

Redemption Through Christ

Salvation is provided only through the person of Christ: Salvation is based on faith plus nothing as highlighted by the Scripture.

Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace”

Hebrews 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

1Peter 1:19 but [redeemed] with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

Revelation 1:5 To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood --

Romans 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

Hebrews 13:12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

1John 1:7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

John 16:8-9“And He [Holy Spirit], when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me”

Our personal sins are not an issue in salvation. They were an issue at the cross, and Jesus Christ was already judged for every one of them. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, who convicts us with regard to salvation, never convicts us with regard to our personal sins. However, the one sin He convicts us of is the only sin for which Christ could not die: the sin of rejecting Him, or the sin of unbelief.

John 3:15 So that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish [eternal security], but have eternal life.

John 3:18 He who believes in Him [Christ] is not judged; he who does not

believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Notice that the word believe is repeated three times in this verse, and that no works are added to it. The issue in salvation is that you either believe in Christ once, or you do not believe.

John 3:36 He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but he who does not believe in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on Him.

John 6:47 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.”

John 11:25-26 Jesus said to her [Martha], “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.” You have to believe while you are alive; there is no second chance after you die.

John 20:31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Acts 16:31 They said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household [meaning, if anyone in your household believes in Christ, they too are saved].” Notice that the command is to believe; there is nothing added to it.

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God [Royal Family] through faith in Christ Jesus. Notice that nothing is added to faith.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek [Gentile]. Everyone is saved the same way, both Jew and Gentile. They are saved, not by keeping the Law, but only by believing in Christ.

Romans 3:20-22 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets [Old Testament], even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

Romans 3:28 For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the Law. Notice it is by faith apart from works. This means that when a person adds any type of works whatsoever to faith, he is not justified and therefore not saved.

Romans 4:4-5 Now to the one who works [for salvation], his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work [for salvation], but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness ...

Romans 4:14 For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified;

Galatians 2:16 Nevertheless knowing that a man [spiritually dead person] is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through Our Lord Jesus Christ.” The only way of salvation is one act of personal faith in Jesus Christ with nothing added to it. To add to faith in Christ for salvation is no salvation at all. If, when you believe in Christ, you are depending upon something else besides faith in Christ, you are not saved.

Philippians 3:9 And may [I] be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.

2Timothy 3:15 And that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Even if you later renounce your faith in Christ, you are still saved.

2Timothy 2:11-13 Faithful is the saying [Word]: For if we died with Him [Christ; and we have, through retroactive positional truth], we will also live with Him [Christ]; if we endure [suffering for blessing], we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us [escrow savings account blessings for time and eternity]; if we are faithless [do not believe, after we are saved], He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. God the Father cannot deny the indwelling of the Trinity.

Romans 3:24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; Salvation is said to be by grace, and grace is God doing the work and God getting the credit, and excludes human works.

Romans 4:16(a) For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace,

Romans 5:1-2 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand;

Romans 5:15 But the free gift [of salvation] is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one [Adam] the many [human race] died [spiritual death], much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many

Romans 5:17 For if by the transgression of the one [Adam], [spiritual] death reigned through the one [Adam], much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.

2Timothy 1:9 who [God the Father] has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity past,

Christ died has a substitute for us once; we believe in Him once.

Hebrews 9:27-28 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once ...

Romans 5:8 demonstrates the proposition of substitution: *huper plus* the genitive of ego in the plural. But God demonstrates His own love toward us [this is impersonal unconditional love for all mankind in the status of real spiritual death], in that while we were yet sinners [objects of divine impersonal love], Christ died [as a substitute] for us. This is substitution spiritual death on the cross.

1Peter 3:18 For Christ also died once for our sins, the righteous one [impeccable humanity of Christ] as a substitute for the unrighteous ones.

Notice how this word *once* keeps occurring. It is the Greek word *hapax*. In this verse we have *huper plus* the genitive of advantage of *adikos*, which means, on behalf of the unrighteous ones or better still, as a substitute for the unrighteous ones. In both Romans 5:8 and 1Peter 3:18, Christ died as a substitute for us. Notice that both verses say Christ died once. So our response to the one act of sacrifice is one act of faith, and faith alone. By one act of faith, we have eternal life.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for [instead of, in place of, on behalf of, as a substitute for] us – for it stands written (Deuteronomy 21:23), “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree [cross]”

The Law puts a curse on sin. Jesus Christ, as our substitute, was judged for our sins. In Galatians 3:13, the Doctrine of Redemption is used because it is talking about the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law is designed to put us into the slave market of sin. The only way we can be redeemed from the slave market of sin, as members of the human race, is for someone to pay for our freedom.

Jesus Christ paid for our freedom on the cross. That is the meaning of redemption. Yet, the Mosaic Law is used by many as a means of salvation. Such people add the works of the Law to faith in Jesus Christ. That is why Romans 3:20 says, because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. The purpose of the Law is to make us aware of the fact that we are sinners with an old sin nature.

Romans 3:28, For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. This means faith alone, and only one time is necessary for us to believe in Christ. And the first time we do believe, we possess eternal life.

Galatians 2:16 Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, One act of faith in Christ is all it takes to possess eternal life.

1John 4:9-10 By this the love of God [impersonal love for all mankind] was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him [or we might be saved]. In this is love [by this is divine impersonal love for all mankind manifested], not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Propitiation means that once God the Father imputed and judged all our sins in Christ on the cross, at that very moment He was satisfied completely with the work of Our Lord. There is only one work of salvation that satisfies God the Father, and that is the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Grace in salvation is the work of God. God the Father imputed our sins to Jesus Christ on the cross. God the Son received the imputation and judgment for our sins on the cross through His substitution spiritual death. God the Holy Spirit reveals the plan of salvation to the spiritually dead person under the Doctrine of Common Grace. So an invitation from God is extended. When that invitation is accepted, it is simply by believing in Jesus Christ that God the Holy Spirit makes our faith effective.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that [salvation] not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. Therefore, the whole principle of eternal salvation is faith and faith alone in Christ alone.

SALVATION IS BY GRACE, NOT BY WORKS.

Every person is guilty of sin, condemned by God, and needs to be saved. No one is worthy of salvation. Romans 3:10-12 “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away; they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is nothing we can do to earn salvation. God only accepts the perfect work of our Lord on the cross on our behalf. Even our best human efforts are rejected by God:

Isaiah 64:6 For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are as filthy rags. The harder we work for salvation, the farther away it gets. Romans 4:4 5 Now to one who works, his wage is not reckoned as grace, but as debt. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness. Good works are rejected by God as the means of gaining or maintaining salvation. Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.

Romans 3:21-24 But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law has been made known, to which the Law and the prophets testify.

This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ. Salvation is received non-meritoriously by depending on Jesus Christ. It is not the strength or the endurance of our faith but the object of our faith, Jesus Christ, that receives all the credit.

