SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY II
DIPLOMA IN PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Module 4
Soteriology 101
## Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Soteriology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Reconciliation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Salvation</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Regeneration</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Justification and Imputation</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Personal Implication</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Bibliography</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Assignment</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction.

A look at the world around us reveals man’s condition in sin and the sad, serious, and difficult situation in which it has left him. Mankind is completely helpless and left to his own human resources, unable to change his spiritual bankruptcy. In spite of all man’s expectations of a new society in which he is able to bring about peace and prosperity, the world remains shattered and torn by the depredation of sin locally, nationally, and internationally. The Bible speaks though, of God’s gracious plan to provide a solution to man’s problem. We call it salvation or, for the purpose of this study, soteriology (http://bible.org/article/soteriology-doctrine-salvation).

2. Soteriology.

“Soteriology” refers to the doctrine of salvation and is by far the most outstanding theme in the Scriptures. It embraces all of time as well as eternity, past and future. It relates in one way or another to all of mankind, without exception. It even has implications in the sphere of the angels. It is the theme of both the Old and New Testaments. It focuses on the greatest Person of all times, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The term “salvation” encompasses the total work of God by which He seeks to rescue man from the ruin, doom, and power of sin and bestows upon him the wealth of His grace and encompassing eternal life, provision for abundant life now, and eternal glory (Eph. 1:3-8; 2:4-10; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; John 3:16, 36; 10:10).

The word “salvation” is the translation of the Greek word *soteria* which is derived from the word *soter* meaning *saviour*. The word “salvation” refers to the idea of deliverance, safety, protection, reliability, restoration, and healing. In theology, however, its’ major use is to denote a work of God on behalf of men, and as such it is a major doctrine of the Bible which includes redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, conviction, repentance, faith, rebirth, forgiveness, justification, sanctification, preservation, and glorification. On the one hand, salvation is described as the work of God rescuing man from his
lost estate. On the other hand salvation describes the estate of a man who has been saved and who is vitally renewed and made a partaker of the inheritance of the saints. (http://bible.org/article/soteriology-doctrine-salvation)

2.1. Predestination.

There are various views on the matter but all cannot be proved by the Scriptures. It is the will of God that all men should repent (2 Pet 3:9) and accept the gift of salvation. The question remains however, whether there is such a thing as “predestination”. Christ Himself said that there are many that are called but few that have been chosen (Matt. 20:16, 22:14, 15:16-19, Acts 13:17, 1 Cor. 1:27-28).

There are two extreme views addressing this matter.

2.1.1. Calvinistic View.

According to the Calvinistic view:

i. Salvation comes from God alone and man has no choice in the matter.

ii. As far as salvation is concerned man has no free will, if God wants to save man He does as He wants to and man has no choice.

iii. God saves whom He has chosen or predestined. There are people to whom salvation is not allotted and are therefore destined for eternal damnation.

iv. Because it is God who brings salvation, no man can be lost if he is predestined to be saved. That is also the main argument for the teaching: “once saved, always saved”. This argument is based on the following Scriptures: John 10:28-29, Rom. 11:29, Phil. 1:6, 1 Pet. 1:5, Rom. 8:35 and John 17:6.

2.1.2. Armenian View.

Arminius’ view includes:

i. Christ died for all, and it is God’s will that all shall repent (2 Pet. 3:9).
ii. Salvation is man’s own choice, whether he wants to accept Christ or not.

iii. By His “all-knowing”, God knows who is going to follow Him, but it was not predestined.

iv. Man is not always living by grace and may depart from God out of free will.

v. 1 Tim. 2:4-6, Heb. 2:9, 2 Cor. 5:14, 6:4-6 and Tit. 2:11-12.

2.2. The Motivations for Salvation.

When considering the stubbornness and rebellion of man, the question often arises, why God should want to save sinners. And especially why He would want to give His unique and beloved Son to die in the agony of His holy judgment, bearing the sin of the world on the cross.

Scriptural answer provides that salvation redounds to the glory of His grace. Salvation brings glory to God and it does so because it manifests the nature and character of His Person (Eph. 1:6; Phil. 2:11). Salvation reveals a number of things about God that bring glory to the Person of God and shows us something of the reasons for salvation:

- **It reveals His love.** That God would reach out to sinful man by sending His only begotten Son is the greatest manifestation of His love. It declares God provided salvation because He is a loving God (John 3:16; 1 John 4:7-10, 16).

- **Salvation through the person and work of Christ** is also a manifestation of God’s grace, the non-meritorious favour of God (Eph. 2:7-9). Only Christianity offers a salvation based on grace rather than works. All the other religions of the world have man working to acquire salvation.

