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**The Irrevocable Nature of Salvation as a Basis for
Trusting God with the Daily Affairs of Life**

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If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Romans 10:9-10, 13.

I. The Nature of Salvation	2
A. Unconditional Love of God Makes Our Salvation Irrevocable	2
B. Need for Salvation	3
C. Freedom of Choice.....	4
D. Consequence of Sin	5
E. The Loss of Salvation	6
II. Benefits of Salvation.....	8
A. Eternity	8
B. Forgiveness.....	10
C. Justification.....	13
III. Salvation as Displayed in Our Daily Affairs of Life	15
A. Presence of God.....	15
B. Promises Fulfilled.....	16
C. Liberation.....	17
Conclusion.....	20

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I. The Nature of Salvation

Salvation is the eternal gift God provided for mankind’s fallen state and is not merited upon good works, nor good behavior or attitude. Salvation is the Love God has for His people. As recorded in John 3:16 “God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” God’s love, mercy, and grace render eternal life, abundant life and eternal glory (Eph. 1:3-8; 2:4-10; 1Pet. 1:3-5).

The Greek word for “salvation” is *soteria* which denotes “deliverance, preservation, salvation. The root word is *soter* or *sozo* giving reference to save, protect, or a deliverer meaning “God or Christ; Savior.”² The word “salvation” conveys deliverance, protection, preservation, soundness, restoration, and healing” The Biblical doctrine of salvation includes redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, conviction, repentance, faith, regeneration, forgiveness, justification, sanctification, preservation, and glorification.

Salvation is the predestined plan orchestrated by God. God knew from the beginning the plans He had for His people (Jerem.1:5). I Tim. 2:4 and Rom. 8: 29-30 confirms these desires, “for those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. Those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.” The plan and purpose of God is secure through Him alone. Therefore, the plan God provided is through the work of His Son, Jesus that all would be saved as recorded in Romans 10:9-10.

A. Unconditional Love of God Makes Our Salvation Irrevocable

Irrevocable salvation refers to an assurance of everlasting, forever, never changing or ending salvation. The American Heritage College Dictionary defines irrevocable as “impossible to retract or revoke.”³ Based on the definition of irrevocable, salvation is an assurance that is not retractable or reversible. God grants salvation

² The New Strong’s Concise Concordance Vine’s Concise Dictionary, (Thomas Nelson Publishers 1999), 325

³ The American Heritage College Dictionary, 3rd. ed. (Houghton Mifflin Company. 1997), 719

out of love through His Son, Jesus Christ; the Epistle of Romans 11:29 records “for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” God does not change and will not change His mind (Ps. 102:27; Mal 3:6); He will not recall, annul or withdraw His grace from those who believe and accepts Jesus Christ as their Savior. This is the unconditional love of God.

B. Need for Salvation

All creation was made by God including humanity through Adam and Eve. God gave authority and dominion to Adam and Eve, commanding them not to eat from the “tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:17). Adam and Eve were disobedient to the commandment and sin enters because of their actions. Separation of mankind from the presence of God was the result of Adam and Eve’s disobedience. The intimate relationship that was once between God and mankind was broken.

God being omniscient, knowing all things, knew humanity was hopeless without Him. Therefore to renew or restore the relationship that was lost, God established the ultimate plan, salvation. Who is in need of salvation? Everyone; just as disobedience of the one man entered the world, we became sinners, spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1, 5). The relationship we would have known from beginning of time was destroyed through sin and death. Benedict J Groeschel, (1993) articulates that “sin robs us of our right to eternal happiness, frustrating the very meaning and goal of our existence. It darkens our intellect, weakens our will, throws our emotions into chaos, and produces loneliness and alienation.”⁴

As sinners in a broken state, we could not fix nor restore the relationship that was once established. We were guilty to sin, separated from the presence of God and due punishment would have been justified. The graciousness of God instituted a way for man to rectify sin. The process was known as atonement. The Hebrew word for atone, is *kapar* meaning “to cover over, atone, propitiate, pacify.”⁵ According to the Old Testament the Israelites made yearly sacrifices

⁴ Benedict J Groeschel, *Healing the Original Wound* (Servant Publications,1993), 23

