GREAT WORDS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

By Cecil Argetsinger

Forward

The Bible is indeed God's message to man, but that message has been delivered in *words*. By means of *words* has man become the possessor of eternal truths! If this is true, and it is, it follows that those truths can be discerned only by the proper understanding of the precise meanings of the *words* God uses to reveal those eternal realities.

Grace, mercy, and *kindness* are words related to each other, but they are not exactly synonymous. While each sheds light on the character of God, *grace* shines with a glory that the other two can never display. *Propitiation, reconciliation* and *redemption* are all works having reference to the redeeming work of Christ on the Cross, but each has its own particular truth to convey, each presents a separate and different achievement of His death.

So infinite and great is the love of God toward sinful men that, not just one word, but many are needed to express that side of His character and to encompass the nature of His dealings with them. So momentous and far-reaching were the accomplishments of Christ on the Cross that no one word could satisfactorily set forth those values.

This little booklet discusses a few of these "Great Words of the New Testament", words that God uses to teach great truths. And should it be blessed by God and have a part in leading just one person to a better understanding of that salvation purchased by the death of our wonderful Lord, the efforts will be considered as well worthwhile. The prayer of all who have had a share in its publication is that it may honor Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

****Note**** Bible passages, instead of just references, were added for the student to have the complete knowledge of the context and content of the Author. (RD)

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SALVATION

The term Salvation means *deliverance, rescue,* and *being saved.* In the Bible it indicates a work of God for man, not something man must do for God. In this present dispensation of grace it applies to the individual believer, the one who is trusting Christ as his personal Savior.

Included in that salvation are various positions and blessings freely bestowed on "all who believe". No one word could fully describe those benefits; they are to abundant and wonderful. So God uses different words, each one gives the assignment of revealing a different facet of the truths of "so great a salvation".

Justification, faith, redemption, forgiveness, propitiation, reconciliation, grace and glorification are but some of the words used. Particular aspects of salvation will be dealt with in future articles. For now, some of its more general features will be considered. These will be viewed under three headings: the three-fold principle of salvation; a change of citizenship; salvation – past, present and future.

A Three-Fold Principal

There is a three-fold principle in the salvation of the believer in Christ. Though these may not all be mentioned at the same time, salvation is represented as being given by the Grace of God, based on the blood of Christ, (that is, His death on the cross) and received through faith on the part of the individual. That three division rule is well set forth in **Romans 3:23-25. It is *by grace,* (v.24) and *through faith,* (v.25).**

1. By Grace

To say that salvation is by grace is to say that salvation, in its entirety, is a work of God for man. It indicates man's helpless condition, the fact that he has neither the ability nor the inclination to save himself. Even a casual examination of Scripture reveals that there was, and is, no merit or good in man that would obligate God to

act on his behalf. **Romans 3:10-18** is a merciless and damning indictment of all mankind! It, along with other Scriptures, reveals man's utterly corrupt and sinful condition, (**Gen. 6:5, Jer. 17:9, Romans 7:18**). If man is to be saved it must be from someone other than himself.

Just as the Bible clearly asserts that man has neither the means nor the desire to accomplish his own salvation, so does it clearly depict that, from start to finish, it is ALL of God! He is its Author and Finisher, (**Heb. 12:2**). "**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)**. "**For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: v.9 Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)**.

2. By Christ's Blood

Here is something that fallen man refuses to accept, that is, "…**without the shedding of blood is no redemption" (Heb. 9:22)**. But the Scriptures are saturated with the teaching and statements that we are saved by the *blood of Christ.* The blood, of course, represents His life that was given on Calvary's cross - not the life that He lived on earth, although that means much to us. His death is the grounds of our redemption. (Examine closely **Rom. 3:24-25, Acts 20:28, Eph. 1:7, 1Pet. 1:18, 2:24, 2 Cor. 5:21**).

God does not forgive sin in our sense of the word, that of overlooking it. The Bible teaches that when Christ died on the cross the justice of God was satisfied as far as the sin-question was concerned. All the claims of His holy law against the sinner were settled in that death. He became the believer's substitute, One who was provided by God Himself to take the sinner's place. In Christ's death, God could vindicate His righteousness and yet save the sinner.

Not would any other substitute do. "**For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (the Old Testament sacrifices) Heb 10:4.** God did not arbitrarily appoint the death of Jesus Christ as the sole means of salvation. This would have been an unnecessary and exceedingly cruel act had there been any other way. Christ was sent! He came and died because nothing else could solve the sin problem. Salvation is not just *by blood,* it must be by *His Blood!*

3. By Faith

That salvation is by faith and faith alone is the clear teaching of the New Testament Scriptures. At least 135 times do they state that "*believe*", (have faith) is all that a sinner must or can do to be saved. "**For by grace are ye saved through faith;" (Eph 2:8)**, and "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," (Acts 16:31)** present this truth as plainly as words can.

In addition to these are numerous other Scriptures which teach that no self-effort or *good works* can ever save. It is "**Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us...," (Titus 3:5)**; **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; ...v.9 Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph 2:8-9)**.

However, faith is not some act or quality which makes its possessor worthy of salvation. Faith is simply the channel through which it comes, the hand that receives the Gift. All too often an unwarranted emphasis is placed on believing, or faith, making it seems some work for God, and thus singling out the one with faith as deserving of salvation.

But faith cannot save. Only Christ can do that. It is not our faith but the blood of Christ that forever settled the sin-question. Faith is resting in God, depending on what He has done for us, and not what we do for Him.

A Change in Citizenship

Salvation is far more than just deliverance for the guilt and penalty of sin. It means rescue *from* the power, the control and the government of Satan. It means being brought into the relationship with God, coming under His control and a transfer of citizenship into His Kingdom. All humanity dwells in one of the other of two camps, either God's or Satan's. There is no middle ground, no alternative. **"And we know that we** (Christian believers) **are of God, and the whole world (unbelievers) lieth in wickedness." (1 John 5:19)**. This change in leadership and citizenship is no small thing, necessitating as it did the death of Christ for its accomplishment**. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; v.15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb 2:14-15)**.

Two passages of Scripture relating to that remarkable change are here quoted; **"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: v.13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" (Col 1:12)**, **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; v. 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air,** (Satan)**the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: v.3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. V.4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, v.5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us**

together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) v.6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" (Eph 2:1-6) This is only part of it. Indeed the Christian can sing, "What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought…".

Three Time Periods

There are three time periods in the salvation of the believer: Past, Present and Future. He has been saved, is being saved, and will be saved.

1. Salvation Past

Salvation past takes in all that God has done for His child when He saved him from the guilt and penalty **of sin. That he has thus been saved there can be no doubt. "There is therefore now no condemnation (judgment) to them which are in Christ Jesus….", (Rom. 8:1). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment); but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24).**

2. Salvation Present

In this aspect of salvation the keeping power of God is evidenced. Scriptures are clear to the effect that the one who has once been saved can never be lost. Once he has been justified, (declared righteous) his glorification, (entrance into heaven) irrevocably follows. **"Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. 8:30)**. The Holy Spirit of God has sealed, (preserved) the believer until the day of his final redemption. **"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph 4:30)**. **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:28). "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.**

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:37). "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1Pet. 1:5).

3. Salvation Future

Under this heading would include all the matchless and unfathomable blessings and positions which the child of God, under grace, will one day inherit and possess. When it is considered that the Glorified Christ is the pattern to which the believer is ultimately to be conformed, the imagination is staggered and faith is taxed to its limit. But this is the sure Word of God. **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1John 3:2). "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: v.21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." (Philip. 3:20)**. It is no wonder that it is called "so great a salvation."

GRACE

In the English language grace is a word with a wide variety of meanings. It might mean beauty of form or movement, as *graceful.* It can refer to an attractive quality in persons, like *kindness.* A period of time in which payments or judgments are withheld is called a *grace* period. In religious circles it could mean a spiritual gift.

What we want, however, is to discover what the word means in Scripture. There, dictionary definitions will not always do. God has to take ordinary words and invest them with extraordinary meanings in order to reveal heavenly and spiritual truths. So then we must note how He uses a particular word in the bible to discover its real meaning. When that is done, *grace* is seen to be the infinite Love of God, set free by the death of Christ. It indicates not only His kindness and goodness, but reveals the very Heart of God. It speaks of that which moved Him to save the lost.