- **The salvation of the Bible also manifests the holiness of God.** God provided salvation through the person and work of His Son because He is a holy God. In His love and grace God desired fellowship with man, but man’s rebellion and sin created a barrier between God and man that hindered any fellowship with man whatsoever, because of God’s infinite
holiness. Both God’s holiness and His love are satisfied, however, by the person and work of God’s Son, so that man can be reconciled with God and fellowship restored.

- Adam and Eve were created in the image of God that they might give a visible display of God’s character as they walked in fellowship with the invisible God. But when the human race fell through Adam’s sin, the image was not only marred, but man lost the capacity for fellowship with God. Through salvation, the capacity for fellowship is restored and also man’s ability to manifest, through imperfection, the goodness of God.


Salvation in Christ, which begins in eternity past, according to the predetermined plan of God and extends into the eternal future, has three observable phases in the Bible. Understanding this truth can relieve a lot of tension from the perspective of security and enable the believer to relax in the Lord and His grace, while simultaneously moving forward in spiritual growth.

Phase I. This is the past tense of salvation—saved from sin’s penalty. Several passages of Scripture speak of salvation as wholly past, or as accomplished and completed for the one who has believed in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This aspect views the believer as delivered once and for all from sin’s penalty and spiritual death (Luke 7:50; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15; Eph. 2:5, 8; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 7:25; 2 Tim. 1:9). So complete and perfect is this work of God in Christ, that the believer is declared permanently saved and safe forever (John 5:24; 10:28, 29; Rom. 8:1, 37-39; 1 Pet. 1:3-5) provided that he remains in the presence of God by serving God, and leaning on His promises.

Phase II. This is the present tense of salvation, and has to do with present deliverance over the reigning power of sin or the carnal nature’s power in the lives of believers (Rom. 6:1-23; 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 2:19-20; 5:1-26; Phil. 1:19; 2:12-13; 2 Thess. 2:13). This phase of salvation in Christ is accomplished
through the ministry of the indwelling Spirit, and is based on the work of Christ and the believer’s union and co-identification with Christ in that work.

**Phase III.** This is the future tense of salvation, which refers to the future deliverance that all believers in Christ will experience through a glorified, resurrected body. It considers that, though once and for all saved from the penalty of sin and while now being delivered from the power of sin, the believer in Christ will yet be saved into full conformity to Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29; 13:11; 1 Pet. 1:5; 1 John 3:2). This recognizes and shows that the Christian in his experience never becomes perfect in this life (Phil. 3:12-14). Full conformity to the character of Christ, experientially speaking, anticipates ultimate glorification. However, the fact that some aspects of salvation for the one who believes are yet to be accomplished, in no way implies that there is ground for doubt as to the outcome of eternal salvation, because all three phases are dependent upon the merit and the work of God in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ and the acceptance of man of it through faith.

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”. It is then God who brings salvation, but it is man, by his own free will, that has to accept Christ as his own personal Saviour. Man isn’t then saved if he does not want to be saved, but has a choice in the matter. The Holy Spirit is the one that draws man, pleads with him, but it is still man that must make the choice. Man can be saved by heeding to the voice of God, and by inviting Him into his heart.

Miller adds: “Nobody can be saved unless God, in His love, makes it possible by drawing him closer through the Holy Spirit. But it rests with man to resist or allow the Spirit to do a divine work in his life”. 2 Pet. 3:9 declares: “He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance”. The will of God cannot always be applicable, because it also depends on the choice of man as it is indicated in Matt. 23:37: “O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I
have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing”.

The Calvinistic perspective proclaims that what God thought before the creation will happen because of the statement provided in Jer. 1:5. If you are saved therefore, it is by predestination, and if you perish it is also by the same rule. It sounds more like fatalism. It is correct to argue that God can do as it pleases Him, but He created man with an own free will and choice in life. Man is a free moral agent. If this is not so then God was the One Who introduced sin into the world, who released Satan and the evil spirits in the air, etc. It is therefore erroneous to say that “once saved always saved”. See Ezek. 3:17-21, 18:3-28, 33:2-20 in this regard. Christ concluded in Matt 10:22: “. . . he who stands firm to the end will be saved”.

In the Old Testament God chose whom He wanted to use and the Israelites could live by obedience to the law, but in the New Testament it is by grace alone that man is saved no matter from which tribe or nation he descends. Everyone who inherits heavenly glory is chosen by God. In conclusion: “if you repent you are saved. You are saved on grounds of your faith in Christ.”

3. Reconciliation.

Heb 9:22: “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission”. Rom 5:10: “. . . . we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son . . .”. Reconciliation is the work that was done by Christ on the cross. In the Old Testament it was done through the blood of sacrifices, by which the communication between man and God was restored. Ex. 30:10, Lev. 12:8, Num. 5:8, Ps. 85:3, Rom. 5:10, 1 John 2:2.

