

# Eternal Life

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WITHIN THE HIGH PRIESTLY PRAYER OF OUR BLESSED LORD, located in John 17, we find a glorious subject that we desire by the Holy Spirit to open to our hearts: it is the subject of ETERNAL LIFE. In verses 1-3 our Lord says, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that HE SHOULD GIVE ETERNAL LIFE to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS A GIFT***

You see dear friend, the very purpose for which the eternal Son of God came into the world was that as MEDIATOR, He might give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him in electing love. Listen to what He said in John 10:27,28! "My sheep [those whom the Father has given to Me in electing love] hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." Again in John 10:10, "I am come THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly." Also, in our Lord's

words to Nicodemus in John 3:16 He said, “For God so loved the world, that He GAVE His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have EVERLASTING LIFE.” And in John 6:27: “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto EVERLASTING LIFE, which the Son of man *shall give unto you* : for Him hath God the Father sealed.” So we see that God the Father sent the Son of man into the world with power to give spiritually dead sinners life—ETERNAL LIFE.

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS KNOWING GOD***

What then is this marvelous gift the Son of God came to give poor sinners? To answer this question we must understand one vital truth: KNOWING GOD and ETERNAL LIFE are inseparable as verse 3 declares: “And this is life eternal, that they might *know Thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” There is no eternal life apart from knowing the only true and living God as He is manifested and revealed to us in His Son Jesus Christ. And dear friend, the only place we can get this knowledge is from the Holy Scriptures, for they and they alone, through the work of the Holy Spirit, reveal the Person of the Lord Jesus unto us. As John 20:31 tells us, “These are written [speaking of the Holy Scriptures] that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.” Further, it is added in I John 5:11-13, “This is the record [found only in the Holy Scriptures], that God hath given to us ETERNAL LIFE, and *this life is in his Son*. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written [in the Scriptures] unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

### **This Knowledge Is Experiential**

As we search the Scriptures, we understand further that this knowledge of God as He is revealed unto us in Jesus Christ from the Holy Scriptures is *not* just an intellectual or a speculative knowledge; it is not just a theoretical knowledge of doctrines, nor is it just giving mental assent to these truths by a mere “decision” that we make. Oh, no, far from it! The Scriptures declare that ETERNAL LIFE consists in *knowing*, living on, having communion with and enjoying endless satisfaction in the triune God through the one Mediator, even Jesus Christ Himself, Who came down from heaven as the Bread of Life.

### **This Knowledge is Practical**

This knowledge is a practical, daily knowledge that changes our lives continually. It is an experiential knowledge: heart-affecting and life-influencing knowledge that we can practice. In other words, the knowledge of God enables us to live for Him; for when God gives us eternal life in His Son Jesus Christ, we become new creatures, old things are passed away and behold, all things are become new (II Cor 5:17). Being new creatures, we now live a new life.

### **This Knowledge Changes Lives**

The question is asked, “Why is there such a life-changing influence in the person who has truly been given eternal life in Jesus Christ, who has truly believed on Him and in Him with true saving faith?” II Peter 1:2-4 tells us, “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the *knowledge* of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the *knowledge* of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these [this knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord; these precious promises, the Word of God] ye might be *partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption* that is in the world through lust.”

Oh my friend, do you hear what these verses are saying? They answer our questions concerning this life-changing influence that takes place when we have this eternal life in Christ. It comes to us through a *saving knowledge* of God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It comes to us according to His divine power

working in us by the Holy Spirit. You see, in this life all things that are needful to enable us to live a life of godliness, and to be made into the image and likeness of Christ are given to us in salvation.

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS POSSESSING GOD'S NATURE***

Truly, the greatest thing about this eternal life is that the man who possesses it has been made a partaker of the divine nature of God and therefore possesses the very life of God even in this mortal body in which he lives! This is brought out in I Corinthians 6:19: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" Then II Corinthians 4:7 tells us, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Is this not precious?

### **This Divine Nature Is God's Moral Character**

Listen now! The divine nature of God, which the man who possesses eternal life receives in the new birth or in regeneration, is the very MORAL NATURE OF GOD. It is the incorruptible Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever (I Peter 1:23) put into our spirit by the Holy Spirit, that so changes us that indeed II Corinthians 5:17 is true: *we are new creatures*, a new creation in Christ; for we have a spiritual life that we live by the faith which changes us completely. We now have the same views, the same feelings, the same thoughts, the same purposes, and the same principles of action as God our heavenly Father. Perfectly? no, but we desire to be perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect.

### **This Divine Nature Is The Image Of Christ**

Therefore, having this *knowledge* of God in Jesus Christ our Lord by the power of His Holy Spirit working in us, we not only have the life of God imparted to us, but the image of God is stamped upon our life in holiness, in holy living; and the more we know Him, the more we desire to be like Him. And, when we know as we are known (I Cor 13:12), we shall then be altogether like Him in heaven as we read in I John 3:2: "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."

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS BEING DEAD TO THE WORLD***

There is yet something else about the man who possesses this new life, this eternal life: he has "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." He has been "delivered from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal 1:4). He has been delivered from the power of darkness and has been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col 1:13). He will not come into condemnation, but has passed from spiritual death unto spiritual life (John 5:24), having been delivered from the wrath to come (I Thess 1:10). So you see, this man is no longer a part of this world, for the world is dead unto him. This world is no longer his home, for he has the very life of God and heaven in his soul.

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS A LONGING FOR HOLINESS***

The man who possesses this life of God confesses, like those in Hebrews 11, that he is a stranger and a pilgrim upon this earth and he desires a better country, even the heavenly country, where God and the Lamb with all of God's children shall be for ever and ever in that perfected state. Yes, while here upon this earth he waits for the Lord from glory Who shall take him to be with Himself for ever in that place where "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie" (Rev 21:27). Because he has escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust by the grace of God, he now hates sin and every evil way; he now longs to be holy, pure, clean and spotless like his blessed Lord Who gave Himself for him when He died upon Calvary's tree, paying his sin debt in full; who also gave Himself, this ETERNAL LIFE, to him in salvation.

What then have we learned thus far about eternal life? According to the Scriptures, it is KNOWING GOD as He is revealed to us in the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, by which knowledge He changes our lives,

having imparted to us the very moral nature of God. This change is so complete we now desire Christ's life to be lived in us and His image stamped upon us in holiness.

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST***

This is another precious truth revealed to us from the Holy Scriptures concerning this eternal life which the Lord Jesus Christ gives to those whom the Father had given Him in electing love. The man who possesses this life has been brought by the grace of the Holy Spirit through faith into union with Christ, so that it can be said of him that he is identified with Christ as his federal Head in all He did as God's Substitute for sinners; therefore he is a partaker of all the benefits and blessings which flow out of this union with Him. This identification with Christ began in eternity past, was revealed unto and worked in us by the Holy Spirit in time, and reaches into the eternal state in glorification with Him for ever. Listen as we establish this from the Scriptures!

#### **Identified From Eternity Past**

We were identified with Him in eternal election according to II Timothy 1:9, "Who [God] hath saved us, 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." We were identified with Him in eternal redemption according to I Peter 1:18-20: "Ye know...ye were redeemed...with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

#### **Identified With Him In Time**

We are identified with Him in His birth: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb 2:14). We are identified with Him in His circumcision, the first blood shedding (Luke 2:21); for the Spirit of Christ circumcises the foreskins of our hearts: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (Col 2:11). We are identified with Him in His baptism in the Jordan as He fulfilled all righteousness (Matt 3:15). We are identified with Him in His work at the cross as the Holy Spirit puts or baptizes us into Christ, His death, burial and resurrection, from which union all the blessings and benefits of His substitutionary work flow (Rom 6:3-7; I Cor 12:12,13; Col 2:9-12). Also, we are identified with Him *now* in the heavenlies (Eph 2:4-7). Paul expresses this identity with Christ in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me*; and the life which I now live in the flesh *I live by the faith of the Son of God*, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." In Colossians 3:3,4 we hear him saying, 'I am dead, for I died to sin in Christ and *my life is hid with Christ in God*; therefore when Christ, Who is *my life*, shall appear, then I shall also appear *with Him* in glory.'

Again we hear the one who is identified with Christ saying in Ephesians 2:4-8, 'But God, who is rich in mercy, in order to satisfy the great and wonderful love with which He loved me, even when I was dead in trespasses and in sin, has made me alive together in fellowship and in union with Christ, my Lord. He gave me the very life of Christ Himself, the same new life with which God quickened Christ from the grave! You see, all of this has come to me by grace, by His special favor; for I did not deserve to be saved and delivered from judgment or to be made a partaker of the so great salvation in Christ. But God did it! He raised me up together with Christ and made me to sit down together in the heavenly places all because of my union with Christ, by virtue of my being IN Christ Jesus the Lord. He did this that He might clearly demonstrate through the ages to come the immeasurable riches of His free grace in kindness and goodness of heart toward me IN Christ Jesus. The very faith through which I know Him and in which I rest was given to me, for it is of God!' (Paraphrased).

### **Identified With Him In The Future**

Not only are we identified with Christ in eternity past and in time, but we who possess eternal life shall be identified with Him in glorification in our new bodies throughout eternity future. We are “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. 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” (Rom.8:17,18). Listen to I John 3:2, “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.” Philippians 3:20,21 declares that “our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.” Romans 8:28-30 and John 17:24 also confirm this truth.

