

Glossary of Salvation Terms

Adoption: The judicial placement of the new believer into the family of God as an adult son, with all the rights and privileges that come with that standing. All believers are adopted into God's family.

Apostasy: When a person who used to profess faith in Christ rejects Him and now professes to be a non-believer. It is someone who has defected from the faith and rebelled against it.

Apostate: A person who has committed **apostasy**.

Arminianism: A branch of reformed, evangelical theology that emphasizes man's free will, God's loving character, unlimited atonement, synergism, depravity of man, prevenient grace, justification by faith alone. Variations deny eternal security. Variations accept the governmental theory of the atonement.¹

Arminian: person who holds to **Arminianism**, whether fully or in part.

Assurance: A person's personal certainty of their own salvation. If a person has many doubts about their salvation, they do not at that time have assurance. See **eternal security**.

Atonement: The cross-work of Christ whereby he addressed the wrath of God against sin, the bondage of the believer to sin, the enmity of God against sinners, and and guilt of sin. In his death, he provided for full propitiation, redemption, reconciliation, and expiation.

Baptism, Spirit: The work of Christ, through His Spirit, at the moment of salvation, by which the Spirit places the new believer into the body of Christ and into union with Christ. This work of the Spirit is unique to believers in the church age, starting with Pentecost.

Baptism, Water: Immersion of a believer into water, in obedience to Christ's command in Matthew 28:18-20. It **symbolizes** the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. As such, it **pictures** the believer's old man dying and the life of the new man. In water baptism, salvation is not obtained, nor are sins washed away.

Baptist. A Christian who is distinguished from others by belief in water baptism by immersion for believers (not for infants). Baptists also believe the authority of the Bible, autonomy of the local church, priesthood of the believer, two offices in the church's government (pastor and deacon), individual soul liberty, saved church membership, two ordinances (water baptism by immersion and the Lord's supper), and separation of church and state. Some Baptists are Arminian; others are Calvinist. Baptists in the United States most frequently hold to **cessationist** beliefs.

Calling, general: When the gospel is proclaimed.

Calling, effectual: When the Spirit of God convicts an individual of his or her sin, and convinces that person of their need of the gospel of Jesus Christ. At this point variations exist: either the person is enabled to believe, is illuminated, or is regenerated.

Calvinism, five-point: Calvinist who believes total depravity, unconditional personal election,

¹ See the book <https://www.amazon.com/Arminian-Theology-Realities-Roger-Olson/dp/0830828419>

limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints. Most five-point Calvinists are wholehearted supporters of evangelism. Some fail to be evangelistic in practice, but that is a problem shared by many Christians. This is not the same as **hyper-Calvinism**.

Calvinism, Hyper: Calvinism taken to an extreme in which universal evangelism is denied. These say that all of mankind does *not* have the duty to repent and believe—because all of the non-elect cannot do that. They say that it is wrong for a pastor to address unconverted people by calling on them to repent and believe the gospel.

Calvinism: See **five-point Calvinism**.

Calvinism, Moderate: Term used to refer to a form of Calvinism in which not all five points are accepted. For instance, a four-point Calvinist, who does not believe in limited atonement, might call himself a moderate Calvinist. Others may believe three or fewer of the points; they may call themselves moderate calvinists because they disagree with much of **Arminian** teaching.

Calvinist: a person who holds to Calvinism, whether fully or in part.

Calvinistic: adjective that describes a person or church or doctrine as agreeing with Calvinism.

Cessationism, cessationist: Belief that miraculous gifts such as healings, tongues and interpretation of tongues all ceased around the end of the first century and are not present today. Similarly, the gifted offices of apostle and prophet have ceased today.

Confession: In English, this can refer to admitting sins to God or others. It can also refer to a statement of faith, much like a doctrinal statement or statement of beliefs, that summarizes a number of beliefs about Christian doctrine.

Continuationism, continuationist: Belief that God still, in the present day, gives the miraculous gifts of healings and tongues.

Conversion: **Repentance** and **faith**. It involves both a turning from sin and a turning to God.