WE CAN DO NOTHING to gain salvation, and WE CAN DO NOTHING to lose it. Those who do not believe this are being misled. The idea that Christ did His part on the cross and now we must do our part by maintaining a certain level of morality or goodness in order to get to heaven is not the truth of the Bible but a lie from Satan. Morality or keeping the Ten Commandments cannot save! Christ made a wasted trip to the cross if we can get to heaven by being moral. In fact, hell will be full of good, moral people who have depended on themselves rather than Christ for salvation.

Salvation is a gift from God. Just because salvation is free does not mean that it came without a price tag. The cost was tremendous! Jesus Christ paid for it in full by dying in our place on the cross. He was our substitute, taking the judgment for our sins on His own perfect body. That was His gift to us. A gift is free. It is either accepted or rejected, but it is never earned.

If salvation could be earned, it would not be a gift. It would be payment that we

deserve for something we did. Scripture makes it clear; salvation is a gift, no strings attached. God will not freely give a gift and then take it back. To do so would be completely out of character for Him.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

“Grace” is receiving something we do not earn or deserve. Wouldn't you agree that it is foolish to work for something that is free? Anyone who trusts in his own works and ability is in effect saying that Christ's atonement was not good enough. He ignores what Christ said as he hung on the cross before he died: John 19:30 . . .

it is finished! Salvation was completed, the gift was purchased, nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be taken from it. We either accept the gift by believing in Jesus Christ or reject it by trying to work for it. Eternal life is a permanent gift. “Eternal” means infinite duration, everlasting, perpetual, endless, and something impossible to lose. There is not one account in the entire Bible where anyone received the gift of eternal life and then lost it.

Those who believe they must work for salvation will stand before Jesus Christ at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). Their sins, which were already judged on the cross, will not be mentioned. Since they rejected Christ's perfect work on the cross as the only way into heaven, they will have to rely on their own works to get in. They will find that only Christ's work is acceptable to God. Therefore, they will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

SALVATION RESTS ON GOD'S POWER AND HIS PROMISES. NOT OURS Our salvation endures because its security depends on God, not on us. What a relief! What great news!

I Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Jude 24 Now unto Him [Jesus Christ] who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory [God the Father] with exceeding joy.

John 10:28 I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. Romans 8:35 & 38-39 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or

famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord .

There is no sin, no power and no person that can cause us to lose our salvation. Even if we change our mind and renounce Christ, we cannot lose our salvation. The gift of eternal life is permanent no matter how much our faith may waver.

I Timothy 2:11-12 if we endure [suffering] we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him; He also will deny us [rewards]; if we are faithless [turn away from Him], He remains faithful [He does not take back the free gift] for He cannot deny Himself [His promise of eternal life still stands]. Our weakness does not diminish God's strength. Our failures do not revoke His promises.

BELIEVERS ARE CHILDREN OF GOD Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. A believer's relationship with his heavenly Father is similar to the one with his earthly father.

Our confidence is strengthened by knowing that our spiritual relationship cannot be broken any more than our physical one can be. There is nothing a child or his father can do to sever their physical relationship, and there is nothing a believer or God can do to sever their spiritual relationship. It is permanent! The Bible never speaks of any child of God being disowned or disinherited.

BELIEVERS ARE NOT CONDEMNED Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. John 3:18 He that believes on Him is not condemned; but he that does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 5:24

Truly, truly I say unto you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and shall not come into condemnation, but has passed out of death into life. It is impossible for believers to come under condemnation because they have gone from spiritual death to spiritual life. They possess eternal life because they were born again the moment they believed in Jesus Christ.

Believers still sin after they are saved, but they are not condemned for their sins. Why? Because Christ was condemned for these sins on the cross. It would be unjust for God to condemn us for the sins for which Christ has already been judged. Does this mean that there are no consequences for our sins? Of course not. Believers suffer divine discipline when they sin. Our heavenly Father disciplines His children, but He does not condemn them. There is a difference

between divine discipline, which is temporary suffering, and condemnation, which is eternal death.

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At the moment of faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit places the believer in union with Christ. This union is created by baptism of the Holy Spirit. The believer's union with Christ qualifies the believer to live with God forever, making him a new spiritual species (2 Cor. 5:17) and guarantees the eternal security (Rom.8:38-39).

The non-meritorious phrase *believed in God* is considered by God as act of acceptable righteousness like in the case of Abraham (Rom. 4:3). But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness (Rom. 4:5) For with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation (Rom. 10; 10)

Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:16)

Eternal security means that every believer possesses eternal life now and that which continues forever (John 5:24). This assurance stands on the essence of God and not on man (Numbers 23:19) and that God is eternally perfect (Deut. 33:27) and all His gifts to men are perfect (James 1:17). God gave the right to become children of God to those who believe and receive Jesus Christ (John 1:12) as guaranteed by His unchanging character. Every believer is saved once and for all eternity (Acts 16:31).

The term *saved* means eternal, unchangeable, permanent salvation. Think about this, Why would God revoke salvation just because of personal sins committed by a believer? when in fact God solved the problem of sin while the entire human race was in sin (Rom. 5:9-10). God solved the problem of sin apart from our knowledge or participation. Christians are saved by the grace of God (Rom. 5:15, 17,20). Grace is everything that God does for men apart from human participation, contribution or assistance.

Salvation guarantees no condemnation (Rom. 8:1) for those who are in Christ Jesus. This positional truth is guaranteed by the perfect integrity of God. Christians are the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26), this is a permanent relationship (1 Cor. 12:21) that cannot be removed, altered, changed or desalinated by anything else (Rom. 8:38-39).

Every believer remains saved by the power of God (2 Timothy 1:12) not by human power that fails often time. Every believer is born again by the imperishable seed of the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23) not by any inconsistent power, unwavering faith of men, religious activity or sacrifices.

The eternal security of the believer rests on the faithfulness of God. Any person who believed and accepted the free gift of eternal life cannot remove, change, cancel, alter,

revoke or invalidate his salvation. An individual may decide to renounce his Christianity but if God has saved him, his salvation will remain intact and he is saved forever.

Nothing can change the verdict of God to justify the believer through the finished work of Christ and not on the work of men. A person may renounce his faith, embrace any atheistic ideology or doctrine, but if he is saved, his salvation will remain effective until eternity. Salvation does not depend on men but on God. "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself" (2 Timothy 2:13).

If salvation is dependent on men then nobody will ever go to heaven that is because we are inconsistent, changeable, untrustworthy and devious in everything. The title or *Deeds of our Salvation* enters our names as beneficiaries and Jesus Christ as the Benefactor. The authority and assurance of salvation rests on the Benefactor not on the beneficiary. The free gift of salvation is eternal and permanent.

GOD'S PLAN OF GRACE is always misunderstood. Majority of Christians rest on false assumption that God's plan of grace is built on human love. As a result, they try to base their lifestyle, relationship with others and with God on these obscure, imprecise and unclear feelings called love.

In God's plan, all the glory belongs to Him, He has all the merit, He receives all the credit, because He does all the work. Grace is the policy of God's plan which is extended to the undeserving, totally helpless and condemned individual. God treats us in His justice. He is always fair to every person. His justice conforms to the demands of His righteousness and everything He does conform to His righteousness. God cannot accept the imperfect righteousness and good work of men.

