



Salvation as Wholeness

Isaiah 53:4-5

Message Notes, January 29, 2017

We are all broken, but brokenness is not the end of our story (His story for us). God desires to heal us and make us whole. This journey of wholeness begins with salvation – which is much more than a “ticket” for getting into heaven after we die. The fullness of salvation is captured in the Greek *sozo* – “to save, deliver and make whole.” The inherent question when we talk about “being saved” is: To be saved from *what*? Yes, from hell, but from much more than that – from sin, from brokenness, from guilt, from shame. God revealed, prophetically through Isaiah, the fullness of the salvation Jesus would bring.

Isaiah 53:4-5

- Surely he took up our infirmities – sufferings typically associated with physical ailments and disease.
- He carried our sorrows – sufferings of mental anguish and heartache.
- He was pierced for our transgressions – one of the four words referring to sin; here meaning – broken covenant and relationship out of rebellion.
- He was crushed for our iniquities – another of the four words for sin – the intentional bending/twisting from what is right and holy.

The fruit of His sacrifice for us

- He brought us peace – not just the absence of conflict but *Shalom*, the Hebrew word for wholeness.
- By His stripes, we are healed – Raffa (God, our healer) restores physical health and also any broken things in us that need repairing.

Scripture speaks of salvation in three tenses:

1. Past – justification See Ephesians 2:4-5 – “have been saved.” It’s done, completed, in a past moment in time.
2. Present (progressive) – sanctification. 1 Corinthians 1:18 – “are being saved.” A process God is working in us by His Spirit. ... Philippians 2:12 – “working out” our salvation (over time).
3. Future – glorification. Philippians 1:6 – How does this verse express the future tense of our salvation?

At the point of believing in Jesus, and trusting in his saving death and resurrection, we are forgiven and justified from our sins. In that moment, God declares us righteous and we have a new identity in Christ; we become God’s sons and daughters forever. We also receive His Holy Spirit into our spirits.

For the rest of our earthly lives, by faith and surrender, we yield to the Holy Spirit, who works within us to transform us into the character of Jesus (the fruit of the Spirit – see Galatians 5:22). This up and down, life-long process is sanctification. God is making us to be what He has declared us to be when we first believed.

When we physically die and enter heaven, we will be freed from all the effects of sin. We will be perfected. We will be whole! This is glorification. The fullness of our redemption.



The worst of faulty thinking happens when we choose only one side of a both/and biblical truth. In this case, if we focus only on justification, we will not continually yield our lives to God and experience the ongoing healing and freedom of God's salvation. If we hold only to sanctification and neglect the assurance of what Jesus has done for us at the cross, we will live with striving and anxiety that our salvation depends on our own efforts to make ourselves righteous.

The journey of wholeness has this same "three tenses" nature to it:

1. God may heal/deliver us from a brokenness immediately and miraculously (in a moment).
2. God may heal/deliver us from a brokenness through a process (over time). For example, Jeremiah 29:11 promises "the plans God has for His people for a hope and a future," but the context of this verse is that they will live in Babylonian exile for 70 years before this promise is fulfilled.)
3. God may not heal/deliver us from some instances of brokenness until we enter the glory of heaven.

How does Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) reveal this hard truth of God not always delivering us in the way we want? What is God's assurance to Paul in this tough situation?

In salvation, forgiveness of our sins is immediate, but God does not always immediately remove the consequences of our sin, and sometimes our total wholeness doesn't come until our glory in heaven.

Let's be honest: This can be difficult and even confusing for us.

Can we agree:

1. God is good.
2. God is powerful.
3. We will ask boldly by faith (for healing and wholeness).
4. We will trust God unconditionally.
5. We will receive, with gratitude, God's provision of healing or His sustaining grace.

One final point: Counter intuitively, we enter into salvation and wholeness by dying to self. We don't come to Jesus just so He can make our lives work. We come to Him for Him! He is the bread of life. Our true life and wholeness are in Him. Salvation and wholeness are born out of surrender to Jesus as Lord.

Reflection Questions

1. Is there anything in this message that was confusing to you?
2. What one thing has most stirred your heart from this message?
3. In your faith journey, have you tended to lean on one side or the other of the "both/and" nature of salvation (accenting either past justification or present sanctification)? If so, how has this tended to undermine wholeness in your life?
4. Under "Can we agree," how have you experienced the potential tension of Nos. 3 and 4?
5. In the same way, how have you experienced the strain, confusion, perhaps even disillusionment inherent in the "or" of No. 5?
6. Can you give testimony to God's grace in the situations of either of the two questions above?
7. Is there a place of brokenness in your life that God is surfacing and you want/need to share it in the safe place of your supportive group?