⁵ The New Strong’s, 20

to atone for the sin. We find in the book of Leviticus instructions how the ritual sacrifices were performed to atone for sin, young bulls were slaughtered and blood was poured on the altar as sin offerings, to cover the sin of the people (Lev. 16:1-34; Num. 28:22; 29:5,11). What bulls or rams could not accomplish in the Old Testament was accomplished through the Son of God. The Greek word *katallage* is translated as “atonement” signifying “reconciliation” and the Greek word for reconciliation is *katallasso* denoting “to change, exchange, to change from enmity to friendship, to reconcile.”⁶ God instituted atonement and Christ became the sacrificial lamb. Atonement was accomplished for His people once for all; Jesus bore the punishment for the sins of the world, He exchanged positions or became the substitute for the sinful mankind. Reconciliation is accomplished through Jesus, because of Jesus we are reconciled to the Father (Romans 11:15; 2 Cor. 5:18-19). God Himself through Jesus removed the enmity and alienation that separates us from Him (Romans 5:1-11). God is responsible for drawing us to Himself. The Apostle Paul explains that God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thess. 5:9).

Salvation restores or reconciles our relationship with the Father a gift that is awarded to all who confess and believe in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. John 3:16 exemplifies God’s love for His people, by giving His only Son to die for others. God sacrificed His Son, Jesus for the sins of the world. However the believer’s responsibility is to accept the work of the Lord, it is by faith we receive salvation.

C. Freedom of Choice

Being given freedom of choice allows one to choose whether or not they will receive salvation. As written in the Genesis narrative, Adam and Eve had everything. They were in the Garden of Eden; everything was at their disposal except the tree of good and evil. God commanded them not to eat from that tree. Satan came in the form of a serpent and questioned Eve as to what God really commanded. Satan twisted what God had commanded, enticing Eve, she along with Adam became curious. As we examine the situation with Adam

⁶ The New Strong’s, 21

and Eve, it was not about the fruit, it was about obedience. The choice was to obey or disobey. This choice is still prevalent today and salvation is a choice that God provided. The reading of the Old Testament confirms that choice has been a responsibility of the people, Joshua spoke the same sentiment to the Israelites “if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve” (Joshua 24:15). Like Adam and Eve or the ancient Israelites, we desire possessions, places, and people who are forbidden, rather than being grateful for what we have. Regardless of the fact, the choice still remains and if we desire to have a relationship with the Father, we must believe in the work of His Son. Jesus is the only way to the Father, good works or deeds will not suffice for the plan God has established for our relationship with Him. Salvation is the plan that has been granted. God is not a bounty hunter; He does not put us in bondage, forced labor or coerce acceptance of Him. A. W. Tozer (1993) explains that “God never hurries. There are no deadlines against which He must work. Only to know this is to quiet our spirits and relax our nerves.”⁷ He allows us to choose—He gives free will.

D. Consequence of Sin

There is an old saying that nothing is free—even freedom cost something. Too often we take our freedom of choice for granted—we give little thought to the consequences of our decisions. Salvation is based upon the choices and decision we make. Yes, Satan deceived Adam and Eve, but they had a choice. Perhaps Adam and Eve did not know the possible outcome of their actions—yet let us think about that; God did say “the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Certainly, they had an idea, something might happen, as we do today. The reading of Genesis 3:7-12 illustrates that the consequences of disobedience brought forth knowledge of evil; shame and guilt; desire for concealment (trying to hide from God); fear of God’s presence; loss fellowship with God; refusal of personal responsibility, and shifting blame.

Consequences may be positive or negative, good or evil, right or wrong; and may even be life or death. Consequences are not swayed