Decree: God's decision about a matter. Usually this term is used in discussions about how or what God decided to do before the foundation of the world.

Death, physical: When the human spirit leaves the human body and life ceases to exist.

Death, spiritual: When the human spirit is separated from God and spiritual life does not exist.

Definite atonement: see **particular redemption**.

Depravity: The condition of humanity where every part of the person's being, mind, soul, spirit, will, emotions, etc. are touched by sin. Jeremiah 17:9.

Doctrine: a thing that is taught, a teaching.

Doctrines of Grace: another name for **Calvinism** or **Reformed Theology**.

Easy believism: A negative term applied by adherents of Lordship salvation to beliefs such as: repentance is not a required part of saving faith; faith is merely intellectual assent to the facts of the gospel; salvation is not the same as being a disciple; salvation may not result in a transformed life; a professing believer may deny the Lord and yet be truly saved. Lordship salvation rejects all of these beliefs. Adherents of easy believism claim that Lordship salvation makes salvation dependent upon one's

works.

Election: The doctrine that before the world began, God chose individuals to salvation through the gospel, with all its obligations and blessings.

Eternal Security: The doctrine that once a person is saved, he or she always remains saved. Belief in eternal security is justified by texts such as John 10:28-29 that address the nature of salvation as a gift from God, as a miracle, and as a guaranteed promise of God. See **assurance**.

Expiate: To remove. In the atonement, Christ died to provide for the removal of sin and its consequences—guilt and therefore punishment. Thus we say our sins are expiated, or our guilt is expiated. Thus, the believer is freed from eternal punishment.

Faith: trust or belief in God through Jesus Christ.

Forgive: To release a person from obligation due to sin. Forgiveness is a transaction between two parties where the offended is ready to be reconciled; the offender is of a mind to request forgiveness and does so; and the offended extends that release from debt. For God, forgiveness can only come on the basis of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Foreordain. That God planned and decided on all that was to happen in the universe. See **predestine**. It refers to the fact that God not only knew all things before the world began, but planned and decreed them to come to pass.

Free Will. The belief that man is substantially free to choose God or not. See John 8:34, 36; Romans 8:7-8; John 6:44. See also **libertarian free will**.

Free Grace. The belief that in order to be saved, a person only need believe in Jesus as Savior from sin, but definitely not Lord. Lordship is a later matter. Usually advocates also say that salvation and discipleship are two different things. Called **easy believism** by Lordship advocates. For the opposite, see **Lordship Salvation**.

Glorification: That God will completely perfect the believer by removing sin and giving a glorified body fit for heaven.

Hard shell baptists. Also known as primitive baptists or old school baptists, these Baptists are Calvinistic, reject the use of mission boards, Bible societies, age-tracked Sunday school programs, musical instruments for worship, and seminaries. They accept foot washing.

Healing in the atonement: Some people believe physical healing is promised in the atonement to those who have faith. Immediate physical healing is *not* promised in the atonement of Christ. Christ's atonement does provide for physical healing eventually because all effects of sin and the curse will be removed in the eternal state.

Healing, miraculous: the supernatural ability of a person to touch or speak to someone and heal a physical affliction. This ability is not available today. See **cessationism**.

Healing, providential: the doctrine that God may choose to heal a person from illness if it pleases Him, through various means including medicine or miracle.

Inability: An effect of total depravity that makes man unable to believe or seek after God. See Romans 3:11.

Justification: At the moment of salvation, the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer so that the believer is constituted righteous, and treated as such by God.

Libertarian Free Will. This is usually the idea when someone talks about **free will**.

Limited Atonement: See **particular redemption**.

Logical Priority: In Calvinist theology, the idea that while in time regeneration and conversion happen simultaneously, logically regeneration precedes conversion and is the logical cause of it.

Lordship Salvation. The teaching that salvation requires a person to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior *and as Lord* because that is who Jesus is. Salvation equals discipleship. For the opposite, see **Free Grace**.

Monergism. "One working." The idea that God is the sole independent actor in bringing about the salvation of a person.

