

Lent Course 2010

Discussion on 'Hope of Salvation' 24 March 2010

1. The word salvation means 'rescue', being delivered from something! But in biblical terms, it is not just about being saved *from* something. When you think of salvation, what are we saved from and what are we saved *for*?
2. Read: Romans 8: 18-25. The biblical vision of salvation is not just about us being saved. What does the apostle Paul mean when he says that the whole creation will be saved?
3. In most people's church experience they are taught that salvation and judgment are polar opposites. N.T. Wright says this is not the case. What do you think Wright is getting at when he says that salvation and judgment are similar?
4. Read: Acts 17: 22-32. When Jesus was raised from the dead on that first Easter, it was a sign of God's power to sort things out! God passed judgment on all the sin of the world. It was as if God was saying, "This is what I will do for the whole world some day and Jesus is the one through whom I will do it!" How is Jesus the one through whom all our messes can be sorted out and all of our sins cleansed? God is utterly committed to set the world right in the end. This doctrine, like that of resurrection itself, is held firmly in place by the belief in God as creator, on the one side and the belief in his goodness, on the other.
5. When God created the world, he put people here to reflect his image and wise order. How can believers reflect the glory, presence, and image of God into the dark and confused places of this world?
6. As you think of the life of Jesus, what are some specific things about the way he lived that show he was the perfect human being? What are examples of things he did that point to what we should do?
7. The risen Jesus is both the model for the Christian's future body and the means by which it comes about. Read: 1 Corinthians 15: 21-28. Paul talks about Jesus' resurrection and our own. Until this final consummation, we are in a cosmic battle with evil. What are some of the ways Christians should battle the evil systems in our world?
8. In the resurrection of Jesus is the announcement that God has already won the battle. How might we face the pain, struggle, and evil in this world differently if we lived with confident assurance that Jesus has already assured the victory over them?
9. Read: 2 Corinthians 5: 17 - 21. What does it mean to be God's new creation, and what is one way you can live out this 'new-creation life' in the coming weeks?
10. Read: Ephesians 2: 8-10. God's people are not saved *by* good works but saved *for* good works! How might your life look different in one of the following areas if you committed to do good works, for the glory of God, on a regular basis?
 - In your marriage
 - In your workplace
 - In your local church
 - In your neighbourhood
 - Somewhere else you frequent
11. Wright suggests that Christians should be people who: make the world come alive/ bring texture colour, create art, write books, open new possibilities, infuse joy, instil love, bring hope. What are some ways you see Christians doing this? What are some fresh new ways we can bring this kind of God-breathed goodness into the world? Salvation is not 'going to heaven' but 'being raised in life in God's new heaven and new earth'.