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS UNION WITH CHRIST***

My friend, do you notice the theme in all these Scriptures? It is the same: the man who possesses eternal life is a man who has been brought into union with Christ; CHRIST IS HIS LIFE! So we can say that this blessed man has been brought, through faith and by the power of the Holy Spirit, into a union so blessed that God the Father looks upon him and deals with him only in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Listen now to the implications of this great truth of being united to Christ and therefore by virtue of my union with Him, having eternal life. You see, Christ has reconciled me to God in the body of His flesh through death to present me holy in Himself, whereas I once was alienated from God and an enemy in my mind by wicked works (Col 1:21,22). I ask, does Christ stand holy before God? Then I stand in the same position in Him. Does Christ stand unblameable before God? Then I stand in the same position in Him. Does Christ stand unreprieveable before God, with no sin laid to His account because He perfectly satisfied the law and the justice of God in the shedding of His precious blood when He died beneath my sins? Then I stand in this same position in Him.

Is Christ the Father’s beloved Son, in Whom He is well pleased (Matt 3:17)? Then so am I; for God the Father Himself “made me accepted in the Beloved” (Eph 1:6). Does Christ live in peace, in a state of tranquility? Then the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep my heart and mind through Christ Jesus because of my union with Him (Phil 4:7). Is Christ the very righteousness of God? Then I am counted righteous in Him because God Himself has imputed His righteousness to my account in heaven (Rom 3:22; 4:5). Is Christ glorified in heaven in His resurrected body? Then I shall be *glorified together* with Him at His appearing (Rom 8:17; I John 3:2). Does Christ rule and reign in His present kingdom? Then I am reigning with Him even in this life (Rom 5:17); for I am in Him and He is in me. Oh my friend, is not this precious? I could go on and on with this great theme, but I have given enough to show you that the man who possesses eternal life, possesses Christ; and the life which he now lives in this world is the very life of Christ working in him as I John 4:17 puts it, “*As He [Christ] is, so are we in this world.*”

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS “EATING AND DRINKING” CHRIST***

Dear friend, there is no more amazing portion of Scripture in the Bible than what our Lord spoke about in John 6—‘eating His flesh and drinking His blood.’ What does He mean by this? He is saying that the one to whom He has given eternal life actually and experientially maintains this spiritual life which is in him by feeding upon Christ Himself as He is revealed out of the Scriptures. So by the grace of God through faith, this eternal life is sustained by eating and drinking Christ.

Now to show the relationship which the child of God has in his union and communion with Christ, I want you to notice how many times the words ‘life, live and eternal life’ are used in John 6:51-58. He says: “I am the *living* bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall *live* for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the *life* of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no *life* in you.

Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath *eternal life*; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the *living* Father hath sent Me, and *I live* by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall *live* by Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall *live for ever*.”

Do you see how, throughout this entire portion, our blessed Lord equates life, living and living for ever (which is eternal life) with eating His flesh and drinking His blood? And only those who thus partake of Him will He raise up at the last day to spend eternity in His presence in communion with Himself; for He also says that if a man does not eat His flesh and drink His blood by faith, he has *no life in him*, he remains dead in trespasses and sins and abides under the wrath of God.

### **Eating And Drinking Christ Is Believing Christ**

The key to this eating and drinking of the Son of man is found in verse 47 where our Lord said, “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” So eating and drinking are equivalent to believing. What then does this mean? It means that in order to be saved, to have this eternal life in Christ, I must “eat” the flesh and “drink” the blood of the Son of man; that is, I must appropriate Him, make Him mine by an act of faith. This act of receiving Christ is done once for all. I cannot receive Him a second time, for He never leaves me. But having received Him to the saving of my soul, this saving faith is now shown in my life as I feed on Him constantly, daily, as the Food for my soul. As the Israelite in Exodus 12 was to apply the shed blood of the slain lamb to the door post of his home and then, being protected by that blood, he was to feed on the lamb itself; in the same way, the one possessing eternal life applies the blood of Christ by faith to his evil conscience in confession (I John 1:9) and then feeds upon the Lamb as his daily portion also by faith.

Thus eternal life is lived, sustained and enjoyed now, for it consists of appropriating all that Christ is and has done for me to the life I now live. It is applying the promises of God as being spoken to me, remembering that “All the promises of God in Him [Christ] are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God” (II Cor 1:20). It is a personal applying of the precepts and commandments of God to my life; for they are given to enable me to walk in a way that pleases Him Who bought me with the price of His own precious blood.

### **Eating And Drinking Christ Is A Continuing In Faith**

Eating and drinking Christ is not only a beginning with Christ, but it is a continuing life of worship, praise and thanksgiving as we bless the one true and living God Who is revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a life of faith, a continual looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, desiring to be made like Him in holiness. It is a life of confession and repentance of sin as we see ourselves daily coming short of the glory of Christ. It is a life of prayer as we commune with Him and enjoy His presence day by day, feeding upon Him Who is our Life and Sustainer of this eternal life. In one word, it is the ‘just living by faith’, going on ‘from faith to faith’ (Rom 1:17).

### ***FAITH IN CHRIST AND ETERNAL LIFE***

What is faith? It is the heaven-born faculty in the soul, given to us by the Holy Spirit. It is the means by which we see, hear, taste, receive, know and enjoy God and Jesus Christ Whom God has sent. Let us now consider five truths the Scriptures teach concerning faith and eternal life:

First—there is no possessing eternal life apart from faith! We must believe in Christ; we must trust in Christ; and we must go outside ourselves to the Life-Giver Himself to receive this life; for the Scriptures speak of no instrumental means other than faith whereby we can be saved and enjoy this eternal life here upon earth. The vital importance of this teaching of faith in connection with eternal life is brought out over and over in the New Testament. Our Lord said to Nicodemus in John 3:14-15, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” You see, believing in Christ is inseparably connected with eternal life! Again, in John 5:24, He said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me,

hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” Also, in John 11:25-26, our Lord linked faith with eternal life: “I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die” the second death, because he possesses eternal life in Christ.

Second—we see from the Scriptures that those who do trust in, and believe on the Son of God with saving faith, receive this eternal life now; for eternal life is spoken of in John 6:47 as being a present possession as well as a future one; “He that believeth on Christ HATH eternal life.”

Third—the man who possesses this saving faith and eternal life in Christ knows it; for it is not a life that can be lived and a man remain ignorant of its existence. Why? because our blessed Lord spoke of it in John 4:14 as the living water of life which is given to every soul who believes savingly on Him. Listen—“The water that I shall give him shall be *in him* a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” And, since the Holy Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God (Rom 8:16), then how could a man have this spiritual life dwelling in him—yea, the very Holy Spirit of God dwelling in him—and not *know it*? Also, I John 5:11-13 is very plain on this subject: “And this is the record, that God hath given to us *eternal life*, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that you have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

I realize that this life is more real and active at one time than at others; it is enjoyed more at one time than at others; it brings more blessings at one time than at others; but it is a life that is known and felt because it is the very life of God in the soul. We can say it is, “not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal 2:20). Therefore, it is a life that is really eternal! The man who possesses it can never lose it because it is God’s gift to his soul: “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance” (Rom 11:29).

Fourth—the Scriptures teach that faith in connection with eternal life is a gift freely given, the Father Himself being the Source and Fountainhead of this life (John 3:16). They teach that Jesus Christ Himself is the channel through which this life flows (John 17:2) because it is from Him we receive the meat and drink that continue to nourish this life (John 6:54). They teach that the Holy Spirit is the Communicator of this eternal life which is found in Jesus Christ. John 16:13-15, “When He, the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.” And this life is begun in us by the operation of the Holy Spirit in the new birth (John 3:5), whereby we are “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD OF GOD, which *liveth and abideth for ever*” (I Peter 1:23). Therefore, we say that when any man does believe or is found believing, it is proof positive that he is already in possession of eternal life. “He that *believeth* on Me” said Christ, “hath [already has] everlasting life” (John 3:36).

### ***ETERNAL LIFE AS TO IT’S SOURCE***

Fifth—the Scripture plainly says that GRACE, FREE SOVEREIGN GRACE, is the SOURCE of this faith and eternal life in Christ; it is His love in action, coming to us “freely by His *grace* through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24). Grace means that I do not deserve it, but I have received it from the hand of my blessed Lord out of His love and good pleasure. Ephesians 2:8-10, “For by *grace* are ye saved *through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:* not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus* unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Let us see further how the Scriptures describe this great truth of grace being the source of all we have received from the Father through the Son, and communicated to us by the Holy Spirit, even this eternal or spiritual life, which is in God and in His Son Jesus Christ. In Romans 11:5 we find that grace is the source of

our election, for we read: “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” I ask, “When did this election of grace in Christ take place?” II Timothy 1:9 tells us: “God hath saved us, 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*.” Listen now! These verses say nothing about this doctrine that is preached from so many pulpits today which says that God looked down through the ages and saw those who would believe, so He elected them to receive eternal life. Oh no my friend, then our election would be of works and not of grace! What the scriptures do say is found in Acts 13:48, “and as many as WERE ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE BELIEVED.” Therefore grace is the source of this great blessing. They were not ordained, chosen or elected because they believed; they believed because they were ordained—chosen or elected.

Again we see in Scripture that the call of God by His Spirit finds its source in grace. Listen to the apostle Paul in Galatians 1:15, “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me.” This call of grace was unto the receiving of eternal life. This is what our Lord said in John 10:27,28: “My sheep hear My voice [they hear that call of grace] and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.” I say, Praise the Lord for that call of grace which calls us unto Christ and His life eternal!

The Scriptures also show us that grace—God’s free and sovereign grace—is the source of our faith. We read in Acts 18:27 about the people of Achaia who “HAD BELIEVED THROUGH GRACE,” that is, they were enabled by the Holy Spirit to lay hold of Christ and the eternal life which He gives. This is also true of repentance, for we read in Acts 11:18: “Then hath God also to the Gentiles GRANTED REPENTANCE unto life.” II Timothy 2:25,26: “If God peradventure will GIVE THEM REPENTANCE to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” Oh, how we are completely dependent upon the God of all grace for the two things He commands us to do: “repent and believe.” Surely these “graces” come to us by grace!