There is nothing we can do to earn the love of God or the right to live with God forever. We are qualified only by non-meritorious faith in Christ, which is express to man in the simplest form

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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WORD OF TO SALVATION

The Bible is the mind of Christ, that is, His thoughts on every subject. In 1 Corinthians 2:16, Paul said, "For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ."

God places the highest priority on His Word, and has magnified it above everything else known to man. Psalm 138:2 say's, "I bow down toward Thy holy temple and give thanks to Thy name for Thy steadfast love and Thy faithfulness; for Thou hast exalted above everything Thy name and Thy *Word*."

The Word existed, in the form of wisdom, before human history. Proverbs 8:22-30 as wisdom personified, said, "The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old [/ farthest time of antiquity]. From everlasting I was established [Heb. 'olam here means- eternity past], from the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains were settled, before the hills I was brought forth; while He had not yet made the earth and the fields, nor the first dust of the world. When He established the heavens, I was there, when He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep, when He made firm the skies above, when the springs of the deep became fixed, when He set for the sea its boundary, so that the water should not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth; then I was beside Him, {as} a master workman; and I was daily {His} delight, rejoicing always before Him.”

The Bible surpasses all human intellectual achievement. Paul discusses the wisdom of the world and its relation to the Word of God in 1 Corinthians 1:17-31. Peter wrote, in 2 Peter 1:19-21, that “...we have the prophetic word [Old Testament] {made} more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is {a matter} of one’s *own* interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

When Peter say’s, “we have the prophetic word {made} more sure,” he’s speaking in the light of what he just said in v. 16-18, that “...we were eyewitnesses of” Christ’s “majesty,” and that “...when He received honor and glory from God the Father,” who said, ““This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased,’ ...we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven...”What better way of substantiating the truth than to say, “We saw it with our own eyes and we heard it with our own ears.”? What can be more real than seeing and hearing? Peter tells us that the Word of God should be more real to us than *anything* else in life!

Peter documents the experience of the Transfiguration which he had shared with James and John on Mt. Hermon in Caesarea Philippi. They had seen Jesus Christ in all His glory, as He would appear at the 2nd Advent. They had witnessed the inward reality of His true nature as eternal Deity shining through. They heard the Father’s voice speak from Heaven; and yet Peter wrote with utmost conviction “we have the prophetic word {made} more sure, to which you do well to pay attention...”He say’s that the prophetic word is an even surer confirmation than what he saw at the Transfiguration; that the testimony of the OT is more convincing than even the voice of God which he heard that day.

The phrase “more sure” is from the comparative of *be/baioj* (*bebaios*). *Bebaios* means- *permanent, certain, secure*. It speaks of something that is firm, stable, something that can be relied upon and trusted in. The idea is that the Word of God which we possess is an even *more* reliable foundation than the signs and wonders which Peter and the other apostles had witnessed firsthand.

To this Word, Peter say’s, you would “do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place.” One might ask the question, in ignorance, “Why place such a profound importance on the Scriptures?” The Word of God leads us out of spiritual darkness.

Psalm 119:105, “Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.” 2 Samuel 22:29. “For You are my lamp, O LORD; and the LORD illumines my darkness

Proverbs 6:20-23, “My son, observe the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the teaching of your mother [divine viewpoint instilled by / parents]; bind them continually on your heart [right lobe of your soul]; tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk to you. For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is *light*; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life.”

How long are we to single-mindedly devote our thoughts, our efforts, and our energy to the Word of God?” The answer-- “until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.” The dawning of the “day” here is the Day of Christ-- the Rapture of the Church. The “morning star arising in your hearts” signifies the ultimate decoration in eternity-- the order of the Morning Star. The “morning star” is described as a category of eternal reward in Revelation 2:26-28.

Thyatira was a church characterized by great spiritual service. In v. 19 Jesus said, “I know... that your deeds of late are greater than at first,” a statement that implies spiritual growth in the body. Their spiritual growth had resulted in “love and faith and service and perseverance.” Yet, in the midst of their spiritual growth, and their Christ-like attitude of service in the cause of the Gospel, they were tolerating a self-appointed “prophetess” by the name of Jezebel who was teaching false doctrine and leading weaker believers astray into sexual immorality and idol worship.

Nevertheless, our Lord said, that “...he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received {authority} from My Father; and I will give him the *morning star*,” vv. 26-28. The “morning star” is a decoration awarded to those few who have become so conformed to Christ in this earthly life that they will reflect the glory of Christ in heaven. There could be no more tremendous honor-- no greater privilege than to exchange at the Bema Seat this uniform of honor, worn in the soul, for that uniform of glory.

When Peter writes to these persecuted believers, he doesn't say, “But know this first of all.” What he says is, “keep on *knowing* this.” The word Peter uses is a pres. act. part. Which speaks of a perception and understanding which is uninterrupted, continually taking place, The active voice brings out the principle of personal responsibility in the application of the doctrine they were being taught. He uses the phrase “keep on *knowing* this” to refer *back* to the words “to which you do well to pay attention.” That is, as these believers gave their attention to the OT prophecies and the OT Scriptures, they were to keep in mind what followed in the next two verses.

In one short sentence Peter lay's down the most important hermeneutical principle you and I will *ever* learn “that no prophecy of Scripture is {a matter} of one's *own* interpretation.” The Greek *idios* (idios) means- *one's own private, exclusive possession*. I.e., what he's saying is the Word of God is not subject to the mind of man; it's not a ball of metaphorical clay that even the most brilliant human mind can mold and shape into the form and fashion it desires, nor is it subject to rationalism and empiricism.

It is, however, the exclusive possession of the Spirit of God, and therefore, to assimilate

the Word, to metabolize the Word, and to interpret it *accurately* requires the exercise of faith in the power of the Spirit. Allow me, if you will, to illustrate this for you from 1 Corinthians 2.

In 1 Corinthians 2:11 Paul told the believers in Corinth that no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. He went on to say in v. 12, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world [human viewpoint / wisdom and rationale of / CS], but the Spirit who is from God [HS], that [*hina*- ‘in order that;’ it begins a final purpose clause, i.e., it is used by Paul to point out / principal reason for our having been given the HS at salvation] we might know [with a *clear* and *absolute knowledge*; subj. mood of *oida* means that volitionally, / choice to learn and apply / Word is entirely up to you and I] the things freely given to us by God [‘freely given’ comes from / verb *charizomai*- ‘give in grace;’ those ‘things given to us by the grace of God’ are spiritual truths in / form of Bible doctrine].” --Back to 2 Peter.

The word “for” in v. 21 is the causal particle *gar*, and it means- *for this reason*. Why is it that “no prophecy of Scripture is of one’s own interpretation”? For this simple reason, because “no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will” “no prophecy was ever given by the will and desire of man,” by his choice and his inclination. Therefore, divine truth is not relegated to the sphere of human intellect, or to the subjectivity of emotion. That belongs to cults, like the Mormons, with their completely subjective ‘test of faith’ known as the “burning in the bosom.”

