A Quiz on the Doctrine of Salvation

At the heart of the Christian faith is this statement: “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Christians are those who have been saved. How well do you know the doctrine of salvation? This quiz is designed to help you find out. Read each carefully and circle your answer.

1. After Adam and Eve fell into sin, God immediately determined he would save sinners.
   - True
   - False

2. God’s work of salvation depends upon all three persons of the Trinity.
   - True
   - False

3. The Father, rather than the Son or Holy Spirit, chose the people he would save.
   - True
   - False

4. Every person born has been a sinner except one—Jesus.
   - True
   - False

5. Every person born, except Jesus, needs to be saved from the wrath of God.
   - True
   - False

6. With sufficient time and effort, we could make ourselves worthy so God would save us from his wrath.
   - True
   - False

7. Because God is love, in the end, every sinner will be saved from his wrath.
   - True
   - False

8. The Father sent the Son to reconcile God and sinners.
   - True
   - False

9. On the cross, Jesus voluntarily substituted himself for the sinners the Father chose to save and bore the wrath of the God in their place.
   - True
   - False

10. A sinner must pray “the sinner’s prayer” to be saved.
    - True
    - False

11. Persuading a sinner to believe the good news is primarily the work of the preacher.
    - True
    - False

12. A sinner must repent of their sins to be saved.
    - True
    - False

13. A sinner must be born again (or regenerated) to be saved.
    - True
    - False

14. The new birth (or regeneration) is accomplished by the Spirit when and where he pleases.
    - True
    - False

15. A sinner is born again (or regenerated) as a result of their faith.
    - True
    - False

16. Saving faith can be lost if a person commits grievous sin.
    - True
    - False

17. Saving faith never wavers and never doubts.
    - True
    - False

18. Saving faith always results in good works.
    - True
    - False

19. In justification, God makes sinners righteous.
    - True
    - False

20. In justification, God declares sinners righteous.
    - True
    - False

21. Justification includes the forgiveness of sin.
    - True
    - False

22. For God to justify sinners, his just wrath against them must be satisfied.
    - True
    - False

23. The legal basis for a sinner’s justification is the good works the Spirit produces within them spiritual which meant he could not suffer physical pain.
    - True
    - False
24. The legal basis for a sinner’s justification is their faith.

True    False

25. The legal basis for a sinner’s justification is Christ’s righteous life and obedient death counted as their own (or imputed to them).

True    False

26. Sinners are justified when they believe.

True    False

27. Those who believe are adopted by God and become his children.

True    False

28. After sinners are reborn and justified, the Spirit continues to work within them to make them like Christ.

True    False

29. Becoming holy is a matter of letting go of all effort and letting the Spirit do his work within.

True    False

30. The presence of the Holy Spirit producing Christlikeness within believers means it is possible for them to become perfectly righteous in this life.

True    False

31. The act of baptism is a guarantee of the believer’s final salvation.

True    False

32. God’s plan of salvation is sufficiently revealed in Creation that all can hear, believe, and come to salvation.

True    False

33. God’s work of salvation will be completed when Christ comes again and all believers—those who have died and those who remain alive—receive their resurrection bodies.

True    False

The inability to love, obey, or please God is the very essence of human depravity. And the only solution to that predicament is the re-creative work of God. That is why Jesus told Nicodemus, “You must be born again.” “Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” This is what salvation is all about: God miraculously changes the nature of those whom He redeems, so that they are drawn to the very same righteousness they formerly hated. This was the central promise of the New Covenant.

—John MacArthur
Answers & Explanations

1. After Adam and Eve fell into sin, God immediately determined he would save sinners.
   False. Before creation, God’s plan to save was already in place. He had already “appointed the elect unto glory” and “foreordained all the means thereunto” (Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 3, Section 6). See Ephesians 1:4-5, 11; 1 Peter 1:20.

2. God’s work of salvation depends upon all three persons of the Trinity.
   True. We could sum it up like this: The Father plans and directs the Trinitarian work of redemption, the Son accomplishes it, and the Spirit applies it. See Ephesians 1:3-14 and the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 3, Section 6.

3. The Father, rather than the Son or Holy Spirit, chose the people he would save.
   True. As Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:4, “He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.” See 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 and the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 3, Section 5.

4. Every person born has been a sinner except one—Jesus.
   True. Everyone has sinned (Romans 3:23) except Jesus, who is human like us, “yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). See also Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 8, Section 2.

5. Every person born, except Jesus, needs to be saved from the wrath of God.
   True. We are all “children of wrath” by nature (Ephesians 2:3) and because of our own sins (Romans 3:20, 22-24)—except Jesus, of course, who was without sin.

6. With sufficient time and effort, we could make ourselves worthy so God would save us from his wrath.
   False. We can “by no means” make ourselves worthy, but “on the contrary we daily increase our debt” because we can’t stop sinning (Heidelberg Catechism, Questions 13) See Psalm 130:3.

7. Because God is love, in the end, every sinner will be saved from his wrath.
   False. As the Westminster Confession of Faith says those “who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be . . . punished with everlasting destruction” (Chapter 33, Section 2). See Matthew 25:31-46.