Then the Scriptures teach us that grace is the only source of our justification before God in Christ, which flows out of this gift of eternal life. Titus 3:7, “Being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Then what shall we say of the gift of salvation itself? This: All that is encompassed in the word “salvation” has its source in the free sovereign grace of God. “We believe that THROUGH THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST we shall be saved” (Acts 15:11). Then Ephesians 2:8,9 brings this out: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”

I say, surely grace is the outflowing of God’s love to poor, undeserving sinners who, in themselves, deserve nothing but the wrath of God to be poured out upon them in the lake of fire for ever. But, in love to our souls through His grace, He has opened the way to His very throne of grace, for He is the *true God and eternal life* (I John 5:20).

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS A KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S CHARACTER***

Now let us go back and expound in more detail our first point on eternal life and knowing God (John 17:3)! I have shown you that this knowledge is more than just an intellectual or a speculative knowledge; it is more than just giving mental assent to truth by a mere decision we make; for as we have seen, the Scriptures declare that eternal life consists in knowing, living on, having communion with and enjoying eternal and endless satisfaction in the triune God through the one Mediator, even Jesus Christ Himself. The knowledge of the true and living God and Jesus Christ Whom God has sent is a knowledge of God’s CHARACTER as He is revealed unto us out of the Holy Scriptures in His glorious attributes. Therefore, when this knowledge comes to us in the power of the Holy Spirit, and we see WHO GOD IS and what HE IS LIKE, we are affected by this knowledge: we then have an appreciation for Him, and our hearts go out to Him in love,



reverence, obedience, honour, yea, even in gratitude and supreme affection. Then the question is asked, "Why is this? Why does this knowledge have such an effect upon us?"

### ***ETERNAL LIFE IS INVOLVEMENT WITH GOD IN HIS ATTRIBUTES***

The answer to the above question my friend, is this: We become personally involved with God in our mind, affection and our will as He is revealed to us in HIS ATTRIBUTES. You see, in order to really know another person, we must commit ourselves to his company and his interests, willingly becoming identified with him, his concerns and all that he is. Without this involvement, our relationship with this individual would only be superficial or lifeless. How can we say we know someone, never having lived with him, never having been identified with him or his interests in a personal way, never having been involved in this knowledge of him with our mind, or affection and our will? Is not this what is wrong with present-day Christendom, who draw near to God with their mouth and honour Him with their lips, while their hearts are far from Him? (Matt 15:8). They profess to know Him, and yet they have never been personally involved with Him!

That there must be personal involvement with the attributes of God is seen in Psalm 34:8, "*O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.*" You see, there is a tasting and there is a seeing that the Lord is good, that He is merciful, kind and gracious; I become involved in my mind (I see), in my affection (I taste), and in my will (my whole being goes out after Him in faith as I have seen and tasted that He is good).

Let us see if I can illustrate this! In the life of Moses there was a time when he cried unto the Lord saying, "I beseech Thee, shew me Thy glory." And the LORD answered and said, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee" (Exo 33:18,19). Then in Exodus 34:5-7 where the Lord fulfilled His promise, we find Him standing with Moses upon the mount proclaiming, "The *name* of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

What was happening here in this relationship between God and Moses is this: Moses was becoming personally involved in mind, affection and will with the very character of the triune God as He was revealed unto Moses in His glorious attributes. You see dear friend, God gave Moses the knowledge of His very being. He revealed His personal character to Moses which consisted of His mercy, His grace, His longsuffering, His goodness, His truthfulness, yea, and His forgiveness; and there is also mentioned His wrath against sin. Now I understand that Moses did not see God with the eye of the body, the natural eye; but he saw Him with the eye of the soul, with the eye of faith, and what he saw made him appreciate the living God. Love, reverence, obedience, yea, even honour and gratitude were worked in his heart by the Holy Spirit, and there went out to Him a supreme affection that he had never known before; God had shown him His glory! How do we know this? "And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped" the true and living God. Yes, this knowledge caused him to worship the true and living God, and to know Him in that relationship which is eternal life. This knowledge of God as revealed unto Moses in His attributes, caused his heart to go out after Him.

My friend, this is the way God is revealed unto us in Jesus Christ Whom He has sent: You and I whom God deals with by His Spirit have the same attitude as Moses; we too become personally involved in mind, affection and will when the Spirit of Christ gives us eternal life. "And we *know* [what do we know?] that the Son of God is come, [and what has He done?] and hath given us an understanding, [you see, we are involved in our mind] that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. [So we are involved in mind, affection and will; and we come to *know* that] "*This is the true God, and eternal life*" (I John 5:20). Let us read it again! "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may *know Him* that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

We see then, that when God by His Holy Spirit gives us the effectual call to come unto Christ for salvation, He begins working in our hearts by teaching us of Himself: Who He is in His character and what He requires of us as His creatures. He reveals unto us our state before Him as guilty, ungodly sinners; He reveals unto us our helplessness to produce a righteousness which He will accept, and He even goes further: He reveals unto us the truth of His great love to us by sending His only begotten Son to reconcile us unto Himself by the sacrifice of Christ in our place. For you see, there is no salvation without knowledge, so God the Holy Spirit reveals to our hearts in the gospel the knowledge of God in His glorious attributes.

### **The Attribute Of God's Holiness**

Listen now as we unfold this truth from the Scriptures that we may see how the Holy Spirit gives us this knowledge of the true and living God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent! First, He gives us the knowledge that God is HOLY; holiness is one of His attributes, His very character, His very being. Then He reveals unto our hearts that this holy God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity (Hab 1:13). He reveals to us out of the Word that because the God of the Bible is a holy God, He hates sin; He loathes and abhors everything that is contrary to His holy law. He begins to show us that "the froward is abomination to the LORD" (Prov 3:32); that this holy Being with Whom we have to do, Who sits upon the throne of the universe is a *holy God* and therefore He must of necessity punish sin. His very hatred for sin demands its punishment, because He is the *holy God*.

As this attribute of our true and living God is made known to us, we become deeply involved with His holiness in our mind, affection and will as we begin to see how far, far short we have come of this beauty of our God. When this knowledge is given unto us out of the Holy Scriptures, all we can do is cry like Isaiah when he saw this holy God high and lifted up; "Woe is me! for I am *undone*; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (Isa 6:5). And then we cry like Job, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee." And what effect did it have upon him when he saw this holy God? "Wherefore I *abhor myself, and repent* in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5,6). You see, I become involved in this! This knowledge brings me into an involvement with the very character of God, and I cannot get away from it.

This knowledge of the holy God has such an effect upon us as we are involved in mind, affection and will, that we stand guilty before God. We now can identify with the publican in Luke 18:13 as we see him standing afar off, who would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote himself upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." So this knowledge brings us to confession of sin. The knowledge that God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity brings us to repentance toward Him, to an attitude of hatred for sin and an acknowledgement that we are worthy only of God's wrath, because we have sinned and come short of the glory of God, which is Jesus Christ Himself.

My friend, are you beginning to see what we are saying? We become deeply involved, personally involved, when this knowledge of the true and living God comes home to our hearts! Therefore, there is no such thing as salvation without a man knowing it! A man might be on his way to hell and not know it, but he can't be on his way to heaven and not know it, because he becomes so deeply involved in this knowledge of the true and living God.

### **The Attribute Of God's Wrath**

As we thus experience the holiness of God, we are also made aware of the attribute of God called His WRATH, or His anger against sin. We find from the Scriptures that God has made no attempt to conceal that fact of His wrath; He is not ashamed to make it known that vengeance and fury belong unto Him. If you take your concordance and study it, you will see that there are more references in Scripture to the anger, fury, and wrath of God than there are to His love and tenderness. Why? because God is holy; and because He is holy, He hates all sin; and because He hates all sin, His anger burns against the sinner. Psalm 7:11,12: "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, He will whet His sword; He hath bent His bow, and made it ready."

Therefore, the man whom God saves and to whom He gives eternal life acknowledges and knows that the holiness of God demands God's wrath to be kindled against every sin, and he rejoices when God's judgment falls upon sin—did you know that? Revelation 19:1-3, "I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgments [His wrath]: for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever."

So we see from Scripture that the man who possesses eternal life is involved personally in mind, affection and will with the attitude of God toward sin, and with this very attribute of God which is His wrath. He knows that God's wrath burns against sin; it should and would burn against him, apart from the work of Christ in His redemptive grace for him and in him.

Oh my friend, do you see how we become deeply involved with the very attributes or the character of God? In fact, there is no salvation, no eternal life, without me becoming personally involved as a sinner in God's great work of grace in my soul. I am not saying that there is any work that I perform that merits my salvation; oh no! for salvation is of the Lord and wholly of His grace. But I am saying what the Bible says, that when the Holy Spirit works in our souls and gives us life in regeneration, then He begins to give us the knowledge of God in Christ; and this knowledge so affects us that it changes our lives and causes us to bow before God in repentance and confession of sin. It causes us to acknowledge that *the only way* we can be saved is by God's grace through the redemptive work of Christ.

### **The Attribute Of God's Love**

Now let us consider another attribute of our living God that we become deeply involved in when the Holy Spirit opens our hearts to the knowledge of God: it is His LOVE. Yes, the character of God is clearly displayed by His love for poor sinners, and this love is not merely one of His attributes, but it is His very nature, for I John 4:8 declares that "*God is love.*"

My dear friend, that which makes this love of God so amazing, so precious and so gracious, is the fact that it comes to us uninfluenced by anything in us; it comes to us freely, spontaneous and uncaused. You see, the only reason God loves any is found in His sovereign will. Listen to what He said to the Israelites in the wilderness! "The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the LORD loved you" (Deut 7:7,8). God has loved His people from everlasting, and therefore nothing of the creature can be the cause of what is found in God from eternity. He loves from Himself: "According to His own purpose" (II Tim 1:9).

