

GOD SAVES THE WORST OF SINNERS

This series of five bible lessons is taken from the special phrase, “Trustworthy Saying.” It is found in each of the following five passages of Scriptures.

1 Tim.1:12-17 **(15)**

2 Tim.2:8-14 **(11)**

1 Tim.3:1-7 **(1)**

Titus 3:1-11 **(8)**

1 Tim.4:1-11 **(9)**

All five passages are found in the Pastoral Epistles (I & II Timothy and Titus).

A **Trustworthy Saying** refers to an important Church Doctrine that was either being attacked or was not being followed correctly. Paul is charging a young minister in training named, Timothy, to fight the good fight for the teaching of sound doctrine (1 Tim.1:3-5, 18-19).

It is a Trustworthy Saying because it comes from God and its trustworthiness depends upon the character of God **(1 Cor.1:9; 1 Thess.5:24)**.

The **first Trustworthy Saying** involves defending the gospel of grace salvation:

“It is a trustworthy saying (**pistos ho logos**) deserving full acceptance (**axios pas apodoche**) that Christ Jesus came (erchomai / a.a.ind / V.B) (Luke 1:34-35) into the world to save (sozo / a.a.infin) [impeccability] (2 Cor.5:21) sinners (**hamartolos**), among whom I am (**eimi / p.a.ind**) foremost of all (**protos**) [**first, chief, worst**].” (1 Tim.1:15)

This lesson will study SIX aspects of GOD SAVES THE WORST OF SINNERS.
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1. The connecting of the Greek word and grammar of the words came (erchomai / a.a.ind) and saved (sozo / a.a.infin) offer the doctrine of Unlimited Atonement (1 Tim.1:15).

The aorist tense of erchomai and sozo are culminative and refer to once and forever. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners once and forever (Matt.1:21; Heb.7:26; 9:28; 10:10; 1 Tim.2:4-5; Titus 2:11; 1 Pet.1:19).

Notice that “saved” is an aorist infinitive denoting God’s purpose for sending Jesus Christ. Jesus was sent into the world to save those who consider themselves to be the worst of sinners (Luke 15:1-2; 19:1-10).

- Since God is willing to save the worst of sinners, He is willing and capable of saving all sinners (2 Pet.3:9).

2. Paul declared himself to be among the worst of sinners.

“And the grace of our Lord was more than abundant (huperpleonazo / a.a.ind).” (1 Tim.1:14)

Paul’s reasoning for this statement was that he was a persecutor of the Son of God and the Church of Jesus Christ (Acts 7:54-8:3).

3. **Paul had a sense of deep gratitude for the Lord's grace salvation on the basis of faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Cor.15:1-4; Rom.1:16).**

“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service; even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and violent aggressor. And yet I was shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief.” (1 Tim.1:12-13).

“Whenever Paul thought of all that the Lord had done for him, he was overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude and of deep thanksgiving. He never got over the wonder of all that Christ his Savior had done for him. Whenever he thought upon the miracle that God wrought in him in saving him and transforming his heart, he was thrilled.” (Rev.Francis Dixion – comments on 1 Tim.1:12-17)

4. **As Paul spiritually grew in the word of God and his salvation, his gratitude grew towards God awesome grace (Eph.2:8-9).**

He knew that he had been saved from a FORMER life to a transformed life in Christ (Rom.12:2).

However, when you read **Phil.3:4-9**, you get a picture of a religiously lost person (**Acts 9:1-5; 22:7-8; Gal.1:13-14**). However, it wasn't these things that made him a sinner.

All mankind is born a sinner because of the 13 judicial charges of Adamic sin (AOS) (**Rom.3:9, 23; 5:6-12, 19**). [See the **50 Things FREE** available on www.doctrinalstudies.com web site]

5. **Paul was also overwhelmed by God's mercy extended to this worst of sinners:**

“And yet for this reason I found mercy (eleeo / a.p.ind) [the passive is the voice of grace] in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.” (1 Tim.1:16)

As a sinner, Paul came to realize that in spite of being religious, he was undeserving and unworthy even though he believed in God (James 2:19). He still needed to experience God's mercy and saving grace because of AOS.

(Titus 3:5; Rom.5:12).

As a Christian, our salvation is not based on religious works or human merit or on changing our life or on some spiritual pilgrimage (Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9).

“It was to save sinners that Christ Jesus came into the world. He did not come to help them save themselves, nor to induce them to save themselves, nor even to enable them to save themselves, He came to save them.” (Wm. Hendriksen, NT commentary, pg.79)

6. **Paul declares that he is God's poster child of grace salvation.**

“And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate (endeiknumi / a.m.subj) His perfect patience (hapas makrothumia), as an example (hupotuposis) [pattern, prototype] for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.” (1 Tim.1:16)

Paul's testimony was that if God would save the worst of sinners, then anyone can be saved! Look what Christ did for ME; there is hope for YOU in God's grace!

Spurgeon commented that the idea that Paul's conversion was exceptional is flatly contradicted in this verse. What God did for Paul, He is willing to do for everyone - **“As an example for THOSE WHO WOULD BELIEVE IN HIM FOR ETERNAL LIFE.” (1 Tim.1:16b)**