We cannot say, as *many*, many a Sunday School class can testify, “Well, this is what *I* think it means.” That’s precisely the type of ‘pooled ignorance’ that leads to mass confusion and spiritual blindness. Peter begins his last statement with “but.” The Greek word is *alla*, the strongest conjunction of contrast possible. In perfect contrast to the finite intellect of man, “men moved by the HS spoke from God.” *Phero* means- ‘be carried or borne along.’ It signifies that the prophets of old were impelled by the power of the Spirit, that He controlled and superintended them so that what they wrote was the *exact* message He wanted written.

They didn’t simply write what they *felt* like writing, they were “carried along” by the HS. Neither can we simply interpret the Word according to what we *feel* it means, or what we feel it *ought* to mean. We must let the writer speak for himself, without putting *our* thoughts in *his* head.

The verb *lale/w* (*laleo*) here means *use words in order to declare one’s mind and disclose one’s thoughts*. Without waiving the human authors personality, literary style, IQ, vocabulary or frame of reference, G / HS inspired these men to declare and disclose to the human race, in the language and vernacular of their *own* day, the mind and thoughts of God the divine viewpoint infallibly expressed in human terms. o, we have seen, without a shadow of a doubt, that the Bible far surpasses any human intellectual achievement. “All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the Sacred Scriptures.”

The Bible is our most important provision for daily life. In Matthew 4:4 Jesus answered the temptation and testing of Satan with the words, “...Man shall not live on bread alone,

but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” The man who hears and obeys instruction from the Word is a *wise* man. Our response to the Word of God is the basis for our eternal reward.

James 2:12-13, “So speak and so act, as those who are to be judged [evaluated, at / Bema Seat] by {the} law of liberty [Word of God; what James is saying is that our spiritual lives will be assessed in / light of / divine standard found in / ‘law of freedom’].

For judgment (at Bema Seat) will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy [James recognizes that because of our arrogance, our inability and our insufficiency, what we need more than anything else, standing in / presence of / omniscient Judge, is mercy, i.e., / fullest possible measure of compassion]; mercy triumphs over judgment [not only will mercy triumph at / Day of Christ, mercy is victorious right now; mercy triumphs over arrogance, mercy triumphs over hypocrisy, mercy triumphs over self-righteousness and a judgmental attitude; 2 principles of mercy from vv. 12-13].”

Because God has shown us great mercy, we are to show mercy to others. The standard of mercy that you measure out to others is the standard by which you yourself will be measured.

In Matthew 7:1-2 Jesus told his fellow Jews, “Do not judge lest you be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.” How do *you* judge others? Because this is the divine standard of judgment, whether *with* mercy and grace, or *without*, it’s measured back to us,

John exhorts these believers, to “watch yourselves, that you might not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.” The word for “watch” here is a mental word in the Greek. It means *consider, contemplate, direct your thoughts and attention toward something*.

John penned these very words in recognition of the “...many deceivers” who had “gone out into the world.” He describes them in v. 7, as “those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh those who did not acknowledge humanity of Christ were Gnostics that John labeled as deceivers and antichrists.”

What was it about themselves that John was commanding these believers to keep a watchful eye on, to direct their thoughts and attention toward. It was their *dedication* to the one and only thing that would give them discernment against false teaching, the *one* thing that would enable them to identify the deceivers and antichrists the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

Hebrews 10:35-36: “Therefore [or *consequently*, in light of your having endured / ‘great conflict of suffering,’ described in vv. 33-34, he say’s], do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward [their confidence, which came about as a result of their understanding / Word of God, rested in an eternal, omnipotent and immutable God]. For you have need of endurance, [now he gives us / reason for our desperate need of divine endurance] so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised [blessing in time and reward in eternity].”

Communication of the Word must be heard before faith can be exercised, thus accentuating the importance of Bible class and *personal* study “faith {comes} from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ,” Romans 10:17.

Faith must be exercised, ‘inhale faith,’ before application can take place, for the simple fact that you *cannot* apply what you do not know.

Full knowledge, knowledge to which faith has been applied, is a reality *only* when we believe what has been perceived and understood through the illumination of the HS, through His teaching ministry. Once we possess *epignosis*, full knowledge, in the heart the right lobe of the mentality now we can move into the realm of *application**. We call this ‘exhale faith.’

From application of the Word in the power of the Spirit comes character. Christian character means virtue, and eventually, integrity. Integrity is *consistency* of character.

From spiritual character comes true spiritual service, *ministry* to the Body of Christ. Here’s the principle: *Character is a result of spiritual growth; service is a result of character.*

With that service comes a finality in our personal sense of destiny joy, peace, contentment, and a sense of completion and fulfillment unequalled and unparalleled by *anything* the world has to offer! Inner tranquility and contentment come from learning how to rest in the arms of God’s matchless grace.

The personal sense of destiny, the joy of spiritual service, the fulfillment and contentment which come from ministry to the Body of Christ, are all a part of the believer’s blessing in time which will be parlayed into reward in eternity. actions stand or fall based on their attitude of people toward God’s Word.

“The vigor of our spiritual life will be *in exact proportion* to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts.

JR Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries

What is the reality of grace?

Luke 18:9-14: “And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer.

I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the

sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted.'”

The Author of Grace (9-10). The first thing we notice is who is speaking the parable. “He” is the Lord Jesus Christ immediately we recognize the principle that grace is revealed by the Living Word. “Trusted”, in v. 9 means that they had confidence not in God but in themselves. They confidently believed that they were better than others. They were confident of their self-righteousness. This is nothing more than the self-righteous arrogance of religion, the inevitable result of ritual without reality!

Such human viewpoint of self-righteousness grows in arrogance. “Others” comes from the word *loipos* meaning- ‘the rest,’ i.e., all those who weren’t Pharisees, who didn’t belong to their exclusive sect. “With contempt” is the Greek verb *exoutheneo*- ‘despise utterly, treat with contempt and scorn.’ This teaches us two things right away. Self-righteous arrogance leads to contempt and scorn of everyone that doesn’t fit your lofty ideal. The fastest way to move from humility to arrogance, from grace orientation to self-righteousness is to trust in yourself your strength, your knowledge, your power.

Grace teaches us dependence on God. Self-righteousness is dependence on illusionary (arrogance) ability and capacity which does not really exist. Growing and advancing believers are totally dependence on God’s power (the Holy Spirit) and God’s provision (Bible doctrine). Since spirituality or carnality is absolute, the dependence of the Christians on God or self is always absolute. Carnality is not 50% reliance on self and 50% reliance on God but 100% reliance on self.

In verse 10 we notice the two characters who’ve now taken the stage of our parable, both of them heading for the temple to pray the Pharisee and the tax-gatherer. Both attended the temple services. Majority of those who continually reject the grace of God are in the local churches.