⁷ A. W. Tozer, *Pursuit of God* (Christian Publications 1993), 101

in one direction; if that was the case choices would not be necessary. However, in most cases consequences are known, especially negative ones. They may result in broken relationships, devastations to physical health, loss of a job or a financial catastrophe. All consequences evolve from the choices made and affect more than one individual or situation. They affect family members, spouses, children, significant others, neighbors, coworkers, community, and church members as well as our livelihood. The results of Adam and Eve's actions was not completed with them, it affected generations. We are all part of God's creation (Ex. 9:29; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 24:1; Ps. 50:12; Ps. 89:11). We live, learn, suffer, and grow in similar fashions. Negative choices or consequences can cause us to deviate from the course God has laid out. We become ingrained in personal desires, rather than others. The Bible strongly teaches to put aside selfish desires; what gratifies self only and to consider others more than self (I Cor. 10:24; Phil. 2:3, 4). In many cases it is difficult to consider others when the need within is greater, a need to be loved and accepted. It is impossible to fulfill an internal need without the power of God and His Spirit. The Spirit of God empowers us with strength, guidance, and direction to meet daily challenges. Challenges or consequences are encountered every day; they may even enhance our lives. All challenges and/or consequences are not obstacles; the obstacle is often how we choose to handle them. Nevertheless, our decisions do not destroy our salvation. God is faithful—Salvation is granted through the sacrifice and crucifixion of Jesus. Yes, life situations and challenges can be overwhelming, but the power of the Blood of Jesus gives us sustaining strength (Rom. 5:6-11).

E. The Loss of Salvation

Salvation the eternal gift is everlasting. The responsibility of the recipient of the gift is faith, believing in Jesus and the work of the cross. One may choose not to believe and refuse the gift but if you believe salvation is granted; it is sealed through the Spirit and in the terms of Apostle Paul is guaranteed (II Cor. 1:21-22; 5:5).

Un-confessed and/or un-forgiven sin will cause separation in our relationship with God. The Old Testament Hebrew word for sin is *awen* meaning “iniquity; vanity; sorrow;” another term is *asham*

meaning “sin; guilt; trespass offering.” The Greek word is *hamartia* meaning “missing of the mark.”⁸ R. C. Sproul, (1992) defines his version of the frequently used terms of omission and commission as; omission is failure to do what God commands and commission is when we commit actions prohibited by God.⁹ Sin causes disharmony, uncertainty and/or questions the assurance of our salvation. The Apostle Paul shares the dilemma that is often experienced “the things we should not do, we are doing them and the things we should do we are not doing them, the flesh is warring against what is right before the Lord” (Rom. 7: 19-20). R.C. Sproul, (1992) attains that people in this state consciously wrestles with salvation because of sin.¹⁰ Unconfessed sin and un-forgiveness creates a sense of uneasiness, restlessness, bitterness, resentment and/or anger.

Regardless of feelings that lead to bitterness, resentment or anger, salvation gives us the strength and courage to forgive and to love one another. The Gospel of John speaks to our relationship toward one another. Chapter 15 describes our relationship with Jesus as the vine and the husbandman but it goes on to demand that we love each other as Jesus loved us and gave His life for us. The command is great, it encumbers that we as believers (who believe in the plan of Salvation) examine ourselves and do some self sacrifices and self denial. In a society/world of today where possessions are plentiful and self gratification is priority, others are generally of less concern. An attitude that gives little concern tends to marginalize the needs of others and makes it difficult to say “no” to self, especially when we think our heart deserves it. I Corinthians 10:13 emphasize that “everything is permissible but not everything is beneficial, everything is permissible but not everything is constructive.” Understanding the perplexity of this statement; one can have anything in actuality, but is it beneficial. Paul warns us not to think more highly than we ought (Rom. 12:3; Gal. 6:3) the love that was granted through grace is the same love we ought to grant to others. If God has commanded us to love one another and we do not we are committing sin against what

⁸ The New Strong’s 344-346

⁹ R. C. Sproul, *Essential Truths Of The Christian Faith* (Tyndale House Publishers 1992), 143

¹⁰ Sproul, 151

God has commanded. Material possessions cannot be the focus of our lives but rather the love that was commanded (Jn. 15:12).

Everything is not beneficial or constructive for our lives, our family or our society. Mistakes occur because of envy and strife toward people and/or possessions. The Word teaches “thou shall not covet” meaning longing or desiring what others have, whether it is a job, family, position or ministry, covetous can perpetuate a life of deception. Desiring earthly possessions that are not beneficial or constructive brings confusion, fear, and defeat in our lives and to those we love, but even these things will not cause us to lose salvation. Psalms 146:3-5 encourages us not to put our trust in earthy possession they will soon fade away, instead trust God. Our Salvation is grounded in the work of the Lord. Romans 8:1 declare that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.” Our ultimate goal as a Christian is to seek and follow Christ; and allow Him to fulfill our desires according to His will. As written in Hebrews 11:6 “...He rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

