

MASTER THE CONTENT

OF SCRIPTURE



DISCIPLESHIP 7

Salvation

Armando Rodríguez

Introduction

Salvation is not merely an entry point into Christianity—it is the unfolding masterpiece of God’s redemptive love. *Discipleship 7: Salvation* takes believers on a journey from eternity past to eternity future, unpacking the doctrines that form the foundation of our hope and the fuel of our worship. Like R.C. Sproul’s *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, this workbook seeks not just to inform but to transform—to move minds and hearts closer to the Savior.

Each chapter builds a theological framework around salvation, covering topics such as predestination, effectual calling, regeneration, justification, sanctification, assurance, and glorification. Every doctrine is clearly explained, biblically grounded, and practically applied, with illustrations that resonate and questions that encourage thoughtful reflection. This workbook doesn’t just answer “What is salvation?”—it compels us to ask, “How should I now live?”

“From the first spark of grace to the final glory of heaven, salvation belongs to the Lord—and it secures His people forever.”

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Salvation	1
Predestination	4
Predestination and Reprobation	7
Effectual Calling	10
Rebirth	13
Atonement	16
Definite Atonement	19
Free Will	22
Faith	25
Saving Grace	28
Justification by Faith	31
Faith and Works	34
Repentance	37
Merit and Grace	40
Perseverance of the Saints	43
The Assurance of Salvation	46
The Intermediate State	49
The Last Resurrection	52
Glorification.....	55

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 1: Salvation

“The Lifeboat No One Boarded”

In the early 20th century, a ship sank off the coast of Nova Scotia. Panic ensued. One lifeboat, fully capable of holding thirty people, was lowered with only four aboard. It floated beside the wreckage while dozens struggled in the frigid waters. The four passengers, fearing they’d be capsized, refused to go back for others. All the rest perished.

Now imagine another lifeboat — this one rowed by the Captain himself, who refuses to leave anyone behind, pulling in each struggling soul with nail-pierced hands. That is a glimpse of biblical salvation.

Overarching Question

What does it mean to be saved according to the Bible, and how does God accomplish salvation?

1. What is Salvation, and Why Do We Need It?

Salvation is God’s act of rescuing sinners from His own righteous judgment.

- **Example:** Just as Israel was saved from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 14:13), so we are saved from slavery to sin and death.
- **Romans 3:23** – “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

- **Ephesians 2:1** – “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.”

2. Who Does the Saving—Is It God Alone?

Yes. Salvation is the work of God alone, from beginning to end.

- **Example:** A drowning man doesn't need swimming lessons; he needs a Savior.
- **Jonah 2:9** – “Salvation is of the Lord.”
- **Titus 3:5** – “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us...”

3. How Is Salvation Applied to the Individual?

By grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and not by human effort.

- **Example:** Faith is not a work; it is an open hand receiving a gift.
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”
- **Romans 10:9** – “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus...”

4. What Are the Benefits of Salvation?

Peace with God, adoption, sanctification, and the hope of eternal glory.

- **Example:** Justification is the divine courtroom declaring you righteous.
- **Romans 5:1** – “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- **John 1:12** – “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God...”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

Salvation is not a vague religious feeling or a moral improvement plan. It is a sovereign act of God that rescues, justifies, and sanctifies sinners for His glory and our joy. We contribute nothing but the sin that made it necessary. To understand salvation is to stand in awe of God's mercy and to respond in worship and obedience.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some common misunderstandings about salvation in today's culture?
 2. Why is it essential to believe that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone?
 3. How does knowing you are saved affect your daily life and relationships?
 4. What does it mean to be justified by faith? How is this different from being "a good person"?
 5. How should the doctrine of salvation influence the way we share the gospel with others?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 2: Predestination

"The Puzzle Box Lid"

A man stared at a thousand puzzle pieces scattered on the floor, bewildered. Without the picture on the box, he tried to make sense of it. Hours passed, frustration mounted. Then a friend handed him the lid with the finished image. Suddenly, the chaos had context.

Predestination is like the box lid to history's puzzle. Without it, salvation looks like a random jumble. With it, we see the hand of a sovereign God orchestrating redemption from eternity past.

Overarching Question

What does the Bible teach about God's sovereign choice in salvation, and how should we respond to the doctrine of predestination?

1. What Is Predestination According to Scripture?

Predestination refers to God's eternal decree by which He has determined the destiny of every person, including those He will save.

- **Example:** A builder doesn't begin construction without a blueprint. God's plan precedes the foundation of the world.

BOOK 7: Salvation

- **Ephesians 1:4-5** – “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world... having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself.”
- **Romans 8:29-30** – “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate...”

2. Is Predestination Based on God’s Foreknowledge of Our Choices?

No. God’s foreknowledge is not passive awareness but active, relational choosing.

- **Example:** God’s knowledge is causative – like a playwright knowing the ending because He wrote it.
- **John 15:16** – “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.”
- **2 Timothy 1:9** – “Who hath saved us... not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

3. Does Predestination Eliminate Human Responsibility?

No. While God is sovereign, human beings are fully responsible for their sin and response to the gospel.

- **Example:** Pharaoh hardened his heart – and yet God also hardened Pharaoh’s heart (Exodus 9:12). Both truths coexist.
- **Acts 2:23** – Jesus was “delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,” but those who crucified Him were “wicked hands.”
- **Philippians 2:12-13** – “Work out your own salvation... for it is God which worketh in you...”

4. Why Does Predestination Matter for the Christian Life?

It fuels humility, assurance, gratitude, and worship – not pride or passivity.

BOOK 7: Salvation

- **Example:** A child adopted by loving parents doesn't boast in being chosen but rests secure in love.
 - **Romans 9:16** – "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."
 - **2 Peter 1:10** – "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure..."
-

Conclusion

Predestination is not a cold or mechanical doctrine. It is the warm, comforting truth that before the world began, God set His love upon His people. It exalts grace, levels pride, and assures us that salvation depends not on human effort, but on the sovereign mercy of God. Rather than provoke debate, it should provoke worship.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you explain predestination to someone who is new to the Christian faith?
 2. Why is it important that predestination is rooted in God's purpose, not our performance?
 3. How can predestination give you assurance in seasons of doubt or struggle?
 4. What are some misconceptions people have about predestination?
 5. How should this doctrine affect our view of evangelism?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 3: Predestination and Reprobation

“The Two Letters”

Imagine a king sending out invitations to his royal banquet. Some letters read, “Come, all is prepared.” Others are never sent. The people who never receive the invitation go about their day unaware of the feast. They weren't mistreated – they were simply left as they were. The invited guests, however, are overwhelmed by grace.