They that reject the grace of God: There is an amazing phrase that comes to life for us if we will read v. 11 with the utmost care and attention the Pharisee was praying “thus to himself.” While we may find this humorous I find it hilarious-- it is no wonder to him, because in his mind he really was as good as God. He was convinced God held his lofty standard.

The term “Pharisee” is a transliteration of *Pharisaios*, which literally means the separated ones. It was a name originally given them by their adversaries; however, they were indeed separatist’s legalists to an extreme and arrogant to the maximum. They called themselves *Chaver*, a Hebrew term used in the Mishnah and in ancient Rabbinical writings for ‘one who strictly observes the law.’

His expression of thank you was void of genuine thanksgiving. The statement about not being like other people was a bold-faced lie; he was exactly like other people. Arrogance always short-circuits in comparing self with others. In verse 12 we find the culmination of his impressive self-worth. Notice throughout his entire prayer that the Pharisee has no praise for God, only praise for self; in the place of praise was self-exaltation. He makes

no request of God because he is totally unaware of any need; therefore, he gets nothing because he asks for nothing!

Which brings us to an important principle: The trouble with our religious as opposed to spiritual ideals is that if we live up to all of them, we become impossible to live with. Religion drives people away from God. No amount of religious sacrifices, service or zealotry can save man or make him acceptable before God.

What Jesus did was sufficient (John 19:30). To the extent that we are self-made saints like the Pharisees or neutral like Pilate- never making the leap in trust we let the prostitutes and publicans go first into the Kingdom, while we ...are in the background having our alleged virtue burnt out of us.

The hookers and swindlers enter before us because they know they cannot save themselves, they cannot make themselves presentable or lovable. They risked everything on Jesus and knowing they didn't have it all together, were not too proud to accept the handout of amazing grace "The blood of the Lamb points to the truth of grace: what we cannot do for ourselves, God has done for us." And what God has done for us is clearly understood by those without self-righteousness.

Some Church Age believers find the Royal Priesthood boring, lifeless, unsatisfying and unfulfilling. They see absolutely no need for anything that God has to give in grace; consequently, they get exactly what they ask for. Some Christians never benefit from Bible class, no matter how on target, how intense or how practical. They don't go away full because they don't come in hungry.

The Lord Jesus told the religious Jews in John 6:35, that "...I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

They that received the grace of God: The term "tax-gatherer" was just another way of saying "a tax-collector for the Romans." These men were considered traitors by their fellow Jews, and were despised by almost everyone, especially the Pharisees, who classed them as 'sinners' ranking right alongside harlots and Gentiles. The fact that the tax-gatherer was standing away and apart, unwilling to even look towards God's direction was an indication of the emptiness in his soul. In utter humility he was about to fling himself recklessly at the mercy of God!

Grace teaches us about sinfulness. Grace shows us the most undeserving person who has received so much from God. It points us to the greatest sinner, no other than me, me and me. If you cannot look at yourself objectively in the light of the Word of God and in the light of grace, you will never understand the attitude of humility expressed by the tax-gatherer in Luke 18:13.

"Be merciful" is from the verb *hilaskomai*, which in the pass. voice means be propitiated, be gracious and merciful. It reminds us of the fact that grace gives us what we do not deserve, it is extended to those with absolutely no merit; while mercy withholds from us judgment we rightfully deserve, for mercy is extended, in spite of human merit. The only

people who can lay hold of grace are those who recognize their need for mercy.

The tax-collector hated, rejected, an outcast in his own nation stood in the temple and uttered seven words, seven words that form one of the most profound prayers in the entire Bible: “God, be merciful to me, the sinner!” He had no grand illusions about himself, no egotistically inflated ideas about being good enough for God. He saw how awesome his need was, and he knew that nothing but God’s mercy could sustain him. Mercy and grace are vitally united, inextricably linked in the Word of God. Mercy naturally precedes grace.

Mercy must remove the condemnation we rightfully deserve before grace can bestow the blessing that we cannot earn and never deserve. In verse 14, the Lord Jesus tells us that the tax-gatherer left the temple “justified.” “Justified” is *dikaioo*, a legal term meaning- ‘vindicate, acquit; declare legally righteous.’

This tells us that in the recognition of his need for mercy and grace the tax-gatherer had believed in the Messiah of Israel Yehowah Elohim for there is no other way to stand justified, vindicated, legally righteous before God unless we have received His absolute righteousness, the imputed righteousness which belongs to us through faith in Christ (Phil. 3:9).

Galatians 2:16, “nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.” One man went up to the temple in humility and for his faith received eternal life; the other entered with an attitude of arrogance and for his self righteousness received nothing.

The Lord Jesus gives us the reason why in the closing phrase of verse 14, “for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted.” The deeper we grow in our spiritual relationship with Christ, the poorer we become in our own eyes, realizing that everything we have in life is a gift. There is only one song that comes deep from the soul of such believer, the song of humble and genuine gratitude.

Awareness of our poverty and ineptitude causes us to rejoice in the gift of being called out of darkness into the wondrous light and translated into the Kingdom of God’s beloved Son. The poor in spirit are the most non-judgmental of peoples; they get along well with sinners. The” humble “man and woman have made peace with their flawed existence.

They are aware of their lack of wholeness, their brokenness, the simple fact that they don’t have it all together. While they do not excuse their sin, they are humbly aware that sin is precisely what has caused them to throw themselves at the mercy of the Father. They do not pretend to be anything but what they are-sinners saved by grace. These are the saints empowered by the Holy Spirit.

J. R. Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries

Salvation refers to the imputed eternal life to anyone who believes and accepts

Christ as Savior. Eternal life is the life of God (Jeremiah 10:10, John 1:4). God lives. He does not possess life as we do which begins at some point and has a termination. There was never a time when God did not live. He has always existed. His life is called eternal life. The eternal life of God imparted to all who believe in Christ (John 3:16, 18, 36) is called everlasting life which has no end but begins at the moment of faith in Christ. This imputed eternal life is the door to the plan of God for every person in this world.

Jesus Christ is the Life (John 14:6). He is life, never was there a time when He, in His deity, did not exist. Eternal life has always resided in Him. God has given eternal life to all who believed and received Christ as Savior without condition like what many religious sect prescribed (1 John 5:11-13, 20). "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life". (Titus 3:5-7). Salvation and eternal life is the free gift of God (Romans 3:23).

The free gift of salvation (and eternal life) are the result of the finished work of Christ on the cross (Romans 5: 15, 17) apart from any assistance or contribution from the imperfect human race. Man has nothing to add or subtract from the spiritual death of Christ. Every regenerated believer is saved by grace through faith and not from his human good work (Ephesians 2:8).

In the same way, the forgiveness of sin comes as a result of the decision of a person to believe in Christ (Acts 10:43). As it is written, "Of Him all the prophet*s bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins" .As the Creator, Jesus Christ is the Source of all life (Hebrews 1:2). God the Father is the Source of life as the One who breathes the spark of life when the fetus emerges from the womb. God the Holy Spirit is the Source of Life as the Agent of spiritual birth as the One who places each person into union with Christ at the moment of faith in the Gospel of Christ.