II. Benefits of Salvation

A. Eternity

The most important reward/benefit of Salvation is the assurance of life after death. Perhaps life after death means nothing now, but as life’s journey approaches the end, whether there is longevity or not, curiosity emerges. Living is temporary, dying is a certainty, and there is no favoritism, regardless of what we believe. However, for the believers John 3: 36a reads “whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.” Eternity is life that goes on forever with our Master. This gift of eternity is not predicated on good deeds, works, economic status, ethnicity or gender. Knowing there is an afterlife when this earthly journey is over brings an exuberant joy. Salvation that God offers gives an assurance in the kingdom (Jn. 5:24; 6:40, 47).

Salvation is not restricted or limited for eternity; it is relevant for the present. Jesus came that we would have abundant life (Jn. 10:10). The assurance of salvation is manifested in everyday life. As previously stated, life offers new challenges, struggles, obstacles, opportunities, advantages, and disadvantages. Dealing with daily

challenges depends on our attitude toward life. Our perception determines how we view the various challenges. Some view life from the perception of a half empty glass or a half-full glass. Others would even question does it really matter either way the glass is only half filled. The analogy relates to how we perceive our surroundings, ourselves, and others, is it from the bottom-up rather than from the top down?

The perceptions of how we visualize is important to how we conceptualize situations. Curtis and Eldredge, (1997) describes it as the external story of our lives.¹¹ So often we look at our situation from the bottom up thinking we are at the bottom and there is no way to reach the top. The situation is viewed as passive, worthless or even hopeless. We struggle daily wondering how the day is going to progress; whether or not there is going to be rain, snow, or if the sun will come out. We give great thought to the possibility if we have everything we need to meet today's necessities. More often than not we worry about superficial matters rather than the benefits of God's grace. Regardless of the challenges, obstacles or decisions, Matthew 6: 34 records not to worry about tomorrow, there is enough problems in one day than to worry about what will happen tomorrow. God is in control of them all. We have the assurance that He will provide, protect, and give us what we need including wisdom if we ask. The Epistle of James assures us that if we lack anything God will provide generously if we ask (Js. 1:5). The benefit of salvation is our knowledge of God through Jesus the Christ, relying on Him.

In everything we must trust God, not on our own understanding regarding daily issues, but rely on God to lead and direct us (Pr. 3:5). Salvation is the essence of our faith. Therefore, when disparity arises, surely it will, do not become weary, assurance is in the hope that is founded on the promises of God. He will never forsake nor leave us (Deut. 31:6, 8; Heb.13:5). He is the strength of our salvation (Ps. 27: 1-3; 140:7). Salvation is more than just being saved to spend time in eternity; it is for the here and now; the present. Where we fall short, we will attain strength through the power of the Holy Spirit. Our faith is tested daily through trials and tribulations. The question is how are

¹¹ Curtis and Eldredge, *The Sacred Romance, Drawing Closer To The Heart of God*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers 1997), 5

they often handled; directly, indirectly, positive or negatively. We can choose to deal with them individually, pass it off to someone else or even to ignore it. Nothing will stop the trial or tribulations of life. As believers we have the confidence and assurance that the Father through His Son and His Spirit is present to guide, lead, and direct us into all truth if we trust Him.

B. Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the awesome benefit that God has granted His people. Regardless of what one might think everyone is in need of forgiveness, whether we are believers or not. The words of Alexander Pope are “to err is human, to forgive, divine.”¹² Romans 3:23 confirms that we have sinned. Sin is sin; there is no large or small sin. When we examine sin what and who’s scale are we using; that of men or God’s? Men tend to want to justify sins, when God has already clarified that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. So if one person commits murder and another a lie, are we to say that one or the other is not a sinner. No, that is contrary to the Word of God, sin is sin. God is the justifier; He will determine the outcome of the sin. God in His sovereignty provided a way for the sinner through Jesus the Christ.