This is a glimpse into the doctrine of predestination and reprobation: God’s elect are graciously chosen to receive mercy; the rest are justly passed over.

Overarching Question

How does the Bible explain both God’s choice to save some and His decision to pass over others in the doctrine of reprobation?

1. What Is the Doctrine of Reprobation?

Reprobation is the biblical teaching that God passes over some individuals, leaving them in their sin and justly condemning them for it.

- **Example:** Like a judge pardoning one criminal and letting the others face justice, the mercy shown does not mean injustice was done to the rest.
- **Romans 9:22** – “What if God, willing to shew his wrath... endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?”

BOOK 7: Salvation

- **Proverbs 16:4** – “The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.”
-

2. Is God Unjust to Pass Over Some?

No. God is never obligated to show mercy. Grace, by definition, is undeserved.

- **Example:** A lifeguard isn't unjust for saving one drowning person when none deserved rescue in the first place.
 - **Romans 9:14-15** – “Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid... I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.”
 - **Deuteronomy 32:4** – “He is the Rock, his work is perfect... just and right is he.”
-

3. How Does Reprobation Relate to Human Sin?

Those who are reprobate are not made sinful by God; rather, God permits them to follow their own evil desires, which they freely choose.

- **Example:** Like God hardening Pharaoh's heart *after* Pharaoh already resisted Him, divine judgment often confirms human rebellion.
 - **Romans 1:24** – “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness...”
 - **2 Thessalonians 2:11-12** – “God shall send them strong delusion... that they all might be damned who believed not the truth.”
-

4. Why Is This Doctrine So Difficult – And Why Should It Be Studied?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Because it exalts the glory of God's justice and mercy and shows us the gravity of sin and the greatness of grace.

- **Example:** A diamond shines most brightly against a black velvet backdrop – so too grace is most radiant when contrasted with judgment.
 - **Romans 11:22** – “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God...”
 - **Daniel 4:35** – “He doeth according to his will... none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”
-

Conclusion

The doctrine of reprobation does not present God as cruel, but as just. While it confronts our human sensitivities, it also magnifies God's mercy to the elect. The wonder is not that some are passed over, but that anyone is saved at all. Rather than accuse God of injustice, we should respond with reverent awe and trembling gratitude.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to distinguish between election and reprobation?
 2. How does the doctrine of reprobation protect the biblical definition of grace?
 3. What is the danger of softening or avoiding this doctrine in our theology?
 4. How does this teaching challenge the idea that “God owes everyone a chance”?
 5. In what ways should this truth humble believers and encourage worship?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 4: Effectual Calling

“The Phone Call That Changed Everything”

A young woman receives a phone call. She almost doesn't answer — she's busy, distracted, uninterested. But something compels her to pick up. The voice on the other end offers her a full scholarship to the university of her dreams. It wasn't just a call — it was an *effective* call. It didn't merely invite; it accomplished something.

This is how God's call works in salvation. He doesn't just dial in and hope we pick up. When He calls the elect, hearts awaken, ears hear, and dead souls rise.

Overarching Question

What is effectual calling, and how does it differ from the general call of the gospel?

1. What Is the Difference Between the External and Internal Call?

The external call is the preaching of the gospel to all people. The internal, or effectual, call is the sovereign work of God that brings the elect to faith.

- **Example:** Many hear the church bell, but only some come to the feast.
 - **Matthew 22:14** – “For many are called, but few are chosen.”
 - **Romans 8:30** – “Whom he called, them he also justified...”
-

2. How Does God's Call Overcome the Sinner's Resistance?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Effectual calling overcomes the deadness and rebellion of the human heart, making the sinner both willing and able to believe.

- **Example:** Lazarus didn't "cooperate" with resurrection; he was made alive by the word of Christ (John 11:43).
 - **John 6:44** – "No man can come to me, except the Father... draw him."
 - **Ezekiel 36:26** – "A new heart also will I give you... and I will put my spirit within you."
-

3. Is Effectual Calling Irresistible?

Yes—not in the sense of coercion, but in the sense that it always achieves its goal: awakening the elect to saving faith.

- **Example:** A magnet doesn't drag the iron; it draws it naturally, powerfully, irresistibly.
 - **Psalms 110:3** – "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."
 - **Acts 16:14** – "The Lord opened [Lydia's] heart, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."
-

4. Why Is Effectual Calling Essential to Understanding Salvation?

It safeguards grace, ensures that salvation is not of man, and produces praise to God—not human willpower.

- **Example:** If faith were our own unaided response, grace would no longer be grace.

BOOK 7: Salvation

- **2 Timothy 1:9** – “[God] hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling... not according to our works.”
 - **1 Corinthians 1:23-24** – “Christ... the power of God, and the wisdom of God” to those who are called.
-

Conclusion

Effectual calling is God’s mighty and merciful voice that awakens dead hearts. It is not a suggestion, nor a mere invitation – it is a divine summons that creates the response it commands. Without it, no one would come to Christ. With it, the hardest heart is melted, and the blindest eyes are opened. Grace alone explains it. Glory alone belongs to God for it.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you explain the difference between the general and effectual call to a new believer?
 2. Why does effectual calling uphold the doctrine of grace alone?
 3. What does this doctrine reveal about the condition of the human heart before conversion?
 4. In what ways does effectual calling bring assurance to the believer?
 5. How does this teaching inspire deeper worship and evangelism?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 5: Rebirth

“The Passport That Didn’t Count”

A traveler confidently approaches immigration, passport in hand. But the agent shakes his head. “This is expired. You need a new one.” No amount of pleading or paperwork will do—he must be issued new credentials.

So it is with the kingdom of God. We cannot enter with old identities. Jesus said plainly, “Ye must be born again.” Rebirth isn’t optional—it’s essential.