8. The Father sent the Son to reconcile God and sinners.
   True. God reconciled sinners to himself through the death of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

9. On the cross, Jesus voluntarily substituted himself for the sinners the Father chose to save and bore the wrath of the God in their place.
   True. From the Westminster Confession of Faith: “God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did, in the fullness of time, die for their sins,” (Chapter 11, Section 4) and in this way he made “a proper, real and full satisfaction to His Father’s justice in their behalf” (Chapter 11, Section 3). See Romans 5:8-9.

10. A sinner must pray “the sinner’s prayer” to be saved.
    False. A sinner must believe the good news of salvation in Christ to be saved. As the Westminster Confession of Faith says, “The principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life . . .” (Chapter 14, Section 2). See Acts 16:31.

11. Persuading a sinner to believe the good news is primarily the work of the preacher.
    False. It is primarily the work of the Holy Spirit. That any sinner believes is due to “the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts” (Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 14, Section 1). See Ephesians 1:17-19.

12. A sinner must repent of their sins to be saved.
    True. Saving faith includes both “repentance toward God” and “faith in our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21).
Answers & Explanations

13. A sinner must be born again (or regenerated) to be saved.
   True. Jesus said, “unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God…” See John 3:3-7, Ephesians 2:1-9.

14. The new birth (or regeneration) is accomplished by the Spirit when and where he pleases.
   True. As Jesus said, “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8).

15. A sinner is born again (or regenerated) as a result of their faith.
   False. Believing is a result of being born of God. The apostle John wrote, “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God…” (1 John 5:1).

16. Saving faith can be lost if a person commits grievous sin.
   False. According to 1 Peter 1:5, God’s power sustains the faith of those who are being saved, causing them to endure to the end.

17. Saving faith never wavers and never doubts.
   False. Saving faith, says the Westminster Confession of Faith, “is different in degrees, weak or strong; may often and many ways assailed, and weakened,” but does eventually “get the victory” (Chapter 14, Section 3). See Matthew 6:30 and 8:10.

18. Saving faith always results in good works.
   True. As the Heidelberg Catechism says, “[I]t is impossible that those who are implanted into Christ by a true faith, should not bring forth the fruits of thankfulness” (Question 64). These good works are the result of God’s recreative work (Ephesians 2:10).

19. In justification, God makes sinners righteous.
   False. The people God justifies are ungodly (Romans 4:5), so we know justify doesn't mean “to make righteous.” See also Romans 3:19-24.

20. In justification, God declares sinners righteous.
   True. “Justify” is a legal term which means to declare someone righteous rather than to make them righteous. See question 23 of this quiz and also the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 11, Section 1.

21. Justification includes the forgiveness of sin.
   True. In Romans 4:6-7, Paul quotes David, who speaks about the person who is justified (or “the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works”), and says their “lawless deeds are forgiven.”

22. For God to justify sinners, his just wrath against them must be satisfied.
   True. Sinners are justified “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation [a sacrifice that satisfies God’s wrath] by his blood…” (Romans 3:24-25). See the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 11, Sections 1, 3, and 4.

23. The legal basis for a sinner’s justification is the good works the Spirit produces within them.
   False. Justification is “apart from works” (Romans 4:6-7). See also Romans 3:20, Philippians 3:9, and the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 11, Section 1.

24. The legal basis for a sinner’s justification is their faith.
   False. Faith necessary for our justification, but it isn’t what merits it. Rather, faith is the instrument by which we receive our justification. It is “self-emptying and has no merit in itself” (Question 61, Heidelberg Catechism).
25. The legal basis for a sinner’s justification is Christ’s righteous life and obedient death counted as their own (or imputed to them).
   True. Sinners are justified “for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them” (Question 70 of the Westminster Larger Catechism). “Perfect obedience” refers to Christ’s righteous life, and “full satisfaction” to his death.

26. Sinners are justified when they believe.
   True. Sinners are justified through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, which is “received by faith” (Romans 3:24-25).

27. Those who believe are adopted by God and become his children.
   True. “[T]o all . . . who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12).

28. After sinners are reborn and justified, the Spirit continues to work within them to make them like Christ.
   True. Believers are being “created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:23-24). They “are being transformed” by “the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 2:18).

29. Becoming holy is a matter of letting go of all effort and letting the Spirit do his work within.
   False. The Spirit’s work within is the incentive for believers themselves to work to become more like Christ. Paul encourages the Philippians to continue in their obedience by working out their “own salvation,” because God was working in them “both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12-13).

30. The presence of the Holy Spirit producing Christlikeness within believers means it is possible for them to become perfectly righteous in this life.
   False. As the Westminster Confession of Faith says, growth in Christlikeness is always “imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part” (Chapter 13, Section 2). See 1 John 1:10 and Philippians 3:12.

31. The act of baptism is a guarantee of the believer’s final salvation.
   False. The presence of the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of the believer’s final salvation. Those who believe have been “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it” (Ephesians 1:13-14).

32. God’s plan of salvation is sufficiently revealed in Creation that all can hear, believe, and come to salvation.
   False. God’s plan of salvation is revealed in the Bible which must be heard for a person to come to salvation (Romans 10:14).

33. God’s work of salvation will be completed when Christ comes again and all believers—those who have died and those who remain alive—receive their resurrection bodies.
   True. As the Westminster Larger Catechism states, on the last day, believers “that are then found alive shall in a moment be changed” and those that have died “shall be raised in power, spiritual, incorruptible, and made like to his glorious body” (Question 87). See 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.

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