

The Three Tenses of Salvation

“A Three-Fold Salvation”

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

A twelve-year-old boy became a Christian during a revival. The next week at school his friends questioned him about the experience. "Did you see a vision?" asked one friend. "Did you hear God speak?" asked another. The youngster answered no to all these questions. "Well, how did you know you were saved?" they asked. The boy searched for an answer and finally he said, "It's like when you catch a fish, you can't see the fish or hear the fish; you just feel him tugging on your line. I just felt God tugging on my heart."

How wonderful that special day was when God tugged on our heart and saved and delivered us from an everlasting hell. I will never forget this day!

The word “salvation” literally means deliverance and carries the idea of deliverance, safety, and preservation. The root idea is deliverance from some danger or even death for Peter cried out “Lord save me” (Matt. 14:30).

The Bible teaches there is a three-fold salvation that we have been given by God.

This is a doctrinal study that is very important. Bible doctrine is meant to be understood and applied to our lives (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Bible study should *repair* us and then *prepare* us for service. It should help us on to understanding grace better and enable us to live more effectively. Whenever the Bible is preached, including the preaching and teaching of doctrinal studies, we are to make sure that we understand the truth that is being unfolded to us and then apply it to our lives. As a result, we will be blessed in our Christian walk, begin to grow in our Christian life, and become a better Christian because of it.

A Threefold Salvation

We HAVE BEEN saved from the PENALTY of sin (JUSTIFICATION).

We are BEING saved from the POWER of sin (Sanctification).

We SHALL be saved from the PRESENCE of sin (Glorification).

As seen in the chart above, the Bible teaches that every person who believes on Jesus Christ is saved from the penalty of sin, is being saved from the power of sin, and one day will be saved from the very presence of sin. The Bible reveals that “a threefold cord is not quickly broken” (Eccl. 4:12). In other words, we can be sure of this. God’s threefold salvation will be experienced by every believing sinner who transfers his faith to Christ.

This threefold salvation can be viewed as the three tenses of our salvation experience. When we express faith in Christ, we can have the complete confidence that we have been saved or rescued from sin’s penalty forever. We no longer must fear the wrath of God. But we can also from this point forward, also experience our daily salvation or deliverance from sin’s power in our life. Finally, we can look ahead to experiencing our final salvation someday when we receive a new body and are delivered from the very presence of sin forever.

Every believer experiences a three-fold salvation. Our salvation is explained in three ways.

PAST Tense of Salvation

Deliverance from sin’s
PENALTY (DAMNATION)



Occurs Through **JUSTIFICATION**

COMMENCEMENT of our Salvation Experience

The Bible teaches that the believing sinner has been saved from the penalty of sin at the very moment he believes. The Scriptures clearly reveal that everyone in the human race has sinned against God (“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” - Romans 3:23). It also informs us that sin requires a penalty (“the wages of sin is death” - Romans 6:23). A wage is something we deserve to

receive because of our sin against God. The “death” we ultimately deserve to receive is eternal separation from God in hell.

This wage or necessary payment for sin is presented in the Bible as a penalty that God required for sin. The picture is very clear. We accumulated a sin debt before God that must be paid, not by money, but by experiencing God’s judgment and wrath in hell. We deserve to receive eternal and spiritual death for the sins we have committed against God. We have sinned against God’s holiness and

righteous ways and for this reason we must experience the necessary penalty for sin which is “death.” Death (separation from God) is ultimately the expression of God’s wrath and punishment for our sins in hell for all eternity.

Hebrews 9:27 portrays this penalty:

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”

Revelation 20:15 adds this awful record of the sinner’s penalty:

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

On one occasion Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, the agnostic lecturer of the 19th century, was announced to give an address on hell. He declared he would prove conclusively that hell was a wild dream of some scheming theologians who invented it to terrify credulous people. As he was launching into his subject, a half-drunken man arose in the audience and exclaimed, "Make it strong, Bob. There's a lot of us poor fellows depending on you. If you are wrong, we are all lost. So be sure you prove it clear and plain."

We must remember that no amount of reasoning can nullify God's sure and unchanging Word. Jesus has spoken as plainly on the subject of hell for the unsaved as He did of Heaven for those who are saved. The Bible teaches that we must suffer the due penalty for our sins because God’s holiness is offended when we sin against Him and His ways and since His justice, holiness, and righteousness must be vindicated, defended, or protected in order to properly reflect His glory. Dear friend, God’s moral perfections and character cannot be overlooked in any way. God must act and react according to His pristine nature and glory which is reflected in His perfect righteousness, justice, and holiness.

Habakkuk 1:13 reminds us that “*Thou art* of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.” In order to be God, He must respond in justice and righteousness to those who sin against His will and moral perfections. The truth is that part of God's moral perfection is his perfection in judgment. This means that every last sinner who has been born and lives in this world must suffer the consequences for his or her sins which is the pure and righteous expression of God’s wrath and justice.

In an article written by Dr. Curtis Hutson (“Why Do Men Go to Hell?”), he remarks about the justice of God in damning sinners to hell. “The doctrine of eternal damnation is probably one of the most difficult doctrines of the Christian Faith. It is hard to believe that anyone could do anything in one lifetime that was so bad that God would send him into the lake of fire to burn forever and ever and ever and never get out. I tell you plainly that is If didn’t have the Bible and if I didn’t believe every word in it, I would not believe in the doctrine of eternal darnation.”

You know, he’s right. The doctrine of endless punishment is hard to accept but we must believe it, since the Bible clearly teaches it, and God’s nature of righteousness, holiness, and justice demands it. Let me ask you a question. Could any one of your children do anything so bad that you would burn him in a fire forever and ever and ever? Certainly not. But we are viewing this from our human perspective and not from God’s holy nature and justice. Furthermore, God does not burn His children for they are saved eternally!

Here is something wonderful to contemplate. There is a way of escape from the penalty that we deserve to receive. It comes through the expression of the other side of God’s character which consists of His grace and mercy. Thank God that His mercy and grace is revealed to the lost sinners through the death of Jesus Christ! On the cross, God’s justice and mercy meet. The good news is this. Jesus Christ had died in the place of the sinner, incurring God’s wrath and judgment in his stead or place, so that every believing sinner can be released from his personal obligation to pay for the penalty that he deserved for his sins.

This is because a ransom or redeeming price has been paid to set the sinner free from the penalty of sin.

Galatians 3:13

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree.”

The whole Biblical concept of redemption speaks of the ransom or price that Jesus paid to free us from sin’s penalty (the righteous expression of the wrath of God). A purchasing price was necessary to satisfy God’s wrath and set the sinner free from the penalty that he deserved. In essence, the repeated teaching of our redemption through Jesus Christ conveys the old, old story of how Christ became

the ransoming sacrifice to set us free from the penalty of sin. The “wages of sin” that we deserved were placed upon Christ. In short, Jesus paid the “wages” or ransoming price that God required to free sinners from the penalty of sin that they deserved.

1 Corinthians 15:3 explains it in this way:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”

In dying for the sinner, Christ died paying the sinner’s fine or penalty, the wages of sin that he incurred and deserved. Christ died to save us from sin’s penalty or doom. This is what the Bible repeatedly teaches us. Elsewhere, the Bible talks about Christ’s suffering and death upon the cross as an offering (a payment price that God required to satisfy His justice against sin and the sinner).

Isaiah 53:10

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin (a payment price that God required), he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.”

Ephesians 5:2

“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.”

The idea of an offering speaks of the necessary wages (payment or price for sin) that a holy God required. It was a payment that was related to God’s wrath being expressed for sin and sinners. It was the necessary judgment of God for the sins of the human race. This was the offering that Jesus made to the Father when hanging and dying on the cross. Yes, Jesus paid it all!

“And when before the throne
I stand in Him complete
Jesus died my soul to save my lips shall still repeat
Jesus paid it all, All to him I owe
Sin had left a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow.”

Here is the good news! When we express faith in Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:26), or what He did to keep us out of hell, we experience what the Bible calls salvation from sin's penalty, we escape the wages of death, which we have seen is the expression of God's righteous wrath and judgment upon sinners who have offended Him. God's wrath results in the sinner's judgment in hell for all eternity.

But when a person believes in Jesus Christ, he is immediately and forever delivered from the penalty for his sin as a result of our justified position in Heaven. This means we are no longer obligated to pay for our penalty since Jesus Christ made the payment that God required on our behalf. This is the good news of the Gospel!

The idea of hell and judgment are nowhere to be found in Betty Eadie's bestseller, "Embraced By The Light," on the N.Y. Times bestseller list for more than 40 weeks, including 5 weeks as #1. In November 1973, Eadie allegedly died after undergoing a hysterectomy, and returned five hours later with the secrets of heaven revealed by Jesus]. Eadie says that Jesus "never wanted to do or say anything that would offend me" while she visited Heaven. This is the way many people view Jesus today. Jesus seems to be relegated to the role of a happy tour guide in Heaven, not the Savior of the world who died on the cross to bear the terrible wrath of God on the sinner's behalf.

Friend, Jesus died for despicable sinners like you and me. If this offends you, then so bit it. Jesus died paying the penalty that sin required for each one of us who have transgressed against God's moral law.

There are many verses in Scripture which paint the glorious transaction and picture of believing sinners being saved or delivered from God's penalty for sin.

Let's review some verses that teach the past tense of our salvation experience or the time when we were finally and forever delivered or rescued from sin's penalty or judgment.

Romans 5:9

"Much more than, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved (right now and forever!) from wrath through him."

When the Bible speaks of being justified, it means that a sinner who believes in Jesus Christ is declared legally righteous in God's presence. The register of his sin

is cleared in the bank of Heaven and God sees us as forgiven and righteous in His presence.

This salvation from God's wrath occurs as a result of receiving a justified position (legally righteous standing) in God's sight, through the forgiveness provided by Christ's shed blood on the cross.

