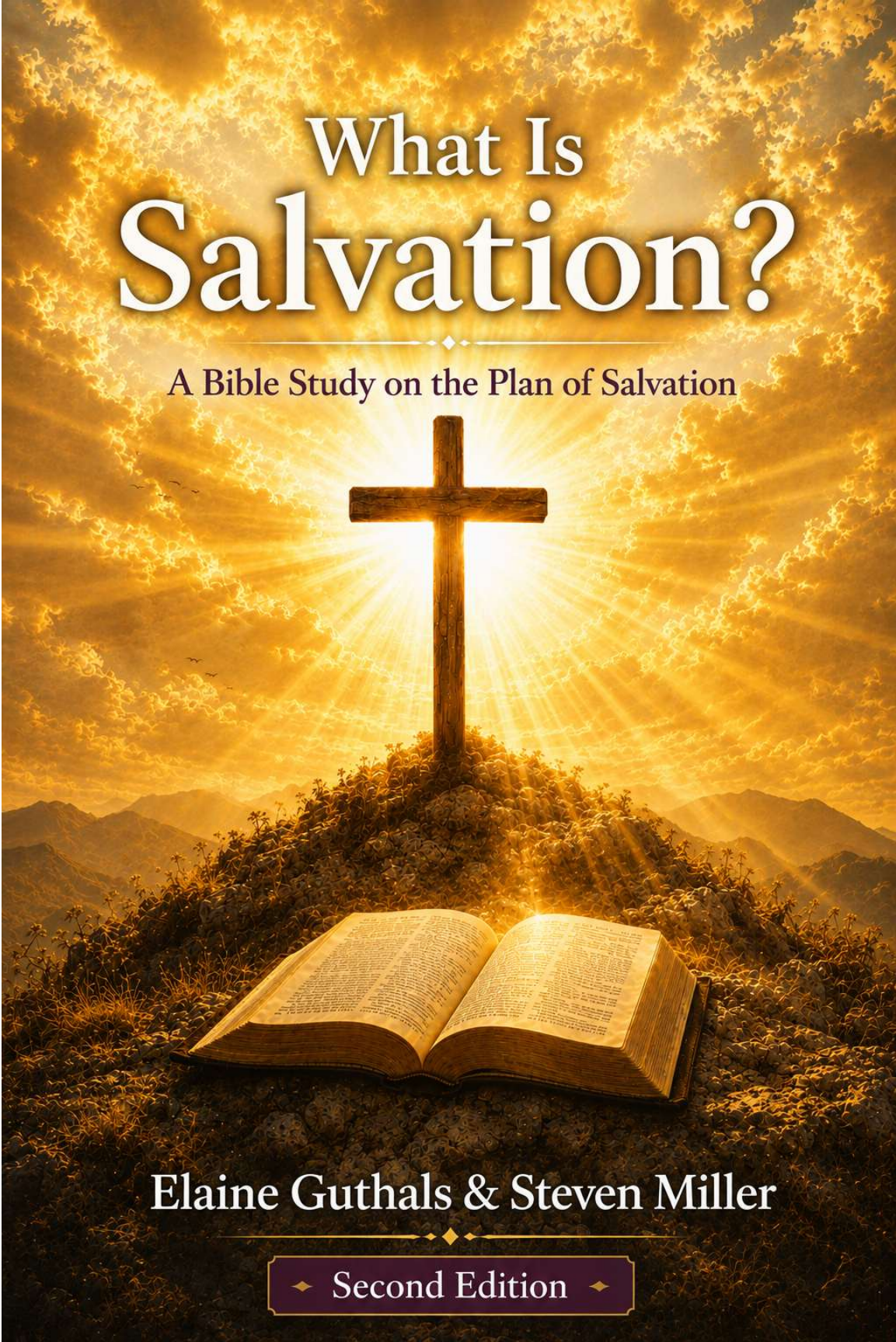




What Is Salvation?

A Bible Study on the Plan of Salvation

Elaine Guthals & Steven Miller

◆ Second Edition ◆



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PREVIEW

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PREVIEW

Introduction

Understanding Salvation

Salvation is one of the most important themes in the Bible. Yet many people are unsure about what it truly means or how it is received. This five-week study explores what Scripture teaches about salvation — why it is necessary, what it is not, what it truly is, and how we respond to God's gracious offer.

In order to understand salvation, we must first understand the gospel. The gospel is the good news of what God has done to restore our relationship with Him. In simple terms:

- God created us to have a relationship with Him.
- Sin separated us from God.
- Jesus died and rose again to pay the penalty for our sin and offer us the gift of salvation.
- We must respond in faith and repentance to that gift.

The Bible speaks about salvation throughout both the Old and New Testaments. This study will examine several key passages that help us understand God's plan of salvation more clearly.

This mini-Bible study includes five lessons designed for personal reflection or group conversation. Each lesson includes teaching sections and discussion questions designed to help readers understand and apply Scripture.