Without a Cause

Romans 3:23 declares **that "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."** However, **Romans 3:24** goes on to declare that these same sinners are **"Being justified** (made righteous) **freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"** In this passage the word *freely* is from the Greek word *dorean.* Dorean also occurs in **John 15:25** where Christ, speaking of His soon coming death and quoting from **Psalms 35:19**, said that His enemies **"hated Me without a cause".**

How true was that which He spoke. There was no reason or cause in Christ that those Jews should hate Him. He was no sinner, He had broken no law, He had harmed no one. Rather it was written of Him that He **".....who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him", (Acts 10:38)**. There was nothing in Christ, no cause in Him for their hatred. It had to arise from within them. It is what they were, and the hardness of their own hearts that caused them to crucify

Him. They were thus giving expression to their own wickedness and unbelief. They hated Him "*without a cause*".

That phrase "*without a cause"*, is also a translation of *dorean.* If instead of *freely* we would substitute *without a cause,* (and we have a right to do so) **Romans 3:24** would be read, **"Being justified *without a cause* by His grace."**

How clearly those words express the truth. We have indeed been justified without a cause. Just as those Jews could find nothing in Christ to hate for there was no fault in Him. (**Luke 23:4**), even so God has found no cause in us as to why we should redeemed. There was no good in us, no worth, no merit, only sinfulness, (**Romans 3:9-18**). Not what we are but what He is, a God of Love and Grace, moved Him to provide "**so great a salvation**." We deserved nothing but condemnation and judgment, but His own heart of Love found a way in which His justice could be satisfied and His Love set free to save us from sin. His Grace has saved us *without a cause*.

Expects No Return

An excellent illustration of the meaning of grace is provided in **Luke 6:32-34. "For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. v.33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. v.34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again."** In each of these three verses we find the word *thank. Thank* is a translation of the Greek *karis* from which we get our English *grace.* Let us examine those three verses.

In **verse 32** we read**, "For if ye love them which love you, what thank** (karis –grace) **have ye? for sinners also love those that love them."** There is no grace in loving someone who loves you, or from whom you hope to receive love in return. Grace loves *without a cause*.

Grace does not consider whether or not love will be answered in kind; grace loves because that is what grace is.

In **verse 33** we read, **"And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank** (karis-grace) **have ye? for sinners also do even the same."** Again the same truth is present, that grace operates *without a cause*. Grace does not do good to someone expecting good in return. Grace does not say, "I will be good to you if you will be good to me." Grace does not consider the results or the returns. Grace expresses that which is worthwhile in the character of the one who gives, not the worth or merit in the one who receives.

The last **verse 34** states, **"And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again."** Now it may be good business to lend expecting to be paid back, but this is not grace. Grace lends and grace gives because it wants to give, not because of any special return. Grace gives whether it is appreciated or not. Grace gives in *spite* of who or what the receiver is, not *because* of who he is. Grace is free, *without a cause*. Grace is God's Love expressing itself in immeasurable benefits to the believer in Christ.

In the light of all this, how plainly can it be seen that salvation is all of God. It is not because of any supposed merit or goodness in us that we have been justified and brought into fellowship with God. Neither is it because God could foresee that we would come to Him if we were but given the opportunity. It is not that He expects us to pay Him back. We have been saved because of what is in God, not because of any good in us. Grace does not lend to trusting to be repaid again. Grace gives, and grace blesses, and grace loves simply because that is the nature of grace. It operates *without a cause*.

The Nature of God

The word *grace*, however, as it is used in the New Testament, goes far beyond a simple definition of the term. There is expresses and portrays a character of God never before seen. It describes a motivation, an urge in the heart of God, a desire to save, to bless and bestow. There is something in God which moves Him to bless and bestow, and bless again, never ceasing, never resting until the believer is at home in Glory, with and like His savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor will it end there but, wonder of wonders, will continue throughout all eternity to move Him in our behalf. It is His stated intention **"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (Eph 2:7).**

A Warning

A word of caution needs to be added. To teach that God is motivated by His Grace in the redemption of lost sinners is not to teach that all will be saved. It is true, that God has provided a salvation that is being offered to all, but it is applied *only* to "them that believe." Grace is bestowed on *undeserving* sinners, not on unbelieving sinners.

Neither is it true that the teachings of grace encourage loose living. Rather, grace prohibits carelessness in the Christians walk**. "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." (Romans 6:15)**. No statement regarding this truth can be clearer than the words of **Titus 2:11-12. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,**
12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;"

May, **1Pe 5:10....."God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect,**

stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

FAITH

Faith then, is not doing something for God, it is allowing God to do something for you. It is resting in what He has done and not in doing anything good that you might do. Faith is depending on another to do for you what you cannot do for yourself.

Faith can also be defined as simply believing the promise of God. God speaks, (in His Word, the Bible) and faith takes God at His Word and believes what He said. When an angel appeared to Zacharias, informing him that he was to father a son and that his son was to be the one to announce Messiah's Birth, (Christ), Zacharias was dumbfounded and unbelieving, **(Luke 1:5-20). "....Whereby shall I know this?" he asked the angel, "for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years" (v.18)**. He was asking for outward proof or some sign that would lend credence to the angel's announcement. As punishment for his unbelief, he was sentenced to be dumb, (without voice) for a period of time. Said the angel, **"And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season." (v.20)**.

How different the Scripture language concerning a somewhat similar revelation to Abraham's reception to God's Message**. "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb; v.20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; v.21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. (Romans 4:19)**. God promises and Abraham believes. He depends on God to keep His Word.

Real faith then, does not demand proofs. It is its own evidence and grounds for belief and requires no other proof.

It places its reliance on the promises of God, not upon outward signs and manifestations. Faith is the assurance and confidence that God will keep His Word, and the firm conviction that He will do just what He says. Scripture defines it as **"Now faith is the substance (assurance) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Heb 11:1)**.

The Scriptures also picture faith as receiving or accepting that which God has done. **"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name:" (John 1:12)**.
Receiving and believing are here shown to be precise counterparts. Receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as He is offered in His redemptive work on the cross is exactly the same as believing. It is the opposite of rejecting or disbelieving.

Salvation is All of God

Faith, rightly understood, can never stand in opposition to the truth that salvation is entirely a work of God. It can never imply that we do a part, and then God does the rest, for the simple reason that faith is not doing something. It is receiving something. To say that we are justified by faith is another way of saying that we are made right, not in the slightest degree by ourselves, but wholly by the One on whom our faith is set. The Scriptural summons, to be right with God, does not consist of a plan for self-improvement, but in an appeal to accept the righteousness that God had provided**. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21**).

Faith is not praying, (though the Believer prays) faith is not seeking God, faith is not coming forward, faith is not confession, nor is it trying to lead a Christian Life. It is not, (and this bears repeating) doing something for God. It is

receiving as a gift that which God has freely offered through Christ.

This is not to say, however, that faith is passive or inactive. It is not, it is very active. One does not come into salvation simply because Christ died on the cross, the message must be believed! **"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, Brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:" (2 Thess. 2:13)**. Faith intelligently *elects* to stand before God on the grounds of His gracious provision for righteousness. Faith consciously *rejects* self-effort as a means of gaining acceptance with God. Instead it *chooses* to believe that salvation is a gift.

What is Faith? Faith simply believes all that God has said in His Word. Faith does not work to earn a right standing before God. Instead it *rests* in what Christ did through His death on the cross. Faith is not doing something for God, but receiving something from God. Faith is depending on Him to do for you what you cannot do for yourself.

JUSTIFICATION

JUSTIFICATION, in the Scriptures, is the declaration by God that He now considers the one who believes in Him to be perfectly righteous. (Stop here and let that sink in for a moment). Justification does not make the believer righteous; it is simply God's assertion that now and forever He views the believer as righteous. It is the direct opposite of condemnation. To be condemned means that one has been declared guilty and is therefore worthy of punishment. To be justified is to be declared righteous and therefore free from all judgments.

Righteousness Imputed

As stated, justification makes no one righteous. The unrighteous become righteous when they are put *into Christ.* The Bible teaches that, upon believing, the sinner is *baptized*, that is, *put into Christ,* by the Holy Spirit, **"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit," (1Cor. 12:13)**. Being thus joined to and submerged into Christ, he becomes a partaker of Christ's death, Christ's resurrection, Christ's life, and Christ's perfections. Read here, **"v. 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? v. 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. v. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection," (Rom. 6:3-5)**. God has now **"..... made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21)**. Therefore **"..... of Him you are in Christ Jesus, Who became for us wisdom from God--and righteousness and sanctification and redemption —"(1 Cor. 1:30)**.

By virtue of this union to Christ, righteousness has been imputed, that is “credited”, to the believer. Just as all have been declared guilty and therefore condemned because of their relation to Adam, **“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned--, (Rom. 5:12)**, so all those who have become related and joined to Christ by their *baptism* into Him have been justified, that is declared to be righteous. That righteousness has been imputed to all who believe is a fact; justification is the Divine acknowledgement and recognition of that fact.

