faithful teachers.
- E. Romans 13:11 teaches FINAL salvation in heaven that is drawing nearer each day.
- F. Matthew 1:21 teaches LEGAL salvation from sins that Jesus obtained in His flesh.
- G. I Corinthians 15:2 teaches PRACTICAL salvation from misery by true doctrine.
- H. I Peter 1:5 teaches FINAL salvation to be revealed at the appearing of Christ.
- I. James 5:20 teaches PRACTICAL salvation from error and sin by conversion.
- J. I Corinthians 9:22 teaches PRACTICAL salvation to the knowledge of the gospel.
- K. Hebrews 5:9 teaches LEGAL salvation earned by the perfect obedience of Christ.
- L. Acts 2:40 teaches PRACTICAL salvation from the Roman armies in 70 A.D.
- M. I Corinthians 1:18 teaches VITAL salvation through regeneration preceding faith.
- N. James 1:21 teaches PRACTICAL salvation to true religion by obeying Scripture.
- O. I Thessalonians 5:9 teaches FINAL salvation God has appointed at Christ's return.
- P. I Corinthians 1:21 teaches PRACTICAL salvation from ignorance by preaching.

- Q. I Timothy 2:15 teaches LEGAL salvation from Adam's sin by the woman's Seed.
- R. Hebrews 2:3 teaches PRACTICAL salvation in the gospel which may be neglected.
- S. Romans 5:10 teaches FINAL salvation to the uttermost obtained by Christ's work.
- T. II Thessalonians 2:13 teaches PRACTICAL salvation from lies of the Man of Sin.
- U. Revelation 12:10 teaches LEGAL salvation that occurred at Christ's resurrection.
- V. Mark 16:16 teaches PRACTICAL salvation from pagan error by faith and baptism.
- W. Romans 10:1 teaches PRACTICAL salvation from missing Christ's righteousness.
- X. Hebrews 9:28 teaches FINAL salvation Christ will bring with Him at His return.
- Y. Acts 13:47 teaches PRACTICAL salvation Paul was chosen to reveal to Gentiles.
- Z. II Corinthians 7:10 teaches PRACTICAL salvation for Corinth by obeying Paul.

IV. COMPONENTS RIGHTLY DIVIDED

- A. ADOPTION is understood better when it is seen in its five phases or senses.
 1. The eternal phase is God's plan to have sons (Romans 8:29; Eph 1:5).
 2. The legal phase is Christ's work to make it possible (Ga 4:4-5; Heb 2:14-17).
 3. The vital phase is when we are born as God's sons (John 1:12-13; 3:3-6).
 4. The practical phase is evidence and fellowship as sons (Mat 5:45; Rom 8:16).
 5. The final phase is when our bodies are adopted from the grave (Rom 8:23).
- B. SANCTIFICATION is understood better when it is seen in its five phases or senses.
 1. The eternal phase is God's choice to make certain sinners holy (Eph 1:4).
 2. The legal phase is Christ's death to obtain official holiness (Heb 10:10-14).
 3. The vital phase is when we obtain a holy nature from the Spirit (Eph 4:24).
 4. The practical phase is when we work to live holy lives (I Thess 4:3-4).
 5. The final phase is being made completely holy at the last day (I Thess 5:23).
- C. Justification, union with Christ, election, redemption, calling, reconciliation, and other components of salvation should be studied the same way.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. We should be thankful for such a glorious scheme of salvation by our great God.
- B. We should be established in these things to teach others and refute gainsayers.
- C. We should work out our practical salvation with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12).