At the moment of faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit places the believer in union with Christ. This union is created by baptism of the Holy Spirit. The believer's union with Christ qualifies the believer to live with God forever, making him a new spiritual species (2 Cor. 5:17) and guarantees the eternal security (Rom.8:38-39). The non-meritorious phrase*believed in God* is considered by God as act of acceptable righteousness like in the case of Abraham (Rom. 4:3).

But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness (Rom. 4:5) For with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation (Rom. 10; 10)

Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:16)

Eternal Security means that every believer possesses eternal life now and that

which continues forever (John 5:24). This assurance stands on the essence of God and not on man (Numbers 23:19) and that God is eternally perfect (Deut. 33:27) and all His gifts to men are perfect (James 1:17). God gave the right to become children of God to those who believe and receive Jesus Christ (John 1:12) as guaranteed by His unchanging character. Every believer is saved once and for all eternity (Acts 16:31).

The term saved means eternal, unchangeable, permanent salvation. Think about this, “Why would God revoke salvation just because of personal sins committed by a believer?” when in fact God solved the problem of sin while the entire human race was in sin (Rom. 5:9-10). God solved the problem of sin apart from our knowledge or participation. Christians are saved by the grace of God (Rom. 5:15, 17, and 20). Grace is everything that God does for men apart from human participation, contribution or assistance.

Salvation guarantees no condemnation (Rom. 8:1) for those who are in Christ Jesus. This positional truth is guaranteed by the perfect integrity of God. Christians are the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26), this is a permanent relationship (1 Cor. 12:21) that cannot be removed, altered, changed or desalinated by anything else (Rom. 8:38-39). Every believer remains saved by the power of God (2 Timothy 1:12) not by human power that fails often time. Every believer is born again by the imperishable seed of the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23) not by any inconsistent power, unwavering faith of men, religious activity or sacrifices.

The eternal security of the believer rests on the faithfulness of God. Any person who believed and accepted the free gift of eternal life cannot remove, change, cancel, alter, revoke or invalidate his salvation. An individual may decide to renounce his Christianity but if God has saved him, his salvation will remain intact and he is saved forever. Nothing can change the verdict of God to justify the believer through the finished work of Christ and not on the work of men.

A person may renounce his faith, embrace any atheistic ideology or doctrine, but if he is saved, his salvation will remain effective until eternity. Salvation does not depend on men but on God. “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself” (2 Timothy 2:13).

If salvation is dependent on men then nobody will ever go to heaven that is because we are inconsistent, changeable, untrustworthy and devious in everything. The title or “Deeds of our Salvation” enters our names as beneficiaries and Jesus Christ as the Benefactor. The authority and assurance of salvation rests on the Benefactor not on the beneficiary. The free gift of salvation is eternal and permanent.

God’s plan of grace is always misunderstood. Majority of Christians rest on false assumption that God’s plan of grace is built on human love. As a result, they try to base their lifestyle, relationship with others and with God on these obscure, imprecise and unclear feelings called love.

In God’s plan, all the glory belongs to Him, He has all the merit, He receives all the credit, because He does all the work. Grace is the policy of God’s plan which is extended

to the undeserving, totally helpless and condemned individual. God treats us in His justice. He is always fair to every person. His justice conforms to the demands of His righteousness and everything He does conform to His righteousness. God cannot accept the imperfect righteousness and good work of men.

There is nothing we can do to earn the love of God or the right to live with God forever. We are qualified only by non-meritorious faith in Christ, which is expressed to man in the simplest form called grace.

J. R. Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries

Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Faith is the only system of perception that is totally devoid of any human merit. Only the object has merit, and in salvation the object of faith is Our Lord Jesus Christ. No one has ever been saved by asking Jesus to come into his heart or life. How much faith does it take to be saved? It takes just a little bit more than no faith at all. The perfect salvation work of Christ on the cross, which is called expiation, excludes anything else being added to faith. No works of any kind are allowed.

Ephesians 2:8-9: **“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that [salvation] not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.**

Grace is all that God is free to do for unsaved mankind on the basis of the saving work of Christ on the cross. Grace is extended to unbelievers, who are living under spiritual death in total depravity and total helplessness regarding salvation. Therefore, salvation is a matter of grace, and entirely the work of God. Salvation is the work of the Father in judging our sins, the work of the Son in being judged for our sins, and the work of the Holy Spirit in common and efficacious grace. This is why the way of salvation is faith in Jesus Christ -- faith alone with no works or emotions added to it.

Efficacious grace fits into the pattern of faith alone. When the spiritually dead person responds to the divine call or invitation to eternal salvation, he simply responds by believing in Jesus Christ. This is classified as faith alone, or faith plus nothing. When the spiritually dead person simply believes in Christ, God the Holy Spirit causes the faith to be effective for eternal life. This is classified as efficacious grace, or the Doctrine of Effectual Faith. The faith of the spiritually dead person indicates positive volition and a non-meritorious function that is compatible with grace.

However, because the spiritually dead person who believes in Christ is helpless, his faith is ineffective without the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's efficacious grace causes the unbeliever's faith to be effective. However, no works can be added to faith. The Holy Spirit can only make faith and faith alone effective for salvation.

Any works added to faith in Christ are dead works, and the Holy Spirit does not make dead works effective for salvation. Principle: If a person adds any works at the moment of believing in Jesus Christ, he or she is NOT saved at that point. If anything at all is added to faith, God the Holy Spirit will not touch it, and so there is no efficacious grace. The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit will make effectual only non-meritorious faith alone in Jesus Christ.

The very nature of real spiritual death at birth eliminates any system of salvation by works. The spiritually dead person is incapable of doing anything to obtain salvation. Spiritual death at birth includes: (1) total depravity, which means moral or immoral degeneration; (2) total separation from God; (3) total helplessness to attain a relationship with God; and (4) dichotomy, which is having only a body and soul, without a human spirit. Because of all this, we are unable to understand the simplest concepts of the Gospel. The spiritually dead person can only produce dead works, which have no validity with God.

In the function of evangelism, there are two acts of human volition: (1) hearing the Gospel, which is non-meritorious; and (2) believing in Jesus Christ, which is non-meritorious. However, the spiritually dead person is unable to understand what he hears, and powerless to make his faith in Christ effective for salvation.

The sequence of the pre-salvation grace ministry of God is as follows: In common grace, the Holy Spirit makes the gospel message perspicuous [clear and understandable], to a spiritually dead individual. 1Corinthians 2:14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

God the Father invites the spiritually dead person to believe in Christ, which is referred to as the divine call. The spiritually dead person believes in Christ, and the Holy Spirit causes faith to be effective for salvation, which is called efficacious grace. The spiritually dead person can choose to listen to the Gospel and believe in Christ; but these two decisions come from spiritual death and are powerless to provide salvation or make faith effective.

Therefore, pre-salvation clarification of the Gospel is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. The omnipotence of God provides the ability for the unbeliever to understand the Gospel, believe in Jesus Christ, and to accept the invitation. At the moment of simply believing, the Holy Spirit makes our faith effective for salvation.