This justified standing is said to be "by his blood" which means through Christ's sacrificial death which includes the shedding of His blood. The blessing of justification is that we receive a legal standing of righteousness before God. When Christ's death is applied to our lives, we are forgiven of all our sins and then Christ's righteousness is applied to our account before God, so we can be forever justified in God's presence. Yes, God accepts us forever!

Justification is a legal declaration of our righteous standing before God. It means that we are acquitted of all our sins in God's presence forever and then are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, so God sees us as legally righteous and accepted in His holy presence.

As a result of our justification before God in Heaven, we can be absolutely sure that we are "saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:9). Salvation is a finished and final transaction based upon our justification before God's throne. This means that when a person expresses faith in Christ, the believing sinner is saved eternally from the expression of God's wrath which is His decision to judge sinners in hell forever. We are rescued from the coming danger of hell and damnation forever.

So, out of our justification (our acquittal and righteous standing in God's presence) flows our salvation or deliverance from sin's penalty which is damnation in hell. You cannot get to salvation without justification since our salvation is based upon our justification before the throne of God.

In 1997 Chinese firefighters succeeded in putting out a 400-year-old fire. The fire in the Baiyanghe coalfield started in 1560. The fire consumed over 127 million tons of coal before it was extinguished. Four hundred years is a long time, but it is nothing in view of eternity. The fires of hell will never end or be put out. God's wrath cannot be satisfied but only through Jesus Christ. Therefore, if a person

refuses to believe on Jesus Christ, the wrath of God, or the penalty for sin, must be endured forever in hell.

John 3:36 says:

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Right now, at this very moment, the wrath of God hangs over the head of the unbelieving sinner. It hovers over the life of the unbeliever assuring the lost sinner of his ultimate doom in hell forever. It follows the unsaved person around and is constantly reminding them that we are not right with God.

Romans 5:9 gives us the wonderful promise that we are “saved from wrath through him.” Again, this means we can know that we are saved from hell’s judgment (the expression of God’s wrath) and that we will never again experience God’s wrath or judgment. This is called eternal security.

“Born of the Spirit with life from above
into God's family divine,
Justified fully thru Calvary's love,
O what a standing is mine!
And the transaction so quickly was made,
when as a sinner I came,
Took of the offer, of grace He did proffer,
He saved me, O praise His dear name!”

There is a touching account of Christ’ delivering and saving a woman from sin’s penalty and judgment (Luke 7:36-50).

Here is a brief outline of this passage of Scripture.

- a. The repentance of sinners (Luke 7:36-38, 44-46)
- b. The friend of sinners (Luke 7:39)
- c. The cleansing of sinners (Luke 7:40-43, 47-48).
- d. The salvation of sinners (Luke 7:50).

Jesus taught in Luke 7:48:

“And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.”

He then concludes in Luke 7:50:

“Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”

Please note in these verses that the Bible ties together Christ’s forgiveness and our faith. In other words, when people express simple faith in Christ, they are forgiven of all their sins. As a result, they are released from sin’s penalty (Romans 6:23), which means they are immediately and forever saved from God’s doom and judgment. They escape the God’s wrath which is hell. You will notice that Christ said that this woman’s faith “saved” her. This does speak of free will or freedom of choice. Although theologians have grappled with this through the centuries, a person can express personal faith in Christ. Yes, it’s a faith made possible by the work of God, but nonetheless, it is still a person expressing personal belief in the Savior.

Romans 4:5

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

When a person is “saved” this means they are delivered from sin’s judgment or penalty. This salvation or deliverance occurs at a given point in time and it continues to be experienced. Jesus never conveyed that this was something that could repeatedly occur on many different occasions and at various times throughout one’s lifetime. No, He explained that you are saved. This is the blessed noonday truth that we need to see today. When we express faith in Christ, our sins are forgiven and we are saved from God’s wrath. This is because the Father sees the Son as taking our wrath in our place and satisfying the wrath of the God on behalf of the sinner.

One day, when Vice President Calvin Coolidge was presiding over the Senate, one Senator angrily told another to go "straight to hell". The offended Senator complained to Coolidge as presiding officer, and Cal looked up from the book he had been leafing through while listening to the debate. "I've been looking through the rule book," he said. "You don't have to go to hell."

Well, it's true. We don't have to pay for the penalty of our sins. We can place our faith in Christ, who was offered in our place, as the payment of judgment that God demanded for sin, so that we are saved from sin's damnation.

A coal fire has been burning underneath the borough of Centralia, Pennsylvania, since at least May 27, 1962. The fire is suspected to be from the deliberate burning of trash in a former strip mine, igniting a coal seam. The fire is burning in underground coal mines at depths of up to 300 feet over an 8-mile stretch of 3,700 acres. At its current rate, it could continue to burn for over 250 years. The blaze has resulted in most of the town being abandoned. The population dwindled from 2,761 in 1890 to only 7 in 2013, and most of the buildings have been leveled.

We think that a 250-year coal fire is a long time to burn. But the Bible teaches that the lost or unsaved will burn in the Lake of Fire, experiencing God's wrath or judgment, forever and ever. This is because those who fail to embrace Christ as Savior must experience the penalty or wages for their sin. Romans 6:23 says that "wages of sin is death." The "wages or sin" refers to the payment we deserve to receive because of our sins. It's described in Scripture as a penalty that we must face which is "death" or separation from God in hell for all eternity. The picture is very clear. We accumulated a sin debt before God that must be paid for, not by money, but by experiencing God's judgment and wrath in hell.

But how wonderful to realize that Jesus died on the cross as an offering, becoming the payment that God required for sin, so God's justice and righteousness can be satisfied. As a result, when we express faith in Christ, what He did for us to keep us out of hell, we can be saved from the penalty of sin, which is the expression of God's wrath in hell for all eternity.

We have a few more verses that we need to study which portray this aspect of our salvation – salvation from sin's penalty. This is salvation in the past tense. At the moment we express faith in Christ, we are saved from sin's penalty forever. This means we are no longer obligated to pay for the penalty that we deserve for Christ's paid the penalty on our behalf and took care of the sin debt that we had before God.

The work of Christ on the cross is applied to our account and we are acquitted of all our sins and declared legally righteous in the courtroom of Heaven (Rom. 5:9). As a result, we are saved from hell, the eternal Lake of Fire, which is the righteous expression of God's wrath and judgment against sinners.

Augustus Toplady wrote these lovely words:

"If Thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my place endured
The whole of wrath divine,
Payment God will not twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then again at mine."

If Jesus paid the sinner's debt before God, which was the required sin payment on the cross, then we no longer must pay for this debt. Instead, we are saved from God's wrath for Jesus paid the sinner's debt in our place.

While I was in the hospital, I began reflecting upon this message which I could not preach. I thought about Christ paying the penalty and God accepting Christ's sacrifice as the sufficient payment for my sin. Some people believe that they are saved by grace but that they we also remain saved by sanctification. The Bible does not teach this. When we are saved from the penalty of sin, God accepts us forever, as His save child, on the basis that the penalty of sin is paid by Christ on our behalf forever. This results in our abuttal and righteous standing before God (Romans 5:10).

The penalty cannot be unpaid or repaid again. It's payment only happened once and it cannot be undone. This is because God has accepted it. Since God declared that the penalty price has been fully paid by His Son and says that it is finished (John 19:30), then we should rest in this wonderful expression of free grace throughout our entire Christian lives. To concede that we can lose our salvation by a lack of sanctification (good works) is to conclude that God does not accept the penalty for sin to be paid, which is not true (Isaiah 53) and that salvation is not by grace alone, which is also not true (Eph. 2:8-9). I'm free from the penalty forever! When we truly embrace this, we can experience true liberty.

Acts 16:31 also speaks of salvation from sin's penalty:

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved (rescued), and thy house" (if they also believe on the Son of God).

We once again see that when faith is expressed in Christ, that a transaction of salvation (deliverance from sin's doom and judgment) occurs immediately and forever. The Bible does not say "you might be saved" or "you might be lost in the future." A thousand times no! It declares that you are saved. This is God's promise to us today. Our salvation is viewed as an accomplished transaction and finished transaction that cannot change. You cannot be more saved or less saved than you are when you believed on Christ.

Romans 1:16 declares our salvation from damnation:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

This is once again referring to salvation (deliverance) from sin's judgment and penalty. The Bible declares that this is a salvation that can be shared by both Jews and Gentiles or all people in the world. No person is left out. Salvation is available and open to all. Any person who chooses to believe on Christ to be his or her Savior, expressing faith in the fact that Christ's died in the sinner's place to save them, can know they have been delivered from God's wrath and judgment.

When we believe on Jesus Christ, we are delivered from this future judgment and condemnation or sentence of judgment.

Romans 8:1

"There is therefore now no condemnation (no adverse damnatory sentence, no sentence of punishment or judgment) to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Yes, we are saved. This refers to the past tense of the believer's salvation experience. We have been saved from condemnation and judgment forever. This is a salvation experience that will never change. It's a done deal!

Romans 10:13 is one of my favorite verses:

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

I was dreaming about this verse last night! I was dreaming and sharing this truth with children and trying to get them to understand what calling on Jesus Christ means! Calling upon Christ for salvation is a synonym for faith. What are we saved from when we call upon Christ? We are rescued from the penalty that we deserved because of our sins against God. In other words, we are saved from hell and damnation forever. This is why we can sing today:

“Glory hallelujah, Christ has set me free,
Glory hallelujah, a new life now I see.
My sins all forgiv’n, I’m on my way to Heav’n,
To live eternally. Glory hallelujah, He coming back for me.”

You shall be saved! What a great deliverance this is! This is God’s promise to every one who calls upon Jesus Christ for salvation. We are saved. Again, this salvation is viewed as something that is accomplished once and for all. It’s totally complete. Nothing can change it or be added to it. You are saved! Salvation is a finished and final transaction.