Overarching Question

What does it mean to be born again, and how is spiritual rebirth accomplished?

1. What Is Rebirth According to Scripture?

Rebirth, or regeneration, is the supernatural act of God by which He imparts new spiritual life to the soul.

- **Example:** It’s not a makeover—it’s a resurrection.
- **John 3:3** – “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
- **Titus 3:5** – “He saved us... by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

2. Who Causes Rebirth, and Is It Prior to Faith?

God alone causes rebirth, and it precedes and enables faith.

BOOK 7: Salvation

- **Example:** A baby doesn't choose to be born; birth is the start, not the result, of life.
- **John 1:13** – “[We] were born... not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”
- **Ezekiel 36:26-27** – “A new heart also will I give you...”

3. What Are the Signs of New Birth?

New affections, repentance, faith in Christ, love for God, and hatred of sin.

- **Example:** A newborn cries, breathes, and grows – so does the new creature in Christ.
- **1 John 5:1** – “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.”
- **2 Corinthians 5:17** – “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature...”

4. How Does Rebirth Relate to the Rest of Salvation?

Rebirth is the beginning of our experience of salvation – it leads to faith, justification, and sanctification.

- **Example:** The seed must first sprout before fruit can grow.
- **James 1:18** – “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth...”
- **1 Peter 1:23** – “Being born again... by the word of God...”

Conclusion

Rebirth is not something we achieve; it is something we receive. It is the moment the Holy Spirit breathes life into a soul dead in sin. Without it, there is no salvation. With it,

BOOK 7: Salvation

everything changes. The gospel is not about making bad people good, but dead people alive. You must be born again.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is rebirth necessary for entering the kingdom of God?
 2. How does the doctrine of rebirth challenge the idea that we come to God by our own will?
 3. What are some clear evidences of the new birth in a believer's life?
 4. How should understanding regeneration affect our view of evangelism?
 5. In what ways does rebirth display the sovereign grace of God?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 6: Atonement

“The Trade No One Expected”

In a small town, a man known for his crimes stood trial. Just as the judge was about to pronounce the sentence, another man stepped forward. “Punish me instead,” he said. The crowd gasped. The judge agreed. The guilty man walked free; the innocent bore the penalty.

This is a glimpse – an inadequate one – of the atonement. The righteous for the unrighteous. The innocent Lamb of God slain for sinners.

Overarching Question

What is the atonement, and how does it accomplish reconciliation between God and sinners?

1. What Does “Atonement” Mean in the Bible?

Atonement refers to the covering or removal of sin through a sacrificial substitute, restoring the relationship between God and man.

- **Example:** In the Old Testament, blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat to atone for the people (Leviticus 16).
- **Leviticus 17:11** – “It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”
- **Hebrews 9:22** – “Without shedding of blood is no remission.”

2. Why Was Christ’s Death Necessary for Atonement?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Only a sinless, divine substitute could fully satisfy the justice of God and bear the wrath due to sinners.

- **Example:** A sacrificial lamb could only symbolize what Christ would actually fulfill.
- **Isaiah 53:5** – “He was wounded for our transgressions...”
- **Hebrews 10:4-10** – “It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins... we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

3. What Is Meant by “Substitutionary Atonement”?

Christ’s death was in our place – He bore the punishment we deserved so that we could receive the righteousness we never earned.

- **Example:** The cross was not an accident or a tragic martyrdom – it was a divine transaction.
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** – “For he hath made him to be sin for us... that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
- **Galatians 3:13** – “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.”

4. What Did the Atonement Accomplish?

The atonement secured forgiveness, satisfied divine justice, reconciled sinners to God, and guaranteed eternal life for the elect.

- **Example:** At the cross, justice and mercy kissed (Psalm 85:10).
- **Romans 5:10-11** – “We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son...”
- **John 10:11** – “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

The atonement is the heart of the gospel. It is not merely a demonstration of love — it is a payment of debt, a satisfaction of wrath, and a restoration of peace between God and man. Christ didn't die to make salvation possible; He died to actually save. To understand atonement is to kneel before the cross in reverence, awe, and gratitude.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is blood essential to biblical atonement?
 2. How does Christ's death fulfill the Old Testament sacrificial system?
 3. In what ways does substitutionary atonement deepen our understanding of grace?
 4. How should the doctrine of atonement shape our view of sin?
 5. Why must we guard the doctrine of substitutionary atonement in our preaching and teaching?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 7: Definite Atonement

“The Rescue Helicopter That Knew the Names”

A disaster strikes — a flood submerges a town. Rescue helicopters arrive. But one chopper’s mission is different. The pilot isn’t circling randomly. He’s calling out names. He’s been given a list. Every person on that list is found and pulled from the waters — no one is missed.

Definite atonement is like that. Christ’s death wasn’t a vague offer for anyone in general — it was a deliberate rescue mission for His people.

Overarching Question

For whom did Christ die, and what did His death actually accomplish?

1. What Is Meant by “Definite” or “Particular” Atonement?

It means that Christ died specifically and effectually for the elect, securing their salvation — not just making it possible.

- **Example:** Jesus didn’t merely write a check of infinite value — He wrote it to specific names.
- **John 10:14-15** – “I know my sheep... and I lay down my life for the sheep.”
- **Matthew 1:21** – “He shall save *his* people from their sins.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

2. Did Christ's Atonement Guarantee Salvation or Merely Make It Available?

It guaranteed it. Jesus accomplished redemption on the cross, rather than creating a possibility dependent on human response.

- **Example:** A parachute left on a plane helps no one. A parachute worn and opened saves.
- **Hebrews 9:12** – “By his own blood he entered in once... having obtained eternal redemption for us.”
- **Isaiah 53:11** – “By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”

3. Does the Bible Teach That Christ Died for “All” People?

Scripture uses “all” in different senses, often meaning all kinds or all nations, not every individual. Context is key.

- **Example:** “All are welcome” on a sign doesn’t mean everyone will actually come.
- **1 Timothy 4:10** – “The Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.”
- **John 6:37-39** – “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me... and I will raise him up at the last day.”

4. Why Does Definite Atonement Matter for the Gospel and the Church?

It brings assurance, magnifies grace, and shows the unity of the Trinity in salvation.