Already pointed out and perfectly clear in the Bible, is the truth that this righteousness of Christ is imputed or counted to the one who believes, **“For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”**, **...“He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, v.21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. v.22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." v.23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, v.24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, (Rom. 4:3, 20-24)**. But never to be forgotten is the parallel truth that such and every part of salvation is a work of God for man, and belief, (faith) is no exception to the rule. Righteousness before God is His gift, something He provides by His infinite grace, and faith is simply the hand that reaches out to accept that gift—nothing more. Faith rests in that which God has done; faith is not doing something for God, **“But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,” (Rom. 4:5).**

A Perfect Standing

Justification is not forgiveness. Forgiveness is the cancelation of the sin-debt; *justification* is related to the imputation of righteousness. *Forgiveness* is negative, it is the removal of condemnation. *Justification* is positive, it is the bestowal of a righteous standing before God.

Forgiveness is the subtraction of sin and its consequences; *justification* is the addition of righteousness and its benefits. What Christ has done in His finished work on Calvary is the basis of forgiveness for sin. What Christ is in the perfections of His wonderful Person forms the basis of justification. On the cross He made a complete settlement for sin; therefore we are made the righteousness of God "in Him".

The consequence of the believer's justification is that he now has a perfect standing before God. His position is no longer that of a guilty and condemned sinner, but of a righteous saint. He can now praise **"...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light" (Col 1:12)**. That standing is enduring and unchangeable since it depends, not in any degree on the believers works, but wholly on the merits and perfections of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Imputation is fact, not fiction! It is real. God is not dealing in double talk or make believe when He declares that, on the basis of his union with Christ, the believer is now to be considered perfectly righteous in His sight. It is not that God just overlooks his sin and pretends that the believer is righteous, but that by imputation he is actually *provided* with a righteousness that is fully acceptable, even to a Holy God.

Of all that have ever walked the paths of earth, the only perfect One was the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone was sinless. Of Him the Father said, **...."This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt 3:17)**. The thief on his cross stated, **"....for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." (Luke**

23:41).The Bible declares that, **" ....He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21)**, and even His enemies could find no fault or flaw. "**I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me."** and , "**Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?" (John 14:30, 8:46)**.

Yet under the heavy hand of God, Christ died on Calvary's cross, bearing the guilt and sin of the world. He was no sinner, still, God, **".....And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)**. He was made a curse for us, **"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),"** (Gal. 3:13). Our sins had been *imputed* to Him and so real was that redemption that Christ died paying the penalty for those sins.

Imputation then, is real, not imaginary. God is not dealing in fiction when He imputes the righteousness of Christ to the sinner who does no more than *believe in Jesus*. Just as He laid our sins on Christ and punished Him as though He was guilty of sins, when personally He was not, so He counts or imputes the perfect righteousness of Christ to those who believe. They are then treated as though they were perfectly righteous, though, apart from being in Christ, they are not.

It is All of God

Scripture states that men are justified freely, by Gods grace, entirely without any merit of their own. But grace could never be bestowed on undeserving sinners were it not for the redeeming work of Christ and His death for the lost. It constitutes the only grounds by which they can be saved! It is why Christ died bearing the sins of the world. It is why God, in His righteousness and strictness of justice, forever settled the sin question, is now able to pardon and

save. He at the same time is able to judge the sin and rescue the sinner. He is indeed the Justifier of lost men, and remains Just in so doing. **“to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” (Rom. 3:26).**

Justification rests on the death of Christ, and not His resurrection. He was raised from the dead, not in order that the believer might be justified, but because he has already been justified. Though **Romans 4:25, “who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.”**, might seem to teach otherwise, in reality it does not. Rightly understood, the verse is saying, we sinned, therefore because of this, Christ died; we were, (by His death) justified, therefore or because of this, Christ arose.

How Wonderful! **“Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.” (Rom. 8:33).** The answer is **No One**, not now or ever! God cannot and would not contradict Himself by charging any with evil, those whom He has declared righteous. That would amount to a reversal of justification and such could never be. God does not change His mind; **“I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him.” (Eccl. 3:14)**.

PROPITIATION

In our English dictionary, propitiation is defined as "to appease, to conciliate, or to cause to be favorably inclined". This last one, "to cause to be favorably inclined", is very near the meaning of propitiation as it is used in the Bible. There, propitiation is used to point out that the death of Christ on the cross satisfied and carried out the righteous judgments of God against sin and allowed Him to be "favorably inclined" toward the sinner.

This bears repeating. The word *propitiation* points out that by His death on the cross, Christ has suffered every penalty and punishment due to the sinner**. "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. v. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Isa 53:5-6)**. With the punishment and judgments against them being thus carried out and taken out of the way, God can now be *kindly disposed* towards sinners.

Sin Cannot be Overlooked

It is wrong to suppose that God is against the sinner and that His *wrath* must be appeased. It is His *justice* that must be satisfied. God has always loved the sinner and longed to meet him with mercy and grace. Scripture declares that **"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8)**. But while the heart of God has always yearned after the sinner and longed for his good, that awful sin question intervened. Gods own Holy Nature, His own condemnation and judgment against sin, stood in the way.

Sin is always against God. Sin separates from God, and sin must be punished, no matter how much god loves the sinner. He cannot tolerate sin. He cannot overlook its

penalties. He cannot be lenient with the sinner. This is a moral universe; righteousness and justice must prevail.

Love Found a Way

And so, in answer to the problem thus posed by sin, as the hymn writer wrote, "Love found a way." The way that Love found is this: God bore the punishment of the sinner Himself. In the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, He went there and bore the sins of the world, past, present and future sins, yours and mine. With the sin account now righteously and forever settled to Gods' perfect satisfaction, He is now free to be favorably inclined, to be gracious toward the sinner. It is not that God forgives sin in the sense of overlooking it, but that He made the settlement for sin *righteously* when Christ died on the cross.

In **Romans 3:24-25** we read these words, **"being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, v. 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,"**. See that? Being justified, (counted righteous) is an ongoing act by God. The meaning of the passage is quite plain. God, before Christ came to earth, had "passed by" that is overlooked and not brought into account the sins of the Old Testament believers.

The Cross Answers Questions

It thus appeared that God was condoning sin and this brought His righteousness and justice into question. Why did He not condemn those like Abraham and David who, while in some ways were good men, were yet sinful and disobedient? Can God simply overlook their sins and still be just and holy? Will they not be brought into judgment and condemned like others?

The cross of Calvary provides the answers to all these questions. Christ came to earth and Christ died on

the cross. He did not die as ordinary men die, or for the same reasons. Instead He died for the sins of others. God had saved up, as it were, all the sins of those Old Testament believers until Christ came, and then God punished Him for all of them. Thus God was shown to be righteous. Their sins had not been ignored or overlooked, but the judgment had been merely postponed until the Wonderful Savior came, and on the cross died for those sins. It is as if judgment for all the sins of the past were waters stored up behind the dam of Gods forbearance. Throughout the long years of time they were piled up, held back by the barrier of His patience, until one day cruel men lifted up Christ on the cross. In that moment the forbearance and all the patience of God gave way and all the penalties of the sins of the ages swept over that lonely figure on the cross, the Central One, Christ. All alone He bore the fierceness of God's wrath against sin. The rest of the world could now go free because this One paid the debt for their punishment on Himself.

But what is true of past sins is also declared to be true of present and future sins. In **Romans 3:25** that we quoted earlier, speaks of the pre-cross sins. **Verse 26** goes on to state that Christ's death proves God to be righteous now at the present time in treating as righteous the one who does no more than believe in the Lord Jesus. All sins were laid on Him. Nothing, that's **NO THING** was left unsettled.

The Cross Reveals God

The death of Christ on the cross is a beautiful display of the love of God for lost sinners. **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)**".It also sets forth His holiness and hatred for sin. In perfect accord with the truths of Scripture we could say, "For God so hated sin that He even punished His own Son when He became sin for

us." In addition, that cross loudly and clearly proclaims that God is a just and righteous God. He breaks not His own laws, nor does He ever act out of keeping with His own righteous nature. He is no respecter of persons and does not deal leniently with sin, even though He seeks to save the sinner. Through the death of Christ He made a just and equitable settlement for sin.

Propitiation-The Gospel Story

Propitiation is the word we preach, the Gospel Story. Because Christ died, sinners may go free. The Bible teaches that God is love, however it does not teach that God will forgive or forget our sin if we but ask Him. It rather teaches that God found a way to deal with sin that was perfectly in accordance with His own Holiness. *Christ made the settlement for sin.* God does not and cannot hold the believers sin against the sinner. That has been wiped out through the precious shed blood of Christ.