Ephesians 2:8-9

“For by grace (the way of salvation) are ye saved (God’s plan of salvation) through faith (the link to salvation); and that not of yourselves (a God-centered salvation): *it is* the gift of God (a free salvation): Not of works, lest any man should boast (a non-legalistic salvation).”

When the Bible says that we “are saved” it’s referring to our past salvation, which was the transaction that occurred when we expressed faith in Christ. This means you cannot be less saved one day and more saved another day. Furthermore, you will notice that salvation is based on the expression of God’s grace, as seen in the death of Christ. Salvation has nothing to do with human achievement or good works. Salvation is a free gift that cannot be earned or merited in any way.

During the Spanish-American War, Clara Barton was overseeing the work of the Red Cross in Cuba. One day Colonel Theodore Roosevelt came to her, wanted to buy food for his sick and wounded Rough Riders. But she refused to sell him any. Roosevelt was perplexed. His men needed the help and he was prepared to pay out of his own funds.

When he asked someone why he could not buy the supplies, he was told, "Colonel, just ask for it!" A smile broke over Roosevelt's face. Now he understood--the provisions were not for sale. All he had to do was simply ask and they would be given freely. The same is true regarding our salvation. We receive is freely! Grace is not for sale! This is the wonder of grace.

There is a verse that is part of the well-known hymn "Rock of Ages" which speaks to the truth that salvation is not by human achievement but is based upon God's grace.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die."

Since salvation is a free gift and is "not of works," it means you cannot become unsaved after you have been saved. This is because our salvation is based upon the death of Jesus Christ and our justification in Heaven. It is based solely upon grace.

Charles Spurgeon and Joseph Parker both had churches in London in the 19th century. On one occasion, Parker commented on the poor condition of children admitted to Spurgeon's orphanage. It was wrongly reported to Spurgeon however, that Parker had criticized the orphanage itself. Spurgeon blasted Parker the next week from the pulpit. The attack was printed in the newspapers and became the talk of the town.

People flocked to Parker's church the next Sunday to hear his rebuttal. "I understand Dr. Spurgeon is not in his pulpit today, and this is the Sunday they use to take an offering for the orphanage. I suggest we take a love offering here instead."

The crowd was delighted. The ushers had to empty the collection plates 3 times. Later that week there was a knock at Parker's study. It was Spurgeon. "You know Parker, you have practiced grace on me. You have given me not what I deserved, you have given me what I needed."

Thank God that we are saved by grace! Grace and salvation is what we need – not what we deserve.

2 Timothy 1:9 also declares:

“Who hath saved us (past tense of salvation which occurs in eternity present when we believed\), and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (the past purpose of our salvation which occurred in eternity past when God planned out our salvation).

Paul takes us from the plan of salvation in eternity past to the time we are saved in eternity present. This is the bridge of salvation. Our salvation was planned in eternity past within the counsels of the Godhead but it came to fruition in eternity present, when we embraced Christ by faith. Today, we can look back to the time were saved (“who hath saved us”) and know that we are delivered from sin’s penalty and are safe forevermore. Remember once again that salvation speaks of safety. This means when we are saved, we are safely preserved and kept safe by God’s saving grace.

Jesus taught in John 10:27-28 that our salvation results in eternal life:

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (the proof of salvation) And I give unto them eternal life (the perpetuity of salvation); and they shall never perish (the promise of salvation), neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand” (the preservation of salvation).

Our salvation or deliverance from hell is something that Jesus repeatedly declared as being eternal and something which is completely safe and reliable (John 3:16; 6:47; 5:24). This is because Jesus paid the necessary fine or penalty that we deserved for our sins when He died on the cross. Jesus gave Himself to settle the sin question. Since this is true, it is both unnecessary and impossible for us to add to such a work, or to help save our own souls by good works or law-keeping. Christ is the sole and sufficient Savior. His death saves and secures us forever!

“Safe am I, Safe am I,
In the hollow of His hand;
Sheltered o'er, sheltered o'er
With His love forever more

No ill can harm me, No foe alarm me,
Fro He keeps both day and night,
Safe am I, Safe am I,
In the hollow of His hand."

Jesus taught in John 10:9:

"I am the door: by me (the pathway of salvation – John 14:6) if any man enter in (the personal choice of salvation), he shall be saved (the promise of salvation), and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (the productive life of salvation – John 10:10).

William MacDonald said:

"This verse is one of those delightful verses which is simple enough for the Sunday School pupil to understand, and yet which can never be exhausted by the most learned scholars."

The words of Christ ("by me if any man enter in") indicate something very wonderful. Christ alone is the door or opening pathway and only pathway to our salvation. Salvation is not found in a creed, church, our baptism or the Lord's Supper, it is found only through the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). Jesus taught that salvation was only "by me."

Once again, Jesus taught that a person "shall be saved." This means when we express simple faith in Christ, a finished and final transaction occurs, whereby we are saved from experiencing God's wrath forever. Jesus did not teach that we will be saved in the future or might be saved if we live a good enough life and hang on to the end. Jesus declared that we are saved. There are no qualifications, future requirements, or add-ons.

It's not like those commercials which tell you that you can have free counseling from a lawyer and then at the bottom of the screen the words come across which say: "certain restrictions apply." Following these words there is a whole paragraph of words which are too small for any human being to read, even when you are wearing your glasses! When Jesus said that we shall be saved, He did not give any more "add-on" requirements to keep yourself in God's favor and salvation. He did not write a paragraph of small letters or any hidden code that

would lead us to believe anything else than what He said. He simply said, “by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” Period.

Jesus is teaching that we shall be saved both now and forevermore when we believe on Him for our salvation. We shall be rescued from the penalty of our sins forever and can now and forever rejoice in this wonderful transaction that has occurred in our life.

All of the Bible verses mentioned above present the past aspect of our salvation experience or what occurred when we placed faith in Christ. The moment we transferred our faith to Christ, salvation was transferred to us. We were rescued from hell and God’s wrath forever. This salvation is something that God has done for us and continues to provide for us throughout our entire lives on earth and in to eternity.

The Bible teaches that at the moment we transfer our faith alone to Jesus Christ, we are saved immediately and forever. Our sins are forgiven, we are acquitted before God, justified, and escape the damnation of hell forever. There are no “ifs” “ands” or “buts” about it! We are saved! It’s a done deal! In God’s mind, our salvation from the penalty of sin is settled forever. Of course, you might need to settle this matter in your own heart by believing God’s Word. But the Bible repeatedly declares that you are saved! You are not saved again and again, over and over again, but saved! In other words, you ARE saved, WILL BE saved, and never can there be a time when you are not saved! You are saved!

Our music teacher, David Traeger, who served at the Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music, announced a new song that he wanted our 32 voice choir to sing. It was a choral arrangement of “Jesus Saves.” The men’s section was beaming with smiles for we loved sing about our salvation. And why shouldn’t we? If we are saved from sin’s penalty (damnation and hell) then we have something to sing about!

“We have heard the joyful sound:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Spread the tidings all around:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Bear the news to every land,

Climb the mountains, cross the waves;
Onward! 'tis our Lord's command;
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!"

What a joyful sound! Saved! Saved from God's judgment, saved from hell, saved from the Lake of Fire. Saved! I can say today that the Lord has saved my soul and this is good news!

Beloved, the Bible says that Christ died "for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:3) which means that he bore the penalty or wrath that God required for sinners. If we place our faith in His sacrifice, which satisfied God's wrath on our behalf, and believe that He arose from the dead (that Christ is alive to give us eternal life), then we can be saved from hell and God's wrath will never be brought against us.

Our salvation or deliverance from hell is directly linked to the cross of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:18

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish (the unsaved who are going to hell) foolishness (by human standards); but unto us which are saved (those who are being saved) it is the power of God" (that results in our salvation).

In other words, every person that is being saved by the preaching and message of Gospel, they have experienced the power of God. The miracle of salvation occurs when a person hears the message, accepts it by faith, and when they are regenerated or born again. Yes, the cross made the difference for me!

In dying upon the cross of Calvary, Jesus was able to take the hand of man and the hand of God, so that he could join them back together. The saving provision of the cross enabled man to walk across the bridge of salvation from this world into the next world, bypassing hell, and entering Heaven.



On the cross, Jesus became a sin offering and paid the penalty of sin, the wages of sin, for each one of us, so we could be saved from God’s wrath and judgment, so we could walk across the bridge into Heaven.

“I must needs go home by the way of the cross,
There’s no other way but this;
I shall ne’er get sight of the Gates of Light,
If the way of the cross I miss.

The way of the cross leads home,
The way of the cross leads home;
It is sweet to know, as I onward go,
The way of the cross leads home.”

Yes, the way of the cross leads home! The Bible repeatedly teaches in many Bible verses that we are saved or rescued from God’s wrath immediately and forever, when we personally believe that Jesus Christ took God’s punishment for our sins on the cross. When we commit our faith alone to Christ’s sacrifice to save us from God’s wrath, we can know that we are saved, since it is the cross that takes us to Heaven.

Let us never forget or lose site of the “so great salvation” (Heb. 2:3) which was shown to us, when we received the blessing of deliverance from God’s wrath,

which was an eternal hell. Our salvation is a “great salvation” for the simple reason that God is a great Savior and we were great sinners. It is a great salvation because of the terrible judgment that were delivered from through Jesus Christ. It is a great salvation since Jesus Christ closed the great divide between a holy God and sinful humanity. Our salvation is great because of what is accomplished for us, what it promises us, and what it means to us.