- **Example:** The Father elects, the Son redeems, and the Spirit applies – without contradiction.
- **Romans 8:32-34** – “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?... It is Christ that died...”

BOOK 7: Salvation

- **Ephesians 5:25** – “Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”
-

Conclusion

Definite atonement declares that Jesus Christ died not merely to make salvation *possible*, but to actually *save* His people. His death was effective, intentional, and personal. This truth anchors our assurance: If Christ died for you, your salvation is as secure as His resurrection. The Shepherd laid down His life not for potential sheep – but for His own.

Discussion Questions

1. How does definite atonement differ from a general or universal atonement?
 2. What assurance does this doctrine give to believers?
 3. How does definite atonement uphold the unity of the Trinity in salvation?
 4. What Scriptures most clearly support particular redemption?
 5. Why is this doctrine often misunderstood or rejected in modern churches?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 8: Free Will

“The Man in the Cell”

A man sits in a prison cell. The door is unlocked, but he won't leave. He's convinced that staying is freedom, even as the mold creeps and the chains rust. A friend arrives, swings the door wide, and calls out, “You're free!” Still, he stays – until his mind is changed, his eyes opened, and his heart stirred to run out into the light.

This is the reality of the human will: not destroyed, but bound. And only God's grace sets it truly free.

Overarching Question

What is the nature of human free will after the Fall, and how does it relate to salvation?

1. What Kind of Free Will Did Humans Have Before the Fall?

Adam and Eve had true freedom – they could choose good or evil. They had the ability to sin and the ability *not* to sin.

- **Example:** Think of it as a perfect balance – before sin tipped the scale.
- **Genesis 2:16-17** – “Thou mayest freely eat... but of the tree... thou shalt not eat.”
- **Ecclesiastes 7:29** – “God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”

2. What Happened to the Human Will After the Fall?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Humanity lost the moral ability to choose God. We still *make choices*, but we are now inclined toward sin and spiritually dead.

- **Example:** A compass stuck pointing south is still “working” – but it’s no longer trustworthy.
- **Romans 3:10-12** – “There is none that seeketh after God...”
- **Ephesians 2:1** – “You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.”

3. Can Sinners Choose God Without Divine Intervention?

No. The will is in bondage to sin. Regeneration must come first, freeing the will to respond in faith.

- **Example:** A corpse doesn’t ask for CPR. Life must come before breath.
- **John 6:44** – “No man can come to me, except the Father... draw him.”
- **Philippians 2:13** – “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do...”

4. What Is True Freedom According to Scripture?

True freedom is not autonomy – it is the ability to obey God joyfully, a gift granted by grace.

- **Example:** A fish is most free *in* the water, not out of it. We are most free when we live according to our design – holy and obedient.
- **Romans 6:18** – “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”
- **Galatians 5:1** – “Stand fast... in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.”

Conclusion

BOOK 7: Salvation

Free will is not the ability to do anything we please. It is the moral capacity to choose the good – a capacity we lost in Adam. In our fallen state, we are free to sin but not free to choose Christ. Only the Spirit of God, through regeneration, restores that freedom. Until then, the will is not free – it is a prisoner in need of rescue.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you define “free will” in a biblical sense?
 2. In what way is the fallen will still active, but no longer truly free?
 3. Why is regeneration necessary for someone to choose Christ?
 4. How does understanding the bondage of the will affect how we evangelize?
 5. How can you explain to someone that freedom is found in serving Christ, not self?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 9: Faith

“The Bridge That Held”

A hiker approaches a shaky rope bridge spanning a deep ravine. He studies it, pokes it, paces. Another hiker walks up, smiles, and crosses with confidence. The first man finally steps out – tentatively, fearfully – but the bridge holds.

Faith isn’t about the strength of the one who believes. It’s about the strength of what – or *who* – is believed. The bridge didn’t need perfect trust to hold; it needed to be trustworthy.

Overarching Question

What is biblical faith, and how does it relate to salvation?

1. What Is Saving Faith According to Scripture?

Saving faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. It includes knowledge (*notitia*), assent (*assensus*), and personal trust (*fiducia*).

- **Example:** It’s one thing to believe a chair can hold you – it’s another to sit in it.
- **Hebrews 11:1** – “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
- **Romans 10:9** – “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth... and believe in thine heart...”

2. Is Faith a Work or a Gift?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Faith is not a human achievement – it is a gift of God’s grace, made possible by regeneration.

- **Example:** The hand that receives a gift doesn’t earn it.
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** – “For by grace are ye saved through faith... it is the gift of God.”
- **Philippians 1:29** – “Unto you it is given... to believe on him.”

3. What Is the Object of Saving Faith?

The object of saving faith is Christ – His person, His finished work, and His promises.

- **Example:** Faith is not strong because it feels strong, but because Christ is strong.
- **Galatians 2:16** – “A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.”
- **Acts 16:31** – “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

4. What Are the Fruits of True Faith?

True faith produces obedience, good works, perseverance, and spiritual growth – not as the basis of salvation, but as evidence of it.

- **Example:** A living tree bears fruit – not to become alive, but because it is alive.
- **James 2:17** – “Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”
- **Galatians 5:6** – “Faith which worketh by love.”

Conclusion

Faith is not a leap in the dark – it is trust in the Light. It looks to Christ alone, not to self, not to feelings, not to works. Faith doesn’t save because it is noble or powerful. Faith

BOOK 7: Salvation

saves because it lays hold of the only One who can save. And the One who gives us faith will never let us fall.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you explain the difference between belief *in* God and saving faith *in* Christ?
 2. Why is it important to understand faith as a gift and not a work?
 3. What does it mean to say that faith must have an object?
 4. How can we tell if our faith is genuine?
 5. How does true faith produce action without becoming works-based righteousness?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 10: Saving Grace

“The Counterfeit Currency”

A man walks into a store with a smile and confidence – until the clerk holds his bill up to the light. It looked real, felt real, but under scrutiny, it proved worthless. The man is stunned.

Many carry what *seems* like faith – religious activity, positive thinking, or a vague belief in “God” – but it doesn’t pass the light test. Only saving faith – real, living, Christ-centered faith – has eternal value.