Believers, “if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (I Jn. 1:9). God does not want us to be lost, for the wages of sin is death. Jesus came to give life through His death and resurrection. God made a way for His people to be forgiven, therefore the responsibility is ours. Too often we say we want to be forgiven but we do not want to accept the responsibility or admit our fault. Sin will cause separation from God, according to the words spoken in Ps. 66:18 “If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.” I John 1:9 also says that if we say we have not sinned we are liars. Confession is generally insignificant because of anger, seeking revenge or believing that nothing will be accomplished. C.S. Lewis points out that “Forgiveness does not mean excusing.”¹³ Forgiveness is not about

¹²Pope, Alexander, <http://www.1-love-quotes.com/quote/931628>, (access 4 March, 2011)

¹³ Lewis, Famous Quotes, http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/c_s_lewis/quotes, (access 4 March, 2011)

someone else, it is about the individual (me). Failure to forgive hinders growth and healing. The individual or person becomes stagnant. Valuable time is spent thinking about the hurt/pain/sin; how, why, what, when it happened, be it a lie, fornication, stealing, an abusive situation, a divorce, an abortion, or injustice. A person will become consumed in the pain rather than forgiveness.

Unforgiveness will lead to destruction. It will destroy ambitions, aspirations, and in some cases lead to isolation and depression and may result in death. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in men and youth according to CDC Reports.¹⁴ Women tend to make more attempts, but frailty is high among men, especially among White males. Reasons vary for suicide from financial problems, mental disorder, family history, and history of attempts, not being accepted by loved ones or peers, or being abused physically or mentally by someone. Suicide is the result of one doing harm to oneself.

Unfortunately, the pain becomes insulated and is internalized as a problem. The problem becomes too deep to handle alone, yet we refuse to discuss it or address the issue with God. Suicide can occur in many ways, for example poison, hanging, gun fire, or starvation. Recently, it was telecast that a young mother drove herself and her three children in the Hudson Bay River, killing herself and the children (April 2011). This situation emphasizes that everyone is dealing with various issues of life, they are prevalent. No one is exempt from life tragedies. We need one another; we need to share the pain. We cannot help each other if we isolate ourselves from one another. Loving your neighbor begins with being connected, being concerned about the well being of another. We must learn to accept each other; we are part of the body of Christ. When we accept one another it brings honor and praise to God (Rom.15:7).

Another situation occurred with a young lady who described her emotional state as one on a roller coaster; she was ready to commit suicide. She immediately began to cry; explaining that her husband

14 Suicide Data, 2007. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/suicide/SuicideDataSheet.pdf>, (access 4 March, 2011).

divorced her. “He just brought the papers and gave them to me. What am I to do?” she cried, “we made a vow to care for each other I depended on him.” She was devastated as well as angry. Again, many times we hold others hostage for their mistakes, and they believe they are useless and guilty.

Yes, marriages are meant to last a lifetime, until death, but in some cases divorce happens. When it happens judgmental attitudes arises and casting of stones starts; the stones that should have been left on the ground or in the box. Divorce hurts the family. Parents separate, children are face with choosing who is right or wrong without knowing what is really happening. Devastation affects everyone, the course of blaming becomes paramount and crucifying. Feelings of guilt and inadequacy invade every thought; often to a point of destruction, isolation or hopelessness. Jesus told the accuser in the parable about the adulterous woman, anyone without sin cast the first stone, and no one could throw stones because all have sinned (Jn. 8:3). God forgives. Jesus forgave from the cross. “Father they do not know what they are doing” (Lk. 23:34). Salvation through Jesus gives power to render forgiveness. Forgiveness is difficult but forgiveness is the solution to our problems, whether we are those who hurt or if we are those who caused the hurt. Michael E. McCullough, Steven J. Sandage and Everett L. Worthington Jr. (1997) articulate that “forgiveness calms turbulence, dampens the need to lash out at others, keeps families together and maintains harmony in relationships. Forgiveness is a place of calm in an angry sea. Forgiveness is often sought but less often found.”¹⁵

Life is full of choices some are more difficult than others, nevertheless decisions are made. Forgiveness is a choice but more than that, it is a command declared by God to forgive as you have been forgiven (Matthew 6:12; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13), it is difficult but forgiveness is the answer. Forgiveness does not change the situation, nor does it free one of their responsibilities. It does however release the one who is hurt, from anger, bitterness, and pain, it generates