Our salvation should be dear and precious to our hearts. We should never lose the wonder of it all. The Bible says we should keep the glorious truth of our salvation from sin’s doom and damnation close to our hearts. This wonderful truth about our salvation from the penalty of sin is something that we should meditate upon (Rom. 11:33, Eph. 1:17-19; 3:8) and allow to motivate us to live pure lives for God’s glory (Titus 2:11-12). Our time of reflection and meditation, our devotional life, must be heavily dosed with Christ’s sacrificed and salvation which He has provided for us.

Psalm 77:11

“I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.”

Psalm 143:5

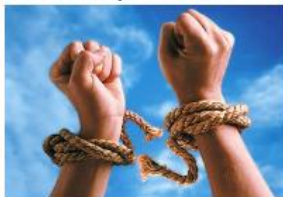
“I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.”

We need to constantly reflect or meditate upon the greatness of our salvation and what Christ did for us to keep us out of hell, when He paid our penalty in full, to forever satisfy God’s wrath on our behalf.

“Tell me the story slowly,
That I may take it in—
That wonderful redemption,
God’s remedy for sin;
Tell me the story often,
For I forget so soon,
The early dew of morning
Has passed away at noon.”

PRESENT Tense of Salvation

Deliverance from sin's POWER (DOMINION)



Occurs Through SANCTIFICATION

COURSE of our Salvation Experience

The story is told of a young girl who accepted Christ as her Savior and applied for membership in a local church. "Were you a sinner before you received the Lord Jesus into your Life?" inquired an old deacon. "Yes, sir," she replied. "Well, are you still a sinner?" "To tell you the truth, I feel I'm a greater sinner than ever." "Then what real change have you experienced?" "I don't quite know how to explain it," she said, "except I used to be a sinner

running after sin, but now that I am saved, I'm a sinner running from sin!" The young girl was received into the fellowship of the church, and she proved by her consistent life that she was truly converted.

We are reminded from this story that the Christian is not perfect, but he is a person who should be experiencing sanctification or spiritual growth in connection with his new life and also bearing fruit.

John Newton is on record as saying:

"I am not what I might be, I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I wish to be, I am not what I hope to be. But I thank God I am not what I once was, and I can say with the great apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

The Bible also teaches that the child of God is also presently being saved from the power, habit, and dominion of sin. This is the present experience of our salvation or deliverance. Our present salvation or deliverance has to do with the work of sanctification and holiness occurring in our hearts and lives.

James 1:21

"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness (wickedness, depravity), and receive with meekness the engrafted (implanted, inborn) word, which is able to save your souls."

James is talking about the present tense of our salvation experience. When we are delivered from sinful practices and living in victory, through the power of God's Word, it's then that we are "able to save your souls." This means we can experience the spiritual deliverance that we need in our daily lives through the promises and power of God's liberating truth.

In one sense, we are being saved or delivered from the power and dominion of sin over our lives, as we experience God's life within us. Salvation is much more than just a fire escape from hell! It's an escape from the world, the flesh, and the devil!

Galatians 1:4 declares:

"Who gave himself for our sins (Christ's sacrifice for sin), that he might deliver us from (out of) this present evil world (Christian sanctification), according to the will of God and our Father."

This verse speaks of Jesus' rescue operation which took place on the cross. The cross was Christ's rescue mission. We often think of those poor souls that we find living in rescue missions. But we must remember that all of us were in need of rescue. We were all part of God's rescue mission.

Note that the Bible teaches that Jesus "gave himself for our sins." This aligns with what Jesus taught elsewhere.

John 10:17-18

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

William D. Matheson, in *My Grandfather's War*, tells of a veteran who walked through the streets of his hometown with an empty sleeve. When a passerby commented on the loss of his arm, the veteran replied, "I didn't lose it. I gave it." This describes what Jesus did for us. He didn't lose His life on the cross. He gave it. As this verse says, He "gave Himself for our sins."

A wonderful and gracious transaction took place on the cross. We were the ones who deserved to die because we owed God an infinite debt for our sin, a payment that sin required, which was hell. But Christ took our place on the Cross. He became our substitute, our sin-offering. He gathered up all our sins, put them on His own shoulders, and paid the necessary fine that God required for them with His death. This payment or fine was that Christ experienced the wrath of God on the sinner's behalf.

The word "deliver" (Gal. 1:4) speaks once again of the salvation or rescue of the believer. It means to set a person free from confinement, danger, or evil. It means to liberate from actual restraint, or to remove or withdraw from a state of exposure to evil and danger. The idea of rescuing us from sin's penalty and power is the real purpose of God's grace. Here the emphasis is being rescued from sin's powerful sway upon our lives.

One time Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn writer, visited the McAuley Mission in New York. She asked if there was a boy there who had no mother, and "if he would come up and let her lay her hand on his head." A motherless little boy came up, and she put her arms about him and kissed him. She went from that meeting and wrote: "Rescue the perishing, care for the dying, Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave, Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen, Tell them of Jesus the mighty to save."

Sometime later, when Mr. Sankey was about to sing this song in St. Louis, he related the incident. A man sprang to his feet in the audience and said, "I am the boy she kissed that night. I was never able to get away from the impression made by that touching act, and I have become a Christian."

Dear friend, one-day God came to us, put his arms around us, and kissed us! And in doing this, He saved and rescued us by His amazing grace.

J. B. Lightfoot writes that the word deliver or rescue, "strikes the keynote of the epistle." The Gospel provides us with a rescue, an emancipation from a state of bondage! The idea behind the word deliver is not deliverance from the presence of something, but deliverance from the power of something. We will not be delivered from the presence of this evil age until we go to be with Jesus. But we can be experience deliverance from the power of this present evil age right now.

A wealthy English family once invited friends to spend some time at their beautiful estate. The happy gathering was almost plunged into a terrible tragedy on the first day. When the children went swimming, one of them got into deep water and was drowning. Fortunately, the gardener heard the others screaming and plunged into the pool to rescue the helpless victim. That youngster was Winston Churchill. His parents, deeply grateful to the gardener, asked what they could do to reward him. He hesitated, then said, "I wish my son could go to college someday and become a doctor." "We'll pay his way," replied Churchill's parents.

Years later when Sir Winston was prime minister of England, he was stricken with pneumonia. Greatly concerned, the king summoned the best physician who could be found to the bedside of the ailing leader. That doctor was Sir Alexander Fleming, the developer of penicillin. He was also the son of that gardener who had rescued Winston from drowning as a boy! Later Churchill said, "Rarely, has one man owed his life twice to the same person."

Friend, we owe our lives to Jesus Christ, who died on the cross to rescue or deliver us from the awful plight of our sins, not only the penalty connected with our sins, but also the power of sin (Gal. 1:4), which sought to run and ruin our lives. Christ died to deliver us. In this context and instance, the present tense of our salvation is being referenced. It is referring to our deliverance from the power of sin. It's a deliverance that is experienced by the sanctification and holiness that is occurring in relation to our daily lives. Sanctification is when we are set apart from sin and are set apart unto God, experiencing spiritual growth in character and conduct.

This verse in Galatians 1:4 declares that Jesus died on the cross to deliver us from this evil "world" (age), or the course of time and lifespan in which we live today, prior to Messiah's reign over the earth. The division between 'the present age' and 'the age to come' (Heb. 6:5) was familiar to every Jew, and therefore to the Christian. The "age" in this context refers to the popular culture and manner of thinking that is in rebellion against God.

Barry Horner defined the age in this way:

“By way of application the New Testament picture of this age is that of a ship run aground on rocks, breaking up. Some are rescued since they confess their plight and cry out to be delivered, but others are foolishly trying to patch the vessel up and cast off once again, only to encounter further tragedy after tragedy! We might name this ship, ‘this present evil age.’”

Today, we live in an age or time period that is against God and righteousness. The grand purpose of Christ’s rescue is to deliver us from the dominion of this godless age. We have been rescued from the enslaving power of this present evil age, which is a world ruled by Satan, an age filled with cruelty, tragedy, temptation, and deception.

The present age is evil because it causes people to ignore, neglect, deny, and even curse God. It also stirs and excites ungodliness, unrighteousness, immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, strife, deceit, ill will toward others, unforgiveness, cruelty, backbiting, gossip, slander, pride, boasting, disobedience to parents, and many other sins which can overtake our lives.

This verse does not promise that Christ will deliver us from all our present earthly problems of pain and suffering. Christ died on the cross to deliver or save us from the evil and sinful aspects of this present age. The text literally reads that Christ delivers us “out of” this evil age. In one sense, Christ plucked us out of the muck and the mire of this age. This means we don’t have to go along with the strong current of the present age or time in which we live today. Instead, we can live victorious and experience our deliverance over the power of sin.

Notice also that our deliverance is already promised (“that he might deliver us”). It’s an accomplished fact and transaction that is based upon Christ’s death on the cross. All we must do is claim it by faith as we rely upon the delivering power over sin which was provided for us as a result of Christ’s death. Christ not only dealt with the *penalty* of sin when He died on the cross; He also dealt with the *power* of sin over our lives. Christ did not only die to cancel out the penalty of sin which was hanging over our head. He also died to nullify the power of sin which kept us in slavery and bondage before we were saved (Eph. 2:1-2).

“He breaks the power of canceled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me.”

Captain Scott O’Grady knows better than most what the word rescue or delivered means. In June 1995 his plane was shot down over Bosnia. The Air Force pilot survived on insects, plants, and rain water and was only able to use his radio transmitter late at night. On the sixth night of his ordeal, his faint radio signal was picked up by another U.S. pilot. A daring rescue mission eventually brought the helpless pilot to safety. As amazing as this rescue was, every believer has experienced a deliverance or rescue that is even more miraculous, as pit text reveals. Galatians 1:4 states: “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world.”

Colossians 1:13 is a verse that teaches a similar thing:

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son.”

The word “delivered” speaks of our salvation and rescue from the power of darkness which includes sin, Satan, and his evil cohorts. This transaction occurs at the time of our salvation. The word “power” speaks of how we have been removed from the realm of the authority of darkness (sin and Satan) and now have been given a new authority figure and Master for our lives who is none other than Jesus Christ.