Now the question is, "Whom does He love? To whom is this love manifested?" Romans 5:8 tells us, "But God commendeth His love toward US, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Or, as verse 6 puts it, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." For whom? for the ungodly, the unlovable, the loathsome, the depraved, those who are nothing but a mass of corruption, with "no good thing" in them. Again I ask the question, "To whom and for whom is this love manifested?" Ephesians 2:1-3 tells us it was to and for those who were dead—spiritually dead—in trespasses and sins, who walked according to the course of this world, who did nothing but walk in the lusts of their flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the very children of wrath because they were spiritual children of the devil!

It was to these that the words of Ephesians 2:4-5 were written: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved)." Oh my friend, when I know that God loves me in Christ and "gave Himself for me" (Gal 2:20) upon Calvary's cross to redeem my soul from hell, then I am deeply involved in mind, affection and will; for my heart is drawn out after Him. My soul is made to bow before Him in adoring love, in amazing wonder, and I cry out after Him in confession, repentance, and faith, because His love has won my heart!

When I hear this great God saying to my soul out of Jeremiah 31:3, "I have loved thee with AN EVERLASTING LOVE : therefore, with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." I am made to bow before Him in adoring praise, for this knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, but I know it is true because it has been shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit which is given unto me (Rom 5:5).

So again I say, this knowledge of God's character as revealed unto us in His attributes is an experiential knowledge, a heart-affecting knowledge, a life-influencing knowledge; for when God gives us eternal life in His Son Jesus Christ, we become a new creature, old things pass away and behold, all things become new (II Cor 5:17). This is the reason that the sinner whom God saves is deeply involved in mind, affection and will, because he cannot have this knowledge of God in Christ and be the same person. He cannot be stoic or unmoved by this great love of God manifested toward him in Christ!

### **The Attribute Of God's Knowledge**

Another attribute of our living God which causes me to be deeply involved in mind, affection and will when the Holy Spirit reveals it unto me is God's OMNISCIENCE, that is, He knows everything, all events, all creatures, past, present and future. He is perfectly acquainted with every detail in the life of every being in heaven, in earth and in hell. As Daniel 2:22 tells us, "He knoweth what is in the darkness." Nothing escapes His notice, nothing can be hidden from Him, nothing is forgotten by Him. Hebrews 4:13 tells us, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do." Psalm 139:2-4 goes further and tells us this: "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasseth my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, Thou knowest it altogether."

Do you see that a man cannot have this knowledge of the living God and not be affected by it or involved in mind, affection and will? To know that the God of the universe, the holy and righteous God with Whom I have to do, knows all about me and yet loved me enough to die to put away my sins, is a knowledge that brings me down at His feet in wonder and admiration. It causes me to love, reverence, obey, honour and follow after Him in the pathway of righteousness and true holiness crying, "Oh, Lord, make me in the image and likeness of Christ; for I desire to be like Him." It causes me to desire to be like Him in word, conversation, love, spirit, faith, purity and in prayer, and to follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and meekness. I ask, "Why are these my desires?" It is because His love has won my heart; His knowledge of me in Christ lets me know He cares for and watches over me and therefore desires only the best for me. And, since He knows all about me and yet loves me, I can say in time of sad failure, when my actions have belied my heart, when my deeds have repudiated my devotion, and the searching question comes to me from my Lord, "Lovest thou Me?"—the only answer I have is: "Lord, Thou knowest all things, *Thou knowest* that I love Thee" (John 21:17). Oh my dear friend, how comforting is this great attribute of God to my heart, that *He* knows all about me and yet loves me!

### **The Attribute Of God's Patience**

There is one more of our great God's attributes which shows us His character that I would like to set before you and it is this: His attribute of patience. Yes, our God is shown in Scripture as being One Who bears long with His creatures. Romans 15:5 tells us He is the God of PATIENCE. His longsuffering is exercised both toward the saved and the lost, toward both the elect and the non-elect.

We would define the divine patience as that power of control which God exercises over Himself, causing Him to bear with the wicked and forbear long in withholding His punishment of them. This is brought out in Nahum 1:3, "The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power." You will notice that He is slow in anger because He is great in power. Further, the patience of God is that excellency which causes Him to sustain great injuries without immediately avenging Himself. By His power, He holds Himself in check as it were, until He has finished the purpose for which He has made each one of His creatures.

It was to this glorious attribute of our living God that Moses appealed when Israel sinned so grievously at Kadesh-Barnea and provoked the Lord so deeply. In Numbers 14:12 the Lord said to His servant, Moses, “I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them.” Then Moses, as the typical mediator, pleaded, “I beseech Thee, let the power of my LORD be great, according as Thou hast spoken, saying, The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression” (vv 17,18). Therefore, we see the “longsuffering” of God is His power of self-restraint, His power of self-control.

I said this patience of God exercised in His longsuffering is manifested both toward the saved and the lost, the elect and the non-elect. Let us see this applied in the Scriptures. Romans 9:22, “What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.” My dear friend, were God to immediately cut off the wicked when they rebel so grievously against Him, His power of self-control would not eminently appear; but by bearing with their wickedness and forbearing punishment so long, the power of His patience is gloriously demonstrated.

Then listen to this great truth brought forth in II Peter 3:9 concerning His longsuffering toward His elect! “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”; and in verse 15, “And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.”

Oh my friend, every one of God’s children are deeply involved in mind, affection and will, with this great attribute because we *know* that if God had not borne long with us, if His great power of patience had not been exercised toward us, we would surely be in hell. Oh, how many times did He call, and we heeded Him not! How many times did He knock at our heart’s door, and we paid Him no mind! But oh, the patience of our living God to wait, and wait, and then make us willing in the day of His power to seek His face, to turn from our evil way in heart-felt repentance, and cast ourselves upon Him by faith in Christ.

But, not only before He saved us did He exercise this great patience and longsuffering, how patient and longsuffering has He been since we have been brought to know Him in saving grace! He has not cast us off, but has shown Himself again and again to be that God of Psalm 103:8: “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.” Why does He do this toward His children? Listen to verses 13,14! “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.” And the knowledge of this glorious attribute deeply affects us: we are humbled in the dust before Him, *knowing* by the divine teaching of His Holy Spirit what we really deserve; this knowledge magnifies His great mercy in bearing so long with us.

My friend, let me repeat a statement I made in our last study: There is no salvation, no eternal life, without my becoming personally involved as a sinner in God’s great work of grace in my soul. I am not saying that there is any work that I perform that merits my salvation, oh no!, for salvation is OF THE LORD and wholly of *His grace*. What I am saying is what the Bible says, that when the Holy Spirit works in our souls, giving us the *knowledge of God in Christ*, this knowledge completely changes our lives, causing us to bow before God in repentance and confession of sin. It causes us to acknowledge that the *only* way we can be saved is by God’s grace through the redemptive work that is in Christ.

Let us now consider another attribute of our living God which reveals unto us His character, and thereby we will see further what is contained in the term “eternal life,” or *knowing* the true and living God as He is revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **The Attribute Of God’s Faithfulness**

I love to meditate upon this glorious attribute of my living God, for I know that Deuteronomy 7:9 is true which says, “Know therefore that the LORD thy God, He is God, the FAITHFUL God.” As I behold Him Who is faithful in all things and at all times, I am involved in mind, affection and will with this faithful God Who has saved my never-dying soul. I love to meditate upon His faithfulness and exclaim: “His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS “ (Lam 3:22,23). I love to say with the Psalmist in Psalm 36:5, “Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and Thy

FAITHFULNESS reacheth unto the clouds”; and to consider Numbers 23:19 that “God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken and shall He not make it good?” Indeed it is grace to *know* that the faithfulness of God is round about me (Psa 89:8), and that this faithful God Who never forgets, never fails, never falters, and never forfeits His Word has revealed Himself to me, that I may know and trust Him, and serve Him willingly all the days of my life.

Oh my dear friend, this glorious attribute of my living God is precious to my soul as I have been deeply involved in it, for He has proven Himself faithful to me in all circumstances of life. He has never lied to me, nor put me to shame. Never has He put on me any more than I was able to bear, but many times has He proven to me that His promise in I Corinthians 10:13 is true—“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is *faithful*, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

My friend, the God of the Bible is true! His Word of promise is sure! In all His relations with His People, *God is faithful*. I say, He may be safely relied upon, for no one ever yet really trusted Him in vain. This precious truth is expressed almost everywhere in the Scriptures, for His people need to know that faithfulness is an essential part of His divine character; His faithfulness is the basis of our confidence in Him. But it is one thing to accept the faithfulness of God as a divine truth, and yet it is quite another to act upon it. God has given us many “exceeding great and precious promises” (II Peter 1:4), but are we really counting on His fulfillment of them? Are we actually expecting Him to do for us all that He has said? Are we resting with implicit assurance on the words found in Hebrews 10:23, “*He is faithful that promised*”?

The Scriptures abound in illustrations of God’s faithfulness. More than four thousand years ago He said to Noah: “While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (Gen 8:22); and every year that comes furnishes a fresh witness to God’s fulfillment of this promise. In fact, it was in this very covenant that God had made with Noah, and His faithfulness in keeping it, that He pleads His faithfulness to the covenant He made with David. Jeremiah 33:20-21, “Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, My ministers.”