Overarching Question

What distinguishes saving faith from mere belief, and how does it function in the salvation of the sinner?

1. What Are the Essential Components of Saving Faith?

Saving faith includes knowledge (*notitia*), assent (*assensus*), and trust (*fiducia*). One must know the truth, agree with it, and personally trust in Christ.

- **Example:** It’s not enough to know a lifeboat floats – you have to get in.
- **Hebrews 11:6** – “Without faith it is impossible to please him...”
- **John 3:16** – “...whosoever believeth in him should not perish...”

2. Can One Have Faith and Still Not Be Saved?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Yes—if the faith is not the kind that rests in Christ alone. Intellectual assent alone does not save.

- **Example:** Even demons believe in God—and tremble (James 2:19).
- **Matthew 7:22-23** – “Lord, Lord... I never knew you.”
- **James 2:17** – “Faith, if it hath not works, is dead.”

3. Who Gives Saving Faith, and How?

Saving faith is a gift from God, given to the elect through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

- **Example:** It’s not the will of man but the grace of God that awakens the heart to believe.
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** – “By grace are ye saved through faith... not of yourselves.”
- **Acts 13:48** – “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”

4. What Does Saving Faith Produce in the Believer’s Life?

It results in repentance, love for Christ, growth in holiness, and a persevering trust in God's promises.

- **Example:** A true fire gives off light and heat; so saving faith gives off fruit and endurance.
- **Galatians 5:6** – “Faith which worketh by love.”
- **1 Peter 1:5** – “Who are kept by the power of God through faith...”

Conclusion: Saving faith is more than belief in facts—it is a Spirit-wrought trust in the finished work of Christ. It clings to Him as Savior and submits to Him as Lord. It cannot

BOOK 7: Salvation

be self-manufactured, but it will always bear the marks of authenticity: humility, love, repentance, and perseverance. If you have saving faith, you have Christ – and in Him, eternal life.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between saving faith and intellectual belief?
 2. Why must faith include personal trust, not just agreement with doctrine?
 3. How can someone examine their heart to see if their faith is genuine?
 4. In what ways does saving faith transform a person's character and priorities?
 5. How does the doctrine of saving faith guard against both legalism and lawlessness?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 11: Justification by Faith

“The Courtroom Surprise”

Imagine standing in court, guilty beyond doubt. The evidence is overwhelming. The judge lifts the gavel, and you're ready for the verdict. But then – shockingly – he declares you righteous. Not because you're innocent, but because someone else has stepped in, paid your fine, and handed you their perfect record.

That's not just courtroom drama – it's the gospel. It's justification by faith alone.

Overarching Question

How are sinners declared righteous before God, and what role does faith play in their justification?

1. What Is Justification?

Justification is God's legal declaration that a sinner is righteous in His sight – not by their works, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them and received by faith.

- **Example:** It's not “just-as-if-I'd never sinned” – it's “just-as-if-I'd always obeyed.”
- **Romans 3:24** – “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** – “For he hath made him to be sin for us... that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

2. What Role Does Faith Play in Justification?

Faith is the instrument – not the basis – by which we receive the righteousness of Christ. It unites us to Him.

- **Example:** Faith is the empty hand that receives a gift – not the hand that earns it.
- **Romans 5:1** – “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God...”
- **Galatians 2:16** – “A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.”

3. Are We Justified by Faith Alone?

Yes. Sola fide – faith alone – is the clear teaching of Scripture. Works are the result of justification, not the cause.

- **Example:** Good works are fruit, not the root.
- **Ephesians 2:8-10** – “Not of works... created in Christ Jesus unto good works...”
- **Philippians 3:9** – “Not having mine own righteousness... but that which is through the faith of Christ.”

4. How Does Justification Relate to Assurance and Peace?

Because justification is based on Christ’s righteousness, not ours, it brings unshakable assurance and peace with God.

- **Example:** If your status before God rested on your performance, you’d be on a rollercoaster. Justification puts your feet on the Rock.
- **Romans 8:1** – “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”
- **Isaiah 32:17** – “The work of righteousness shall be peace...”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

Justification by faith is the heartbeat of the gospel. It teaches us that our salvation rests entirely on the finished work of Christ. We don't earn it, maintain it, or supplement it with our efforts. We receive it by faith, rest in it with joy, and live out its implications in gratitude. To abandon this truth is to abandon the gospel. To embrace it is to walk in liberty.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is justification by faith alone central to the gospel message?
 2. How does justification differ from sanctification?
 3. What happens if we mix faith with works in justification?
 4. How does understanding justification affect your assurance and joy in Christ?
 5. How would you explain this doctrine to someone who believes they must "be good enough" for heaven?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 12: Faith and Works

“The Counterfeit Coin”

A young boy finds an old coin and is told it might be valuable. He’s ecstatic – until an expert inspects it and gently says, “It’s a fake.” It looked right but lacked the weight, stamp, and age of the real thing.

So it is with a faith that boasts but doesn’t obey. Faith and works aren’t enemies – they’re inseparable allies. Where true faith is, works will follow – not to earn salvation, but to reveal it.

Overarching Question

How do faith and works relate in the life of the believer, and how are they distinguished in the doctrine of salvation?

1. Are We Saved by Faith Alone or by Faith and Works?

We are justified by faith alone (*sola fide*), but saving faith is never alone – it is always accompanied by works as evidence, not merit.

- **Example:** Works are the fruit that prove the tree is alive.
- **Ephesians 2:8-10** – “By grace... through faith... not of works... created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”
- **James 2:26** – “Faith without works is dead.”

2. Does James Contradict Paul on This Issue?

BOOK 7: Salvation

No. Paul teaches we are justified *before God* by faith alone. James teaches we are shown to be justified *before men* by our works.

- **Example:** Paul focuses on the *root*, James on the *fruit*.
- **Romans 3:28** – “A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.”
- **James 2:24** – “A man is justified by works, and not by faith only.”

3. What Kind of Works Demonstrate Genuine Faith?

Obedience to God’s commands, love for others, repentance, humility, and growing holiness – works done not to earn favor, but because of it.