The picture the Bible paints regarding our deliverance from sin’s power and mastery over our lives, is a beautiful picture. In Paul’s day, a slave, having no rights and in total bondage to his master, could be redeemed by the payment of a suitable price, and only then could that slave be set at liberty. At one point, his status was transformed. He had been a slave; he became a freeman.

In a similar way, Christ has paid the necessary ransom or price for our redemption (1 Peter 1:18), so we might not only be freed from sin’s penalty, but also sin’s power. Since the ransom has been paid in full, we can be made free from “this present evil age” and from the “power of darkness” because we have been put under a new authority, who is Jesus Christ.

Our deliverance from the power of sin and Satan can be illustrated by the experience of the children of Israel, as recorded in Exodus. They had been living in Egypt, groaning under the taskmasters there. However, by a marvelous act of divine intervention, God delivered them out of this fearful bondage and led them through the wilderness to the promised land. In a similar way, as sinners we were in bondage to Satan, but through Christ we have been delivered from his evil clutches and now we are subjects of Christ's kingdom.

Someone once said:

"Lord, help us to remember how needy we were when You found us. Forgive us for sometimes wanting to go back into the dark tunnel."

Another person gave this insight:

"Children of the light will not be comfortable in the dark."

"I wandered in the shades of night
Till Jesus came to me
And with the sunlight of His love
Bid all my darkness flee."

Christ "hath delivered us from the power of darkness." Thank God that He did!

Through Christ sacrifice, we have been brought from a rebel kingdom and placed under the sovereignty of a new King (Jesus Christ). The expression "translated into the kingdom of his dear son" suggested that when we believe upon Jesus Christ, we are immediately placed in the realm of another kingdom that is opposite of Satan's kingdom. This is a spiritual kingdom over which Christ rules today. The word "kingdom" denotes sovereignty, royal power, dominion and refers to the territory or people over whom a king rules. Therefore, in context the kingdom of His beloved Son defines the sphere in which the Son rules. He rules over the lives and in the hearts of His people today. Although Christ does not yet rule on earth, He should still be our King today.

"King of my life, I crown Thee now,
Thine shall the glory be;
Lest I forget Thy thorn crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary.

Lest I forget Gethsemane,
Lest I forget Thine agony;
Lest I forget Thy love for me,
Lead me to Calvary.



Romans chapter six also speaks of our present-day salvation experiencing, our deliverance from sin's power, which Jesus provided for us through Christ's death and resurrection. The Bible actually teaches that each believer has shared in Christ's death and resurrection experience. This is called the

doctrine of identification. I am identified with Christ in His death and resurrection, possessing a spiritual union with Christ, resulting in each believer sharing in the saving benefits of Christ's death. It is this experience with Christ in His death and resurrection which provides us with our present salvation or deliverance over sin. In short, we have victory over sin and experience sanctification through Christ's death and resurrection.

In sharing in Christ's death, I can claim the victory that sin has been defeated for me, and in sharing in Christ's resurrection, I can claim Christ's power over sin.

- a. The death of Christ is the basis for our victory over sin.

This means that through sharing in Christ's death, we can claim that the power of sin has been defeated over our lives and that we must no longer live in bondage to any sin.

Romans 6:3 explains it like this:

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized (spiritually baptized or immersed) into Jesus Christ (our identification and union with Christ) were baptized (by the Holy Spirit – 1 Cor. 6:19) into his death" (shared in Christ's experience of death).

In view of our identification and union with Christ in His death, we can claim our victory over sin. This is because Christ died to defeat the power of sin over our lives. The Bible is very clear on this. Jesus not only died to take away the penalty of sin but also to take away the power of sin.

Romans 6:6-7 further explains:

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

The “old man” or old person we used to be under sin’s power and dominance has been “crucified” (put to death). The result is so “the body of sin” (the human body that was once controlled by sin in our unregenerate state) might be “destroyed” (put out of business) with the direct result that we should no longer “serve sin” (be in bondage to sin) for we have been “freed from sin” through sharing in Christ’s victorious death over sin. We see that Christ’s death is also linked to providing the believer with victory over the sin nature.

The death of Christ provided the groundwork for our victory over sin and release from sin, in that Christ defeated sin’s power over our lives, providing us with a way to be delivered from sin’s slavery.

b. The resurrection of Christ is the power that grants victory over sin.

Of course, the Gospel victory that we have over sin’s power does not only pertain to Christ’s death on Calvary but also to His resurrection from the dead and the believer’s present-day sharing of His resurrection life and power.

Romans 6:4 gives the other side of the Gospel story:

“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.”

The implication of this is very wonderful. The believer has also been identified with Christ’s resurrection, which means that today we can experientially share in Christ’s risen life, as we possess His indwelling life within us, and claim His power

for victory over sin. As a result, we can walk “in newness of life.” This is what makes Christians different. It’s Christ’s new life being manifested and experienced in our lives. As we experientially share His resurrected life, claiming His power for victory over sin, we can live a new way of life.

Romans 6:5 explains our link to the risen Christ in this way:

“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his resurrection.*”

Romans 6:8

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him”

Romans 6:11

“Likewise reckon (count it to be true) ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin (it’s power and slavery through Christ’s death), but alive unto God (born again) through Jesus Christ our Lord” (sharing His resurrection life).

What all these verses are teaching is that each child of God also shares in the resurrected life of Jesus Christ. In short, we have been born again and made alive unto (Rom. 6:11) through sharing in Christ’s resurrection life and can now “live with him” (Christ). This means we can at this very moment share His indwelling, resurrection life, and possess daily victory over sin.

Paul wrote elsewhere that he wanted to experientially know “the power of his resurrection” (Phil. 3:10). Here is the wonderful teaching of our identification with Christ. We died with Christ which resulted in the defeat of sin’s slavery over our life. But we also rose with Christ resulting in our new birth and the power to live victorious over sin. The Gospel is an emancipating message. It delivers believing sinners from the power of the present world system (Gal. 1:4) just as certainly as it delivers them from eternal judgment to come.

We must claim our victory over sin which Christ provided for us when He died on the cross. We don’t pray for victory but claim our victory as we pray, thanking Jesus Christ for delivering us from sin’s power. And then we must rely upon His life and inworking resurrection power to release us from sin. It’s the new life and the new nature that provide us with incentive and power to live effectively and victoriously.

If you are struggling over some particular sin, then you must remember that Christ died to deliver you from the power of that sin and every sin which is overtaking your life. If you live in bondage to a certain sin, it's because you have not been claiming your victory over it through Christ's death. Furthermore, you have not been relying on the power of the indwelling Christ to grant you with this victory.

We are talking about the present tense of our salvation experience. Christ died to produce sanctification and holiness in our lives which is essentially living our lives in a manner where sin does not rule us, control us, and overtake our lives. Jesus died to defeat sin, save or deliver us from sin's power, and provide the way of sanctification and new life. He died to save or deliver us from this present evil age (Gal. 1:4) and lives in us today to grant us with all the assistance and power we need to live victoriously.

For 16 years, John Kovacs was a "tenant of the tunnel." Along with a few others, John lived underground in an abandoned railroad tunnel in New York City. When Amtrak bought the tunnel and prepared to reopen it, John was forced to look for a place to live above ground.

According to The New York Times, Mr. Kovacs became the first person chosen for a new program designed to "transform the homeless into homesteaders." After spending a third of his life in a railroad tunnel, he left his underground existence to become an organic farmer in upstate New York. He was quoted as saying, "The air will be better up there. I'm not going to miss anything. I'm not coming back."

If we could see ourselves as our Lord does, we would realize that every child of God has had a similar experience. We too have been chosen to leave a dark, filthy existence for the dignity of a new life and work. If only we could see our former life as clearly as John Kovacs saw his, we too would know that there is nothing worthwhile in the dark, and no reason to go back.

Ephesians 6:17 also speaks of our present deliverance or salvation from sin's power and bondage. It states in very clear and unmistakable terms: "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

This verse speaks about the mind. Our minds are a key component in the time of spiritual warfare or battle. The “helmet of salvation” portrays the mind being delivered from Satan’s lies and deception. This is presented in the Bible as a present aspect of our salvation and deliverance. There is a salvation that we must experience in our everyday lives and this deliverance occurs in our minds.

Someone said:

“The mind is a battlefield where all the decisive battles of life are won or lost.”

In war, the two most vulnerable spots are the heart and the head. When a person is wounded in these places, he will likely die. The enemy soldier wanted to give a vital blow to the physical brain of his enemy. For this reason, a helmet has always been one of the most important parts of the soldier’s armor. The Roman soldier had a bronze helmet with a leather strap on it. This helmet was carried on his shoulder or his side so that he was always ready to wear it in the time of battle. The helmet never left the soldier’s side, and he never entered a battle without his helmet on.

What is the purpose of the helmet of salvation or deliverance as it relates to the Christian life? The application is very easy to see. It protects our mind from the attacks of our enemy. Satan wants to attack our mind or the way that we think. Therefore, we must wear the helmet to give us daily salvation or deliverance from our enemy who is the devil.

In order to have victory in the Christian life something must happen to our minds. We must be delivered from the lies, suspicions, and doubts that the devil places in our minds. Of course, the only way we can be saved or delivered from the doubts, lies, and traps of Satan is to know and use the Word of God against him.

We counter lies and deception with the absolute standard of truth and righteousness which is the Word of God. This is brought out in the very verse before us when it talks about “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17).

Our minds can be taken hostage by Satan. This is why we need to know the truth, hide it in our heart, and obey it.

Psalm 119:11

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

It has been said:

“Our memories are like a photo album and we're the ones who get to choose what goes into the album.”