One could well substitute the phrase, *"complete settlement for propitiation"* in our Bibles, for that is just what it means. If that were done, then **1 John 2:1-2** would read **"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. v. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation**, (complete settlement) (*brackets added for emphasis*), **for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."** **1 John 4:10** would say, **"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation**, (*complete settlement) (brackets added for emphasis)*, **for our sins."**

Not just settlement, but complete settlement. God has accepted the death of Christ, and the shedding of every last drop of His blood for the remission of sins, in settling every last demand of justice**. "And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without**

shedding of blood there is no remission.“ (Heb 9:22). The account is now completely settled! Even Gods own Perfect Holiness cannot lay one more thing to the sinners account. His righteousness has been satisfied. His character has been cleared of the charge of tolerating sin or being lenient with the sinner. His love is now free to bestow the blessings of grace on the one who believes.

Dear Reader: This is the Gospel Story! It’s the Good News of Grace, (**free gift**). The sin question has been forever settled. God’s justice is fully satisfied. God Himself has accepted that which Christ has accomplished as the complete settlement for sin. Your sins cannot, and will no longer, be held against you. The only ground of condemnation is not sin, but is the rejection of Jesus Christ. If you are not already a Christian, (that is a “Follower/Believer of Christ”), will you not right here and now, pause and thank God for what He has provided and done for you in Christ? God declares that He is satisfied with the death of Christ; will you/can you/are you satisfied with that and believe on Him now as your Savior?

RECONCILLIATION

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life, **(Romans 5:10).**

THE BIBLE sets forth the work of Christ on the Cross as having a threefold direction: God-ward, man-ward, and sin-ward. *Propitiation* is the word used to indicate the God-ward aspect - Christ on the cross, fully bearing the penalty and guilt due the sinner, and satisfying the justice of God. *Redemption* has to do with the death of Christ on the cross and the resulting values man-ward.

Webster's Dictionary defines "Reconcile" in its primary meaning as "to make friendly again". In the Scriptures the word is somewhat stronger, meaning, "to change completely". There is this further distinction; in ordinary usage, when reconciliation has been accomplished, it is mostly that feelings have been altered. In Scripture usage, the word sets forth the truth that the alienating conditions have been changed. Those factors which brought about division have been dealt with and reconciliation, a complete change, has been effected.

From the onset, this much should be strongly emphasized: In speaking of "*reconciliation*" between God and man, the Bible never indicates that Gods feelings, used to be or have in any way been changed. The attitudes of man towards God may need an adjustment; however His love towards man, His Creation, is ever constant. The heart of God has always yearned for sinners. It was **"...while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, (Romans 5:8)**. It was **"...when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." (Romans 5:10)**. God has always loved the sinner and it was His love that moved Him to act on His behalf. Reconciliation is the result of His love, not the cause of it.

Universal Condemnation

Without question the bible teaches that when Adam sinned, the whole human race became estranged from God. **Romans 5:12** states that ”**Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”.** The words “**all have sinned**” in this passage are in the form in the original Greek which presents a past completed action. It is not that all sinned or will sin eventually or individually, but that once in the past all men already have sinned. No other explanation can satisfy but that this happened when Adam sinned. Nor can any opposing interpretation be adopted for the explanation of **Romans 5:12**.

“By the offense of one man, (Adam) **many be dead”.** – “judgment was by one (Adam) to condemnation” – by one man’s (Adam’s offence) death reigned” – “by the offence of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men” – “by one man’s (Adam’s) disobedience, many were made sinners.” The most fatal consequences of Adam’s sin is not that misery and woe followed his transgression, but that by it, all mankind became estranged from the Maker of man, they were out of fellowship, under the sentence of death, lost and condemned.

However the Bible also teaches that what the human race lost, through the disobedience of Adam, was fully recovered by the perfect obedience of Christ. The same verses just quoted as proof of the doctrine of condemnation through Adam, include the truth that reconciliation has been effected through Another Man, Jesus Christ. **Romans 5:15-19** offers, **“…For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.” v.17 “For if by one man's**

offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. v.18, "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." v.19 "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

A complete change has taken place. By Adam's sin came universal condemnation, estrangement of the whole world from God. Through the death of Christ on the cross has come a universal reconciliation. Universal reconciliation is *not universal salvation.* Neither this Scripture, nor any other in the Bible, declares that all men will ultimately be saved. However, it does teach that by the death of Christ all men are rendered "savable". It is not that men are by the perfect obedience of Christ saved, whether with faith or not, or regardless of personal choice, but this is the effect of reconciliation; that by it God has removed the former basis of condemnation and has taken all men out of their alienated estate. Sin had turned the Throne of God into a Throne of judgment, but the death of Christ on Calvary's cross changed that throne into a Throne of Grace, through which God is able to dispense grace and salvation to **"them that believe"**. Again, it is **"to them that believe".** I love the thought of the Throne of Grace as it is still open at this time, and God is still receiving convicted sinners who became believers to Himself because of the work on the Cross, reconciling them and adding their names are being recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life.

It bears repeating that there is not a single text of Scripture which teaches unequivocally that all men will be saved. In direct contrast, there are many that plainly teach the eternal doom of the lost. It is true that Christ, **"... is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also**

for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2). However this is not to say that the whole world including those who reject/despise His sacrifice, will partake of that propitiation. God indeed, **".... was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor.5:19)**. However there are those who reject that reconciliation. **"Everlasting fire" (Matt. 18:8, 25:41), "eternal damnation" (Mark 3:29), "smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever" (Rev. 14:11), "everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25:46)**, etc., are not compatible with the wishful thinking that all will be saved. "For **G**od so loved the world, that He gave His **O**nly begotten **S**on, that whosoever believeth in Him should not **P**erish, but have **E**verlasting **L**ife." **(John 3:16)**. While there is redemption for the "believers", there is only condemnation for those who refuse the salvation that God has provided. 2 verses further down in John's book says, **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18).** Friend, did you happen to notice the bold letters in **3:16**. Go back up and spell them out. **G**-**O**-**S**-**P**-**E**-**L**. God's Words cannot be any clearer. It means "Good News". God provided a way, Jesus, for us.

Two Aspects of Reconciliation

There are two aspects of reconciliation. The one declares that through the death of Christ, the whole world has already been reconciled, (changed completely) in its relationship with God. The other beseeches, (pleads) men to accept that reconciliation which God has provided.

2 Cor.5:19 is clear regarding the change accomplished by "**obedience unto death of Jesus Christ**", **"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of**

reconciliation." Since reconciliation has been effected, men no longer stand condemned because of sin. God is not holding men's sins against them, neither Adam's nor their own. The words of the verse above are clear indeed. The death of Christ has so finished the work on the cross, that the condemnation that comes about by sin has been removed.

Thus reconciliation in its first aspect presents the truth that though the whole world had become estranged from God and under condemnation, now, because of Christ's sacrifice, this is no longer so. Men are not to be considered to be condemned or alienated from God. God is not counting their sins to them; they are not being condemned for Adam's sin or for their own. This is the message He would have all men to know: that sin is not being held against them. God is satisfied with the death of Christ as being sufficient to accomplish this reconciliation, this mighty change. This is a message we are to preach: that Christ has died, the sin question has been settled, men are not being counted guilty, and salvation is a free gift offered to all who will accept it.

Second Aspect

This brings us to the second aspect of reconciliation, which is that men are reconciled individually when they accept that reconciliation which god has provided. God Himself is satisfied with the Work of Christ. Men are urged to accept and also be satisfied with what He has done. To be reconciled to God is not a request for the sinner to forgive God, but for him to receive forgiveness which has been provided in Christ. When a sinner believes and is satisfied with Christ, he is said to be reconciled. Men are not saved simply because Christ died, though this is the righteous grounds of their salvation, but are saved when they adjust themselves to God through the death of Christ.

Thus, while reconciliation is universal, and the whole world, because of Christ's death, has been completely

changed in its standing before God, nevertheless, salvation is not accomplished for the individual until he himself becomes personally reconciled to God. To believe in Christ, to accept His death as the sole means of being right with God instead of depending on self and personal merit, is to "change completely".

In perfect keeping with the change provided by the death of Christ, are the terms of salvation, as presented in **John 3:18**, as we read before. By this it can be seen that the basis of condemnation is not Adam's sin, nor personal sin, but the rejection of Jesus Christ as Savior and God. Salvation is offered freely to all who believe without regard to the sin question. There is no demand for reformation, neither is the individual ever required to make personal satisfaction to God for sin committed. Conversely, condemnation is declared to be the consequence of unbelief, the rejection of Christ, not the result of individual sin.

