

Salvation and the Blood of Christ

Objective

To understand how a person can attain salvation.

References

“Salvation in the Orthodox Concept [Understanding]” by H.H. Pope Shenouda

Scriptural Verse

“Believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31)

Lesson Outlines

The Blood of Christ is the Reason We Have Access To Salvation

- ❖ If it wasn't for the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, there would be no Salvation.
- ❖ The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is ready to save, but does not save you without yourself.

To be worthy, to deserve the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be saved from hell, or to have salvation, you must meet three basic criteria:

- 1) Faith
- 2) Good Works = Being Good
- 3) Sacraments

Faith

- ❖ Those who do good works apart from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will not be saved.
- ❖ “Believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31)
- ❖ “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” (John 3:16).

Works, Deeds

- ❖ “Those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the condemnation of death” (John 5:29).
- ❖ Being good, having good works, is proof that we believe in God and that we obey Him.
- ❖ “You will know them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:16, 17).
- ❖ It shows we are born of God: “whoever is born of God does not commit sin” (1 John 3:9). The way you act, your conduct, shows whether you are truly a Christian or not.
- ❖ It is also evidence that we love God. It says in the Bible: “And this is love, that we walk after his commandments” (2 John 6).

Grace and Striving

- ❖ A person cannot be saved through his own efforts. You need *your part* and *God's part* to go to Heaven.
- ❖ “Without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5)
- ❖ Grace is the work of the Holy Spirit in conjunction with your efforts.

Striving

- ❖ It is absolutely necessary, as the Bible teaches us:
- ❖ “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1).
- ❖ “You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin” (Hebrews 12:4)
- ❖ “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all” (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

Sacraments

You need four of the seven:

- ❖ Baptism
- ❖ Chrism,
- ❖ Communion,
- ❖ Repentance and Confession, and

It is through the shedding of His Blood on the Cross that we now have access to Salvation. The door is open, but we have to walk in. The Lord Jesus Christ has set the path by which we walk into salvation, and that path is the Church. He administers the means of salvation through the Church. Without the Church, no salvation is possible.

Through the Sacraments, the person is united to the Lord Jesus Christ in a holy marriage. the Lord Jesus Christ is the bridegroom and the Church is the bride. Simply put, He married the Church. Only those who are part of the Church are united to Him in this spiritual union. Through this marriage we can claim God the Father as our own Father and we now have a share in the inheritance in God's Kingdom. Just as in a regular Orthodox Marriage, the Holy Spirit mysteriously unites the two individuals to become one. We are united to the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit as well—when we first become a part of the Church through baptism and chrismation, and then by conforming our image to Him and shedding off our sins through our repentance and confession. Then, we get physically and spiritually infused with the Lord Jesus Christ when we take His Body and Blood in communion.

Baptism - Water

- ❖ The Lord Jesus Christ told Nicodemus, “Most assuredly I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Then He

- explains this further, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a man is born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God” (John 3:5).
- ❖ “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20).

Chrismation - Spirit

- ❖ When Peter was calling the Jews to be baptized, he told them: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).
- ❖ There is a story in the Bible about people from Samaria. When the apostles were at Jerusalem, they heard that they were baptized but hadn’t received the Holy Spirit, so Peter and John went to them and laid their hands on them, and the people received the Holy Spirit. If Baptism were enough, they wouldn’t have cared about going all the way to Samaria to just lay their hands on all those people.

Communion

- ❖ “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him” (John 6:53-58)

Repentance and Confession

- ❖ “Unless you repent, you will all also perish” (Luke 13:3)

Conclusion

Three things we need for our salvation: Faith, Sacraments, and Deeds. This allows us to enjoy eternal life that was prepared for us by the shedding of the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Activities/Discussion Points

1. Why didn’t someone else other than the Lord Jesus die? An Angel or another Human?
2. What was the Sin committed by Adam?
3. What was the nature of man before the Original Sin?
4. What was the nature of man after the Original Sin?
5. Is it possible that a believer should perish?
6. What if someone asks you, **Are You Saved?** What is your response?