- **Example:** A candle doesn’t burn to become fire – it burns *because* it is lit.
- **Galatians 5:6** – “Faith which worketh by love.”
- **1 John 2:3** – “Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”

4. Why Must We Guard Against Both Legalism and Antinomianism?

Legalism adds works to faith as a requirement for justification. Antinomianism removes works from the Christian life altogether. Both pervert the gospel.

- **Example:** A train needs both the engine (faith) and the track (obedience) to move forward.
- **Titus 2:11-12** – “Grace... teaches us that, denying ungodliness... we should live soberly, righteously, and godly.”
- **Matthew 7:16** – “Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

Faith alone justifies—but the faith that justifies is never alone. True faith transforms. It bears fruit, obeys God, and lives out the implications of grace. Works don't earn salvation—they express it. Just as breath proves life, so good works prove living faith. We are saved by grace through faith, and we live by that same grace with obedient hearts.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it vital to distinguish between the cause and the evidence of salvation?
 2. How does James's teaching on faith and works complement Paul's?
 3. What are examples of "dead faith" in today's Christian culture?
 4. How do good works flow from a heart transformed by grace?
 5. How can you guard your own heart from both legalism and license?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 13: Repentance

“The U-Turn That Saved a Life”

A man drives down a mountain road, ignoring the “Danger Ahead” signs. Suddenly, he sees the cliff’s edge. Tires screech. Heart pounding, he spins the wheel and turns around. That U-turn saved his life.

Repentance is that spiritual U-turn. It's not just regret or sorrow – it's a decisive turning away from sin and a turning to God. And it's not optional – it's commanded.

Overarching Question

What is true repentance, and how does it relate to saving faith and the Christian life?

1. What Is Biblical Repentance?

Repentance is a Spirit-wrought change of mind and heart that turns away from sin and turns toward God in obedience.

- **Example:** It's not just feeling bad about sin – it's fleeing from it.
- **Acts 3:19** – “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...”
- **2 Corinthians 7:10** – “Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of...”

2. How Is Repentance Related to Faith?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin. You cannot truly turn to Christ in faith without turning away from sin in repentance.

- **Example:** If you're clinging to sin, your hands aren't free to cling to Christ.
- **Mark 1:15** – “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.”
- **Acts 20:21** – “Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

3. Is Repentance a One-Time Event or a Lifelong Practice?

It begins at conversion but continues throughout the Christian life as we grow in holiness.

- **Example:** Just as breathing begins at birth and never stops, repentance is ongoing for the born-again.
- **Luke 9:23** – “If any man will come after me... let him deny himself daily...”
- **Revelation 2:5** – “Remember... repent, and do the first works...”

4. What Does True Repentance Look Like?

It produces visible change: confession, brokenness over sin, renewed obedience, and a hunger for righteousness.

- **Example:** Zacchaeus didn't just say “sorry” —he gave back fourfold (Luke 19:8).
- **Psalms 51:17** – “A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”
- **Matthew 3:8** – “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.”

Conclusion

Repentance is not penance. It's not about earning forgiveness —it's about receiving grace with a transformed heart. It's not the enemy of joy —it's the pathway to it. The

BOOK 7: Salvation

gospel calls us not to self-reformation but to surrender. True repentance is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and wherever it is found, grace abounds, and renewal begins.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the key differences between remorse, penance, and repentance?
 2. Why must repentance accompany saving faith?
 3. How can we tell if our repentance is genuine or merely emotional?
 4. In what ways can we cultivate a life of daily repentance?
 5. How does repentance glorify Christ and deepen our joy in Him?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 14: Merit and Grace

“The Paycheck and the Inheritance”

Two envelopes arrive. One contains a paycheck earned by hard labor – the other, a check from a wealthy relative you barely knew, leaving you a fortune you never earned. One is a wage; the other is a gift.

That’s the difference between merit and grace. Salvation isn’t God giving us what we’ve earned – it’s Him giving what we never could.

Overarching Question

Can human beings earn favor with God, or is salvation entirely a gift of grace?

1. What Is Merit in Theological Terms?

Merit refers to something that earns a reward or favor. In Catholic theology, one may earn "congruent" merit, but in Reformed theology, fallen humans have no merit before God.

- **Example:** Even our “best” acts are flawed and can’t purchase divine approval.
- **Isaiah 64:6** – “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.”
- **Romans 4:4** – “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.”

2. Why Can’t Sinners Earn Salvation by Good Works?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Because God demands perfect obedience, and we are spiritually dead in sin. No amount of good behavior can undo guilt or earn righteousness.

- **Example:** A single drop of poison in a glass of water makes the whole thing unfit to drink.
- **Romans 3:20** – “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified...”
- **Galatians 3:10** – “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things... to do them.”

3. How Does Grace Differ from Merit?

Grace is unearned favor – God’s loving initiative toward sinners who deserve wrath, not reward.

- **Example:** If merit is about justice, grace is about mercy.
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** – “By grace are ye saved through faith... not of yourselves...”
- **Romans 11:6** – “If by grace, then is it no more of works...”

4. What Role Did Christ’s Merit Play in Our Salvation?

Jesus alone merited salvation. His perfect obedience and sacrificial death earned eternal life for His people. His merit is imputed to us by faith.

- **Example:** Christ didn’t just die in our place – He *lived* in our place, earning the righteousness we lacked.
- **Romans 5:19** – “By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** – “That we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

In salvation, we bring nothing to the table but our need. Grace isn't a supplement to merit—it is the *total replacement* of it. We cannot earn God's love; Christ has earned it for us. All boasting is silenced. All glory belongs to God. Our security is not in what we've done but in what Christ has done—freely, fully, and forever.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it impossible for sinful humans to merit salvation?
 2. How does understanding grace transform your relationship with God?
 3. Why is Christ's merit essential to the gospel?
 4. How does confusing merit and grace lead to a false gospel?
 5. How should the truth of unmerited grace shape our view of ourselves and others?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 15: Perseverance of the Saints

“The Marathon with a Guarantee”

Imagine entering a marathon where the race director promises, “If you start, I will make sure you finish.” You trip, cramp, crawl – but a hand lifts you, carries you, and ensures you cross the line.

That’s perseverance – not the runner’s strength, but the unwavering faithfulness of the One who called him. In salvation, God not only starts the work – He guarantees the finish.