Reconciliation is necessary to take down the wall of sin between God and man so that God's judgements on man can be just. Isa. 6:5, 52:9, Rom. 3:23, Jam. 2:10, 1 Pet. 1:15, Rev. 20:11. Christ made a perfect reconciliation, which could not be obtained with the blood of animals (Ex. 12, Lev. 1-7), because His sacrifice was a perfect one (Heb. 9:11-15) and He became the High priest.
bringing the perfect sacrifice (Heb. 9:26, 10:10-14) through His own blood into the sanctuary (Heb. 9:23-26). This reconciliation became the entrance to God (Luke 23:42-43, John 14:14), and it brings to us victory and a life of victory (Rom. 6:1-14).

3.1. The meaning of reconciliation. (http://bible.org/article/soteriology-doctrine-salvation)

Definition of Reconcile.

3.1.1. The English word “reconcile” means “to cause to be friendly again; to bring back to harmony, make peace”.

3.1.2. The Greek words for reconciliation and their definitions: (a) Katallasso, the verb, and katallage, the noun. This word comes from kata which means “down” and allaso which means “to change” or “exchange”. Thus, katallasso means “to change from enmity or disharmony to friendship and harmony,” or “to reconcile” (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:18-19). (b) Apokatallaso. This is a triple compound word (the preposition apo added, “from”). It does not occur in earlier Greek and seems to be used by Paul only, to express the idea of the completeness of reconciliation (Eph. 2:6; Col. 1:20-21). We can properly translate it as: “to reconcile completely”.

Each of these Greek words primarily referred to a one-way kind of reconciliation, and accomplished by only one person. This is significant because the Greeks had a word, diallasso, that referred to a two-way or mutual reconciliation—one dependent upon the work of both parties. Diallasso “denotes a mutual concession after mutual hostility, an idea absent from katall”. Though katallasso could be descriptive of reconciliation between people (1 Cor. 7:11), the exclusive choice of the katalasso family of words for the reconciliation of the sinner stresses that salvation is totally the work of God that man may either accept by faith or reject, but either way, salvation is a work not partly of man and partly of God as it might occur between people, but totally, 100%, a work accomplished by God through His Son, the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17-19; Rom. 5:11).
3.1.3. The concept of reconciliation is, of course, not limited to the word “reconcile”. When the Scripture speaks of “peace with God” (Rom. 5:1), of Christ as “our peace” (Eph. 2:14), and of His work of “establishing peace” (Eph. 2:15-17), this is reconciliation, the work of God in Christ to remove the enmity and alienation that separates God and man (Rom. 5:1-11).

3.1.4. Doctrinal definition: In short, reconciliation is the work of God in Christ by which man is brought from the place of enmity to harmony or peace with God (Rom. 5:1). There are other terms used in Scripture of God’s gracious work in Christ like redemption, justification, regeneration, and propitiation, but reconciliation seems to be the over-all term of Scripture which encompasses all the other terms as a part of what God has done through the Lord Jesus to completely remove the enmity or alienation, the whole of the barrier (sin, God’s holiness, death, unrighteousness, etc.). It is this work that sets God free to justify the believing sinner by faith in Christ so there is peace with God, the change of relationship from hostility to harmony.

3.2. The necessity of reconciliation.

Rom. 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”. Because of the sinfulfulness of man it was necessary to have reconciliation. The law required that man should abide by what is written in the law to live forever and when there was transgression of the law it was necessary to have reconciliation.

It is only the pure in heart that will see God and for a person to obtain a pure heart there must be a sacrifice for the reconciliation and purification of man; in the OT it was done with the blood of animal sacrifices, but in the NT it is done by the sacrifice of Christ and His redeeming blood. Man has no offer that he can bring and that is why God gave His only begotten Son.
3.3. Reconciliation in the Old Testament.

Reconciliation took place early in the OT when God killed an animal to dress Adam and Eve in animal skins. Blood had to flow. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, a goat and other animals had to be sacrificed to reconcile Israel before God. Heb. 10:3 reads "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again of sins every year" as the blood of animals could only cover the sins before God and not remove it because of the imperfection of these sacrifices. These sacrifices only cleansed the Israelites ceremonially, and it was done by priests who were also sinful men, and was only the shadow of the perfect sacrifice to come. The true sacrifice that was to come would be so powerful that even its shadow was able to temporarily provide redemption.


For a sacrifice to give complete reconciliation it must be (1) perfect (2) the priest that brings it must be perfect (3) the blood must be brought into the perfect sanctuary. Christ alone qualified as He alone was perfect (Heb. 9:14 "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God"). He was the perfect High priest (Heb. 7:28 "For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever"). He brought the sacrifice (Himself) into the perfect sanctuary (Heb. 9:24 "For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appears for us in God's presence").