When any works are added to faith in Christ, the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit will not cause that faith to be effective. The reason is because divine omnipotence and human works, or human power, are mutually exclusive and mutually restrictive. Consequently, human works added to faith in Christ cancels faith because human works is human power, which is rejected by grace.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that [salvation] not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. Both charis [grace] and pistis [faith] are in the feminine gender. Then follows the peritactic kai, translated and, which is used to coordinate expressions that have no syntactical relationship in the Greek. This is followed by the neuter gender of the immediate demonstrative pronoun houtos which cannot refer to either grace or faith.

And so the phrase and that refers to salvation in general; that [salvation is] not of yourselves, because it is the gift of God under the grace ministry of the Holy Spirit. We are spiritually dead, meaning we are under total depravity, total separation from God, and

totally helpless to do anything about it. Being spiritually dead, we cannot even understand the Gospel because we have spiritual brain death. So, first the Holy Spirit makes the Gospel clear and understandable through common grace.

Then when we believe, by expressing positive volition toward the salvation work of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit takes our faith [positive volition] and makes it effectual for salvation. Therefore, salvation is not from ourselves, because it is a matter of common grace, the divine call, and efficacious grace; and that is why it is referred to as a gift from God.

God's plan of salvation operates by the grace of God through the non-meritorious faith of man. God through His grace provided the gift of salvation by which man can access through faith. The Lord Jesus Christ is the object of faith who earned all the merits for our salvation. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9).

Grace means that God took the initiative in providing salvation apart from any human participation or contribution, but only through the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. Grace means that God provided Jesus Christ to take our place of condemnation. "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross" (1 Peter 2:24a).

The Lord Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sins and spiritual death, who became substitute for us. His spiritual death on the cross made salvation available for everyone. "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16)

Salvation is the finished work of God. To receive salvation is man's decision, since it is a private matter between an individual and God. In His grace, God has done His part of salvation, but now, (if you have not receive the free gift of eternal life), it is your part that matters. So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:11).

In the privacy of your soul, unknown and invisible to others, you can tell God that you believe in Christ, (this decision of your soul will result to eternal life), or you can reject Christ (resulting to eternal condemnation). However, God is not willing for any man to perish but for all to come to repentance that is, to change their thinking toward Christ. "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36).

Eternal security is that aspect of Soteriology (study of salvation) which contends that no individual, once the recipient of the saving grace of God through faith in Christ, will ever fall from that estate, because the believer is by eternally protected by the power of God.

To understand the doctrine of eternal salvation, four things are essentials.

First: The total depravity of man. There is nothing in fallen man that could in any way commend him to God. He is an object of divine grace.

Second: The efficacious grace of God. Fallen man's salvation is made possible entirely by God the Holy Spirit. It is His power and His graces that acknowledge the faith of a spiritually dead person and make it effective for salvation.

Third: The sovereign and eternal election of the believer. Those who are saved by efficacious grace from the estate of depravity have been chosen for that special purpose even before the foundation of the world.

Fourth: The eternal security. Those chosen of God and saved by grace are, of necessity, preserved until the plan of God to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ is realized.

The truth of eternal security is inherent in the nature of salvation itself! Salvation is the creation of a new spiritual species composed of unchangeable and imperishable elements and every aspect of it is made to depend on the perfect and immutable merit of the Son of God, then there can be no failure! God is not offering a salvation to men which are not eternal in its very nature.

John 3:15, "that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life." And in 3:36, John the Baptist said, that "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

John 10:28, Jesus said of all believers, that "...I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand."

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

John 5:11-13, that "...the witness is this that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know [with absolute certainty] that you have eternal life."

Doubts about the security of believers can be traced almost universally to a failure to comprehend the reality of what God accomplishes in sovereign grace, a finished and complete redemption, reconciliation and propitiation! Scripturally, it is a fact that no soul once saved has ever been, or ever will be, lost again. The salvation of the believer is eternally secured.

Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus

Ephesians 1:3-6: "Blessed {be} the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly {places} in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. (NAS)

1 Corinthians 15:22: "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.

(NAS)

Romans 6:3 say's, "...do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?"

1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit [Holy Spirit] we [Church Age believers] were all [none excluded] baptized into [identified with forever, at the moment of salvation] one body [Body of Christ], whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we [Church Age believers] were all [none excluded] made to drink of one Spirit [a reference to the eternal indwelling of the Holy Spirit which is another factor that is unique to the Dispensation of the Church]."

The baptism by the Spirit brings the believer into living union with Jesus Christ. Through the baptism by the Spirit, the believer is vitally and spiritually united to the Lord. Being "in Christ," he is a possessor of the righteousness which Christ is. "In Christ" we are perfected to the point which satisfies divine integrity and on that ground alone God declares us justified in His own sight.

Romans 5:8-9: "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath {of God} through Him."

We see in Romans 3:26-28 Paul saying, "for the demonstration, {I say,} of His righteousness at the present time, that He [God / Father] might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. For we maintain that a man is justified [declared legally righteous in the sight of God] by faith apart from works of the Law."

Having justified us completely "in Christ," God cannot and will not bring any charges against His "elect." Justification logically follows the imputation of God's absolute righteousness at the moment of salvation. "Justified" is from the root verb dika/iow (dikaioo). To "justify" was a legal term meaning- secure a favorable verdict, acquit, vindicate, declare righteous.

Romans 8:29, "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined [proori/zw (proorizo), from pro- before, and horizo- determine or appoint; it means- ordain beforehand, predestine] {to be} conformed [summo/rfoj (summorphos), comprised of sun with, and morphe- refers to the outward expression of an inward nature or essence; thus together they mean- be similar in form (inner man- soul) and appearance (outer man- body)] to the image [ei]kw/n (eikon)- likeness, embodiment, manifestation; and in Mat. 22:20 of the emperor's head on a coin; in the NT it comes to mean not just a copy or facsimile but a living image in which the original is always present; just as the child is the eikon of his parents,

so we as children of God are eikons of Christ-- He is refining (Ps. 17:3- "tried... and tested" by God, 66:10- "refined... as silver is refined"; tested and refined both come from the Heb. tsaraph- smelt, refine, test; 1 Pet. 1:7 speaks of our faith being "tested {dokimazo- used for the testing and examination of precious metals for their genuineness} by fire") us into Christ-likeness through the process of spiritual growth, a

process to be consummated with our resurrection body at the Rapture] of His Son, that He [Jesus Christ] might be the first-born among many brethren.”

Romans 8:30, “and whom He predestined, these [same ones] He also called [elected to privilege]; and whom He elected to privilege, these [same ones] He also justified [declared righteous]; and whom He declared righteous, these [same ones] He also glorified [a future event written in the past tense- stated as already accomplished, though still future in the fullest sense; Paul is saying that this conclusive step of glorification is both final and inevitable in the divine decrees].”

Ephesians 1:4-5: “just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.”

Ephesians 1:11-12: “Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory”.