Overarching Question

Can a true believer lose their salvation, or will God preserve them to the end?

1. What Is the Perseverance of the Saints?

It is the biblical doctrine that all those truly regenerated and justified will persevere in faith and be preserved by God unto eternal glory.

- **Example:** Salvation isn’t a tightrope walk – it’s being carried across by grace.
- **John 10:28-29** – “I give unto them eternal life... neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”
- **Philippians 1:6** – “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it...”

2. Does This Mean Believers Never Sin or Struggle?

BOOK 7: Salvation

No. Believers may fall into sin, but they will not fall away completely or finally. God disciplines and restores His own.

- **Example:** Peter denied Christ – but Christ didn't deny Peter.
- **Luke 22:32** – "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."
- **Proverbs 24:16** – "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again."

3. Who Ultimately Secures the Believer's Perseverance?

God does. The believer is kept by God's power through faith, not by their own willpower or performance.

- **Example:** If it depended on us, none would stand. But God holds His own.
- **1 Peter 1:5** – "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."
- **Jude 24** – "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling..."

4. How Does This Doctrine Encourage the Christian Life?

It brings assurance, combats despair, strengthens endurance, and exalts God's faithfulness over human frailty.

- **Example:** You fight sin not to earn salvation, but because you're securely loved.
- **Romans 8:30** – "Whom he justified, them he also glorified."
- **2 Timothy 4:7-8** – "I have fought a good fight... henceforth there is laid up for me a crown..."

Conclusion

The perseverance of the saints is not a license to sin – it is a promise that God's grip never slips. Salvation is not a probationary period – it is eternal life given and guarded

BOOK 7: Salvation

by Christ. Our confidence doesn't rest in our hold on Him, but in His eternal hold on us. The saints persevere because the Savior preserves.

Discussion Questions

1. What's the difference between "once saved, always saved" and perseverance of the saints?
 2. How does this doctrine bring comfort in seasons of doubt or failure?
 3. Why does perseverance exalt God's faithfulness rather than human effort?
 4. What role does discipline and correction play in God preserving His people?
 5. How can this truth motivate a holy and joyful life?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 16: The Assurance of Salvation

“The Signed Adoption Papers”

A young orphan lives in fear, unsure if her new family will change their mind and send her back. One day, she finds the legal adoption papers – signed, sealed, and filed. The decision is final. Her tears turn to peace.

In the gospel, assurance is not based on our feelings or performance, but on the unchanging promise of God sealed by His Spirit. If you are in Christ, you are His – forever.

Overarching Question

Can believers know with certainty that they are saved, and on what basis is this assurance grounded?

1. Is It Possible to Have Assurance of Salvation?

Yes. While assurance is not the essence of saving faith, it is its fruit. True believers can and should enjoy the certainty of salvation.

- **Example:** A child doesn’t need to constantly ask, “Am I still part of the family?”
- **1 John 5:13** – “These things have I written unto you... that ye may know that ye have eternal life.”
- **Romans 8:16** – “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

2. What Is the Basis of Our Assurance?

Assurance rests on three pillars: the promises of God, the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, and the evidence of a changed life.

- **Example:** Like a three-legged stool, all parts support your confidence.
- **John 6:37** – “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”
- **2 Corinthians 13:5** – “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith...”

3. Can a True Believer Lose Their Assurance?

Yes, through sin, spiritual neglect, or trials, assurance can be shaken – but not salvation itself.

- **Example:** The sun may be hidden by clouds, but it never stops shining.
- **Psalms 51:12** – “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.”
- **Isaiah 50:10** – “Who is among you that feareth the Lord... and walketh in darkness... let him trust in the name of the Lord.”

4. How Can Assurance Be Strengthened?

Through growing in obedience, meditating on God’s promises, fellowshiping with the saints, and relying on the Holy Spirit’s witness.

- **Example:** Assurance grows like fruit in a well-tended garden.
- **2 Peter 1:10** – “Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.”
- **Hebrews 10:22** – “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith...”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

Assurance is not spiritual arrogance – it is gospel confidence. It doesn't rest on our performance but on Christ's perfection. It's the Spirit's whisper that we belong to the Father, even when our hearts tremble. Assurance fuels holiness, strengthens witness, and anchors us through storms. You are His, not because you hold tightly to Him – but because He holds tightly to you.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some common reasons believers struggle with assurance?
 2. How can we distinguish between false assurance and true assurance?
 3. What role does obedience play in building assurance?
 4. How does the Holy Spirit give us assurance?
 5. How would you counsel a believer who doubts their salvation?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 17: The Intermediate State

“The Layover Before Home”

A traveler boards a plane headed for her hometown but has a scheduled layover in another city. It's not her final destination, but it's not random either — it's part of the plan. She waits with anticipation, knowing that home is next.

So it is with the believer's soul after death. Heaven is the destination, but the *intermediate state* is the stop between death and the final resurrection — a glorious rest while we wait for the fullness of God's promise.

Overarching Question

What happens to believers and unbelievers immediately after death, before the final resurrection and judgment?

1. What Is the Intermediate State?

It is the conscious existence of the soul between physical death and the bodily resurrection. The body returns to dust, but the soul lives on.

- **Example:** The body may sleep, but the soul remains awake.
- **Ecclesiastes 12:7** – “Then shall the dust return to the earth... and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”
- **2 Corinthians 5:8** – “Absent from the body... present with the Lord.”

2. Where Do Believers Go After Death?

BOOK 7: Salvation

Believers go immediately into the presence of Christ, to a state of blessed rest and joy, though not yet in their glorified bodies.

- **Example:** The thief on the cross was promised “paradise” – not purgatory or soul-sleep.
- **Luke 23:43** – “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.”
- **Philippians 1:23** – “To depart, and to be with Christ... is far better.”

3. What Happens to Unbelievers in the Intermediate State?

They enter a state of conscious torment, awaiting the final judgment and eternal punishment.

- **Example:** The rich man in Luke 16 was aware, alert, and in anguish.
- **Luke 16:23** – “In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments...”
- **2 Peter 2:9** – “The Lord... reserves the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”

4. Why Is the Intermediate State Temporary?

Because God's redemptive plan includes the resurrection of the body and the renewal of creation. Final judgment and eternal states follow the return of Christ.