The blood in the OT could not accomplish reconciliation, deliverance, forgiveness, purification etc, but the blood of Christ does all this. Eph. 1:7 declares "In Him we have the redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sin according to the richness of God's grace". 1 John 1:7 "... and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies (cleanses) from all sin". We have confidence to approach the throne of God (Heb. 4:16) and we exercise victory over sin (Rom. 6:10-14).
4. Salvation.

Col. 1:13 "For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin". Reconciliation brings about salvation for us (Heb. 5:9 "... and once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him" and therefore an escape from the pending judgement (Rev. 20:11-15, John 5:24). We receive salvation when we accept His call and repent from our sinful lifestyle, in Christ, before God.

From the time in the Garden of Eden, God calls man. His hand of grace was always outstretched towards us. John 6:44 confirms: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him . . . ". The Spirit convicts man (John 16:8 "When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement . . . ").

The Greek words soterion and sotyria means to be saved or made free (Luke 19:9, Eph. 1:13), salvation (2 Pet. 3:15), keeping, safeguarding, preservation (Acts 27:34, Heb. 11:7), deliverance (Acts 13:26), and welfare (Phil. 2:12, 2 Cor. 6:2). We partake in the kingdom of grace through salvation.

To be saved is to live and die a saved life, and a life of salvation is a life that we live in God, a life in the spirit, and controlled by the Spirit of God. Man's spirit is again linked with the Spirit of God, so that we may know Him, be with Him and live for Him (John 17:3 "And this is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom You have sent").

4.1. Substitution.

Isa. 53:4-11 states: “Surely our grief He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us
has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, “for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?” His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge, the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities”.

The doctrine of the substitutionary death of Christ is closely related to expiation. As redemption was that part of reconciliation aimed at the problem of man’s sin, expiation was that part which dealt with the concept of the penalty that man must pay, so substitution is directed toward the specific penalty required, the penalty of death.

By the substitutionary death of Christ we mean that Christ, as the innocent Lamb of God, died and suffered the penalty of death in the place of the sinner, the actual guilty party. This means He took our place and bore the penalty of God’s judgment which we rightly deserved. We owed a debt we could not pay and He paid a debt He did not owe.

4.1.1 Greek words which imply substitution.

There are two Greek prepositions that are important to this doctrine because they are used in the New Testament for the concept of the substitutionary death of Christ.

*Anti*. The basic and most common meaning of *anti* is “in the place of, in the stead of” and naturally teaches the concept of substitution; one thing in the
place of another. The following passages of Scripture illustrate this common usage. (1) “... Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of (antî) his Father Herod” (Matt. 2:22). (2) “... he will not give him a snake instead (antî) of a fish, will he?” (Luke 11:11) With this in view, compare the following two parallel accounts in the Gospels which clearly point to the substitutionary work of Christ: (1) “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for (antî—in the place of) many” (Matt. 20:28). (2) “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for (antî) many” (Mark 10:45).

_Huper._ The most common meaning of _huper_ is “for the sake of”, but it may also be used like _anti_ to mean “in place of”. That _huper_ may mean “in the place of” is clear from the following passages:

- Philemon verse 13 provides a good illustration that _huper_ can be used in the sense of “in the place of”. Paul writes of Onesimus, the servant of Philemon and says: “whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf (huper) he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel”. Had the Apostle kept Onesimus with him, Onesimus would have served as a substitute for Philemon.
- Then in 2 Cor. 5:20 Paul says: “therefore we are ambassadors for (huper) Christ (in the place of Christ), as though God were entreating through us”. Since Christ is no longer on earth preaching the Gospel, believers are left here in His place as His ambassadors and representatives to entreat men to believe in the person and work of Christ.

The following are verses where _huper_ is used of the substitutionary death of Christ:

Rom. 5:8  “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for (huper) us”.

1 Cor. 15:3  “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for (huper) our sins according to the Scriptures”. 
2 Cor. 5:21 “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf (huper), that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”.

Heb. 2:9 “But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He might taste death for (huper) everyone”.

Heb. 2:9 tells us that Christ experienced death for every man and since man’s penalty for being a sinner is both spiritual and physical death, Christ experienced and partook of both in our place. When Jesus cried out “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me!”, He was speaking judicially of God as the holy and righteous Judge who had placed the iniquities of all humanity on Him and who had thereby turned His face from the Son while He was bearing our iniquity in our place. At this time Christ tasted death spiritually and was in some mysterious way cut off from the fellowship He had always known with the Father because He was bearing our sin (Isa. 53:4-11; 2 Cor. 5:21). After these dark hours on the cross Christ called out “it is finished”, meaning His redemptive work was accomplished, He had borne our sin. He then bowed His head, gave up His spirit and physically died. By His death on the cross, He paid the penalty for all mankind and He became our substitute.