Ephesians 2:4-7: “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly {places}, in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”.

These passages encompass all of eternity. They reveal a divine purpose from eternity past. They reach on to its realization and fulfillment in eternity future. All of the aforementioned conclusions are accomplished without one reference to human conditions!

1 John 2:2: “And He (Jesus Christ) Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

1 John 2:2 declares that the believer’s sins, as well as “those of the entire world,” have had their precise and consummate judgment accomplished and finished by Christ in His death. This judgment was so perfect that God the Father is rendered infinitely propitious by it. God the Father is able, because of His omnipotence, to keep His children eternally. God the Father is set free through the sacrificial death of His Son to keep His children, in spite of the “moral problem” of personal sin from the OSN.

If there is a sin which wasn’t paid for on the Cross, and which can subsequently cause a man to lose his salvation, then Christ died for nothing and everything we believe is a lie! The real problem is not the infallible Bible doctrine but the preachers who are proclaiming distorted church doctrines.

Psalm 37:23-24: “The steps of a man are established by the LORD; and He delights in his way. When he falls, he shall not be hurled headlong; because the LORD is the One who holds his hand: In this verse, the believer is pictured as falling, which is a reference to personal sin, yet held securely by the hand of Almighty God. God’s hand holds the believer whether he or she is holding His or not!

John 10:27-29: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. "My Father, who has given {them} to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch {them} out of the Father's hand.

This verse tells us that regardless of human conditions and circumstances, the believer will never perish. There is no created power sufficient to snatch the believer out of the hand of Christ, including his own free will. The hand of God the Father is seen as closed around the hand of Jesus Christ which holds you and I as His sheep.

Romans 5:8-10: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath {of God} through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life

We are seen as the "enemies of God" prior to salvation. While we were His "enemies" God did the most for us by providing the sacrifice of His perfect Son on the Cross. We are reconciled to God through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ (v. 10).

This includes justification through His blood (spiritual death) and salvation from eternal wrath through Him (v. 9). Now that we are His children, He will do "much more" than the most.

Romans 8:35-39: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord".

The spiritual believer draws His strength from the Word of God. The Psalmist wrote, "The LORD is for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me?," Psalm 118:6.

The phrase "I am convinced" is distinctive, used only twice by the Apostle Paul, both times referring directly to the eternal security of the child of God. First usage is universal (includes all believers, v. 38).

2 Timothy 1:12, "For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted [a banking term meaning- deposit; it speaks of the only thing Paul had to offer Christ-- his faith] to Him until that day [of Paul's physical redemption]."

There is unconditionally no danger, pressure, problem or adversity, including our own personal sins that can "separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Nothing and none can ever fracture, invalidate or annul your union with Christ! There is no creature or creation, whether angelic or human, in either the physical or

spiritual realm which can “separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The Holy Scriptures, inerrant and God-breathed, bear abundant testimony to the unrestrained ability of God to keep eternally secure those whom He has saved through Jesus Christ His Son. Consider the Infinite love of God the Father. That which actuated God the Father from eternity past in His elective choice of those whom He would bring into glory was His love (agape) for them.

Ephesians 1:4-5: “Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will”.

“God is love” which means He has never acquired love, He does not sustain it by any effort whatsoever, nor does His love depend upon conditions; for He is the author of all conditions. God’s love is as eternal and immutable as His own existence. Predestination is, in reality, the supreme endeavor and fulfillment of His infinite compassion. Salvation springs, not from the misery of men which God in mercy might choose to relieve, but from the love God has for His creatures, which love can be satisfied by nothing short of their conformity to Christ in His eternal presence.

Romans 8:29: “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined {to become} conformed to the image of His Son, that He [Jesus Christ] might be the first-born among many brethren.” It simply will not do to infuse the love of God with the inconsistency and capriciousness which characterize human love, as though God loved His creatures when they were good but withdrew His love when they were wrong. The fact is God loved mankind enough to give His Son to die for them when they were “enemies” and “sinners.”

Romans 5:8-10: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath {of God} through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life

The words “much more” occur twice in this passage and contrast the outworking of the love of God for the unsaved (the provision of salvation) with the outworking of the love of God for the saved (justification v. 9, reconciliation- v. 10, and eternal security v. 10). They indicate the opportunity has been made, through salvation, for His love to have a “much more” manifestation in those who are saved. The preservation declared at the end of v. 10 is due to the vital fact of Christ’s own life and all that He, the resurrected Son of God, is to the believer.

Hebrews 7:25-27, that “...He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the {sins} of the people, because this He

did once for all when He offered up Himself.”

Hebrews 9:12, “and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” Love removed every barrier that sin erected and love will keep, by a “much more” manifestation even than that exhibited at Calvary, all whom God has chosen “in Christ” before the foundation of the world. To deny this love its full manifestation, is an attempt to impair, if not to deny the essential reality of one of God’s most glorious attributes.

2 Timothy 2:12-13: “If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny himself.

Verse 12 speaks of rewards not of salvation. When a believer is operating outside of the power of the Holy Spirit, he is not producing divine good; therefore, he is denying Christ. ”If we “deny Him” refers to divine good production in time, He will “deny us” rewards in eternity. “Faithless” is the present indicative of a)πιστε/ω (apisteo) disbelieve, be unfaithful. The aoristic present is used to convey the idea of punctiliar action in present time. The declarative use of the indicative mood signifies the statement of a simple fact from the viewpoint of reality.

“If we disbelieve” is a literal translation. It designates the Christian who, after salvation, claims that he no longer believes in Jesus Christ and / or His Work on the Cross. “He remains faithful” is a phrase that describes Jesus Christ and His commitment to save us eternally in spite of our renunciation and apostasy. “He cannot deny Himself” is a reference to the immutability of Christ and His unwillingness to compromise His divine essence by taking a course of action other than what He has stated in His Word.

John 1:12: “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, {even} to those who believe in His name, Galatians 3:26: “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Based on regeneration you are born again into the Family of God.

Regeneration is the theological term for spiritual birth. At the moment anyone believes in Jesus Christ for eternal salvation God the Holy Spirit creates for that person a human spirit. God the Father then imputes eternal life to that human spirit

Titus 3:5: “He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.” A regenerate person passes from spiritual death to spiritual life. Once you are born again into the Family of God you can no more be unborn spiritually than you can enter back into your mother’s womb physically. Regeneration makes the believer a member of the Family of God. The baptism by the Spirit, which is unique to the Church Age, makes the believer Royal Family of God.

Ephesians 1:13: “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,. Ephesians 4:30: “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. The believer is sealed “In Christ” forever.

The sealing indicates three things: A finished transaction, between yourself and God. This means your non-meritorious faith in Christ has secured eternal salvation. It is a done deal! Divine ownership which means that we belong to God forever. Protection and safe deliverance to our final destination (Heaven)

Salvation is not something the believer does but something he receives. What God provides in grace can only be received by faith. The Word of God is a title deed to eternal life and should be treated as an article of surety, for God cannot fail in any Word He has spoken.

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