- **Example:** The soul is a guest in heaven or hell; after the resurrection, it moves into its eternal home.
- **John 5:28-29** – “The hour is coming... all that are in the graves shall hear his voice...”
- **Revelation 20:13-14** – “Death and hell delivered up the dead... and they were judged.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

The intermediate state reminds us that death is not the end. For the believer, it is the beginning of unhindered communion with Christ, even as we await the resurrection. For the unbeliever, it is the beginning of conscious separation from God. In either case, eternity looms ahead. Let this truth anchor our hope, awaken our urgency, and lift our eyes to the eternal.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you explain the intermediate state to someone unfamiliar with it?
 2. What comfort does the intermediate state give to believers who've lost loved ones in Christ?
 3. Why is it important to affirm the conscious existence of the soul after death?
 4. How does the intermediate state point forward to the final resurrection?
 5. What dangers come from denying or misunderstanding this doctrine?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 19: The Last Resurrection

“The Wake-Up Call You Can’t Miss”

In a quiet town, a lighthouse stands at the edge of the sea. One night, its great bell rings louder than ever before – warning ships and waking the town. No one sleeps through it.

The last resurrection will be like that – an inescapable awakening of the dead by the voice of God. No one will miss it. No one will ignore it. Every grave will be emptied. Every soul reunited with a body – for glory or for judgment.

Overarching Question

What is the last resurrection, and how does it relate to the final state of all people?

1. What Is the Last Resurrection?

The last resurrection refers to the final and universal bodily resurrection of all the dead – believers and unbelievers – at the return of Christ.

- **Example:** Like fields coming to life after winter, the dead will rise when Christ calls.
- **John 5:28-29** – “All that are in the graves shall hear his voice... they shall come forth.”
- **Daniel 12:2** – “Many of them that sleep in the dust... shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame...”

BOOK 7: Salvation

2. What Kind of Bodies Will People Have in the Resurrection?

The righteous will be raised with glorified, imperishable bodies. The wicked will be raised to face judgment in bodies suited for eternal punishment.

- **Example:** The resurrection body is not a clone of the old – it is the perfected version, transformed by glory or justice.
- **1 Corinthians 15:42-44** – “It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption...”
- **Philippians 3:21** – “[Christ] shall change our vile body... fashioned like unto his glorious body.”

3. Why Is the Resurrection of the Body Necessary?

Because humans were created as body-soul unities. Final salvation and final judgment both require bodily resurrection.

- **Example:** Redemption isn't complete until our bodies join in the glory already given to our souls.
- **Romans 8:23** – “Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”
- **Job 19:26** – “In my flesh shall I see God...”

4. What Will Happen Immediately After the Resurrection?

All will stand before Christ in final judgment, receiving either eternal life or eternal punishment.

- **Example:** The great separation will follow the great rising.
- **Revelation 20:12-13** – “The dead were judged... according to their works.”
- **Matthew 25:46** – “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

The last resurrection is not myth, metaphor, or spiritual symbolism — it is the final and physical vindication of God's justice and mercy. Believers will rise to unending joy in glorified bodies, like their Savior's. Unbelievers will rise to face judgment for their rejection of God. It is a sobering truth, but for those in Christ, it is the dawn of unending glory. Therefore, we hope. And therefore, we live holy lives now.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is the bodily resurrection essential to the Christian gospel?
 2. How does the promise of a glorified body comfort suffering believers?
 3. What would be lost if we denied a physical resurrection?
 4. How can belief in the last resurrection influence your daily priorities?
 5. How would you explain the difference between resurrection to life and resurrection to judgment?
-

BOOK 7: Salvation

Chapter 20: Glorification

“The Restoration of the Masterpiece”

An ancient painting hangs in a dusty attic – cracked, dull, forgotten. But in the hands of a master restorer, layer by layer, the grime is removed. The colors return. The glory shines. It looks better than ever before.

This is glorification. When Christ returns, He won’t merely restore us to Eden’s condition – He’ll perfect us in body and soul, forever fit for heaven, forever radiant with His glory.

Overarching Question

What is glorification, and how does it complete the believer’s salvation?

1. What Is Glorification?

Glorification is the final step in the *ordo salutis* (order of salvation), where believers are made perfectly holy in body and soul and are conformed to the image of Christ forever.

- **Example:** It’s not just God putting us back together – it’s Him finishing His masterpiece.
- **Romans 8:30** – “Whom he justified, them he also glorified.”
- **1 John 3:2** – “We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

2. When Does Glorification Happen?

BOOK 7: Salvation

At the return of Christ, when the dead in Christ are raised in glorified bodies and those alive are instantly transformed.

- **Example:** It is the grand finale of redemptive history for God's people.
- **1 Corinthians 15:52-53** – “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye... the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”
- **Philippians 3:21** – “[He] shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.”

3. What Will Our Glorified Bodies Be Like?

They will be imperishable, powerful, glorious, and spiritual – suited for eternal communion with God and free from all sin, pain, and death.

- **Example:** We will not be ghosts, nor merely improved versions of ourselves – we will be perfected in every way.
- **1 Corinthians 15:42-44** – “It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power...”
- **Revelation 21:4** – “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow... for the former things are passed away.”

4. Why Is Glorification Important to the Christian Hope?

Because it completes what God began in justification and sanctification. It anchors our hope, strengthens our endurance, and assures us that nothing in us or around us will remain broken forever.

- **Example:** It's not just about escaping hell – it's about entering glory.
- **Romans 8:18** – “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”
- **2 Corinthians 4:17** – “Our light affliction... worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

BOOK 7: Salvation

Conclusion

Glorification is the crowning touch of God's saving work. It is His promise that the scars of sin will be gone, our bodies will be made new, and our souls will be forever pure. No more doubt. No more death. No more decay. Just everlasting joy in the presence of Christ. This is not a distant dream—it is your guaranteed future in Christ. So press on.

Discussion Questions

1. How does glorification differ from justification and sanctification?
2. What about glorification brings you the most hope?
3. How can the promise of glorification help you endure suffering now?
4. What does the glorified body reveal about God's purpose for the physical world?
5. How would you explain glorification to a new believer who's never heard of it?