Therefore the preaching of the Gospel does not consist of urging men to forsake their sins, or to plead with God for forgiveness. The preaching of the Gospel presents men with the truth that God, in Christ, has provided a mighty change. Sin need no longer condemn. Men are urged to believe and accept the salvation provided by God. When they do this they are personally reconciled. Herein is "Good News".

Be Ye Reconciled

Both the facts of reconciliation and the gist of our message to the lost are clearly stated in **2 Cor. 5:18-20. "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; v.19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. v.20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did**

beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Dear Friend, Salvation can be yours for the taking. Though you are sinful and guilty, yet God seeks you out and is not holding this against you, it is freely offered as a gift that you may reap the blessings of eternal life. Strange as it may seem, the great and Holy God of the universe is not accusing you of your sin, but is pleading with you to accept the reconciliation that He, in love and righteousness, has provided.

As an Ambassador for Him, speaking for Him, I urge you, with Gods own Words of love, that you believe the message that has been given concerning His Son and His death on the cross for you. Hear our prayer for you, **"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:20)**

Redemption

Redemption and *Salvation* are sometimes synonymous terms in the New Testament Epistles, each referring to that whole deliverance wrought by God on behalf of the believing sinner. Yet, as with all other great words of the Bible, each has its own particular truth to maintain, its own light to add to the Glory of God. In its usage of various words, Scripture approaches the central truth from different angles, so that aspect of the truth which one word does not supply, another may. Therefore, where the word salvation would emphasize the *fact* of our deliverance, redemption would stress its *cost*. Where *salvation* dwells generally on present safety, *redemption* looks forward to future glory.

In the original, the word for redemption is *apolutrosis;* a combination of two Greek words – *apo*, away from, and *hutrosis*, a setting free by ransom. It means literally, (a loosing of) deliverance away from something, by the paying of a ransom price. Both of these ideas are clearly present in the several occurrences of the word in the New Testament.

Blood of Christ: Our Ransom Price

There is no doubt as to what the Scriptures teach concerning the ransom price. It is the blood of Jesus Christ. That redemption was accomplished in and through the death of Christ on the cross, and the shedding of His blood, indisputably stated. **Ephesians 1:7** reads, **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"**. **Romans 3:24-25** declares, **"Being justified freely by His** (God's) **grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: v.25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"** (*Brackets added for understanding*). The new song in glory will be "**Redeemed By The Blood**"

Rev. 5:9 "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;" Peter declared we were redeemed by the blood, **1 Pet. 1:19 "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:", and the Book of Hebrews emphatically declares that, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22).**

To some people, the idea that God would demand punishment, a price to be paid, before He would forgive the sinner, sounds both offensive and unreasonable. To them, such teaching casts discredit on the character of God, making Him out to be a cruel Judge instead of a loving, Heavenly Father. They say that any earthly father, deserving of the name, would freely forgive his child when forgiveness was requested. Neither would he demand retribution.

However, consider for a moment that every thoughtful person must assign some reason for the death of Jesus Christ. It is certain He did not need to die, neither for His own sin or because He could not help Himself. Twelve legions of Angels were at His beck and call, **"Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword"**. **Matthew 26** records for us, **v. 52 "But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. v. 53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt 26:52-53)**. Why then did He permit Himself to be put to death?

The Scriptures know of but one solution to the problem of the death of Christ. He died as a Substitute for someone else. He became the God-Provided ransom for the

sins of the world. Because of the substitutionary death in man's place, the grounds of condemnation for the believing sinner are forever past.

The Cross Honors God

The teaching that the death of Christ on the cross is the price paid for our redemption is far more honoring to God than any other. Who can fathom the love of God, as that love is expressed on the cross of Calvary? **"Guilty, vile and helpless we; spotless Lamb of God was He....,"** wrote the hymn write Philip Bliss in his penned song, **"Hallelujah! What a Savior!"**. Yet, "..**God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son....," (John 3:16)**. The One Who thus gave His only Son was not a vindictive and heartless Judge, but a God of inexpressible love and grace!

This Father could not take His ease in Glory while His child was lost in sin. Love constrained Him to go to the rescue. This was a terrible ransom price, however so great was His love, He considered no price too dear for Him to pay. Ah, no! Instead of dishonoring him, this teaching only adds to His Glory and should more than ever cause us to bow down before Him in awe and wonder.

In addition, does not this death of Christ on the cross also demonstrate the holiness of God, and vindicate His righteousness even when He forgives vile sinners? Our Lord Jesus has shown to an assembled universe that God's law is not to be trifled with. Indeed, every transgression and disobedience must receive a **"just recompense of reward"** and that **"just recompense"** brought upon Christ the death on the cross. That death of Christ rendered more honor to God's law than perfect obedience from all who were never ever under it could have rendered, and it was a more forcible vindication of God's righteousness than if all the redeemed ones had been cast into hell. When the Holy One smites His own Son, His wrath against sin is evident to all. When the stroke falls on His Son, He is declared, even by eternal reckoning, to be absolutely righteous in foregoing the punishment of those whose place He took, and it is set forth in clear terms than ever words could tell, how much He loved. **"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his**

judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

Redemption – Complete Deliverance

There is this other thought that underlies the cost of redemption in our full and complete release from sin. It stresses that we have been saved from the penalty of sin by Christ's blood. It also emphasizes that we are being kept from the power of sin by the indwelling Holy Spirit, and that one day we will be changed into the image of the glorious Christ, ushered faultless into the presence of God and out of the existence of sin.

In the **Book of Ephesians** we read, **"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, v.14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." (Eph. 1:13-14)** and further in **Chapter 4:30, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."** Two important realities are evident in these verses. One, that a day of full redemption is coming, and two, that the Holy Spirit has sealed and secured every believer in order that he may be present in that day.

How encouraging and how much to be treasured are those truths. How good to know that a blest day is coming when, just as the believer has been taken out from under the penalty of sin, so shall he be removed from its power and presence! Faultless will he stand before God, clothed in the righteousness of his Savior, subject no more to that awful sin nature which has held him in bondage all his life.

Oh, that great day the Lord Jesus will descend from Heaven, give that shout, the command for all His own to come up and join Him in the air. Join Him they will! In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, every believer in Christ, whether living or dead, will rise up to meet his Lord. He will leave his sinful, earthly body behind, put on his new glorious body, now **"....which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (Col 1:12)**.

He is destined to be an heir of glory with Christ, to be seated in the heavens and next to Christ's more glorious throne, transformed into His image, His likeness, filled with His wisdom, imbued with His power.

These are not empty dreams from Scripture, but they are God's "exceeding great and precious promises" to His own. This is the **"blessed hope"** of the believer, the day of redemption for which not only he, but all creation waits. It is the one and only event which can and will deliver him from **"this body of death"** in which he now resides.

No power on earth or in hell can prevent any child of God from appearing to receive his inheritance on that day of redemption. The reward is as surely his as if he already possessed it. His attendance there is not dependent on his own efforts or merit, but rather on the saving and keeping power of God Himself, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in every believer, and is the pledge and guarantee that he whom the Father loved and for whom the Son died will one day be fully redeemed.

Amazing Grace! **v. 38 "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, v. 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38-39).**

SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification and Justification are kindred words. Each speaks of a particular aspect of the believers standing before God. That is, they do not describe what the believer is in himself, but rather how God sees him in Christ's finished work. There is this difference; where *justification* declares the believer's righteousness, *sanctification* reveals his holiness. *Justification* is that act of God which clears the *guilty* sinner and declares him fit to worship and to have fellowship with a Holy and Just God. Not righteous but guilty, the sinner is justified. Not holy but defiled, the sinner is sanctified.

The Guilty Conscience

It is one thing for God to *declare us free* from the guilt and penalty of sin through the substitutionary death of Christ, and quite the other thing for us to *feel free* from the defilement of sin, and acceptable for the fellowship with Him. We can believe that Christ has borne our sins so that we are no longer condemned, even in the slightest degree, by them. We can also now believe that in justification, a perfect righteousness has been committed unto us, and that righteousness, being of God Himself, is perfectly acceptable to Him.

Fellowship, though, is something else. We know what we are in ourselves. Counted righteous we may be, however we recognize and acknowledge our defilement. We are we and by what right do we have to fellowship with God? The penalty for sin may be gone, however the vast gulf between a Holy God and a defiled sinner remains.

Even though we can no longer be punished for our sins, we are ashamed to enter into God's presence. While we know that He now counts us righteous, there is still the matter of our sinful nature and its defiling touch. We are declared righteous but we feel sinful. The question then is, how can the conscience be purged so that worship and fellowship are restored?

