

**Special: Spring 2024 #7**

**May 5, 2024**

**Series Title: Behold Our King!**

**Today's Message: The Doctrine of Salvation, pt 4; Ephesians 4:17- 6:9**

For many people “salvation” is the elementary teachings of Scripture. For that matter, for some, salvation is simple and, in some respects, boring. But for people who set their minds to look into this doctrine it is far from simple and far from boring. The biblical treatment of salvation takes us on an eternal odyssey. We navigate the deep waters of the theology of God—who He is: His nature and character. If we think about salvation in proportion to the biblical revelation concerning salvation we have enough to think about, ask about and delve into to last us an eternity of eternities!

What's more, exploring the doctrine of salvation leads us to see the absolutely sovereignty of God at work in the salvation of His people from before the foundation of the world. Remember the vast expanse of the revelation of God's sovereign electing choice of His people? Election is God's choice. It is in accordance to His eternal predeterminate counsel and will!

Or what about the Gospel Call and Regeneration? How wonderful and how marvelous is God's love and power that not only does He elect some, but in time He saves them “through the hearing of the Word preached or taught or read and “through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior. (Titus 3:5-6)” The effectual nature of the Gospel call to faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ for the regeneration of a human being is nothing short of perfection in its saving accomplishment as the Holy Spirit works the eternal will of God with absolute precision!

Much more could be said but let's move on to the doctrine of justification. Justification is that doctrine upon which our salvation stands or falls. This doctrine leads us to the centrality of the cross of Christ. Never forget that saving faith rests upon the saving work of Jesus Christ. It is that saving work, i.e., His death on the cross that assures us that our sin debt has been paid! Mind you, it isn't the value of the cross, that justifies sinners, it is God who justifies! How? By offering His Lamb as the offering of sacrifice! It is the value and merit of Him, the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, the righteous Son of God! It was Christ alone who took the guilt of our sins upon Himself and died in our place! It is His life and death that is of highest value to God, and precious to us—those who are being saved! And our hope that His death effectually cancelled the law of condemnation, which stood against us, is secured through His resurrection from the dead! Here is a summary of the matter: “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification! (Rom. 4:25)”

No less glorious is the doctrine of the conversion of a sinner! God is behind the conversion of sinners. At that moment of regeneration, as a sinner is made alive, a new creation, the evidence of newness and renewal and belief in Jesus Christ the Savior is expressed through repentance and saving faith! Romans 10:9-10 describes conversion this way: “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved!”

And the doctrine of salvation teaches us that what God begins He finishes! As He chose some for salvation before the foundation of the world and as He saves them in time, He keeps them for all time. The doctrine of adoption gives us this security and assurance, because before time God chose to make a permanent relationship with His elect by adopting them into His family the very moment of regeneration! And do we not also learn more of His great love for us? 1 John 3:1-2 declares, “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God...now we are children of God!”

Remember the **Good Principle**? God the Father elects before time, regenerates in time, applies the Gospel on time, and saves for all time and eternity.

Today we will conclude our brief look into the *doctrine of salvation* by examining the doctrine of sanctification and glorification as well as two other important aspects of the doctrine of salvation.