We need to know Scripture in the day of battle and allow Biblical truth to formulate our decisions and directions in life. What does God say about our action, decision and desire? How does God's Word give me direction and insight regarding some specific matter in life? Our minds can become polluted with lies and deception. The devil can clog up our mind and spiritual arteries with doubts, discouragement, and detrimental ideas that run contrary to God's nature, truth, and purpose for our lives.

The only way to experience deliverance or salvation from the enemy is know the truth and respond in obedience to God's will and direction for your life.

Earl Radmacher said it best:

“The truth of God establishes our vision, straightens our course, and resets our compass on the North Pole of accurate thought.”

We must let the mind of the Master be the master of your mind. This can only occur when we know and obey the truth of Scripture.

According to an October 29, 1994, story from the Reuters news agency, a Chinese woman named Zhang Meihua began to suffer mysterious symptoms when she turned twenty. She was losing the ability to move her legs and arms. Doctors could not find the cause, and the symptoms continued.

Two decades passed, and Zhang began to also suffer from chronic headaches. Again she sought help from the doctors. This time a CAT scan and an X ray found the source of the woman's mysterious symptoms. A rusty pin was lodged in her head. The head of the pin was outside the skull, and the shaft penetrated into her brain. Doctors performed surgery and successfully extracted the pin.

The Xinhua news agency reported the doctor's expressed amazement that the woman "could live for so long a time with a rusty pin stuck in her brain." After noting the position of the pin in her skull, they speculated that the pin had entered her skull sometime soon after birth and before her skull had hardened. Zhang, now fully recovered, said she "had no memory of being pierced by a pin in the head."

Like the rusty pin in that woman's brain, unwholesome thoughts, bad attitudes, and painful memories can lodge in our minds and cause chronic problems. God tells us to put on the helmet of salvation or deliverance to keep our minds in proper spiritual order.

Philippians 2:12 also clearly reveals that there is a present tense aspect to our salvation experience. It states: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

This verse is once again speaking of the present aspect of our salvation experience which results in sanctification and holiness taking place in our hearts and lives. It would have been only a half-way salvation, if the penalty of sin had been canceled, but its dominion in our lives was left unconquered. I'm so thankful that God promised to also deliver us from the dominion or power of sin that is occurring in connection with our lives.

Please note that we are never told to "work for" our salvation but to "work out" our salvation - the salvation that we already possess within us, as His children. We must possess salvation before we can work it out! Paul is telling us to work out the practical implications of the salvation we already possess in Christ. Since God already dwells within us in the person of the Holy Spirit, we have been given the promise of salvation or deliverance from the power of sin through God's life and nature.

This verse is teaching that we should be experiencing God's liberating life and nature working on the inside of us to deliver us from sin's power and slavery and to transform our character. Being saved from the power of indwelling sin is very important in our Christian walk.

Philippians 2:13

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will (desire) and to do (power) of *his* good pleasure.”

Young Christians need to learn the importance of their present salvation experience. God is working in us, giving His children both the DESIRE (“to will”) and the POWER (“to do”) to do what pleases Him. When you have a godly desire, that desire is from God, because no good thing can come out of our old vile heart! Furthermore, when you are given power to live victorious over sin, that power has come from God.

Someone said:

“This is not simply a ‘let go and let God’ affair. It is a ‘take hold with God’ business.”

In other words, the Bible does not say that God does it all and that we are just sit back and relax and He’ll sort of carry you along.” What the text does say is that we are to work out our salvation or deliverance through an active faith, daily dependence upon God, applying God’s nature and power to our lives in order to experience transformation of our character and conduct. Our deliverance does not happen by failing to engage our heart and mind in it. Work, work, work! You must understand that when you are working out your salvation (deliverance over sin) that it demonstrates God working in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Have you heard the expression - “The farmer works the soil?” In a similar way, Philippians 2:12 is teaching that we are to take what we freely have received (salvation) and make it bear fruit. We are to work the soil of our salvation which God has wrought within us and allow it to bring forth fruit for God’s glory.

Philippians 1:11 talks about the fruit of our salvation experience which involves sanctification: “Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”

Think of this analogy: The toaster cannot produce toast unless it is “connected,” so that its inside is heated by the electricity from the electric power house. The electric iron is useless unless the plug of the iron has been pushed into the wall

outlet. There will be no light in the room at night unless the wire connected to the light bulb fixture is connected to the source of electric energy. Friend, we need God's energy to accomplish His purpose for our lives. We must stay connected to God's life.

Philippians 2:12 says to "work out your salvation" (human responsibility) while Philippians 2:13 says "For it is God which worketh in you" (God's sovereign working). This reminds us that we cannot sit by and be idle in the matter of the sanctification of our soul or our deliverance from sin. We must pray, depend on God, seek to put into practice the things that we learn from the Bible, while at the same time God is working in our hearts, moving us and empowering us to do His will.

John Walvoord comments on these verses in this way:

"It is not the idea of work—that unless you work God cannot help you—but rather, work with the realization that you work not alone, that you have an infinite power within you, that actually God is working out His will for you and motivating you both to will or desire it and also to accomplish His good pleasure."

When it comes to experiencing our present and daily salvation (sanctification and deliverance from the power of sin) there is the matter of man's responsibility to obey and work out the salvation of deliverance he already possesses (Philp 2:12) while God's grace gives him the ability to do so (Philp. 2:13a).

Both are important in the working out of our salvation experience as it relates to sanctification. Again, we must take the initiative to walk and live by faith, seek to live a life that is pleasing to God, and reach out to love, live, and serve God, while at the same time, God is communicating His power and life to us, which enables us to live a sanctified life.

Alexander Maclaren wrote this about human responsibility and God's working: "These two streams of truth (man's responsibility and God's sovereign working) are like the rain-shower that falls upon the water-shed of a country. The one half flows down the one side of the everlasting hills, and the other down the other. Falling into rivers that water different continents, they at length find the sea, separated by the distance of half the globe. But the sea into which they fall is one, in every creek and channel."

God does not work in a vacuum. He wants our wills, hearts, and obedience. At the same time, it's God who moves in us, so that we might seek to follow His will and ways for our life. In other words, God is working in our hearts so that we can in our Christian life make the right choices, make the right moves in life, and live a sanctified life in the midst of a very sinful generation. If we don't live a pleasing life before God, it's not God's fault. It's because we choose to live in rebellion against God. God works within our hearts, but He does not override our wills and hearts since we are still responsible to be obedient and work out our salvation through the application of God's life and nature to our daily lives (Phil. 2:12).

Gordon Fee comments on God's working in us:

"This does not mean that God is 'doing it for them,' but that God supplies the working power. Happily for us, God is on the side of his people."

Our responsibility is our response to God's ability! You see, God is the energy and energizer that changes our life!

Warren Wiersbe once said:

"Too many Christians obey God only because of pressure on the outside, and not power on the inside."

Hebrews 13:20-21 also speaks of God's delivering work within us:

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect (reach the goal of maturity) in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen."

God wants to do a great work in our hearts and lives. But we must still yield to Him and open our lives to His liberating power, so we might live a sanctified life in our attitudes and actions, as well as our character and overall conduct in life.

Philippians 2:12 adds that we are to work out our salvation with "fear and trembling. Many times we don't possess a health fear of God in our hearts and lives. This is why we live contrary to His will. The fear of God means that I possess a wholesome dread in my heart of displeasing God. Fearing God means to

reverence God and possess a desire to reflect His holy and righteous nature in all that we do, without offending God.

Possessing a reverential fear of God does not mean that God is compared to an angry God sitting in Heaven, waiting to beat His children over the head. Instead, it means that I have an inward sense that I don't want to offend God by my sinful actions. Fearing God means I don't want to offend Him or displease God with my life. The fear of God is the wholesome dread of not pleasing the Lord with my life. It's not the fear that God is angry with me and will harm me. It's actually the fear that I might hurt God and break His heart with my insincerity and lack of commitment to His will for my life.

This aspect of the fear of God is healthy and needs to be experienced in our hearts and lives. It's a respectful fear of who God is and the failure of not pleasing Him with my life and living. It's not the fear of losing God's love and favor but a wholesome fear that we are not living for God's glory and pleasing the Lord with our personal lives.

Ecclesiastes 12:13

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

Salvation involves the present experience of being delivered from the power of sin. I'm being saved (delivered) today as I experience victory over my sinful thoughts and actions. This is called daily sanctification. I need God's saving and delivering power over sin which is seeking to overtake my heart and life today.

What sinful habit must you be saved from today? Is there one sin that has been eating away at you? Perhaps it is pride, an unforgiving spirit, covetousness, lust, or anger? We can experience salvation or deliverance from the power of sin today as we yield to the life of God and new nature which we already possess. We must learn the secret of working out the inward delivering power of God as we live our daily lives.

Roy Laurin said:

"It should be noted that the believer is one who is perfect in his position but he is still being made perfect in his condition."

Once again, the believer's present experience of salvation is called sanctification, which is when we experience daily victory over sin. It's when we possess a change in our attitude, appetite, ambition, and action.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication."

The word sanctification means to be being set apart from sin's power and dominion. In short, God wants us to experience salvation or deliverance from sin's power in our daily lives, as we live a separated or sanctified life from sin, Satan, and the system of the world.

The Australian coat of arms pictures two creatures--the emu, a flightless bird, and the kangaroo. The animals were chosen because they share a characteristic that appealed to the Australian citizens. Both the emu and kangaroo can move only forward, not back. The emu's three-toed foot causes it to fall if it tries to go backwards, and the kangaroo is prevented from moving in reverse by its large tail. Those who truly choose to follow Jesus are to be like the emu and kangaroo, moving forward in their Christian life – not backward. If we are growing in relation to sanctification, then we will not be taking steps backward.

Someone said:

"Don't shift into neutral and possess the disease of sanctified paralysis."