New Calvinism. Sometimes used simply to refer to a new generation of Calvinists who embrace the doctrines of grace and of the reformation. John Piper considers himself a member of this movement. More negatively, this movement is a "mixed multitude" of those who believe in the continuation of miraculous spiritual gifts, varying doctrines of eschatology, anti-dispensational, and contemporary (worldly) music in church services including rock and rap styles. Practically emphasize popular personalities.

New Man. A term that has to do with the relationships of a person after salvation. Such a person is rightly related to Jesus, righteousness, and eternal life.

Old Man. A term that has to do with the relationships of a person before salvation. Such a person is connected to Adam, sin, and death.

Original Sin: this term is often not defined clearly and so some confusion has surrounded it. It normally refers to the original sin of Adam which is the cause of the sin nature of all people, whose natures come from Adam by procreation.

This phrase may also sometimes be used to refer to the imputed sin of Adam, spoken of in Romans 5:12-19, which is not passed down by procreation from one generation to the next to the next, but is rather passed immediately from Adam to each and every person who has lived.

Particular Redemption: The doctrine that Jesus died for the elect to procure for them salvation, with the intention to save them alone, and no others. Also called **limited atonement** or **definite atonement**. The term limited atonement is considered by its adherents to be unnecessarily negative.

Perseverance: Continuance. That a true believer will continue to believe in Jesus, will continue to believe sound doctrine, and will continue to be involved in good works. In short, that his or her faith will remain alive instead of dead and will bear some fruit.

Predestine: Often used synonymously with **election**. Sometimes use synonymously with **foreordain**. It is commonly used to refer to the part of God's foreordination that has to do with personal salvation.

Preservation: the doctrine that God preserves or keeps each of His children. It is a foundation for

the doctrine of **eternal security**.

Propitiation: Satisfaction of God's wrath against sin.

Reconciliation: The creation of a harmonious relationship between two parties that were enemies.

Redemption: The buying of a person out of slavery to sin.

Reformed Baptists: Baptists who hold to Calvinist theology. Also called Calvinistic Baptists.

Reformed Theology: According to Ligon Duncan, Reformed Theology is a school of historic, orthodox, confessional, Christianity in which the sovereignty of God, the authority of Scripture, God's grace in salvation, the necessity and significance of the church, and covenant theology are maintained and emphasized.

Regeneration: The instantaneous creation of spiritual life in a spiritually dead person.

Repent, repentance: To change one's mind about sin; the state of mind of one who has repented about his sin.

Sanctification: Related to the word "saint." It means to set something apart, usually for a holy purpose. It refers to three "times" in our salvation. It can refer to initial sanctification at the moment of salvation. It can refer to progressive sanctification wherein a person is made more holy in behavior as he matures in the Christian faith. And it can also refer to the final transformation of a believer when he or she enters heaven, apart from all sin.

Second blessing. A second work of grace. Associated with charismatic, perfectionist or Keswick theologies where something must happen to a believer after salvation to bring a second level of blessing, whether speaking in tongues, sinless perfection, or victorious living through the Lordship of Christ.

Sola Fide. Phrase from Latin language that means "faith alone."

Solus Christus. Phrase from Latin language that means "Christ alone."

Sola Gratia. Phrase from Latin language that means "grace alone."

Sola Scriptura. Phrase from Latin language that means "the Bible alone."

Soli Deo Gloria. Phrase from Latin language that means "to the glory of God alone."

Soteriology. The doctrine of salvation and the study of that doctrine in Christian theology.

Sovereignty. The doctrine about God that He rules over everything. His sovereignty extends to every area of the world, including human sin and salvation.

Substitution. The doctrine that Christ took the place of the sinner in dying for his/her sins. More specifically, conservative Christians hold to a penal substitutionary explanation of the atonement, which means that Christ paid the penalty for the believer's sins. See **vicarious**.

Synergism. "Working together." The idea that a person independently cooperates with God, and that God is not the only actor in bringing about salvation.

Universalism. The doctrine that all people will be saved at some point in the future.

Vicarious. Describes something done for another person. Same as **substitutionary**.