

SALVATION

We believe that God must and will punish sin because He is holy and cannot tolerate it. This punishment must come either to the guilty person or to a satisfactory substitute. Because it is not God's will that any should perish, He has provided the way of salvation. Jesus Christ voluntarily offered Himself on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for sin so that all who believe in Him may be redeemed. Initially salvation requires repentance and faith which results in justification, regeneration and sanctification and culminates in resurrection and glorification. Some of these are at times simultaneous in man's experience but are hereafter described separately for the sake of clarity.

A. Repentance

- We believe the Scriptures teach that repentance must accompany regeneration as well as be an ongoing act that accompanies sanctification. (Isaiah 55:7; Mark 1:15; 1 John 1:9)
- Genuine repentance is a necessary attitude of man as a condition for a holy and just God to forgive man's sins. It is produced in man by the kindness of God. It involves godly sorrow for sin and a proper reverence for God's holiness. It results in confessing and forsaking sin and whenever possible and appropriate, making restitution to those sinned against. (Luke 13:3; Romans 2:4; Proverbs 28:13)

B. Faith

- We believe that faith is essential to salvation. It is the means by which the Word of God is received as true. It is both the gift of God and the response of man. (Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 11:6)
- Faith is confidence based upon good evidence. It is an assurance born of complete trust in God as revealed through Christ. By faith one trusts in the death of Christ as the only efficacious sacrifice for his sin. (John 20:31; Romans 10:10)

C. Justification

- We believe that justification is a judicial act of God in which He declares the sinner free from condemnation and punishment and restores him to divine favor and privilege. It takes place when the sinner repents and trusts Christ for salvation. (Romans 3:24-26; Romans 5:1)

D. Regeneration

- We believe that regeneration is wholly of grace and free to all but must include repentance toward God and faith in Christ as Savior. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- Regeneration is the impartation of divine life. By the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word, the believer is given a disposition to love and obey God. What was destroyed in Adam is renewed in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 5:17; Titus 3:4-6)
- Some evidences of regeneration are: the witness of the Holy Spirit, a personal knowledge of the forgiveness of sin, peace with God, love for God's Word, newness of life, and reconciliation with any against whom sin has been committed. (Romans 8:16)

E. Sanctification

- God has always required that His people should be holy because He is holy. (Leviticus 11:44; 1 Peter 1:16)
- Sanctification is that action whereby God sets apart His people from sin. It has its source in what Christ has done through His blood, making believers a people of His own possession and calling them holy ones (saints). This holy position is granted when the Christian first believes in Christ. It is neither earned nor achieved by good works but is followed by good works. (1 Corinthians 1:2,30, 6:9-11; Hebrews 10:14, 13:12)
- Sanctification is also a process in the Christian life and involves the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, setting one apart from a sinful walk and producing a Christ-like character. This process is experienced through faith and obedience which includes consciously yielding the whole life to God and continually letting the Holy Spirit be in control. The results include a manifestation of spiritual fruit and pro-

gress in Christian growth, which are the will of God for every Christian. (John 17:17; Romans 6:13b, 8:29,12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Peter 1:2)

- The process of sanctification will be completed upon entering the presence of Christ when the Christian will enjoy a perfectly holy state. (1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 1 John 3:2)

F. Believer's assurance

- We believe that every Christian can have a valid sense of assurance concerning his salvation, his relationship with God and his destiny. Through faith in Jesus Christ, a knowledge of the Scriptures and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, such assurance becomes real and personal. (1 John 5:13; Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:24)
- There is no need for any believer to be anxious about God's ability or His gracious purpose to keep the believer for Himself. (Romans 8:37-39)
- However, the Scriptures have ample warning for anyone who might be inclined to presume upon the love of God by careless or sinful living. (Hebrews 3:12-13, 10:26-31)
- Therefore, it is necessary to examine ourselves to see whether our faith is genuine, a faith that is expressed in attitude and actions by obedient works. Without that kind of faith, there is no Scriptural assurance. The most complete basis for the believer's assurance is found in 1 John. (2 Corinthians 13:5)

G. Resurrection and glorification

- We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ, and because He lives, we too shall live. (Luke 24:6a; Acts 1:3; 2 Corinthians 15:22; 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 3:20-21)
- At the return of Christ, the bodies of the righteous dead will be raised and will, with the living believers, be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. We will be changed so as to have immortal bodies like unto Christ's own glorious body. (1 Thessalonians 4:16b-17a; 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 3:20-31)
- Our glorification is the culminating act of God's redeeming and sanctifying believers and will be realized when we see Him as He is. (1 John 3:2)

**For a more detailed doctrinal statement and papers of position on abortion, credentialing divorced persons, homosexuality, marriage, divorce and remarriage, the role of women in the Church, etc. visit our conference (Fellowship of Evangelical Churches) website at www.fecministries.org.

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