Sanctification Clears the Conscience

Sanctification is Scripture's answer to the problem. First and foremost it needs to be emphasized that sanctification, in its primary meaning, is not a gradual process or change accomplished by the believer, but is an

act of God as is justification – the shed blood of Christ for sin atoned.

A good illustration of this meaning of sanctification can be found in the words of **Hebrews 9:13-14. v.13 "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: v. 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"**

In **verse 13** the reference is made to **"the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean."** Here another reference can be seen in **Numbers 19**. This was a service whereby the Jew, who in one way or the other had become defiled, and thus was unfit for worship, could become clean and sanctified. Restoration of the privilege of worship was accomplished through this sprinkling ceremony and entitled one who was purified to again participate in the service and worship of God.

Verse 14 contrasts that ritual, which served to sanctify the Israelite of old, with the value of the blood of Christ for us today. It declares that through Christ's blood we have been purged, cleaned and made holy, made perfect to serve and worship the Living God. The sprinkling of that water of purification enabled the defiled Israelite to once more share in the Temple worship; and the blood of Christ brings us without fear and shame into the very presence of God Himself. **v.19 "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,**
20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;
21 And having an high priest over the house of God;
22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:19-22).

Let there be no shadow of doubt here. In ourselves we are defiled and guilty, unfit for the presence of the Holy One. Our only hope, not only for the fellowship here and now, but also for future entrance into Heaven, lies in the accomplishments of the crucified Savior. Putting away of

the guilt of sin, and purging from the defilement of sin are both acts of God provided by the shed blood of Christ.

The gulf between His Holiness and our sinfulness is a chasm that could never be bridged by our puny attempts at holy living. There is nothing that we can do that would make fellowship with God possible. Cleansing from the defilement of sin must be provided for us through the accomplishments of Another, or the gulf remains. Praise God this has been done. The blood of Jesus Christ provides not only for our justification, but also for our sanctification by eradication. We are fitted for fellowship and worship through the death of our Savior.

Sanctification is Continuous

Though Sanctification is declared to be a "**once for all**" act of God, in a real sense that act is a continuing one. *We have been sanctified* in Christ, and we are constantly *being cleansed*. In **Hebrews 10** there is a Greek word that occurs once each in verses 1, 12, and 14. In the KJV Bible, it appears as "**continually**" (v.1), and as "**forever**", (vs. 12 & 14. It is not a word that speaks of a past completed action, however one that indicates a never ceasing action, and could well be translated by the phrase "**in perpetuity**".

Reading verse 1 with this in mind, the words state that the Old Testament sacrifices could not make those who offered perfect perpetually or continually. Those Israelites could, and did, become defiled again, and needed another and still yet, another cleansing. **Verse 12** says, "**But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever.....,".** That is to say, cleansed from the defilement of sin in "perpetuity" or continually. Through the "**once for all**" offering of Christ, the sanctified individual is "being sanctified" in perpetuity.

Not as in the Old Testament, where each defilement demanded another sacrifice, this one offering, of Jesus Christ, provides to keep the believer clean and holy. It is not that he becomes defiled and then upon application of the blood he again becomes clean, but rather that the blood provides that he is continually, constantly, perpetually sanctified, and thus holy.

As an illustration, the blood of Christ might be likened to the waters of Niagara Falls. One standing in and under that mighty flood would never have a chance to

become soiled and dirty. The waters would wash any dirt away as fast as it would appear. So it is with the believer and the blood of Christ, his cleansing is constant and continual by Christ. He is being cleansed "in perpetuity". That precious flow from the side of Christ cleanses and cleanses and keeps on cleansing. There is never a moment when the believer is not clean. Sin's defilement never rests upon him, not even for a moment. He is constantly being "sanctified through the once for all offering of the body of Christ".

Sanctification Means Separation

Sanctification in the Scriptures also can refer to the Christians walk, or calling. Sanctify means to "separate' or "set apart" and the Christian is a separated one to God, separated to Him by virtue of the blood of Christ, and the wooing of the Holy Spirit and calling of God. See here, "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," (**Acts 13:2**). The person who is so separated ought then to live a separated life in keeping with that which he already is in Christ. Since a Christian is a Saint, he ought to act like one. "**Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:" (1Cor. 1:2)** and **"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;" (Eph 5:3)**.

In a certain sense sanctification can also be said to be a process, for we are urged, in the Scriptures, to sanctify ourselves, that is set ourselves apart for God. **".....let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 7:1)**. In this sense sanctification is a growth, a development in personal holiness.

The exhortation to a separated walk should never be confused with that perfect and accomplished sanctification which is a work of God on our behalf and is grounded in the death of our Savior. By that sacrifice we are sanctified, and thereby made perfect to enter into the presence of a Thrice Holy God, and there fellowship with Him. By that act of God we have been cleansed and purified

from every stain and defilement of sin, and therefore nothing, **NO THING** can ever keep us from His Presence. We are sanctified in Calvary's precious flow, sanctified in perpetuity. Wonderful Salvation, Praise God!

BLAMELESS

No child of God, who knows himself at all, would ever lay claim to having any righteousness of his own. He fully recognizes that by his own efforts he could never earn or merit acceptability with God. He would freely admit that his attempts to right living only demonstrate the sad truth taught in Scripture**, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:" (Rom. 3:10)**. With the Apostle Paul, he has found that, **"when I would do good, evil is present with me" (Rom. 7:21)**, and **"For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." (Rom. 7: 19**).

The instructed child of God also understands that though he has no righteousness of his own, through the death of Jesus Christ God has provided to him His own perfect righteousness. He has read and believed the Scripture which declares**, "v. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; v. 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:" (Rom. 3:21)**. By virtue of that supplied righteousness, he knows that he now has a new and faultless standing before God.

The Perfection of Christ

The absolute perfection of that standing before God, which is the present possession of every believer in Christ, can be seen by noting the meaning and usage of the Greek word *amomas.* It appears seven times in the Greek New Testament. Twice it is used in speaking of the substitutionary death of Christ, and four times of the believer and his standing in Christ, and once of the 144,000 Jewish Saints of the tribulation times.

In **Ephesians 1:4** *amonas* is **translated "without blame"**. In **Ephesians 5:27** and **1 Peter 1:19**, **"without blemish"**. In **Hebrews 9:14**, **"without spot"**. **Jude** records it as **"faultless"**. **Revelation 14:5** has **"without fault"**. The two instances in which it speaks of Christ provide a good definition of its Biblical meaning.

We know from Scripture that any offering brought by the Israelites had to be perfect offering. No sick, crippled,

deformed animal could be accepted by the priest. As nearly as possible the offering was to be one hundred percent perfect. We also know that these unblemished sacrifices presented, in type or shadow, the perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ as He was offered on Calvary's cross. Proof of that perfection is not lacking in Scriptures.

In every walk of life, those who came into contact with Christ testified as to His sinlessness. The one who betrayed Him later said**, "...I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." (Matt. 27:4). John 7:46 records "The officers answered, Never man spake like this man."** His judge at His trial**, "Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man." (Luke 23:4)**. The thief and fellow sufferer on the cross said, **"And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." (Luke 23:41)**. Jesus to his accusers said, **"Which of you convinceth me of sin?..." (John 8:46)**. Of Satan he said, **"for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30)**. Meanwhile, the Father from Heaven records, **"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"." (2 Peter 1:17)**. This testimony of the Father concerning the Son was reiterated in no uncertain terms by His resurrection from the dead. Truly He was the One **"who knew no sin"**.

From all this it is clearly evident that when the author of **Hebrews 9:14** states that Jesus Christ **"...who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot (*amomos*) to God,"** is referring to the perfect, spotless righteousness of Christ in which He offered Himself in complete obedience to God. When Peter, **"moved by the Spirit"**, writes that the means by which we were redeemed was **"...with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish (*amomos*) and without spot:" (1Pet. 1:19)** he is clearly saying that His life, represented by the blood and offered for us, was a flawless, spotless, perfect life.

Amomos then, can be defined as being without fault or flaw, completely unblemished and perfectly acceptable in the sight of God. How acceptable? As

acceptable in Gods sight as was the offering of the life and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us now apply that definition to those passages which speak of the believer and his standing before God.

Our Perfection in Christ

Ephesians 1:4 states that, "**According as He** (the Father) **hath chosen us in Him** (Christ) **before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame (*amomos*) before him in love:"**. This passage has been interpreted by many as meaning that we "***ought to be*" holy and without blame before Him."** However the verse presents **"holy and unblameable"** as being a present possession, not something for which we strive. It is one of the spiritual blessings that is ours by virtue of our union with Christ.

