

The Versus Series - Part 6

Aionios Zoe vs. Sozo

"God has given us eternal life (Zoe), and this life (Zoe) is in His Son (Jesus)" — 1 John 5:11-12
"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved (Sozo)." — Romans 10:9-10

Let's start with *Zoe*. *Zoe* is the Greek word for life; animate, breathing life. When *Zoe* is used in the New Testament, it is often modified by the adjective *aionios*, another Greek word that means "eternal," "everlasting," or "endless duration." This eternal, everlasting (*Zoe*) life is given by God the Father through Christ Jesus, the Son, to those who believe the Gospel. When a person receives Jesus as his or her Savior, God's Spirit comes to dwell in the new believer. This also means that the human spirit that was dead is made alive, resurrected to New Life. *Zoe* defines this New Life.

Man is made in God's image—a trinity. In Genesis 1:26 God said, "Let *Us* make man in *Our* image, according to *Our* likeness..." This means every person is made to express human life in three parts: spirit, soul, and body—each representing the image of a member of the triune Godhead. However, because of original sin, the spirit part of a person is dead when he or she enters this world through natural birth. Because of God's love and amazing grace, He wanted to restore what Adam had lost by resurrecting humankind's dead spirit. The restoration comes through His Son, Jesus, who gives every person the opportunity to become whole by receiving Him and His substitutionary death on the cross. When a person confesses Jesus as Lord, the new believer is made complete spirit, soul, and body to reflect the Godhead's likeness. This completeness, along with God's newly indwelt Spirit, enables the believer to experience the abundant life that Jesus came to give—His everlasting *Zoe* Life.

According to John 10:10, Jesus' foremost purpose in coming was to give *Zoe* Life to men—"...I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly." "For the will of My father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life..." In fact, the *Zoe* Life we receive is uncontainable. In John 7:38-39, Jesus says it this way, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." The joy, peace, forgiveness, and eternal security that we receive through Jesus flows out from us as Living water—*Zoe* Life.

The *Zoe* Life we receive is everlasting, but through God's love, *Zoe* also includes the overcoming, abundant life God has for us for the here and now. Moreover, the Holy Spirit empowers us to "be Jesus" to the hurting and lost, bringing His love and message of deliverance to the people we know and meet, giving us joy unspeakable.

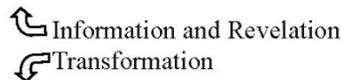
- ❖ The *Zoe* life of God creates in us a new species. —2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Peter 1:4
- ❖ *Aionios Zoe* gives us His divine nature, and enables us to fellowship with God in a closely held relationship. —John 17:3
- ❖ *Aionios Zoe* enables us to be light in the darkness. When we receive Jesus, spiritual darkness is dispelled. —John 1:4, 1 John 5:11,12
- ❖ *Aionios Zoe* enables us to walk in God's divine power and authority. —2 Timothy 1:7, Ephesians 1:19, Ephesians 3:20
- ❖ *Aionios Zoe* empowers us to live out Jesus' purpose as stated in John 10:10, and that is to give His disciples a rich and satisfying life.

Sozo

*Sozo*¹ and *Zoe* are similitudes. Check this out. When you see the English word, “saved” or “salvation” in the New Testament, it is most likely translated from the Greek word *sozo* (*pronounced, sode-zo*). *Sozo* describes the entirety of God’s desire to heal our brokenness: spirit, soul and body. Many times, Jesus used the word *sozo* when He told a person He had healed, “*Your faith has made you whole (sozo).*” When we are adopted by God through salvation in Jesus, and then submit to His restoration process, the Bible refers to this as being made complete in Him.

The Greek word *sozo* (salvation) is all-encompassing, meaning that God not only wants to rescue us from the penalty of sin, but He also wants to restore us and make us whole. In other words, *sozo* means much more than just being saved from hell. *Sozo* says that we are redeemed, progressively healed, restored *and* secured for eternal salvation. Our first word, *Aionios Zoe*, describes the overcoming New Life we have in Jesus, and *Sozo* (salvation) describes how we are enabled to enter into the abundant life that Jesus came to give us. John 10:10 says it this way, “*The thief’s [Satan] purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My [Jesus] purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.*”

Why are *sozo* and *Zoe* so important? *Sozo* tells us that God doesn’t just offer to rescue us and then leave us alone to wander around directionless. *Sozo* describes how and why Jesus set us free to be whom God designed us to be. *Salvation in Jesus, (Sozo) enables you to grow into all of the blessings and promises that God has for you, which also defines aionios Zoe. God wants you to reach your fullest potential in Him. There is a “real you” that God wants to unleash for His glory. —Ω*



Heavenly Father, thank You for looking ahead in time and knowing my need for a Savior. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die for me and save me from Your wrath. I am forever Yours, held in Your loving arms, because of Jesus. Thank You for eternal Zoe Life that enables me to experience the abundant life that Jesus came to give me. Thank You for the joy, peace, forgiveness, and eternal security that I receive in Jesus.

LORD, help me freely offer Your New Life to others as Your life-giving Spirit flows out from me as living water. Help me through the power of the Holy Spirit to “be Jesus” to the hurting and lost, bringing His love and message of deliverance to the people I know and meet, giving joy unspeakable.

LORD, help me submit to Your restoration process so I can walk in wholeness as a testimony of Your goodness, for Your Word says that it’s Your goodness that draws men to repentance. Help me represent You so that people will want what I have in You. Cause my life to make others thirsty and hungry for what they see in me, which is Your goodness and the healing that You offer.

LORD, help me walk in the direction and destiny that You have for me. I ask You to grow me into all of the blessings and promises given in Your Word, so I can reach my fullest potential in You. I ask You to unleash the “real me” for Your glory in Jesus’ name. Amen.

By David E. McFadden
www.DeeperLifeSeries.com

¹ Strong’s NT #4982