#### GOD IS FAITHFUL TO HIS COVENANT

Did you know that the *faithfulness* of God to His covenant with David—that One would sit and reign upon his throne forever—is one of the most amazing truths in God’s Word? Beginning at II Samuel 7 and running through the entire Bible is this great truth of the Lordship and Kingship of David’s greater Son, Who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and Who was none other than God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 1:3). “And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever” (II Sam 7:16).

Follow the promise to Psalm 89:33-37 and hear again God’s faithful Word: “Nevertheless, My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer My *faithfulness* to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.” Hear the Lord confirming it again in Psalm 132:11: “The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; He will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.”

Time passed by, but God had not forgotten His promise. He confirmed it again to Isaiah in 7:14, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” And then again, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase

of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (9:6,7).

Again our faithful God confirmed the promise to Jeremiah, calling upon His faithfulness to the covenant He had made with Noah as proof that He would bring it to pass. Let us read it again! "Thus saith the LORD, If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne" (Jer 33:20,21).

#### THE FULFILLMENT OF HIS PROMISE

Hundreds and hundreds of years went by and did God forget His promise or cease to be faithful? Oh no, for God tells us in Galatians 4:4, "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Hear the words of the angel Gabriel, the one sent from God to announce that the fulness of time had come, as he speaks to the virgin who was to conceive. He said unto her, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in they womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and *the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David*: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end...The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:30-33,35).

I ask: "Did the unbelief of the Jews of our Lord's day make the promise to David void or of none effect, causing the faithfulness of our God to fail?" This is what many believe and preach everywhere today: that Christ's Kingship and Lordship has been postponed from the first coming until thousands of years later when He would be crowned King at His *second coming*. I ask another question, "Did the cruelty of the Pharisees, the high priest and the religious leaders of our Lord's day, who were moved by Satan to crucify the Lord of glory, make the promise to David void and of none effect, or cause the faithfulness of our God to fail?" The answer to these questions is NO ! A thousand times NO ! This Holy One, Jesus Christ our Lord, "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom 1:3,4).

#### CHRIST'S PRESENT REIGN—THE CONSUMMATION OF HIS PROMISE

On the day of Pentecost the apostle Peter confirmed that the *faithfulness* of God had been shown to His promise, for Jesus Christ our Lord, made of the seed of David according to the flesh, had been raised from the dead and *now is sitting upon the throne of David* in the heavenlies, where He will sit for ever. "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, [that is, to David] that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:30-36).

Praise the Lord, the promise has been fulfilled and the *faithfulness* of God has set forth as bright as ever, for Christ sits as King of kings and Lord of lords now upon the spiritual throne of David, ruling and reigning over the affairs of men. In Ephesians 1:20-23 it is declared that God has "raised Him [Christ] from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and

*hath put all things under His feet*, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”

The apostle Paul confirms all of this in I Corinthians 15:25-27 in these words: “For He [Christ] must *reign*, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He [God] hath put all things under His feet.”

How precious then is the *faithfulness* of our living God! No wonder we are deeply involved in mind, affection and will in this great attribute of God, because the *faithfulness* of our living God in raising Christ from the dead and seating Him on David’s spiritual throne is the basis for all of His dealings with our never-dying souls. Out of our Lord’s death, burial and resurrection comes the grace of God to us; out of this attribute proceeds the fulfillment of all that God promised to poor hell-deserving sinners. On His Word we can rest safe and secure, for He cannot lie!

Praise Him that He is the *faithful God* from Whom all blessings flow! Praise Him that this knowledge is revealed unto us from the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit! As our Lord says in John 17:3: “And this is *life eternal*, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.” So knowing this glorious attribute of God as revealed in His Son Jesus Christ, is eternal life as I put my complete confidence in, trust in and rely upon my faithful God. And in thus being personally involved in the knowledge of His attributes, I now have the same views, thoughts, purposes and principles of action as God my heavenly Father; by His grace I am possessed with the very life and nature of God! (II Peter 1:4).

### **The Attribute Of God’s Grace**

My friend, the Scriptures reveal our living God to us as “*the God of all grace*” (I Peter 5:10), the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of grace” (Heb 10:29), and all things coming to us freely from “the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 15:11). *Grace* then, is another of His glorious attributes which flows out of His great *love* toward us in Christ Jesus.

### **GRACE DEFINED**

Having previously shown you how the *grace* of God is the very source of eternal life, let us now define the *grace of God*, showing how it comes to us in Christ Jesus the Lord and how we become personally involved with this attribute in mind, affection and will. Here again we will see that *eternal life* is knowing “the only true God and Jesus Christ” Whom God has sent.

What then is grace? Divine grace is the sovereign and saving favor of God exercised in the bestowment of blessings upon those who have no merit in themselves and no positive deserts of their own, but who are thoroughly ill-deserving and hell-deserving. Grace is completely unmerited and unsought; it is unattracted by anything in, or from, or by the objects upon which it is bestowed, neither can it be bought, earned, or won by the creature. If it could be, it would cease to be grace. When a thing is said to be of grace, we mean that the recipient has no claim upon it; it was in no way due him, but rather it came to him as pure charity, and at first even unasked and undesired.

I will go further and say that the word “GRACE,” more than any other word, expresses the thought of God acting in spontaneous goodness to save sinners. It is God loving the unlovely, making a covenant with them, pardoning their sins, accepting their persons, revealing Himself to them, leading them ultimately into full knowledge and enjoyment of Himself, and overcoming all obstacles that arise at each stage to the fulfillment of His purpose till He gets us at last to glory. Grace is electing love plus covenant love, which is God’s free choice acting in a sovereign way toward sinners to bring them to glory. In grace God saves from sin and all evil, bringing ungodly men to true happiness in the knowledge of their “Faithful Creator” as revealed in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **GRACE COMES ONLY THROUGH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**



Now the Scriptures declare that the *grace of God* comes to us exclusively and only in and through the Lord Jesus Christ; in fact, this is the theme of the Bible. Let us look at a few of these precious Scriptures and rejoice together in praise unto our living God for so great salvation!

In Romans 5:15 we read these words: “Much more the *grace of God*, and the gift by *grace*, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many”; and in John 1:17, “*Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*” Also in II Corinthians 8:9 we read, “For ye know the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.” My friend, this is *grace*! Again, II Corinthians 5:18,19,21 puts it like this: “All things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ...for God was in *Christ*, reconciling the world unto himself.” How? by the grace of SUBSTITUTION, for God hath *made Christ* to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Christ. Paul tells the Corinthian believers, “I thank my God always on your behalf, for the *grace of God* which is given you by *Jesus Christ*” (I Cor 1:4).

We see from these Scriptures that it has pleased the God of *all grace* to show forth His grace and mercy to poor sinners *only* in our blessed Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ; and there is salvation in none other, “for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

### CHRIST IS GRACE PERSONIFIED

My dear friend, when our understanding is enlightened in the knowledge of this glorious attribute of our living God, we become deeply involved in mind, affection and will. Why? because we are involved with a PERSON, Who is HIMSELF GRACE PERSONIFIED as expressed in Titus 2:11: “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” Our Lord Jesus Christ has brought in salvation by the sacrifice of Himself. And having been taught by the Holy Spirit that we deserve nothing but hell, our hearts go out to Him in faith, trust and confident reliance, for we have ceased from our own works (Heb 4:10) by His grace. Then as we rely upon Him in grace, we become willingly obedient and submissive to Him in every circumstance of life, for He is our all and in all, and gives us this assurance: “*My grace is sufficient for thee*” (II Cor 12:9).

### CHRIST IS WILLING TO SAVE SINNERS

Now, by questions and answers from Scripture, let us enlarge upon this great truth of how the grace of God comes to us through the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting the Holy Spirit to enlighten our hearts and minds to give us the knowledge that is needed to bring us to Christ and eternal life. First, I ask, “Was the Lord Jesus Christ a party to the purpose and will of God to save sinners by His grace, and was He willing to bring it down to men?” We read the answer in Heb 10:5-7: “A body hast Thou prepared Me. Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God.” Of what book is Christ speaking here? the Book of predestination, the Lamb’s Book of Life, written before the foundation of the world. Yes, we see that our Lord Jesus Christ *was* a party to this purpose and will of God to shower His *grace* upon poor sinners.

This question is answered further in Hebrews 2 as we see Jesus by the *grace* of God, *tasting death* for every man. “For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings...For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren” (vv9,10,16,17). Here again we behold His part in the divine covenant of *grace* and His willingness to bring salvation to sinners.

Further, to manifest this grace of God, we hear our Lord saying in John 10:11, “I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep”; and again in verses 15,17 & 18: “I lay down My life for the sheep...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.*” This proves His willingness to perform all that was written of Him in the eternal counsels.

But the greatest passage of Scripture that shows our Lord's willingness to bring the *grace* of God down to man is found in Philippians 2:5-8 where we read: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Here we find it all together—He was willing, so He came even to the death of the cross, that He might show forth the amazing *grace of God* in making the way open whereby God could be merciful to sinners, and we could obtain eternal life in Him. And do we not become personally involved with this gracious Person as we believe and trust Him, and cast ourselves wholly upon Him so we might obtain this eternal life spoken of in John 17:3?

Next, I would ask, "IN WHAT MANNER DID CHRIST BRING THIS GRACE, THEREBY REVEALING UNTO US THIS GLORIOUS ATTRIBUTE OF OUR LIVING GOD?"

#### A FOURFOLD ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

First, we see from the Scriptures that it was by His holy and righteous life without sin, that by the shedding of His perfect, precious blood, sinners could be washed clean from all their sins. "For such an High Priest became us, Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's" (Heb 7:26,27). And surely the one who possesses eternal life is involved in this great *grace* as he daily praises Him Who bestowed such grace upon him!