What we **"*ought to be*"** because we are Christians is one thing, what we are because we are in Christ is something entirely different. The one represents our *state*, the other our *standing*, and the two should never be confused. Our *state* is imperfect and varies from day to day because it depends on our obedience and yieldedness. Our *standing* is a perfect, eternal, never changing verity, depending as it does upon our position in Christ. What a wonderful truth this is. In ourselves we are guilty, defiled sinners. In Christ we are without fault or flaw, perfectly righteous, *amomos* before God.

Now let's look at **Ephesians 5:27**. **"That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish** (*amomos*)." This precious truth, our perfect acceptability before God, should certainly turn our every thought away from sinful self and fix the eye of faith on Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Accepted In Him, the Lord Jesus Christ? Accepted by Him, God the Father? Who is sufficient for such things? Can the leopard change its spots or the Ethiopian his skin? Of course not! However God is able to present this sin-spotted and sin-defiled person before His own presence without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, and all because of Christ – the absolutely perfect, the *amomos* One. Precious Savior, Wonderful Salvation.

Amomos occurs again in **Colossians 1:21-22. "v. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled v. 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable (*amomos*) and unreproveable in His sight: "** Before us lies a contrast of what we were, apart from Christ, and what we are now in Him. Where once there existed no grounds of accountability at all, there now exists no grounds of condemnation at all. It is not because of our goodness, no, however it is because we are *amomos* in Him.

A passage in **Jude** remains for our consideration. In this well loved and often used benediction we read, **"v. 24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless** (*amomos*) **before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, v. 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." (Jude 24-25)**

What can be added to such statements? Absolutely nothing! How the believer should rejoice in hs perfect righteousness and acceptability to God. No fear should cloud his horizon concerning whether or not he be fit to meet his Maker. Christ was sinless and perfect, whose atoning sacrifice was accepted by the Father. In Him we are as perfect and acceptable as He is. We are the *amomos* in Him.

ADVOCATE

"v. 1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin (talking of Christians), we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: v. 2 And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." **(1John 2:1-2)**

In these 2 verses of Scripture Jesus Christ is presented as the Advocate for sinning Christians. He appears before the Father in their behalf. That advocacy is for believers only, and is evident from the words in the beginning of **1 John 1**, **"My little children"**. The Bible never speaks of unbelievers as "little children/children or sons" of God. Further, that Advocacy is directed towards the Father, and while in a limited sense God is Father over all creation, (see **Eph 3:14-15**) **"v. 14 for this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, v. 15 of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,"** , in the strict and real meaning of the term, God is only Father to them that believe. **Note added- see **John 8:43-45****

The Nature of Advocacy

The character of that advocacy is also plain to be seen. He is Jesus Christ the *righteous*. He is not pleading for mercy or leniency, nor is He attempting to pacify or calm the Fathers' wrath. He is rather the ***"...propitiation for our sins..."*** **, (1 John 2:2)**.

Propitiation is that work of Christ on the cross by which He became the righteous settlement for sin. In His death, He paid the penalty demanded by the broken law and the Holiness of God. Justice had been perfectly satisfied, since in His death, Christ fully and completely bore the punishment and guilt for sin. The sin debt is canceled, wiped out forever by the blood of Christ. Propitiation is God-ward in its values. The death of Christ has provided Divine satisfaction for sin and God is now seen to be righteous in the forgiveness of guilty sinners**. "v. 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;**

v. 24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: v. 25 Whom God

hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; v. 26 To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be Just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:23).

The work of the Advocate then, lies not in pleading with the Father to be merciful toward the sinner, however in the presenting His death on the cross as the righteous grounds by which God can forgive the sin of the believer. It is not that a wrathful and harsh Father needs to be appeased or reminded of the work of Christ on the Cross. He takes as much satisfaction for the salvation of sinners as Christ does; **"...God so loved that He gave His only Son..."**. This is rather a public display of the righteous character of God and a practical demonstration of the value of the death of Christ on the cross.

The Advocacy at Work

Here is the picture: On earth the believer has just sinned. The happening is relayed to Satan and in heaven he accuses that believer of sin, (for a reference see **Job 1:6-12** and **Rev. 12:10**). That sin may have been done in secret on earth, however it becomes an open scandal in Heaven. Now, both the Father's Righteousness and the security of the believer comes into question. How can God not punish the offender and still be Holy and Just? Should not the sinner be cast away, or not admitted to Heaven at all? Either the Father must show Himself to be tolerant of sin, (that can never be, see **Heb. 1:13**), or else the one who sins is lost and forever condemned.

Instead, Jesus just holds forth his nail pierced hands. There in those wounds is the ample proof that the sin question has been satisfied, and the full penalty of the sin fully paid. The sinner has been acquitted, his sin cannot separate him from his God. Not mercy offered, but justice demonstrated.

What a scene in Glory and what a manifestation of the worth of the cross. Can you not just see it in your mind? There is the Fathers Throne and before it stands the hater of God and his minions, crying out those awful charges of sin against the believer. There stands the Advocate, and gathered around is the Heavenly host, the

angels and the Saints of all ages, **"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," (Heb 12:23)**. The accuser states his charge and amidst the silence that follows the blessed Advocate steps forward. No pleading He makes, no cries for mercy, but before that gathered throng He shows forth His wounds, His scars tell the truth.

"Cleared", says the Judge, "the sinner is acquitted", the account fully settled, the slate wiped clean and he is free. There is no charge, no penalty. By the submission of the proof of the wounds by the Advocate, there is not now, nor ever can there be, any condemnation.

Christ's Finished Work

How wonderful does Christ and the cross appear in all this? How clearly are the values and the worth of Christ's death demonstrated! IF the angels sang and rejoiced at the birth of Him Who was to "save His people from their sins" (**Matt. 1:21**); if **"there is rejoicing over one sinner that repenteth; (Luke 15:10**), how the halls of Heaven must ring with the shouts of joy when the Judge says, "Cleared" .

For those Saints in Glory, how wonderful must the cross appear to them now? Where once they saw **"through a glass darkly", (1 Cor. 13:12)**now their vision is no longer dimmed. Once they walked by faith, now it is by sight. Now, in a way never before possible, is made plain to them the meaning and worth of the Savior's sacrifice. How beautiful does the Lord Jesus Christ now appear in their eyes? And though there may be no weeping in Glory, if what little we understand here causes the voice to choke and the eye to fill with tears, what a tide of emotions should fill the hearts of those who view this scene in Glory.

The song we sing on earth is the same song they sing in Glory. It is the song of Redemption through the blood of the Lamb. **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;" (Rev. 5:9)**. Here we can only sing by faith, there they have a practical demonstration of the blood and its redeeming power to save from sin.

How clearly it is thus seen that the work of Christ on the cross is a finished work. All that is necessary to clear the sinner and accomplish a full redemption has been done. Christ is not present in Heaven pleading for mercy, but He is presenting His blood, His wounds, His scars as the grounds of full forgiveness.

Our Advocate presents His blood
Before the Judgment Throne,
He answers every accusation.
God can forgive His own.

How beautiful does Christ appear
To Saints' and angels gaze;
To Him shall all our praise be given,
Now and throughout endless days.

The reader should be cautious to see this provides no excuse for sinning. The Apostle opens the passage with these words**; "My little children, these things I write unto you, that you sin not." (1 John 2:1)**. The truth of the Advocacy of Christ should lead us away from sin, not into sin. His present ministry should be a deterrent to sinning, never giving us the freedom to sin. It prohibits sin, not licenses it.

Nevertheless, even though we are weak, sinful by nature and prone to wander, how wonderful is the truth that, righteously and justly, the sin question has been settled to the perfect satisfaction of God. No sin can cause me to lose my salvation; nothing, NO THING can separate me from God. What a Wonderful Savior!

GLORIFICATION

A Christian is a person who has been saved. By virtue of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross his sins have been forgiven and he stands justified before God. For him there is **"therefore now no condemnation", (Rom. 8:1)**. In and through Christ he has been **"perfected forever", (Heb. 10:14)**.

A Christian is also one who is *being saved.* Scripture reveals that he is **"kept by the power of God", (1 Peter 1:5), "sealed with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit", (Eph. 1:13)**, and **"saved to the uttermost"** by the intercessory prayers of the Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, (**Heb. 7:25**). Furthermore it is stated that nothing, absolutely **NO THING** can ever **"separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus", (Heb. 8:38-39)**.

