

SHUNNING THE “-TIONS”

Salvation, Redemption, Regeneration, Adoption, Reconciliation, Justification, Propitiation, Sanctification (Consecration), Glorification

Sandwiched between salvation and glorification are the “-tions.” What binds all these “-tion” words together? We might ask the same question of the “-ites” families. You recall the “-ites” families in the Old Testament, don’t you? Hivites, Hittites, Canaanites, Arvadites, Zemarites, Hamathites, Girgashites, Jebusites. Moabites, Perizzites (not to be confused with parasites), Amorites, Amalekites and Ammonites. We might ask the question, but we will leave that for someone else to answer.

What do the “-tions” have in common? These words express action that God undertook and undertakes to reach out to the people He created, the people that live in rebellion against Him. His intentions were and are to:

- Rescue them from the wrath of His judgment for their rebellion (salvation),
- Pay the price they owe Him for their rebellion (redemption),
- Give them a new beginning (regeneration),
- Reestablish them as His children in His family (adoption),
- Restore them to a right and loving relationship with Him (reconciliation),
- Make them righteous before His bar of judgment (justification),
- Forgive them for their rebellion (propitiation), and
- Make them into His image of holiness (sanctification),
- Bring them to the glory for which He created them (glorification).

In short, God provided and provides a way for those whom He created to live a new life in His presence with Him. This new relationship is not based on what they could do to earn that new life (works of the Law), but what He did and would do freely for them (grace and mercy).

<p>If this is God’s nature to reach out to His creation, those in need, us, and if we are born afresh so that we bare God’s nature, then we bare a responsibility to reach out to those in need, those created in the image of God, but marred by sin, those outside the Church.</p>

We carry a God-given responsibility to live out and vocalize God’s determined plan to rescue His highest members in creation, people. This is evangelization.

The aim of this class is to help Christian people to:

1. Understand the biblical concepts of Salvation, Redemption, Regeneration, Adoption, Reconciliation, Justification, Propitiation, Sanctification and Glorification.
2. Appreciate the lengths that God went to bring His creation back to Himself, and

As iron sharpens items,
so a person sharpens his friends.

— Solomon

3. Develop skills to communicate these concepts to Christians and non-Christians using non-technical language.

The challenge we face in making sense of all of this resembles a plate of spaghetti. With the sauce, the spaghetti is messy and tangled up. It's hard to pull out one strand of spaghetti without touching other strands. It's hard to pull out one strand without pulling out another strand. The strands of spaghetti seem to connect to one another. The doctrines of redemption, regeneration, adoption, reconciliation, justification, propitiation and sanctification present a challenge to us because the biblical writers often tie one doctrine to another. It's a challenge to separate them from one another and talk about them in a meaningful way without confusing ourselves.

Just because it is a challenge doesn't mean that we shouldn't take the challenge.

Salvation

What is salvation? From what are we saved? To what are we saved? Why do the writers of the Bible emphasize the doctrine of salvation? How are we saved?

- God saved us from sin (Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-13; Ezekiel 18:4, 20; Romans 3:23) and its consequence, death (John 5:24; Romans 5:9-10; 6:13, 23; Ephesians 2:1-5; Titus 3:3-5).
- God sent Christ to save us from our sin that resulted in our death (Matthew 1:21; Luke 19:10; Romans 5:9-10).
- Only through our living relationship with Christ can we be saved (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).
- It is God's desire to save us, to restore us to our relationship with Him so that we might walk daily with Him while we live on this minute piece of dust in His vast universe (1 Timothy 2:3-4).
- God wants us to partner with Him to bring people back to a knowledge of the truth (John 17:8, 18; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21-23; James 5:19-20).

God saved us to walk for eternity with Him in His universe once our life on earth is complete.

The question that we want to explore in our time together appears in two parts.

- What does God do to save us?
- How should we respond to this offer of salvation?

Each of the words that we will investigate, explain and apply to our lives as Christians begins with an act of God. These picturesque words show us God's activities through the events in the Old and New Testaments. The writers of the New Testament amplify the vividness of the picturesque words by explaining their theological and practical applications for our lives as Christians.

When we are confronted with the claims of the Gospel, then God desires that we respond positively to His offer of salvation, "not wishing that any should perish, but all should reach repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

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Encapsulated in Salvation and fully realized in Glorification are the actions of Redemption, Regeneration, Reconciliation, Adoption, Justification, Propitiation and Sanctification.

Encapsulated in Salvation are the past actions of God, His present actions and the actions He will take to culminate salvation (past, present and future). Think of salvation in the terms that Jesus used to describe the Kingdom of God. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). When challenged by people in a crowd concerning His authority to cast out demons, Jesus said (Luke 11:20), "But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." The Kingdom of God was, is and yet to come. God's actions were, are and will continue to save us from sin and death.

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