In the Scripture the death of Christ is revealed to be a sacrifice for the sin of the entire world. For that reason, John the Baptist introduced Jesus with the words, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Jesus, in His death, was actually the substitute dying in the place of all men. Although “substitute” is not specifically a Biblical concept, the idea that Christ is the sinner’s substitute is constantly confirmed in Scripture. By His substitutionary death the unmeasured, righteous judgments of God against sinners were borne by Christ. The result of this substitution is itself as simple and definite as a transaction. The Saviour has already born the divine judgments against the sinner to the full satisfaction of God. By faith in Christ’s work the sinner is able to possess the forgiveness bought by Him more than 2000 years ago on the cross of Calvary.
5. Regeneration.

Though the word “regeneration” is only found twice (Matt. 19:28; Tit. 3:5), it is nonetheless an important doctrine and a concept that permeates many New Testament passages. Regeneration is specifically revealed as the direct work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-6; Tit. 3:5). The Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son as a result of the work of Christ on the cross. It is therefore a part of the reconciling work of Christ whereby man, who is spiritually dead, can have life and fellowship with God (John 7:37-39).

Regarding the barrier of sin between man and God, the regeneration is that part of the reconciling work of Christ which deals with man’s spiritual death. It deals with man’s need of spiritual life or the new birth (John 3:3-6; Eph. 2:1-4). Though it is primarily the work of the Holy Spirit, all three persons of the trinity seem to be involved in this impartation of new life. Jam. 1:17-18 connects the Father to regeneration as the One Who “brought forth” (apokueo, “to give birth to”). The Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, seems also to be involved in regeneration: “For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes” (John 5:21).

Regeneration is the supernatural action of God whereby the spiritual and eternal life of the Lord Jesus Christ, is imparted to a person through faith in Jesus Christ.

5.1. The Greek word for “regeneration” is palingenesia (from palin, “again, once more”, and genesis, “birth”) referring to “a new birth, a renewal, rebirth, or regeneration”.

5.2. It is used in Matt. 19:28 to describe the restored conditions that will exist during the millennial reign of Christ. In Tit. 3:5 the same word is also used to imply the bestowal of spiritual and eternal life to the believer on the foundation of God’s mercy.
5.3. While the word “regeneration” itself is used to describe spiritual regeneration only once in Tit. 3:5, the concept is clearly taught in a number of passages by a combination of other terms.

- John 1:13. “Who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” The Greek word for “born” is gennao, “to bring forth, give birth, and be born”. The context is clearly speaking of new spiritual birth by which men become the children of God (vs. 12).
- John 3:3. “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’” The words “born again” mean either “born again” or “born from above”. Actually, both ideas apply here. Because men are born spiritually dead, they need a new birth, one from above that can only be accomplished by God through the Holy Spirit.
- Also compare John 5:21; Eph. 2:5; Rom. 6:13; 2 Cor. 5:17 and Jam. 1:13.

5.4. Three facets of Regeneration.

- The New Birth: As a man is born physically by physical birth to human parents so also he must be born by spiritual birth to a spiritual parent whereby he or she becomes a child of God (Gal. 3:26; John 1:12; 3:3-6).
- A New Creation: Regeneration also views the born again believer as new spiritual creation of God created for good works. This calls attention to our need to operate out of our new life in Christ through the power of God (Rom. 6:4-14; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10).
- Spiritual Resurrection: Man is born spiritually dead in sin, but by regeneration the believer is made alive, spiritually resurrected, so to speak. This means he has spiritual life and can now have fellowship with God and can live for God in newness of life (Rom. 6:5, 13; Eph. 2:5-10; John 5:21-23). A new kind and quality of life is emphasised.

5.5. Regeneration is not:

- Conversion, as conversion is man’s action when turning to God. Regeneration is what God does for man to give him life.
• Sanctification or justification.
• Only an experience. It is the basis for personal experience with God as it imparts new life and new spiritual capacity.

5.6. The Dynamics of Regeneration.

• Faith is the human requirement. See John 1:12-13.
• The Scripture is paramount. The Bible provides the content one must believe so regeneration may take place (1 Pet. 1:23).
• God is the cause of regeneration. He regenerates men according to His will (John 1:13; Jam. 1:13).
• The Holy Spirit is the agent of regeneration (Tit. 3:5; John 3:6).
• The Time of Regeneration: In Reformed theology, regeneration precedes faith, for it is argued, a sinner must be given new life in order to be able to believe, but the emphasis of the Bible is that one becomes a child of God through faith. If there is new life through regeneration, why does one need to believe? Without any doubt, faith and regeneration occur simultaneously. Regeneration is instantaneous and takes place the moment faith in Christ is stirred up. It is an instantaneous act of God which bestows new and eternal life.