¹⁵ McCullough, Michael E., Steven J. Sandage and Everett L. Worthington Jr., *To Forgive is Human: How To Put Your Past In The Past* (Illinois. Inter Varsity Press 1997), 15

healing. The gift of forgiveness is for every believer through the work of Jesus. C.S. Lewis quoted “To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in us.”¹⁶

C. Justification

Justification is an outstanding gift of salvation. The Greek term for justification is *dikaiosis* that denotes “the act of pronouncing righteous, acquittal.” The verb term is *dikaioo* meaning “to deem, to be right” “to justify” “to show to be right or righteous.”¹⁷ We as sinners were guilty and deserving of punishment, but we were deemed righteous through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Apostle Paul ensures the readers in the Epistle of Romans, beginning in chapter 3 through chapter 8 that justification begins and ends with the work of Christ. Justification is being freed for something we did without paying the penalty. RC Sproul (1992) summarizes justification as “an act of God whereby He declares unjust sinners to be just after He has imputed to them the righteousness of Christ. No one can earn justification by good works. Faith is the necessary condition to receive the imputation of the merits of Christ. Justification requires a living and real faith, not a mere profession of faith.”¹⁸

The Believers goal is reconciliation with the Father. Reconciliation is imputed through justification and righteousness. Without righteousness and justification, reconciliation is unattainable, for unjust sinners. No one can stand before the Father in sin. Throughout the Bible, both Old and New Testament declares His Holiness (Josh. 24:19; Ps. 99:3, 5, 9; I Sam. 2:2; 6:20; Isa. 6:3; Matt. 6:9; Luke 1:49; Rom. 1:4). He is Holy and declares Holiness. I Peter 1:13-16 reads:

“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’”

¹⁶ Lewis, Famous Quotes

¹⁷ The New Strongs, 202-203

¹⁸ Sproul, 189

The term holy as described in the Old Testament is known as *qadosh* meaning “devoted” or “dedicated,” especially as it relates to a particular place such as holy ground (Exod. 3:5; Josh. 5:15; Acts 7:33). God spoke to Moses and told him to take off his shoes for the ground is holy. The verb form of holy is *qadesh* meaning “to be sanctify” such as the spices described in Exodus 30:27. The noun term is *qodesh* referring to “holiness, holy thing, sanctuary,” New Testament Greek term for holy is *hagiasmos* referring to holiness or sanctification.¹⁹ The America College Dictionary (1993) defines holiness is a state of being holy, sacred, divine power, and regarded with or worthy of worship or revered.²⁰ Holiness denotes separation from ungodliness. As discussed earlier, sin separated us from a Holy Father. God through His love, mercy and grace redeemed us and deemed us righteous through His Son giving access to the Father.

Salvation positioned an alignment for forgiveness, righteousness, justification and reconciliation. Deliverance from sin is given when punishment was deserved. Jesus became the sin offering, the living sacrifice for us. Justification is grounded in love. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to die for all (Jn. 3:16). He, who knew no sin, became the atonement for all (II Cor. 5:21). Jesus paid the price for the sins of the world. He was crucified, buried, and resurrected; meaning He rose from the dead (Matt. 27:53; Mk. 16:6; Lk. 24:6-7). This is a personal declaration for all believers, although Jesus died for all we can only give an account for ourselves (Rom.14:12). Therefore, we embrace the work Jesus accomplished as an individual. He died for past, present and future sins committed and now He lives, giving life abundantly. When we embrace the work of the cross; the Holy Spirit empowers us with strength and delivers us, and we become new creatures in Christ; converted and regenerated. The physical appearance is unchanged but the state in which things are viewed is changed. The inner being is being transformed; evil thoughts, irrational behaviors and bad or selfish attitudes are dying. Apostle Paul’s prayer conveys an encouraging message even today:

“I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts

¹⁹ Strongs,

²⁰ *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 3rd. Ed. (Houghton Mifflin Company 1993), 649

through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:16-19).

Transformation is the process whereby mankind is transformed to the image of the Father through His Son (Gen. 1:26). Groeschel, (1992) articulates that it is the work of the believer to cooperate in restoring his or her inner being to the divine image.²¹ The aspiration of the believer is to be Holy as He is Holy that is the process of sanctification. Sanctification is surrendering our will to the Father’s will, it is the renewing of the mind and being set apart (II Cor. 3:4-18). Justification is granted by faith; faith that believes and accepts that Jesus paid the price on the cross and has set us apart for Himself. We are redeemed, we acquired righteousness through Christ, and we were justified and sanctified that our relationship with a Holy Father would be reconciled.

