

SAVED, SAVINGS AND ALVATION

Seek Ye First
Session ONE

The Most Pressing Questions for Human Beings

- What to do with my investments in 2009

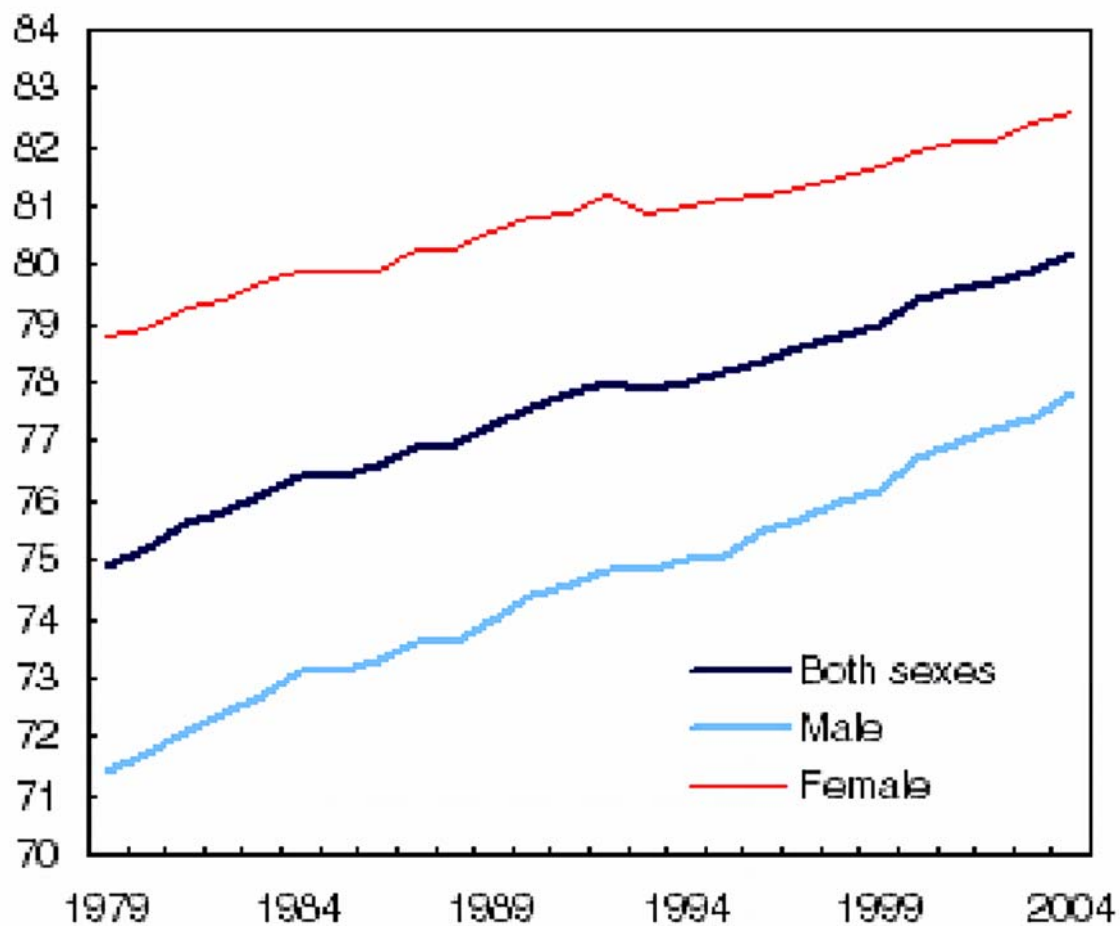


Other pressing questions

- Will my partner, siblings, neighbours and colleagues like me, enjoy me for who I am?
- What about my personal health, now . . . and into the future?
- How long will I live, and what lies beyond physical death?

Gap in life expectancy at birth between men and women narrowing

Years



Biblical Assurances of Salvation

- 2 Cor 5:17 if anyone is in Christ, there is a **new creation**: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!
- Romans 10:9 ... if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved.**

More Assurance

- Colossians 2:13 And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **God made you alive** together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses,
- 1 John 5:11-12 And this is the testimony: **God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.** Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

3 Questions

- What are we saved FROM
- What are we saved FOR
- What is saving us RIGHT NOW

With thanks to Barbara Brown Taylor

What are we saved from?

- Salvation is so much more than many of its proponents would have us believe. In the Bible, human beings experience God's salvation when peace ends war, when food follows famine, when health supplants sickness and freedom trumps oppression.

Barbara Brown Taylor

- Salvation is a word for the divine spaciousness that comes to human beings in all the tight places where their lives are at risk, regardless of how they got there or whether they know God's name.

What are we saved for?

For the Love of God

1 John 4:7-13

- Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God . . . In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

What Else are we saved for?

For Peace and Peace-making

Romans 5:1

- Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

For Creative Living

Phil 2:13

... it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

From Speech to Song

You are God's work of art
created in Jesus the Christ
you have been enlightened by the Lord
walk as children of the light

What is saving us right now?

- Many years ago now, when I was invited to speak at a church gathering, my host said, "Tell us what is saving your life now." It was such a good question that I have made a practice of asking others to answer it even as I continue to answer it myself.

VOCATION

- **(My teaching) is saving my life now.**
While I am still in charge of my classroom .
. . . our answers change from day to day, as
we too are changed by listening to one
another.

RELATIONSHIP

- **Living in relationship with creation is saving my life now.** (T)he concrete realities of rain, drought, summer, and winter strike me with oracular force. Living off the land, I have discovered the organic connection not only between potatoes and dirt but also between honey and bees, ripe figs and fig wasps, boneless breasts and chickens, pine trees and paper mills. Paying attention to these things brings me back into my own body . . . Matter matters to God.

SABBATH

- **Observing the Sabbath is saving my life now.** With sundown on the Sabbath, I stop seeing the dust balls, the bills, and the laundry. They are still there, but they lose their power over me.

GOD IN OTHERS

- **Encountering God in other people is saving my life now.** The clerk at the grocery store is a messenger for me, at least if I give her a fraction of the attention that I lavish on my interior monologue. To emerge from my self-preoccupation long enough to acknowledge her human presence is no mean feat, but when I do I can almost always discover what she has to teach me—and not only she, but every person who crosses my path.

FULL HUMANITY

- **Committing myself to the task of becoming fully human is saving my life now.** This is not the same as the job of being human, which came with my birth certificate. To become **fully** human is something extra, a conscious choice that not everyone makes. I do it by imitating Christ, although I will be the first to admit that I want to stop about a day short of following him all the way.

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

- "Be kind," wrote Philo of Alexandria, "for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle." We may be in for a long wait before the Holy Spirit shows us a new way to be the church together, but in the meantime there is nothing to prevent us from enjoying the breeze of those bright wings.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

- When you hear someone say “I’m saved” how do you react?
- If salvation draws us towards life, what draws towards its opposite, I.e. death?
- Finally, what is saving you right now?