5.7. The Results of Regeneration.

• The believer receives spiritual and eternal life (Eph. 2:1, 1 John 5:11).
• Activates a new nature and capacity for fellowship with God (John 3:6; 2 Pet. 1:3-4).

5.8. Regeneration also:

• Emphasises one’s spiritual and eternal death apart from faith in Christ and the new life only He gives.
• Emphasises one’s total helplessness to be a part the kingdom of God or to change one’s life without God’s supernatural intervention through Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit.
6. Justification and Imputation.

In the parable of the religious, self-righteous Pharisee and the humble publican (tax collector), Christ declared that the publican, contrary to the Pharisee, was justified through his faith in the Levitical offerings which alone could propitiate the holy character of God (Luke 18:10-14). In Rom. 3:25-26 the Apostle Paul speaks of Jesus Christ as the means of propitiation and then explains how the death of Christ demonstrated God’s righteousness so that He might remain just and at the same time be free to justify the one who has faith in Jesus Christ. But what is the meaning of justification and what does it involve?

Justification and imputation are those aspects of reconciliation that deal with the barrier of man’s lack of righteousness. Sometimes a simple definition of justification is provided stating that it is “just as if I’d never sinned”. This definition however, misses the essence of the truth of justification. Being acceptable before God speaks of more than just the removal of our sins.

The barrier consists not only of man’s sin, but of man’s righteousness, which lacks God’s perfect righteousness. Isaiah declares that all of our righteous deeds are as filthy rags in the sight of the perfect holiness of God (Isa. 64:6). Man not only needs the removal of his sin, but also the addition of perfect righteousness, the righteousness of Christ. God’s solution to this problem is found in the doctrines of “imputation” and “justification” as set forth in the Bible.

Justification Defined.

Justification is a judicial or a forensic concept and is therefore related to God as the righteous Judge of all the earth (Gen. 18:25; Deut. 32:4; 2 Tim. 4:8). Ryrie writes:

“If God, the Judge, is without injustice and completely righteous in all His decisions, then how can He announce a sinner righteous? And sinners we all are. There are only three options open to God as sinners stand in His
courtroom. He must condemn them, compromise His own righteousness to receive them as they are, or He can change them into righteous people. If He can exercise the third option, then He can announce them righteous, which is justification. But any righteousness the sinner has must be actual, not fictitious; real, not imagined; acceptable by God’s standards, and not a whit short. If this can be accomplished, then, and only then, can He justify”.

Job stated the problem accurately when he asked, “How can a man be in the right before God?”

Justification answers this question posed by Job. Doctrinally, justification is the judicial act of God, based on the work of Jesus Christ, which justly declares and treats as righteous the one who believes in Jesus Christ and who stands by imputation in the righteousness of Christ.

Scripture reveals a number of important aspects to the process of justification:

6.1. The Plan and Manifestation of Justification Righteousness (Rom. 3:21).

Through the Gospel of the New Testament, this righteousness from God has now, since the coming of Christ, been revealed. This was the fullness of time when God brought the suffering Saviour into a sin-ridden world to deal with man’s sin. Yet, though revealed more clearly than before, this Gospel message is not new.

God revealed His righteousness in many ways before the full revelation of the Gospel. He did so in His Law, His judgments against sin, by the preaching of the prophets, and by His blessings on the obedient. These were all ways by which God revealed His righteousness. Even more, this Gospel message in which righteousness is received by faith was witnessed to and anticipated throughout the Old Testament in the many prophecies of the Messiah who must not only reign on the throne of David, but must first suffer and die for the sin of mankind.

From Gen. 3:15, and continuing through the entire Old Testament, witness is given to salvation by faith in the coming Messiah. God bore witness to His
righteousness in the Old Testament sacrifices, the tabernacle, the priesthood, the prophecies, the types, and significant passages like Isaiah 53. But though the Law could witness to God’s righteousness, it could never provide it for sinful man, “weak as it was in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3).

The righteousness from God is independent of the Law. Note that the words “apart from the Law” are literally, “apart from law”. Law (noun) is anarthrous, that is, without the article. It is broader than just the Law of the Old Testament. It refers to any kind of law whether it is the Law of the Old Testament, or the law of one’s conscience (Rom. 2:14-15), or even the righteous principles of the Sermon on the Mount.

6.2. The Prerequisite and medium for Justification Righteousness (Rom. 3:22).

Righteousness comes through the medium of faith in the person and work of Christ. “Even” of the New American Standard Bible represents the Greek conjunction de. It is transitional and introduces this verse as an explanation which points us to the channel by which man may receive this righteousness from God.