Second, we understand that He actually became what we are—sin itself—by substitution for His people. God hath made Christ "*to be sin for us*, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Cor 5:21). And as I Peter 2:24 tells us, "Who His own self *bare our sins in His own body* on the tree." As Isaiah 53:6 states: "The LORD hath laid on him [Christ] the iniquity of us all." So we see He willingly became what we are—sin, so *He* could show forth the *grace* of God in paying our sin-debt in full and giving *eternal life* in Himself unto us who believe on Him.

Third, Christ showed the manner in which God's grace comes to us by actually imputing to the account of every sinner who believes in Him, His own righteousness. You see, by paying our sin-debt in full, *He* can give to every repenting, believing sinner a right standing before God, which the poor sinner could in no other way obtain; and this dear friend, is *grace in action*. I Corinthians 1:30 tells us that Christ is made unto us righteousness; it is on the basis of His imputed righteousness that we are justified before God and stand before Him perfect, holy and righteous in His sight; and this is part of that eternal life which God gives us in Christ. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith is counted for righteousness*. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom 4:4-8).

Fourth, the Lord Jesus Christ showed the manner in which He brought down the *grace of God*, by giving His Holy Spirit to each soul whom He has saved, to convict him, teach him, fill him, seal him and to work in him sanctification and the fruits of the Spirit. This my friend, is part of that eternal life which is in the true God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent (John 16:7-15; Eph 1:13-14; 5:18; Gal 5:22,23; I Thess 5:23).

So, as we see in all these things the *grace of God* manifested to us in the *Person of His Son*, we become personally involved in mind, affection and will. Because we *know* that all things come to us by *grace* and that we deserve nothing, we do not want to presume upon Him (Rom 6:1), but rather walk before Him in fear and trembling lest we grieve our gracious Lord.

My friend, there is no blessing that ever comes to man from God without coming through the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no salvation apart from Him. This is the reason I have been quoting I John 5:11-13 over and over to you in this series on *eternal life* : "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and

*this life is in His Son.* He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

#### SUBSTITUTION: GOD’S WAY OF GRACE

Listen further! I say it with reverence, but even God could not forgive us apart from the work of the Lord Jesus Christ! Why? because there is no salvation without SUBSTITUTION. This is God’s way of salvation! Therefore, incarnation was essential to God’s way of *grace*: a perfect body, soul and spirit, a sinless body, soul and spirit was necessary for substitution. Why? because a perfect, sinless and holy God had to be satisfied. A perfect and holy law had to be vindicated; a perfect and holy justice had to be executed. Why? because sin had made man a rebel against God, His government, yes, His very Being of holiness. Therefore, only a perfect, sinless human sacrifice could satisfy the wrong done to God’s Person, holiness, law and divine perfection. And this work could only be done by God Himself in the Person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, the integrity of the divine and eternal Being insists upon this if ever God’s GRACE is to flow to poor sinners. And dear friend, **THIS IS THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL** : the grace of God flowing out to us in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Substitute. To sum it all up, *grace* comes to us through *one Person* : truly human, truly God, the two natures in one Person, the God-Man, Christ Jesus (I Tim 2:5); as Romans 5:15 states: “much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.”

Let me repeat it again: The grace of God comes to us, exclusively and only, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. If He had not come, if it could be said of Him that, though He counted it not robbery to be equal with God, and though He humbled Himself and made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a man, and even the form of a servant; if He had not further humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even *the death of the cross*, and submitted passively to having the sins of men laid upon Him and punished in Him; I say, if He had not done all of this, if His blood had not been shed, and if He had not risen again, there would be no abounding grace; there would be no abundance of the *grace of God* with respect unto us; there would have been no eternal life!

So the vital question is: Do I know Christ? Am I experiencing the grace of God in my life and living this eternal life which is the life of Christ in me? I ask the question to you also; Do you know Christ? Are you experiencing the grace of God in your life? Are you living this eternal life which is the life of Christ in you? Do you know this abounding grace? Are you rejoicing in it? Can you say with the song writer: “Thou O Christ, art all I want, more than all in Thee I find”? Is Christ everything to you? Is your salvation merely a matter of saying, “I believe my sins are forgiven”; or are you receiving of His fulness in His eternal life? Are you aware of His meeting your every need? Do you possess this life which is in Christ? Are you looking forward to the glory of this eternal life which comes to us out of the *Grace of God* in Christ?

Oh that each one of us would be enabled by His grace to sing of His *amazing grace* to our souls and walk in His fulness every day as we enjoy this eternal life now which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!

#### **The Attributes Of God’s Justice And Righteousness**

There are two more attributes of God that we desire to consider in this present study of eternal life and they are: *God’s Justice And His Righteousness*. In these two attributes we are also involved. How? Since God’s justice and righteousness are both attributes of God’s moral character, and in eternal life we possess the moral nature of God, then we give assent that God is just and therefore acts justly; and rightly so, for God’s justice and righteousness are consistently joined together in Scripture as being descriptive of God’s very Being and character.

Moses declared in Deuteronomy 32:4 that God is “A God of truth and without iniquity, *just and right is He*.” The Psalmist joined them together in Psalm 89:14: “Justice and judgment [or righteousness] are the habitation [or foundation] of Thy [God’s] throne.” The Prophet Zephaniah states it like this: “The just LORD is in the midst thereof; He will not do iniquity” (Zeph 3:5). The apostle John tells us to confess our

sins to God (I John 1:9). Why? because “He is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” He is “*just* and *righteous*” in His acts of forgiveness toward us in the Lord Jesus Christ based upon His blood redemption.

Because God is just and righteous, He will never do anything which would contradict these attributes, which the one who possesses eternal life acknowledges, for he knows as Abraham did that “the Judge of all the earth doeth right.” When the question is asked then “Is there unrighteousness with God?” The answer comes leaping from his heart: “God forbid!” (Rom 9:14). Why? because he knows that God has always dealt with him in truth and in righteousness, and he will not charge God foolishly (Job 1:22). He knows that the Judge of all the earth cannot do anything unless it is in conformity to His own righteousness.

The man possessing eternal life is involved in these attributes because he knows that the Scriptures teach that God cannot simply forgive sinners and let their sins go unpunished. Why? because God’s justice is displayed by the vindication of His righteousness in the punishment of sin. Therefore if God is “to be just and the justifier” of sinners (Rom 3:26), he knows that, since God has committed Himself to save sinners, He must provide Himself a Lamb for a burnt offering, a sacrifice (Gen.22:8), that would completely satisfy the vindication of His justice and righteousness in order to make the sinner acceptable in His sight. By this knowledge, he gives assent by faith to the glorious good news of the gospel that the only suitable Substitute who could and did meet all of God’s requirements, is none other than Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God: God manifested in the flesh, Who freely “through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God” and “by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Heb 9:12,14).

Yes, the one possessing eternal life is deeply involved in these attributes of God, for he knows and rejoices in the eternal fact that the Lord Jesus Christ paid his sin-debt in full and that God displayed His justice and righteousness in this way. Also, he knows that these two attributes of God are the foundation for his belief in the faithfulness of God, that his heavenly Father will always deal with him only in a just and righteous way. In other words, His heavenly Father can do him no wrong!

### ***ETERNAL LIFE AND GLORIFICATION***

We come now to the final aspect of *eternal life* that we would like to consider in this present series, which is the matter of GLORIFICATION, or the eternal state.

The apostle Paul said in I Cor 15:19,20: “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” And my dear friend, since Christ, our Lord and Head, has risen from the grave and is now in heaven in His resurrected, human body; then we who belong to Him by creation, regeneration, redemption and adoption shall be with Him where He is for ever and ever in our new bodies which will be like His (Phil 3:20,21). This, my friend, is the end of it all, the end of salvation, having this eternal life with Him in a state of *glorification*.

Listen now! Our Lord said in John 12:25, “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” So those to whom Christ has given eternal life, who have believed on and trusted Him, and who have left all for Him, shall continue in this life and be with Him where He is for ever (John 14:3). I Peter 1:3-5 puts it like this: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an *inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away*, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Did you catch those words? The salvation that God gives—this eternal life which is in Him—is an *inheritance*; it is *incorruptible*; it is *undefiled*; it *fadeth not away*! Why? because it is *reserved in heaven* for us who know Christ and possess His life now. Not only is all of this ours now, but it shall be ours for ever, for all of this is *kept* for us by the *power of God* through faith, ready to be revealed to us in the last time, in

the day of His coming for us in glory. Oh how precious is this, and what a theme for our souls to feed upon as we wait for the Lord from glory!

### **Glorification: The Consummation Of The Reign Of Grace**

Yes, the consummation of the reign of grace in our lives will be glorification with Christ in the perfect state of eternal life on the new earth. And dear friend, this is exactly what our blessed Lord prayed for in John 17:24, “Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.”

### **God’s Golden Chain Of Grace**

Let us look at Romans 8:28-30 where we find the GOLDEN CHAIN OF GOD’S PURPOSE for His people from eternity past to eternity future! “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also *glorified*.” The links that form the one complete chain of God’s grace toward His people are found in these expressions: *His purpose*, which was His eternal counsel (Eph 1:11); *His foreknowledge*, which led to that election of grace (Rom 11:5); *His predestination*, which marked out the path by which grace would come and reign over His people (Rom 8:29), to lead them to their designated place to be with Him, having made them in the image of Christ; *His effectual calling*, which was the voice of His Spirit making His people willing in the day of His power (Psalm 110:3); *His justification*, which is given us by faith, based upon the redemption that is in Christ and His imputed righteousness (Rom 4:5-8); and then last (and just as important), the glorious truth of our *glorification* in Christ and with Christ in the ages to come which is the ETERNAL STATE. And it is for this state that every believer, every child of God, longs and prays.