**I) Salvation Applied: How God Unilaterally saves His people: the Steps [of God's] salvation.**

- A) Election. God chooses those whom He will save according to His determinate counsel.
- B) The Gospel Call and Regeneration: God effectually calls and regenerates His people.
- C) Justification is solely the work of God (Romans 8:30, 33): "It is God who justifies."
- D) The Conversion of a sinner occurs upon regeneration by the Spirit, evidenced by repentance and belief in the Truth. However, conversion originates with God. Both faith and repentance are gifts.
  - 1) Saving faith is a gift God bestows on the elect.
    - (a) Ephesians 2:8-9: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—so that no one can boast."
  - 2) Repentance also is a gift from God.
    - (a) 2 Timothy 2:25 informs us that repentance is a gift from God leading to a knowledge of the Truth.
- E) Adoption: Before time God had chosen to make a permanent relationship with His elect by adopting them into His family at the moment we are regenerated and justified!
- F) Sanctification is threefold: Positional, Progressive and Perfective (theological terms)
  - 1) Positional sanctification: this is closely related, if not laminated to justification. When we are justified, we are legally declared righteous. And at the same time, at the moment of saving faith, our position changed from being "in Adam" and the kingdom of darkness, to now being forevermore "in Christ" and His kingdom! By an act of grace through faith God has "Rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:13-14)
    - (a) 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"
    - (b) Positional Sanctification and our Adoption as sons of God (Eph. 1:5).
      - (i) Having been justified we are adopted. Follow the order of the book of Romans.
        - (a) Justification (Romans 3:21- 4:25)
        - (b) Adoption (Romans 8:1-17)
          - 1. Through the Holy Spirit
            - a. Rom. 8:14-15: "...because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"
            - b. Rom. 8:16: "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are the children of God."
  - 2) Progressive Sanctification: Growth and maturity as a believer. See section II B
  - 3) Perfective Sanctification: This is synonymous with "glorification" when are finally perfected. See Glorification next in **point "G."**
- G) Glorification is the completion of salvation yet future to us, when we see Jesus as He is, and are finally free once for all from the presence and the pleasure of sin and made like our Lord Jesus.
  - 1) 1 John 3:2-3: "Dear friends, now we are children of God and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies Himself (progressive sanctification), just as He is pure."
  - 2) Being future to us, the glorification of the believer is the point of spiritual perfection!

- (a) It is that moment when we pass from these mortal bodies and meet the Lord in the air and at some point, receive new bodies like His glorious body!
  - (i) With Him forever! 1 Thess. 4:16-18. "...and so we will be with the Lord forever!"
  - (ii) Perfect and final redemption: Redemption of our bodies! Philippians 3:20-21: "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body."
  - (iii) Romans 8:23: "Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies."
    - (a) It is then, future to us, that we will finally and forever be delivered from the very presence and pleasure of sin!
    - (b) When every saint will have perfection in common! Hebrews 12:22b-23: "You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect."

## II) Our Cooperative Response to God's Gift of Salvation

- A) Conversion and Progressive Sanctification also carries with it the idea of personal repentance in action. The Spirit, having made us new creatures in Christ, works in us providing faith and spiritual power, and we work.
  - 1) Our work is ongoing and simple: To present ourselves as slaves of righteousness (Rom.6:16-19).
  - 2) We "offer our bodies to God as living sacrifices holy and acceptable to God" and no longer live in conformity to the pattern of the world (Romans 12:1-2)
  - 3) We "put off" sinful practices and habits and "put on" practices which please God.
    - (a) See 2 Cor. 5:9-10; Eph. 4:22-5:20; Colossians 3:1-17
- B) More on Progressive Sanctification: Key words and concepts
  - 1) A Process: The process of Progressive sanctification is first dependent on God's grace.
    - (a) According to the grace of God and the inner working of the Holy Spirit a believer separates from sin and becomes dedicated to God's righteousness. i.e. holy living.
      - (i) The process is accomplished by the Word of God *working* in a believer through the power of the Holy Spirit.
        - (a) 1 Thess. 2:13: "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at *work* in you who believe."
        - (b) 2 Thess. 2:13: "But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the Truth."
  - 2) Holiness: As the Word and Spirit work resulting in holiness, or purification from the guilt and power of sin.
  - 3) Separation: The Word and Spirit work causing the believer to *separate* from the world.
  - 4) Other words: Commitment, obedience, affections, renewal, growth, devotion, and maturity.

## III) Appendix: A Summary

- A) Election, Calling, Regeneration, justification: Salvation in the past tense: I have been saved.
  - 1) Ephesians 2:8-9
- B) Conversion and Sanctification is the present tense of salvation: I am being saved.
  - 1) 1 Corinthians 1:18
- C) Glorification is the future tense, the perfection of salvation: I will be saved. (see 1 Thess. 1:10)