“The righteousness of God.” “Of God” is a genitive of source. It means either “the righteousness derived from, sourced in,” or “dependent on God”.

“Through faith in Jesus Christ” points us to the medium or the channel. Righteousness from God is received “by means of” faith in Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, all men end up trusting in something, if only in their own works or record; but the Apostle’s argument is that the only means of having God’s righteousness is through trusting in Jesus Christ.


God can show no favouritism with people since He is perfect holiness and since all have sinned and fallen short of His holiness. As the Judge, He must deal with their actual righteousness.
6.4. The Price of Justification Righteousness (Rom. 3:24-25).

Although justification is free to everyone who believes, without cost, it was not provided without cost. The price paid to redeem us from the slave block of sin was nothing short of the death of Christ who alone could satisfy (propitiate) the holy character of God.

6.5. The Place or Position of Justification Righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21).

When a person receives Christ, he is placed into Christ. This is what makes him righteous. We are made the righteousness of God in Him. This righteousness alone overcomes our desperate, sinful condition, and measures up to all the demands of God’s holiness.

6.6. The Declaration of Justification Righteousness (Rom. 3:25)

God must be perfectly consistent with Himself. He cannot break His own Law nor violate His own nature. “God is love” (1 John 4:8), and “God is light” (1 John 1:5). A God of love wants to forgive sinners, but a God of holiness must judge sin and uphold His righteous character as witnessed in the Law.

How can God be both “just” and also be “the justifier” of those who are sinners? The answer is found in the person and work of Jesus Christ. When Jesus took upon Himself the wrath of God on the cross for the sins of the world, He fully fulfilled the demands of God’s holiness as demonstrated in the Law. At the same time, He fully expressed the love of God’s heart (John 3:16). As the book of Hebrews explains; the animal sacrifices in the Old Testament never took away sin, but when Jesus died, His death was backdated all the way back to Adam and took care of all the sins of the past, especially of those who were believers. No one (including satan) could accuse God of being unjust or unfair because He appeared to pass over the sins of Old Testament saints.
6.7. The Proof of Justification Righteousness (Rom. 4:24).

The words, “and was raised because of our justification” points to the resurrection of Jesus Christ as that crucial event following the cross which gave proof of God’s acceptance of the death of Christ for our sin.

*Justification vs. Sanctification.*

*Sanctify* means to “set apart”. Sanctification includes: positional (unchangeable), experiential (progressive), and ultimate (complete: being in God’s presence).

- Positional sanctification (Rom. 6:1-11) is the basis for experiential or progressive sanctification (Rom. 6:12-14).

- Experiential sanctification is the process whereby God makes the believer more and more like Jesus Christ through our union with Christ and the indwelling Spirit. Like justification, sanctification is the work of God that must also be appropriated by faith. Experiential sanctification may change from day to day. Justification never changes. When the sinner believes in Christ as his or her personal Saviour, God declares him or her to be righteous, and that declaration will never be abolished nor need to be repeated.

Justification, on the other hand, looks at our eternal position in Christ (positional sanctification) whereas sanctification, depending on the context, may look at our experiential condition from day to day. Justification exempts us from the Great White Throne judgment, whereas experiential sanctification prepares us for the Bema, the Judgment Seat of Christ, and the blessings of rewards. Justification also removes the guilt and penalty of sin for us. Experiential sanctification removes the growth and power of sin in and over us. According to justification Christ died for sin’s penalty, whereas in sanctification He died unto sin’s power.
6.8. Imputation.

Imputation is the calculation or “charging to the account” of one what properly belongs to the account of another. Because of the person and work of Christ, God imputes or credits our sin to the person of Jesus Christ and imputes His righteousness to our account through our faith in Him. The key word used of here is the verb *logizomai* which means “to count, reckon, credit, charge to the account of another”. Rom. 4:3-8 “For what does the Scripture say? ‘And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned (*logizomai*) to him as righteousness’. Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned (*logizomai*) as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned (*logizomai*) as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing upon the man to whom God reckons (*logizomai*) righteousness apart from works: ‘Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, And whose sins have been covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account (*logizomai*)”.

In addition 2 Cor. 5:21 reads: “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”.

In these verses, we clearly see both the negative, our sin imputed to Christ who was made sin for us along with the non-imputation of our sin to us, and the positive, His righteousness reckoned or imputed to the account of those who trust in Christ.