We must keep seeking to live a holy and sanctified life every day of our lives. We can't let down the guard. The process of sanctification (the present aspect of our salvation) means that God wants to continually make us holy. This work takes place in our lives, as we yield to His inward life-changing power and nature operating in our lives. God wants to make us into what He wants us to be and when we yield to His plan for our lives, He will see us through.

Those who work and build things out of wood know that it takes a lot of work to finish the wood and bring it to perfection. There are nail holes that need to be filled. The roughness in the wood needs to be smoothed. The procedure to achieve the desired effect is that the wood normally has to be sanded. This is a

big job. The wood worker needs to sand for a while, then he will stop and run his hand over the sanded area to see how it feels. It might still be a little rough, so he sands some more. He keeps repeating this until the wood has the desired smoothness. He then stains it and varnishes the wooden piece in order to produce the finished product.

This is so much like our lives. God looks at us and envisions the finished product. But we aren't finished yet! We have a few holes to be filled. We have rough spots to be sanded. In one sense, Jesus looks down, rubbing those sanded areas, to see how smooth we are becoming. Maybe it isn't quite right, so we are sanded a bit more. Eventually, that area is okay but there is another one that should be sanded as well. The process continues all through life. When we reach glory, God will look at us and be pleased with His finished work in us.

Have you seen the sign which states, "Please be patient. God isn't finished with me yet?" Oftentimes when we look in the mirror and deep into our own soul, we may not like what we see, but it's then that we need to recall this great truth that God isn't finished with us yet! To be certain we are God's work in progress.

The good news is that since God isn't finished yet, we can have great hope for tomorrow and the future. We must remember that since God isn't finished with us yet, He won't allow us to stay the way we are. God will keep chipping away at us until someday we are conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. We all have a long way to go. So if you find yourself stuck in the "miry clay" of personal discouragement and defeat (Ps 40:2) be encouraged for God is not finished with you yet.



We are all still under construction!

“He's still working on me
To make me what I need to be.
It took Him just a week to make
The moon and stars
The sun and the earth and Jupiter and Mars.
How loving and patient He must be
'Cause He's still workin' on me.”

The process of sanctification can be compared to an iceberg, which is almost 90% under water. But as the sun shines on the iceberg, the exposed part melts, moving the lower part upward. This process occurs over many years and is similar to the process of sanctification in our personal lives. Remember that sanctification refers to the present deliverance from sin and transformation of our lives.

So how is our ongoing sanctification experience comparable to an iceberg? Well, like the 10% of the iceberg that is above water, which is exposed to the sun, we are usually aware of only a small part of our sinfulness and need for change. However, as the light of God's word and work occurs in connection with our lives changes us in those areas we already know about, we become aware of new areas emerging needing the work of God.

Christian sanctification and growth is like an iceberg. Just as the iceberg melts and new areas reemerge, so it is with the process of sanctification. One specific area of sin melts away but then we must begin working on a new and different area that surfaces. Living the Christian life is a lifetime melting process!

We have now studied about our present deliverance or salvation from the power or dominion of sin. As we mentioned previously, it would have been only a half-way salvation, if the penalty of sin had been canceled, but its dominion in our lives was left unconquered. I'm so thankful that God promised to also deliver us from the dominion or power of sin that is occurring in connection with our lives.

I want to give you a transition verse that reconfirms the first two phases of our salvation experience and then end with a prophetic anticipation of our salvation, which we will study as our last point.

Philippians 1:6 also promises us salvation or deliverance in our present Christian experience: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you (*deliverance from the penalty and power of sin*) will perform it (*execute and complete it*) until the day of Jesus Christ" (*deliverance from the presence of sin*). In other words, God promises that He will continue to execute and maintain the work of salvation in our lives. God's promise of completing our salvation is not only true from the perspective of deliverance from the penalty of sin but also the power of sin. We will experience His delivering power over sin

throughout our lifetime until we meet Jesus in the Rapture. It's at this time we will experience our final deliverance from sin when receiving a glorified body.

This verse acts a transition from our second and third points in our study on the tenses of salvation and presents all three aspects of our salvation experience. I want to look at it right now because it links all the points together and helps us to flow into our final point.

The work of salvation was begun at the time I was saved from the penalty and power of sin through His death on the cross. This was an instantaneous transaction that occurred because of my identification with Christ. So, "he which begun a good work in you" points to the time we believed and were saved from the judgment and enslavement of sin. However, the idea that God "will perform it" (execute it) gives us the promise that He will not only maintain our salvation from sin's penalty (our first point) but continue to sanctify us, change us, and transform our lives (the second point). This is what God is doing today in relation to our salvation and deliverance. He is working it out, performing it (making it work) in respect to our daily living through the ongoing process of sanctification.

But the final aspect of our salvation is also brought out in this verse for it says that God will perform a work of transformation in our lives until the Rapture ("the day of Jesus Christ") which is the final aspect of our salvation and deliverance, the time we receive a glorified body. This will be when God's entire program of salvation will be completed in connection with our lives.

God commences His saving work to continue His work in our lives, and He continues the work in order to complete it at the Rapture when we get our new sinless body. We will see this in our final point about salvation. When Christ gets involved in a person's life, He always finishes what He starts!

"The work which His goodness began,
The arm of His strength will complete;
His promise is Yea and Amen,
And never was forfeited yet."

In this verse, God is seen beginning and completing a great work in our lives, which is the work of salvation. It is a work that begins with justification before

God, continues on with deliverance from present-day sin in our lives, and ends with the glorification of our body at the Rapture, when we will possess a sinless body and live forever without sin. God will bring His entire sovereign and saving purpose to pass in our lives, which more specifically involves deliverance from sin's penalty, power, and someday from the very presence of sin.

God finishes what He starts!

When I was young boy, I used to try and build model cars. The picture of the hot rod on the box or the helicopter would always catch my eye. However, I never could seem to finish building the model that I started. Why? It's because I got tired of the detailed process and never finished it. I got started but eventually lost interest.

I'm glad God does not start my salvation and then lose interest in it. What He starts, He continues to work out in my life, and one day He is going to complete the work by giving me a new body.

PROPHETIC Tense of Salvation

Deliverance from sin's
PRESENCE (DOMAIN)



Occurs Through **GLORIFICATION**

CONSUMMATION of our Salvation Experience

Once again, what God begins He finishes! We will experience every aspect of our salvation because God always finishes what He starts! God saves us from start to finish! And the final part of our salvation is our redemptive body! It will be a sinless and painless body that will exist forever and forever.

The "day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6, 10; 1 Cor. 1:8) is a reference to Christ's coming in the Rapture. This is looking ahead to the time when we will receive our new glorified body. This will be the grand finale of our salvation experience. It's the time that we cross the finish line! In this coming day, we will no longer have any propensity to sin and we will experience the FINAL ASPECT of our salvation (a sinless, painless, eternal body). We will see this in our final point.

Our glorification relates to our new body and perfect likeness to Jesus Christ. It's a new body and likeness we will receive at the Rapture, when Jesus returns for His Church Age saints. Glorification is when we will receive a new glorified body, just like Jesus Christ. It's a body that will not only be physically perfect, but also be morally perfect, since the spirit that resides within it, so it will be sinless and like Jesus Christ.

Romans 13:11 points to the future aspect of our salvation:

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”

This future and final aspect of our salvation or deliverance is said to be “nearer than when we first believed” (Rom. 13:11). This is because Jesus could return at any moment and finish or complete our salvation by giving us a new glorified body.

Our salvation will reach its climax at the Rapture of the church, when we receive our new glorified, a redemptive body that is free from sin, disease, and death. This is what Paul has in mind when speaking about our future salvation. There is a final salvation or deliverance that we will experience in the future which relates to the redemption of our bodies.

Something still lies ahead in relation to our salvation experience. We are getting a new body someday that will be without sin and fit for eternity! The fact that this future deliverance or salvation of our bodies is “nearer than when we first believed” (expressed faith in Christ) means that the Rapture is imminent (impending) and the time of His coming is drawing nearer every day. We should keep our eyes to the sky! We should live on our spiritual tiptoes with great expectancy!

Think back over this past week. How much of what you did was motivated by your conscious awareness of the coming of the Lord? Many times we get so caught up with daily pressures and deadlines that we forget the big picture. We can forget that Jesus is coming and that we should be living each day in light of this great future event. The possibility that Christ could come at any time and the certainty that He will come at some time should motivate us to holy living right now. But more than this, the imminent return of Christ should be a blessed hope to our

heart and lives, knowing that we are going to experience the final aspect of our salvation or deliverance from sin and get a new glorified and perfect body.

Remember that our salvation is nearer than when we first believed!

“Christian, do you know what time it is?

It’s later than it’s ever been.

The death clock is ticking for all of us.

Christian, do you know what time it is?

It’s the dawning of a new day.

It’s time to put off the deeds of darkness.

It’s time to put on the armor of light.

It’s time to take Jesus with you everywhere you go.

It’s time to get serious about your faith.

It’s time to stop sleepwalking though life.

Look! Do you see the first rays of dawn? The night is almost over, the sun is rising.

Jesus is coming soon.

Have patience, child of God. Your Savior is on the way.

Take hope, defeated Christian. The Lord is at hand.

Be encouraged, suffering believer. The trumpet will soon sound.

Keep believing, struggling saints.

Your salvation is nearer than when you first believed.”

Titus 2:11-13 looks ahead to this future salvation experience:

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The expression “looking for” implies eager anticipation. Yes, our final salvation or deliverance should be a blessed hope that we experience today in our hearts and lives. We should possess the daily reality and anticipation that Jesus is going to return and give us a perfect, sinless, and painless body. We are going to be immediately and forever transformed and delivered from the very presence of sin and all the diseases and heartaches that go along with the original sin of Eden.