### **Glorification Defined**

But the question is asked, “What does *glorification* in the eternal state mean?” Again, what does the apostle Paul mean in Rom 8:17, when he says that we shall be “glorified together” with Christ? I will answer like this: *Glorification* means full and entire deliverance from sin and evil in all their effects and in every respect in body, soul and spirit. In other words, in glorification the whole man will be completely and entirely delivered from every harmful effect of sin; yes, from every tarnishing and polluting effect of sin. Not only this, but we shall become like the Lord Jesus Christ: perfect, glorified men. For you see, because our blessed Lord is *already glorified*, we shall be glorified together with Him, and our glorification (like every thing else that happens to us in the Christian life), is the result of our union with Christ: It is the result of our being joined to Him by His marvelous grace through the operation of the Holy Spirit upon our soul in our entire life.

As we go through the Scriptures, we note that this glorification is the culmination of the eternal life begun in this life in Christ, coming to us by sovereign grace. It is called in II Cor 12:4 being “caught up into the *paradise*” of God, an allusion to the garden of Eden; for at God’s right hand are pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11). To signify its grandeur, its magnificence and its glory, it is called a *crown of glory* in I Peter 5:4 and a *kingdom* in II Timothy 4:18; and we are told in I Peter 1:3-5 that it is “unfading and incorruptible.” To show that none shall enjoy it except by the Redeemer’s obedience, it is called a *crown of righteousness* (II Tim 4:8); also in Revelation 2:10 it is called a *crown of life*.

As a *kingdom*, it was prepared for believers before the foundation of the world (Matt 25:34), and is the kingdom of their Father, Who bestows it upon them here and hereafter. This, dear friend, is glorification, the culmination of eternal life, beginning here in Christ and never ending; for Christ is eternal and we are in Him and He is our life (Col 3:1-4).

To show its continuance, the Scriptures speak of it as an *everlasting kingdom*; and those who enjoy it are called “kings and priests,” who are said to sit upon thrones and to reign in this life and the one to come. Listen to Revelation 1:5,6! “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.” Then Revelation 5:9,10 reads: “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” with Him for ever and ever.

### **To Behold The King In His Beauty**

To me all of this will be blessed indeed, but the thing that matters most to me in our glorification is that mine eyes shall see the *King in His beauty* (Isa 33:17). I shall behold my blessed Lord in all His glory and be with Him where He is for eternity! This precious thought is brought out in many places in the Scriptures. For what would heaven be without Christ? And what would heaven be if we could not behold Him Whom our soul loves and Whose life is the very life of our own glorification?

In the Book of Job, the oldest of all the Books of the Bible, we hear Job saying: “I know that my Redeemer liveth...whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold” (Job 19:25,27). So from the beginning of time, all the children of God have waited with blessed anticipation to behold the face of their lovely Lord. And the Psalmist bore witness to the same longing of his soul in these words found in Psalm 17:15 and 16:11, “As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.” “In Thy presence is fulness of joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” So he, like all of God’s children, would not be satisfied until he could behold the face of Christ, and be by His right hand where there are pleasures for evermore.

My friend, how about you and me? Do *we* long and wait for the coming of the Lord so we might see Him and be like Him? The beloved apostle John said he and all of God’s children did. “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” (I John 3:2). Yes, as we behold Him, the King in all His beauty and glory for ever and ever, we shall be like Him!

### **The Effects Of This Blessed Truth**

I ask a question: “What does this blessed truth do to us now? What effect does it make in our lives?” Two things: the first is found in I John 3:3 in these words: “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He [Christ] is pure.” It makes us desire to live a holy life, for we know that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord (Heb 12:14). Second, it makes us cry “Whom having not seen, I love: in Whom [Christ] though now I see Him not, yet believing, I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of my faith, even the salvation of my soul” (I Peter 1:8,9). So this blessed hope of glorification by the grace of God causes us to “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” (Titus 2:12,13), “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body” (Phil 3:21).

What a hope! What a joy! What a blessing to wait for our Lord from heaven and to live for Him with our lamps all trimmed and burning! You see, as faith lays hold of these gracious truths, they become living realities to our hearts and we can say with the apostle Paul, “Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord...I am willing rather to be present with the Lord” (II Cor 5:6-8). Therefore “for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain...to be with Christ; which is far better” (Phil 1:21,23).

Oh dear fellow believer, you who have this blessed hope of eternal life dwelling in your soul, is not this a gracious truth: to know that all of God’s grace—His eternal purpose, foreknowledge, predestination, effectual calling and justification—shall all end in glorification for you, a poor sinner redeemed by the blood

of Christ? To me this is nothing less than the “sure mercies of God” given to me who deserves nothing but hell!

### **GLORIFICATION AND OUR NEW BODIES**

We have considered one aspect of this truth of *glorification* with Christ, and now we would like to look at what the Scriptures say about the NEW BODY which every believer will have in glory. You see, this truth is given in Scripture to encourage our hearts and to give us comfort as we wait for the Lord from glory.

Meditating upon the Scriptures, we understand that the salvation God gives unto His people in Christ has in it: (1) a provision for the standing of a poor sinner before God’s holy law, (2) a provision for his present life on earth in relation to sin and righteousness, and (3) a provision for his *human body* after death. The first provision we know as JUSTIFICATION: the act of God removing the guilt and penalty of sin from the repenting, believing sinner, and bestowing a positive *righteousness*, *Christ’s righteousness*, in which the believer stands uncondemned, guiltless and righteous before God’s holy law for time and for eternity. This dear friend, is a judicial act of God which comes to us “freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24), and is entered into by faith, “For the just shall live by faith” (Rom 1:17).

The second provision is known as SANCTIFICATION: the act of God breaking the power of indwelling sin and implanting the moral nature of God in us, and *by His divine power* giving us all things that pertain unto life and godliness (II Peter 1:3,4). Therefore His Holy Spirit personally indwells us, making our body the temple or dwelling place of the living God. And there follows a *continuous process* in which sin is being rooted out of the believer and righteousness, or right living, is being produced in its place by the Holy Spirit. This process will continue till we get to glory for we are still in these bodies which have sin in the flesh. But we live by faith in Christ and upon Christ, believing and waiting for entire sanctification when we will be given our new bodies in that glorified state with Christ for ever and ever.

### **Our Bodies Shall Be Like His Glorious Body**

The third provision made in our salvation in this eternal life is GLORIFICATION : the act of God transforming the *human body* of the believer, thereby preparing it for his final abode on the new earth in eternity. We find that the Scriptures give much instruction as to the redemption of our *bodies* in the resurrection at the second coming of Christ. In Philippians 3:20,21 we read: “For our conversation [or citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who *shall change our vile body*, that it may be fashioned like unto *His glorious body*, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.” And this same truth is brought out in I John 3:2: “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.”

Then we also read this truth in Romans 8:22,23: “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and not only they, *but ourselves* also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, *even we ourselves groan within ourselves*, waiting for the adoption, to wit, *the redemption of our body*.” You ask, “When will this take place?”—In the resurrection, at the last trump, at the second coming of our blessed Lord. “Behold, I shew you a mystery; 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” (I Cor 15:51-53).

Yes, praise the Lord, there is coming a time when we shall have the final part of our salvation in Christ, and that is the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY, when we shall be made like Christ in that eternal state, the state of *glorification*. This, dear friend, is the reason God saves His people: to make them like Christ in spirit, soul and body. Romans 8:29 says He has predestinated us, “To be conformed to the image of His [dear] Son,” therefore “we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are *changed into the same image*, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Cor 3:18), and this change shall be

complete when we get our new bodies and dwell with Christ upon the new earth which will be our final and everlasting abode (Rev 21:1,2).

### **Changes In Our Human Body In Glorification**

Now let us look at the many changes that will take place in the HUMAN BODY of the believer in *glorification*; for as we showed you from Romans 8:22-23, we shall have a redeemed, human body in the resurrection. The first change has to do with *the activities of the body*. In I Corinthians 15:44 we are informed that our present body as now constituted is a natural body, and the future body will be spiritual, that is, it will be adapted to a life which will be wholly and completely controlled by the Spirit. Listen to the apostle Paul's statements in I Corinthians 15:42-44! "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It [the body] is sown in corruption; it is raised in *incorruption*: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in *power*: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a *spiritual body*. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

In our physical, natural body we are made up of spirit, soul and body (I Thess 5:23); in our spirit we are God-conscious; in our soul we are self-conscious; and in our body we are world-conscious. You see, our present body is so constituted that it is the efficient organ of the soul. This body is adapted to a life in which the activities of the will, the emotions and the reasons predominate in that these occupy the larger part of our world of sense, time and place as long as we are in this present world.

Now we know that the redeemed spirit of an individual should be the determining factor as to the life which we now live, as we walk in the Spirit of Christ. But since we are still in this body which has not yet been delivered from indwelling sin, the attacks of Satan, and the temptations of the world around us, we do not give the time to the worship of God, the study of His Word, prayer, or serving Him as our souls so long to do. For you see, there is the time spent in eating, drinking and sleeping which our body needs, and in making a living. All of these activities which make up our physical life now keep us from living and enjoying the continual conscious presence of our living God. I know the believer cries for that grace which will enable him to do all to the glory of God, whether he eats or drinks or sleeps or whatsoever he does; but oh how far short he falls of all of this because he is still in this unredeemed body! So he groans to be clothed upon with that new body which will be given him in that state of glorification.

### **OH WHAT A CHANGE!**

But, praise the Lord, in the future life, in the eternal state when we are glorified with Christ, the condition will be changed. Life as we know it now will be a thing of the past. We will then be entirely occupied with God in Christ, with His worship and service, for you see, there is no night there. Our bodies will then be adjusted to the new life. They will be changed so that they will be efficient instruments of the redeemed spirit. Just what the nature of this change will be, the Bible does not say, but we know from His Word that it shall take place.