The key word in the doctrine of justification and imputation is the verb *dikaioo* (*dikaiovw*). This verb ends in oo (ow), and verbs which end in oo (ow), are usually causative and mean “to make the object of the verb into the idea of the word”. For instance *ikanoo* (*ikanovw*) means “to make sufficient, empower someone for something”. But when a verb is formed from an adjective with a moral or spiritual connotation it means “to regard as, treat as, pronounce, or declare as”. Thus *dikaioo* does not mean to make righteous, but to “declare, treat as righteous” when in essence the object may be just the opposite. Thus, the justified sinner is still a sinner and not without personal sins, but he is still
viewed and treated as righteous by God and justly so because of the gift of Christ’s righteousness by imputation. The believer stands in the righteousness of Jesus Christ and his sins are not imputed to him. Not only are his sins taken away, but Christ’s perfect righteousness has been added to the account of the believer.

Justification also does not mean “to make righteous”. If it did, the believing sinner would never again sin because he would have been made constitutionally righteous so he could not and would not sin. That condition will occur in our ultimate condition of sanctification at the resurrection, but not now. Justification means that God accepts us and views us as perfectly righteous in Christ even though in our experience we will commit acts of sin or unrighteousness.

The failure to make this distinction has throughout history led people into various works systems by which they tried to become righteous and acceptable before God. Our acceptance before God comes through the gift of Christ’s righteousness to the believing sinner. Justification is by faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:19-25; 4:1-12).

It is of great importance to understand that there are two kinds of righteousness. There is the perfect and absolute righteousness of Christ which God gives to anyone who will believe and trust in Jesus Christ as his or her Saviour (Rom. 3:22-24). There is also the righteousness of men, which can never even come close to 100% in comparison to the standard of God’s righteousness. No matter how good or religious, all fall short of the righteousness which God requires (Rom. 3:23). Only the righteousness of Christ (which man can receive freely by faith) can give him acceptance with God.

The Apostle Paul who had been one of the most religious men who ever lived said in relation to these two types of righteousness:

Phil. 3:7-9 “But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in
view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith”.

When Paul saw the glory of Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus he came to realize that all his works of righteousness or human efforts were no better than refuse as far as providing a standing before God. Or as Isaiah put it, “. . . And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment . . .”. (Isa. 64:6).

7. Personal application.

In the preceding sections we have seen the marvellous provision of God whereby men might be saved. In His grace and mercy, God has removed those things that separated man from God. Yet, while God has done this, there still remains another barrier. This is the barrier of Christ Himself and His work on the cross. For unless one personally trusts in Jesus Christ and His death on the cross as the sole solution for his sin, he remains cut off and separated from God. There is only one sin today which can keep a person separated from God and lost, the sin of rejection of Christ or unbelief in Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The following verses of Scripture illustrate this fact.

John 3:17-18 “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God”.

John 3:36 “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him”.

John 12:48 “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day”.

26
John 14:12 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father”.

Acts 4:12 “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved”.

Eph. 2:8-9 “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast”.

If you have never reached the point where put your trust in Jesus Christ, may we invite you to do so right now. He has removed the barrier that creates separation between you and God and an abundant life of fellowship and significance as a child of God, but you must personally receive Jesus Christ by faith. Your failure to personally trust in Christ as your Saviour is the only thing that stands between you and a personal relationship with God so that you can begin to experience the abundant life of Christ and deliverance over your sin, the powers of darkness, and the patterns that dominate your life. Just pray this prayer in faith and we assure you by the promises of the Word of God, you will be saved and enter into the family of God as a child of God, born anew by the Spirit of God.

“Father, I understand that I am a sinner and separated from you, but that Jesus Christ has died for my sin and offers me eternal life and an abundant life that can turn my life around through a relationship with Him. Right now I turn from myself and place my trust in Him as my personal Saviour. Thank you heavenly Father for saving me and giving me eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ.”

If you have prayed this prayer, you are now a child of God, but you are also a babe in Christ who needs to grow through spiritual nurture. You need to be discipled, to have fellowship with other Bible believing Christians in a Church that truly teaches the Bible so you learn the Word of God. These things are crucial for your spiritual health and growth.
1 Pet. 2:2 like newborn babes long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.

2 Pet. 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

2 Tim. 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
8. Bibliography

1. Bible Encyclopaedia.
2. Bible Study Guide - members In Christ Church.
3. Nicky van der Westhuizen & Morris Cerullo Correspondence Course.
4. A.F.M. - Pan African - Pastoral Course.
5. Full Gospel Church of God Correspondence Pastoral Course.
7. Amplified Bible.
10. (http://bible.org/article/soteriology-doctrine-salvation)
9. Assignment.

1. Describe briefly what you understand under the subject of Soteriology? (10)

2. Describe Predestination and the two extreme views that are held, and what the Biblical perspective is in this regard. (25)

3. Write short notes on:

   3.1. Reconciliation.
   3.2. Justification.
   3.3. Salvation.
   3.4. Imputation.
   3.5. Substitution.
   3.6. Regeneration. (55)

4. Explain the personal implication of this study on your life. (10)

Total [100]