

Salvation

The theological concept of salvation is relatively simple; yet some believers struggle to understand what it means beyond the generic “deliverance from danger or difficulty.” The Christian believes salvation is specifically “deliverance from the power of sin and restoration of right relationship with God.”

Salvation cannot be earned. There is nothing the believer can do to achieve it. Salvation is God’s gracious gift to us originated in Jesus Christ and His atonement for our sins on the cross. Christ’s crucifixion offers salvation to all who accept Him as the risen Son of God. With that confession, a person is saved. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that who so ever believed in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) Here is how salvation happens. But that is not the end of the story. We receive the gift of salvation with an understanding that it frees us to turn from the sin that held us captive; with God’s grace we then turn toward a life that is the opposite of the one we lived before.

The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church reads, *“When a person, by the grace of God, accepts God’s “pardoning love,” he or she enters into a transformational process of salvation.”* In other words, God’s salvation, a “done deal,” by Jesus’ crucifixion, is ours to claim; but also ours to maintain. And perhaps it is in this stage of the Christian journey that the concept of salvation gives us pause. How do we continue the process of transformation offered by this gift? God’s Word is the best resource. We affirm with the Psalmist, *“The Lord is my light and my salvation.”* (Psalm 27:1) We acknowledge *“He alone is my rock and my salvation.”* (Psalm 62:2) And we hear when Paul writes, *“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and act according to his good purpose.”* (Philippians 2:12-13)

Salvation – Atonement, Justification, Reconciliation or Redemption – whatever you may call it, is God’s gracious gift to all. If you are struggling with understanding your salvation, and need to speak with someone, please email care@cascadeumc.org. If you are feeling anxious and need to share your thoughts immediately, contact the church office at (404) 691-5770 during office hours. After 6:00 p.m. and on weekends, contact our on-call Pastor at (404) 313-4225.