### **THE NEW WORLD IN WHICH WE WILL LIVE**

Dear friend, listen to God's Word as it speaks of the new earth which shall be the final and everlasting abode of the righteous in their *glorified human bodies* in the eternal state! "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it...and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there...and there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face: and His name shall be in their foreheads, and there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev 21:22,25; 22:3-5). So we see that this change shall be a perfect one, and all of our time shall be given to worshipping our living God in whatever activities He has for us there upon the new earth.

### **NO SIN IN OUR GLORIFIED BODIES**



The next change which will take place in our physical body is that it will be made an *incorruptible one*, and thus an immortal one, a body like unto our blessed Lord. Listen to I Corinthians 15:53! “This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” You see, this present body has death, disease and decay in it. It may have many deformities; parts of it may have been taken away through an accident or an operation, but the future human body adapted for the Spirit will have no death in it, no weakness, deformity nor disease; the parts that have been removed will have been restored. Oh dear friend, what a blessed state awaits the believer in the resurrection in *glorification*, to have a body which can never die, in which there will be no indwelling sinful nature! What a blessed state it will be to have a body which will never become weary or exhausted in which there will never be any more pain! And the righteous shall live in this body of glorification upon the new earth for ever.

You ask, “Are these things true? does all of this really await the child of God in glorification?” Listen to God’s Word! “The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away...and there shall in no wise enter into it [the eternal state of glorification upon the new earth] any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life...And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” for ever and ever in the eternal state of glorification (Rev 21:3,4,27; 22:11).

Oh my friend, is not this gracious that God would do all this in Christ for poor hell-deserving sinners like you and me! Then is He not worthy of all our praise?

#### A BODY OF FLESH AND BONES

Let us go further! The next change that takes place in the body of the believer, who will have a body fitted for spiritual use, will have to do with the composition of the body. You see, our present body is made of flesh, blood and bones, and the life principle of our present body according to Leviticus 17:11 is in the blood. But in our future, glorified human body adapted for the Spirit, there will be a different life principle. The body will be devoid of blood, it will be a body of only flesh and bones. In speaking of this body, the apostle Paul in Philippians 3:21 tells us it will be a body like our blessed Lord’s. You see, when our blessed Lord appears to take us to Himself, He by His power, “Shall change our vile body [this body of sin, shame and humiliation] that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.”

The future body of the righteous will be like that which our Lord possesses now as our Head in the heavenlies; for He is there as the Son of Man in His human, resurrected body. He tells us something about His present human body in these words in Luke 24:39-45, spoken to His disciples after His resurrection: “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them His hands and His feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them. And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.” These words tell us some interesting things about our Lord’s body: There were the marks of the nails of the crucifixion still in His hands and His feet (John 20:27,28), even though His resurrected body was perfect. They were left there for the purpose of identification. And the body our Lord had after His resurrection was the same body He had previous to the cross and in which He had died, but was now *glorified*. He had entered into His glory as the Son of Man! So will *we* possess the same body in the future life which we have now, except it will be changed: made perfect like our blessed Lord’s. So since this is true, we will have the same facial expressions—however with all the

sin-wrinkles ironed out. Since this is true, we will know each other in the future life, even as we are known (I Cor 13:12,; Matt 17:4).

The next truth is that our Lord's body was a human body made up of flesh and bones. Remember the disciples handled His body with their hands, depending upon what their sense of touch would tell them. They knew that it was His body and that it was real; for they knew Him (John 20:26-28). Listen to I John 1:1 as the apostle John speaks upon this subject: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and *our hands have handled*, of the Word of life." He was speaking of none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

So we see that our Lord's body after the resurrection was a body that would respond to the sense of touch. It was a body that could be recognized, could speak, see, eat, and perform all the activities of a physical body; and praise the Lord, our bodies will be like His! Again, our Lord's body was a body made up of flesh and bones, but changed in composition. So our future bodies will be made of flesh and bones, the same flesh and bones we now have, but changed as to its composition.

#### A NEW LIFE PRINCIPLE

We see next that our Lord's body was without blood: all His precious blood had been shed at the cross for the full payment of all our sins, for we were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ (I Peter 1:18,19). Therefore since our Lord's resurrected body did not have any blood in it, it had to have a *new life principle*; so our future bodies will have a new life principle in them in the eternal state of glorification upon the new earth. This Life Principle will be *God the Holy Spirit Himself*, for our future body will be adapted to a life that is wholly and completely controlled by the Holy Spirit.

#### THE COVERING OF THE BELIEVER'S RESURRECTED BODY

Dear believer, have you ever given any thought as to how our redeemed, glorified, resurrected body will be clothed in the state of glorification? I have, and my heart is blessed to think that no longer will I wear my present clothing, for clothes are proof that I am a sinner because they cover my nakedness and shame which was brought on by the fall in Adam. Genesis 2:25 reads: "And *they were both naked*, the man and his wife, and *were not ashamed*." But Genesis 3:7 tells us that after they had sinned, "The eyes of them both were opened, and *they knew that they were naked*; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." Then in response to the Lord God's question, "Where art thou?" Adam said, "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and *I was afraid*, because *I was naked*; and I hid myself" (v 10). They were ashamed and afraid, therefore they sought to clothe their naked bodies. So you see, our clothing proves we are sinners; but in our new bodies we will be without sin and shame, redeemed by the grace of God in spirit, soul and body.

How then will our redeemed bodies be clothed in the glorified state? Listen to these Scriptures in Revelation that give us a little insight into this question. "He that overcometh, the same shall be *clothed in white raiment*...And *white robes* were given unto every one of them...a great multitude, which no man could number...stood...before the Lamb, *clothed with white robes*." And who "are these which are *arrayed in white robes*?...for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be *arrayed in fine linen, clean and white*: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev.3:5; 6:11; 7:9,13; 19:7,8).

Can we not see from these Scriptures that the redeemed body of the believer in the final state of glorification will be clothed with a *white garment of glory*, a light covering produced from within, from the holiness and righteousness of God in us? You see, WHITE always indicates holiness, purity, and perfection. I believe this is what Peter, James and John saw on the Mount of Transfiguration when they looked upon the transfigured Person of the Lord of glory: and He was "transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light" (Matt.17:2). They saw Him as He would be in His resurrected, glorified body.

You see, He could have gone from there into heaven, for He had lived a lifetime in perfection and sinlessness, something the first Adam had not done. But instead, He went to the cross and shed His precious blood so His people would share that glory with Him. Therefore we shall wear the *white garment of his glory*, His righteousness, His holiness, His purity, and His perfection for ever and ever.

As I said before, all of these Scriptures and the example of our blessed Lord indicate that in the life to come, in the eternal state, the state of glorification, which is the culmination of eternal life, believers will be clothed with a garment of glory, a light covering, which will be produced from within, given them by the Lord of glory Himself.

Now let us bring all we have studied together and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory as we receive the end of our salvation by faith. All we have learned in our study regarding the future body of the believer is this: it will be a body adapted to a spiritual life in which all one's time and activity have to do with God and the Lamb, His worship and service. It will be a body which will be incorruptible and immortal. It will be a body of flesh and bones, but with no blood. This body will have a new life principle, and its covering will be produced from within.

This is the end, or really the beginning of it all; for the eternal state of glorification is that for which our God is preparing His people. It began in the new birth by the Holy Spirit; it became a reality to us in conversion when, in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we began consciously to walk in the straight and narrow way. It is continued in this life in progressive sanctification and shall be fully realized in the eternal state of glorification with Christ in eternity. Surely I Corinthians 2:9 says it all: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." And as Revelation 21:5 states, "Behold, I make all things new."

Oh my friend, do you by the grace of God possess such a hope as we have described in these messages? a hope worked in your heart by the power of God's Spirit? for He is the *only One who can perform it*; I pray and trust He will!

So I close these studies on *eternal life* with this prayer: that the great God and Savior Jesus Christ will be lifted up and glorified in your heart and life as you read and meditate upon these words, and that your soul will have been blessed as you have considered with us this SO GREAT SALVATION provided for poor hell-deserving sinners. ✠

*These messages were delivered over THE WORD OF TRUTH RADIO NETWORK*

### **CHARACTER AND OFFICES OF CHRIST(Col 3:11)**

CHRIST is the eternal Rock, On which His church is built;The Shepherd of His little flock; The Lamb that took our guilt;Our Counsellor, our Guide, Our Brother, and our Friend;The Bridegroom of His chosen bride, Who loves her to the end.

He is the Son to free; The Bishop He to bless;The full Propitiation He; The Lord our Righteousness;His body's glorious Head; Our Advocate that pleads;Our Priest that prayed, atoned, and bled, And ever intercedes.

Let all obedient souls, Their grateful tribute bring,Submit to Jesus' righteous rules, And bow before the King.Our Prophet, Christ, expounds His and our Father's will;This good Physician cures our wounds, With tenderness and skill.

When sin had sadly made, 'Twixt wrath and mercy, strife,Our dear Redeemer dearly paid, Our ransom with His life.Faith gives the full release; Our Surety for us stood;The Mediator made the peace, And signed it with His blood.

Soldiers, your Captain own; Domestics, serve your Lord; Sinners, the Saviour's love make known; Saints,  
hymn the incarnate Word; The Witness sure and true, Of God's good will to men, The Alpha and the Omega  
too, The First and Last. Amen.

Poor pilgrims shall not stray, Who frighted flee from wrath; A bleeding Jesus is the Way, And blood tracks  
all the path. Christians in Christ obtain, The Truth that can't deceive; And never shall they die again, Who in  
the Life believe.—*Hart*