

BDCL: SALVATION

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

The story of Jesus Christ is the story of God's love for broken humanity, and His desire to redeem and save us from sin and death.

MISSING THE MARK

No matter what one believes, the bible is very clear about our relationship with God. God created humanity for Himself and has always desired to have a relationship with us. However, we rebelled and came under the control of sin and Satan. God is good, merciful, kind and loving, yet He is holy and hates sin and evil.

- The bible also tells us that every human being was born under the power and control of sin, and we all have sin in our hearts. For that reason, our relationship with God is broken and severed, and we are distanced from Him.

Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

- The bible is very clear that every human being was born a sinner; no one is exempt. We were all born with the seed and nature of sin inherent in us. This is confirmed by the popular saying, *"No one teaches a child to sin or err."*

Psalms 51:5 (NIV)

"Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

However, one might say....

- What if I am a good and kind person and do good things?
- What if I don't swear, talk about people and I am not nasty or horrible?
- What if I don't do drugs, smoke or drink alcohol?
- What if I don't commit fornication or adultery?
- What if I don't tell lies, steal or cheat others?
- Am I still sinful, and a sinner...?

Yes, you are, and we all are! The bible describes us as sinful and says we have fallen short of God's standard. Even our best, kindest and most generous works do not count with God and have no value before Him.



Isaiah 64:6 (NLT)

"We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous [good] deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind."

GROUP EXERCISE

Time: 15 minutes

1. What is the meaning of salvation and why do people need to be saved?
2. How does one get saved, and what must one do to be saved?
3. How did you get saved? Share this briefly with your group.



THE CREATION OF MAN

To understand the need for salvation, we must go back to the beginning. In the beginning, God created man in His image and likeness as male and female, and gave them the mandate to be fruitful and multiply and exercise dominion over the earth. (*Genesis 1:26-28*)

Genesis 2:15-17 NKJV

"[15] Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. [16] And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; [17] but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.""

- God created a beautiful place, the Garden of Eden, where they would live and enjoy His blessings. There, He would come and meet and have fellowship with them. However, God cautioned them, concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which He had placed in the garden.

FALL INTO SIN

- Read Genesis 3

Unfortunately, however, Adam and Even disobeyed God and fell into sin. Through their disobedience, sin and death entered the world.

What is Sin?

Sin is mentioned many, many times in the bible. It started in the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Sin is defined in the original translations of the Bible as "to miss the mark."

- The "mark" is the standard of righteousness – what is right, good, and acceptable – set by God from the beginning of creation, and displayed to us through Christ Jesus. Even our best, kindest and most generous works do not count with God and have no value before Him. (*Isaiah 64:6*)

Therefore, all of us have missed the mark, right from birth. That is why the bible says, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

- Sin is also defined as "separation from God." All of us were born separated from God and so all of us were born in sin.

The Consequences of Sin

The consequences of sin are detailed in God's judgements of God to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. The judgements meant that things would no longer be as God had originally intended for humanity and the Creation. Man and woman would no longer function as God had intended and the relationship between them would be severely damaged and



distorted. The judgement meant that Adam and Eve were to lose everything they had enjoyed so far.

- Sin also broke our relationship with the Holy God and separated us from Him.
- The consequences of sin and the effect of our separation from God include pain, suffering and heartache, sickness and diseases, hardships and all kinds of bondages. Humanity would sink into rebellion, evil, wickedness, lust, greed, all kinds of works of darkness and physical death.
- Eternal Death – However, the gravest consequence of sin is death!

Romans 6:23a *"...The wages of sin is death..."*

The ultimate penalty for sin, however, is eternal death, which is worse than physical death. Eternal death is a spiritual separation from God which will last for eternity. People who are spiritually dead will end up in hell, a place of fire, torment and anguish.

GOD PROMISED REDEMPTION

1. In His judgement, however, God provided hope, by promising redemption through the Seed of woman

Genesis 3:15 NKJV

"[15] And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

2. God found a faithful man, called Abraham, who was willing to walk with Him in righteousness. God promised to provide a sacrifice for humanity through Abraham's obedience.

- Read: Genesis 22:1-19

GOD LOVES HUMANITY

Incredibly, God did not stop loving humanity, and desired for us to be reconciled with Him. Despite His hatred for sin, God loves humanity and made a way for us to overcome sin and be reconciled with Him. God certainly does not want any of us to go to hell or face eternal death and separation from Him. On the other hand, God loves us and wants us to be reconciled with Him and have life eternal with Him.

God loves humanity so much that He sent His only Son on earth to die to save us. There are so many scriptures that tell us of God's love for us and the lengths to which He went to save us and reconcile us to Himself.

Romans 5:8

"God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us!"



1 Timothy 2:5-6

*"For there is one God, and **One Mediator** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all..."*

GOD CAME IN HUMAN FORM

John 1:1-5, 14 NKJV

[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] He was in the beginning with God. [3] All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. [4] In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. [5] And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.... [14] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Hebrews 2:14-15

14 Because God's children are human beings – made of flesh and blood – the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had[g] the power of death. 15 Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.

- Through His Son, Jesus Christ, God came down to earth in human form to restore our broken relationship with Him. (Colossians 1:19-20). Christ lived a perfect sinless life (1 Peter 2:22), but died a cruel and painful death on the Cross, to save and redeem us from sin and its penalty. By His death, He paid the full price for our sin, our unrighteousness and separation from God.
- Jesus Christ died, but He rose again on the third day, and is alive today to give us new life and reconcile us to God. (John 10:10). After His resurrection, Jesus ascended back into heaven, where He makes continuous intercession for us.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins... And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day..."

GOD OFFERS US SALVATION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

God offers salvation through belief in Jesus Christ. All that God requires is for us to simply believe in Jesus Christ and what He has done for us, and repent. To repent is to do a U-turn with our lives; it is to transfer our faith and trust in ourselves and other things, to faith and trust in Jesus Christ. This is what saves us from sin, reconciles us to God and delivers us from eternal death.

John 3:16-18 NKJV

[16] For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. [17] For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. [18] "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.



Romans 5:6-8 NKJV

[6] For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. [7] For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. [8] But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 6:23 NKJV

[23] For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Romans 5:12; Romans 5:17-18; Romans 5:7

SALVATION AND GRACE

The good news is that we do not have to work or strive to obtain the salvation that God offers us through the redeeming and saving work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. This is because salvation is an act of GRACE. Therefore, the scriptures say,

Ephesians 2:1,4-5 (NIV)

"1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins... 4But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – 5 it is by grace you have been saved."

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT)

"8 God saved you by His grace when you believed [in faith]. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."

- Grace means 'unmerited and undeserving favour'. We do not deserve God's pardon and forgiveness from sin, yet, He freely gives it to us through His Son Jesus Christ. Grace says we do not have to do anything to earn God's mercy and reprieve, because the price has already been paid by Jesus' death.
- If salvation is a free gift from God, what must we do to be saved? How do we obtain or receive this free, undeserving and unmerited favour from God?

VICTORY OVER SIN AND DEATH

Romans 6:8-14 NKJV

[8] Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, [9] knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. [10] For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. [11] Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. [12] Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. [13] And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. [14] For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