Participants are encouraged to read the scripture passages, consider the explanations provided, and discuss the questions together as they grow in their understanding of God's Plan of Salvation.

It can be used for personal study, small groups, or discipleship classes. Each week includes teaching sections and discussion.

Throughout this study, Scripture passages are sometimes quoted directly and sometimes referenced for readers to look up in their own Bibles.

Readers are encouraged to read the full passages in their preferred Bible translation in order to see the surrounding context and gain a fuller understanding of God's Word.

PREVIEW

Week 1

The Problem: Sin and Separation

Focus of This Week

Understanding what humanity needs salvation begins with understanding sin and its consequences. God created the world good — sin free — but human disobedience broke our relationship with Him. This week we will explore why salvation is necessary.

Key Scripture

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it” (Eph. 2: 8-9 NLT)

Before You Begin

What do you believe is the biggest problem facing humanity today?

If you are searching for God — i.e., a non-believer — this week’s lesson helps explain why Christians believe salvation is necessary.

If you are seeking God — i.e., are already a believer — this week is a reminder of what God rescued us from and why His grace is so extraordinary.

What Is Salvation?

God created the universe. Jesus and the Holy Spirit were also instrumental.

God created the world good and pure. But He knew that humans would eventually choose to disobey Him — and He made us anyway.

That disobedience – called sin – broke our relationship with Him. We became sinful and impure.

That is why God put Jesus – as the Light of the world – into the world first thing. “Then God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light” (Gen. 1: 3 NLT).

Even though at this point – before the foundation of the world – creation was pure, God didn’t want to build it without the chance of redeeming it.

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We don’t know how long it was before humans committed the first sin. But they did. They were separated from God, and so are we. Because we are guilty of sin, we are condemned to judgment.

- “... Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (Mt. 10: 28 NLT).
- “You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way” (Mt. 7: 13 NLT).

To ensure that separation did not stretch through eternity, there had to be some process to restore our relationships with God. This process is called salvation. (And yes, it is a process – in more ways than one!)

The Plan of Salvation is truly a God-thing. God designed and implemented it and will bring it to its complete fruition.

PREVIEW

What is salvation? Salvation is God's work of rescuing us from the consequences of sin and restoring our relationship with Him. These consequences are spiritual death and separation from God.

"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son" (Jn. 3: 16-18 NLT).

Humanity is already condemned because of sin. Salvation comes when we believe in Jesus and receive Him as our Savior and Redeemer.

Deliverance is only available to us by the grace of God. It is an unmerited favor that He bestows on us because of His great love for us.



So, what kind of plan is salvation?

It is a voluntary plan. Because He loves us, God allows us to determine whether or not we are going to accept the gift of salvation. The churchy word for that is free will.

It didn't take long for the first two humans, Adam and Eve, to choose to disobey God. This original sin is generally identified as The Fall.

The Plan of Salvation was introduced to humans in the Garden of Eden. "And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel" (Gen. 3: 15 NLT).



Discussion Questions

1. How does it make you feel that Jesus was designated Savior before creation was even started and He was the first thing placed in the world?
2. What does/would your salvation mean to you?
3. What process did you go/are you going through searching for God?
4. Is it better that the Plan of Salvation is voluntary, or should God have fixed the problem right away?

What does this Plan look like? Next week we'll look at what salvation isn't.



Continue Growing in God's Word

Thank you for taking the time to study what the Bible teaches about salvation. Understanding God's plan of redemption is only the beginning of a lifelong journey of walking with Christ.

Studying God's Word is a lifelong journey. If this study has helped you better understand the Bible's teaching about salvation, we encourage you to continue growing in your faith. Continue seeking Him through:

- reading God's Word
- prayer
- fellowship with other believers
- faithful obedience to His will

Share This Study

If this study has been helpful to you, consider sharing it with a friend, small group, or church class.

Studying God's Word together is one of the best ways to grow in faith and encourage one another.

About the Authors

Elaine Guthals is a Bible teacher, author, and founder of Seeking God with Elaine. Through careful research and a passion for God's Word, she invites readers to study Scripture in its historical, covenantal, and biblical context and discover a deeper walk with Christ through Ancient Paths Publishing.

Steven H. Miller is a pastor, Bible teacher, and author dedicated to helping believers understand and apply God's Word with clarity and faithfulness. Together with his wife, Elaine, he co-founded Ancient Paths Publishing to produce biblically faithful resources that encourage believers to know God more deeply and walk faithfully with Christ."

May God bless you as you grow in your relationship with Him.

Stay Connected



You can find additional Bible studies, devotions, and teaching resources through the following ministries.

Resources from Elaine Guthals

Seeking God with Elaine provides Bible studies and devotions designed to help believers grow in their understanding of God's Word and their relationship with God. Visit www.seekinggodwithelaine.com

Resources from Steven Miller

Steven Miller Ministries focuses on teaching the Word of God and helping believers grow in faithful discipleship and service to Christ. Visit <https://stevenhmler.blogspot.com>