Beloved, there is much more to come! The best is yet to come! Our one true hope and expectation is to one day see Jesus, be like Jesus, and live with Him forever. Friend, it's just a matter of time until we will experience this final deliverance. There is coming a termination day of all of our conflicts and the completion day of all of our hopes!

In the coming deliverance that we will experience, our bodies will be saved from the presence of sin. Our bodies will be transformed at the Rapture into perfect bodies of a new and glorious nature. They will be bodies of glory that will never again commit any type of sin, never experience disease and pain, and bodies that will never die.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

“Behold, I shew you a mystery (a sacred secret not revealed in the past); We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 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. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

Imagine, how we will be completed changed and delivered from all our heartaches, sins, cancers, heart problems, arthritis, deformities, and pain in only a moment!

“In only a moment,
In a twinkling of an eye,
At the sound of the trumpet,
We will see Him come

In only a moment
We'll behold Him in the sky,
And the Lord Himself
Will quickly take us home.

We shall all be changed,
Caught up to heaven,
In a cloud of glory.
We shall all be changed
Transformed in victory.

Death where is thy sting,
God conquered death and hell,
We shall all be changed
We shall all be changed."

We ought to be like the little boy whose family clock malfunctioned and struck fifteen times, so that he rushed wide-eyed to his mother crying, "Mommy, it's later than it's ever been before!" We should also keep in mind that if Christ does not return in our time, he will certainly come individually for us in death. Each ache, each pain, each gray hair, each new wrinkle, each funeral is a reminder that it is later than it has ever been before. But the wonderful news is that it's also true that "our salvation is nearer" than it was before! Jesus will someday return and fix us up

Romans 8:18 talks about this aspect of our final salvation:

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

This verse talks about our glorified body that we will experience at the Rapture. Again, this is what Paul was referring to when he said that our "salvation is nearer than when we first believed."

Someday we will receive a perfect body and be morally like Jesus Christ. The word "glory" speaks of the beauty, splendor, and magnificence that shall be revealed "in us" (the moral glory and likeness of Jesus Christ will be evidenced within us) when we are changed and experience the future aspect of our salvation experience.

Our bodies will experience a transformation that will finalize our salvation. They will be changed in a moment (in the twinkling of an eye) into the moral likeness of Jesus Christ. We will not only experience physical deliverance forever but the complete and eternal deliverance from every sin.

There is coming a future day of final glory and deliverance. We will be raised or raptured with a new body that will be like Jesus Christ's physically (free from pain and death) and morally (free from sin). It will be a new body that will be fashioned like the body of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:16-17

“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory.”

Paul is saying that the old sinful body is in one sense perishing or "wasting away" (being deconstructed!), while our new inner life and communion with Christ is "being renewed" (reconstructed!) day by day. This makes life worth the living! We can stay close to the Lord and experience inner sanctification and transforming on the inside of our hearts even when our outside bodies are not doing very well.

Paul then goes on to give us perspective on our bodies and suffering. He explains that our present experiences of pain and hardships that we pass through today in our physical bodies on earth is nothing by way of comparison to what is going to happen to our bodies in the resurrection. In other words, our afflictions in this life must be put in its proper perspective in relation to time, eternity and the future glory of the new body that you will receive someday when Jesus Christ returns.

Our present trials and tribulations on earth are seen to be a “light” (easy) and “temporal” (momentary) troubles that we experience during our time on earth. This does not mean that they are not difficult trials to bear or pass through in this life. What it means is that we must learn to view all of our trials from an eternal perspective.

The affliction by itself may seem heavy, but when viewed from the eternal perspective, or compared to your glorious destiny that awaits you, our trials in this life are very small, insignificant, and transitory in nature.

As we look forward to the “weight” (degree or abundance) of the glory and splendor that we will someday enter, it makes our present-day trials seem small and insignificant. In other words, the degree of suffering in our present life does not compare with the degree of glory and great blessing that awaits us in the future, when we receive our magnificent body of redemption with its release from all pain and sickness. We need to possess a proper perspective on eternity and the wonderful destiny that awaits us.

The “weight of glory” (a great degree of splendor and magnificence) once again refers to the great transformation that awaits us in the future, when we will receive a new redemptive body. This will be a body that is fully redeemed and saved from the very presence and domain of sin, when we are rid of the sin nature forever, and when we will serve God with pristine holiness. It will be a time when we will no longer experience the pain associated with disease and our failing health. Are you passing through a tough time? I want to remind you that the afflictions will pass. Believe it. Don't lose heart.

Sir Frederic K. Catherwood, Christian businessman and onetime chairman of the European Parliament, once sat at lunch with one of Britain's greatest scientists, at that time he was president of The Royal Society of Britain, and the two discussed the Bible and Christianity. The aged scientist remained firm in his belief of evolution with all of its emptiness and futility.

Catherwood writes:

“Only three or four years later, a few months before his death, I saw the same man in the library of our club, a gaunt, gloomy, silent figure, hunched over the fire, staring into nothing, face to face with oblivion. When I left the club some time later, he was standing in the rain without a coat. I offered him a lift; he told me not to bother. He had come to the end, and nothing seemed to matter any more.”

Friend, I am so thankful that God’s children possess a tremendous future that is filled with hope and deliverance. The end for us is not really an end at all. It is a new beginning and eternity!

1 John 3:2 looks ahead to our final salvation:

“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.”

At that very moment when Jesus returns for us, we will experience a transformation of our bodies, which will not only be physical, but also spiritual. Our bodies will be, in the twinkling of an eye, delivered from every pain and every sin. We will never again suffer from disease or pain. But it’s even better than this. We will never sin against God again. We will be like the glorified Jesus and possess

a perfectly sinless and deathless body that will live on throughout the ages of eternity in perfect holiness.

Yes, we shall “be like him.” This text is not saying that we will look physically like Jesus Christ in Heaven. The Lord Jesus will have His own definite appearance and will bear the scars of Calvary throughout eternity. The Bible teaches that in the resurrection we will have our own distinct features and will be recognizable with these distinct features. The Bible does not teach that everyone will look alike in Heaven (or that we will all have angel wings and sit on top of clouds). However, we will be morally like the Lord Jesus Christ. We will be free from the possibility of defilement, sin, sickness, sorrow, and death. What a final salvation this will be!

Romans 8:23 declares:

“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit (regenerating work of the Holy Spirit that brought salvation into our lives and resulted in the Spirit’s indwelling presence and sanctifying work in our lives), even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit (that is to say), the redemption of our body” (the final harvest of our salvation).

The Bible teaches that there are the first fruits of the Spirit’s salvation and transforming work taking place in our lives and there is also the final fruit or harvest that awaits us. This once again encompasses God’s entire plan and purpose of salvation for our lives. We move from the first fruits of our salvation (the Spirit’s regenerating and sanctifying work that is taking place in our lives today) to the final harvest of our salvation (the redemptive body). This will be the time when we are visibly seen as the sons of God, transformed, changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

The analogy is not difficult to understand. A farmer’s “firstfruits” are the initial harvesting of his first-ripened crops. This first installment was a foretaste and promise that more harvest was to come. In a similar way, God the Holy Spirit, regenerating and indwelling believers, sanctifying their lives, is a foretaste that they will enjoy many more blessings, including a glorified body and living in God’s presence forever.

The TOTAL redemption of our body is the final HARVEST and phase of our salvation experience. This refers to the time we will be delivered from the very presence of sin and never again experience pain, disease, and death.

What a future redemption and glory awaits us as believers! There is an aspect of our salvation that is still future and while Christians today struggle with sin and disease in this life, we can look forward to the day when the struggle will be over! There is a great salvation or coming deliverance that is going to occur in the future. What a day it will be when we are forever freed from the presence of sin, the pains of this life, and the pangs of death itself (Heb. 9:28).

In the future, at the Rapture, when we receive a new body, we will experience the future and final aspect of our salvation. It is salvation from the very presence or domain of sin.

1 Peter 1:5 teaches this as well:

“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (our final redemptive salvation) ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Our future salvation is “ready to be revealed” in “the last time” (the season of Christ’s return – when something momentous is going to happen!). Our final deliverance from sin and disease is ready to occur since Christ’s is imminent and we could experience our transformation and glorification at any moment. This final step or ultimate completion of “the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:9), the deliverance of our entire life, will occur at the Rapture, when we are given a new body that will be forever freed from the very presence of sin, sorrow, and sickness. This will occur “at the appearing of Jesus Christ” or the Rapture (1 Peter 1:7).

“There is coming a day,
When no heart aches shall come,
No more clouds in the sky,
No more tears to dim the eye,
All is peace forever more,
On that happy golden shore,
What a day, glorious day that will be.

What a day that will be,
When my Jesus I shall see,
And I look upon His face,
The One who saved me by His grace;
When He takes me by the hand,
And leads me through the Promised Land,
What a day, glorious day that will be.”

Let’s summarize our study and finish.

As Christians:

- (1) *We have been* saved (past justification) - Titus 3:5
- (2) *We are being* saved (present sanctification) - 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- (3) *We shall be* saved (prophetic glorification) - Romans 13:11.

Salvation began with justification before God (Rom. 5:10), it extends to sanctification through God (Romans 6:11-13), and ends with glorification with God (Rom. 8:17, 29).

And God will be sure to do it all! God is involved in every aspect and phase of our salvation. This is the “good work” of Philippians 1:6 that He has begun, will continue to do, and will finish when His Son returns for His Bride, the Church. Someone put these words to song.

“If the struggle you're facing
Is slowly replacing
Your hope with despair.
Or the process is long
And you're losing your song in the night.
You can be sure
That the Lord has His hand on you,
Safe and secure
He will never abandon you,
You are His treasure
And He finds His pleasure in you.

He who began a good work in you
He who began a good work in you
Will be faithful to complete it
He'll be faithful to complete it
He who started the work
Will be faithful to complete it in you.”