The Christian also *will be saved;* he has a hope for tomorrow. It is a shining hope, a glorious hope and almost unbelievable hope. It is a prospect so bright that it would be classified as sheer imagination except for the fact that it is clearly and often stated in Scripture. The Bible declares, in language plain and unmistakable, that one day Christians will be changed into the image and likeness of Christ, that their bodies will be fashioned like unto His present Body of Glory. **"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (1 Cor. 15:52)**.

Believers Will be Given a New Body

"For our conversation (citizenship) **is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: v.21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philip. 3:20-21). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1John 3:2).**

From these Scriptures it is clear that one day, soon, which is the Rapture, the believer will be given a new body, a body which will bear the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. What kind of a body, many ask. It cannot imply that the believer will be like what Jesus Christ was before He came into the world, for before He came, He had no body, although at certain times and for particular purposes He assumed the likeness of a man. "Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, "O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born." (see the whole context here Judges 13:1-21).

We derive from Scriptures that it cannot mean that we will become like what Christ was during His sojourn here on earth, for His body was not a Glorious Body. That body was a body of weakness, just as is the believer's present body. True, Christ had no sin-nature, (the disposition to sin was never in Him as it is in us), otherwise, His was a body like ours, (Heb. 2:14, 17). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; v.17 Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." He hungered, He thirsted, He grew weary. In the human body, He suffered and endured all the limitations that are common to the human race. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Heb 2:18). "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb 4:15).

We can clearly see that the present Body of Christ, His Glorious Body is the pattern which the Believer will conform, be changed into. It also should be obvious, that the Glory of Christ now, (not the Glory of His Essential Nature as God, but that Glory which relates to His Humanity) far exceeds that Glory which He had while here on earth.

Christ's Body of Glory

When Christ left His home in Heaven to come into this world, He left behind the outward and visible Glory that belonged to Him as God, and took upon Himself a complete human nature and body. He never laid aside His Godhood, (God can never be anything less than God) however by all appearances He was only a man. Upon returning to Heaven, He took again that Glory which rightfully belonged to Him as an equal member of the Trinity. It is that for which He prayed when He said, **"And now, O Father, glorify thou Me with Thine Own Self with the Glory which I had with Thee before the world was." (John 17:5)**.

In addition to the Glory that belongs to Him as God, our wonderful Lord has yet another Glory, the Glory of His exalted Humanity. That human body that was His while here on earth, a body which became inseparably united to His Deity, has been exalted and glorified beyond the power of words to tell. This Glory He has earned, it is His by right of conquest.

He came into this world to do His Fathers will, **"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me,) to do thy will, O God." (Heb 10:7)**. He laid aside the Glory that was His, the worship of angels, the place that was His alongside the Father, to endure the cross and shame. Because He did, when He has finished His work on Calvary's cross, When, **"....being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Philip. 2:8)**. God the Father honored Him and gave Him, in His humanity, first place and Authority over and above all things. It is the Fathers way of saying, **"..... Well done, thou Good and Faithful Servant: Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make Thee Ruler over many things: enter Thou into the joy of Thy Lord." (Matt. 25:21, 25)**.

To this truth Scripture bears clear witness. **"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: v.6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: v.7 But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: v.8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and**

became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Philip. 2:5-8).

Now read the rest of the Scripture for us, **v.9 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name: v.10 That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; v.11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father." (Philip. 2:9).**

As can be visualized, the Glorification and Exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ belongs to His humanity and not to His Deity. As God He is, has been, and forever will be, far above any other except the Father and the Holy Spirit. It is in His humanity that He is thus elevated and honored. His Body has been made suitable for the position He now holds as Lord of all.

The difference between what Christ was while here on earth and what He is now can hardly be grasped. His Ascension and the flowing Glorification constitutes far, far more than just a reversal of His death. For Lazarus and others who were raised from the dead, this resurrection amounted to no more than a return to what they were before death had overtaken them. That was not the case with Christ's resurrection. At His Ascension His humanity, (that is His body, soul and spirit) became perfect Humanity. It was so changed that it became, not only fit for Heaven, but suitable to become an indivisible addition to His Deity.

Something of what Christ is like now in His present Body of Glory is revealed in **1 Tim. 6:15-16**. Speaking of the Glorified Christ, Paul writes**, "Which in His times He shall shew, Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; v.16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."**

It is no wonder then, that Paul on the road to Damascus, seeing Christ in that Body of Glory, should be blinded by the vision. **Acts 9:3-9** records it for us; **"v. 3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: v. 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice**

saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? v. 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I Am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. v. 6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. v. 7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.
v. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. v. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

Nor was it strange that John, the beloved Apostle who knew Him well while He was in His earthly and lowly body, on seeing Him in His Heaven Glorified Body, should record for us **"And when I saw him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I Am the First and the Last:" (Rev. 1:17)**.

This new body is the creation of the "**exceeding greatness**" of the power of God. It is that power which God the Father had Paul write to us about. **"v. 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, v. 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, v. 20 Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,**
v. 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:" (Eph 1:18-21).

Christians Will Share in Christ's Glory

This is the glory which we will share, not the Glory of Christ's Deity, that belongs to Christ alone and no creature can ever have a part in that, but in the Glory of His exalted Humanity. See here in **Isa. 42:8 "I Am the LORD: that is My Name: and My Glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images."** Clearly

stated in **Eph. 1:19**, is the truth that what the mighty power of God did for Christ, is a measure of what He intends for every believer in Christ. The **"exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe"** is **"according"** to what **"He wrought for Christ"**.

This is the hope set before the Christians, that one day, (soon we hope) we will be caught up into Heaven and changed into the image and likeness of the Glorified Christ. Positionally, that is as God views him as he already sits **"……. and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" (Eph. 2:6)**. In that day however, sharing in the position and Glory of Christ will become an actuality

Beloved, rest assured, and it is sure and certain to happen. God's promise cannot fail. In truth, as far as God is concerned, it is already done! He speaks of the future event as a past completed action in **Romans 8:30**; **"Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."**

Listed here are the four steps in the salvation of the believer, none of which in the slightest degree are dependent on himself, however all on the Sovereign choice and power of God.

First, he was predestined, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. **Eph. 1:4**.

Second, he was called; God the Holy Spirit sought him out and using the circumstances of life and the Word of God, which brought him to place his faith in the crucified Christ.

Third, being then put into Christ, joined to Him in a real and lasting union, he was justified, declared righteous, **1 Cor. 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."**, and **Romans 6:3-4 "v.3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? v. 4 Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."**

Fourth, he is said to be already glorified. The verb "**glorified**" being in the past tense, indicates that in the

plan and purpose of God the believer's glorification is an already accomplished fact.

Yes, one day the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of life, will make His way from Heaven down toward this earth, pausing somewhere in the clouds. Just as He did at the grave of Lazarus, He will give a shout, and call to His own, us believers in Christ who by faith accepted and live for Him, and He will bid them "**come forth**". **"v. 38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. v. 39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. v. 40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? v. 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. v. 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. v. 43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. v. 44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go." (John 11-38-44)**. They, as the resurrection of Lazarus foreshadowed, will come forth out of this old world, being changed in an instant, and rise to meet Him in the air. "**1 Cor. 15:51-52 "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,**

v. 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Oh that precious hope. Not even when it was first revealed to the Apostle Paul was it assigned to a far distant future, but was spoken of as being "**at hand**". To the Thessalonian believers , in writing about the Rapture, Paul stated, **"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1Thes. 4:17).** Evidently he figured to be still alive

when Christ would call His Saints home to be with Him in Glory. If it were not far off then, how much nearer now?

Ah yes! One day the appointed time will come and Christ will gather home His Church, all those who have been saved through the preaching of the Gospel of Grace. One day past God the Father gave His Son for the salvation of the world, the greatest gift the world has ever known. He now is engaged in gathering out of the world a people to be a gift to His son. What a Day that will be when, there in the Portals of Heaven, God the Father presents the Church, the Bride of Christ as a gift to His beloved Son. Clothed in all Her bridal garments, the Bride will be Glorified and transformed, made suitable to co-reign with her Bridegroom, Jesus Christ her Lord and Savior.

Oh the riches of the grace in Jesus Christ. Indeed the thoughts of God are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways;

Isaiah 55:8-9, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. v. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Surely no one, not even the most self-satisfied, would ever deem himself worthy of such blessings and glory. All must arise in the infinite Love and Grace of God and be made available only through the immeasurable values of the death of Christ.

Indeed it is all from God. The only part man can have is to accept Christ and sing the praise to Him Who designed such a plan, and rejoice in the One Who bought him with His own precious blood and Whose Glory he shall share.

Yea Lord, hasten the Day. **Rev. 22:20 "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."**

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