III. Salvation as Displayed in Our Daily Affairs of Life

A. Presence of God

Earlier it was mention that there is an eternal reward for our salvation. The reward is present in the abundant life that Jesus ensures. Life here on earth, is meant to be lived in the fullness of the LORD. Matt. 6:10-11 reads “Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread,” this scripture acknowledges that God will provide for our needs. He gives us a world rich with resources. Therefore, everything about us and around us belongs to the LORD (Ps. 24:1; 50:12; I Cor.10:26). The Gospel of John 1:3 affirms that “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” When we observe our surroundings, we see the creation of God. Everything on earth and above, the clouds, the rain, the snow, the trees, the flowers, the grass, the sea, the birds, the animals, the homes where we live, the automobiles, the food we consume, the water we drink, everything falls under God’s creation. God’s presence is ever before us. We do not worship the creations; however, we worship the creator. When

²¹ Groeschel, 108

we smell a flower, know that God placed the aroma in the flower. When we touch a leaf, we touch the hand of God through His creation. He created the universe for His people and gave life to all things, what an awesome God.

His presence is ever before us. The Psalmist declares:

“Where can I go from Your Spirit: or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me” (Psalm 139:7-9).

God’s presence surrounds us. Many believers will say “I just want to be in His presence.” Stop, look around, He is present, recognize Him; He is not limited to our thoughts or ways. He has promised to never leave nor forsake us. When trust is placed in the LORD; we can declare as the Psalmist where can I go from Your Spirit. Psalms 125:1 encourages the believers that “those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.” Verse two goes on to say “as the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people from this time forth and forever.”

B. Promises Fulfilled

God has promised to be with us; wherever we are He is with us. His promises are not clichés, idle words nor are they haphazard (Matt. 5:18). As believers, we can be certain that God will fulfill His promise. God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations (Gen. 15:18; 17:2, 7). Although Abraham did not live to see the nations, the promise was fulfilled. Abraham birthed sons who had sons, from those nations were born. A promise was made with Noah that the earth would not be destroyed again with a flood. God proclaimed to Noah that the rainbow would be an everlasting reminder of His promise to all living creatures on the earth (Gen. 9:11, 16). God is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. The assurance is God cares for us and regardless of our situation, regardless of how we mess up or how long it takes to accept His promise. God is unchangeable.

Salvation is the avenue to a lifelong love relationship with the Savior and nothing can take that away. The Savior, Jesus the Christ is love and His love is unconditional. Acceptance is learning to be

obedient and dedicated to His ways. When we read the parable in Luke 15:11-31, the son thought his days were going to be the best days of his life, like many of us think today. He did not expect to run out of money nor did he expect his friends to leave him. He probably thought that he would be better off on his own than with his father until he experienced difficulties. The difficulties made him realize he had made a mistake, he repented and returned to his father. Like the young man we must realize that when we mess up, repent, and return to the Father, who waits for us with open arms. He will love us as a loving father, who comforts and give us security (II Cor.1:3-4). He will nurture us as a mother to a newborn child, providing protection and provision (Ps. 116:6; I Cor. 10:13). Like a father, God wants us to be obedient to our established relationship. Life is a journey, and on the journey we will encounter pitfalls, bumps, and curves, everything will not go the way we may want or even expect, but it should not drive us into disobedience. Matthew 6:34; 13:22; Luke 12:29 encourage us not to worry about tomorrow, be content in each day. Do not become weary; thinking God will punish us for missing the mark, continue to strive for obedience.

Obedience is not predicated on personal things, but on the willingness or desire to be obedient. There may be times when we fall, or miss the mark or we do not measure up (Prov. 24:16). Life sometimes becomes unbearable, as though the load is too heavy; God is our hope and assurance. His love sustains, nurtures and strengthens us to endure. He will direct others to help us along the way. God is faithful, compassionate and His promises are true. Obedience is a lifestyle committed to the Father.

C. Liberation

Both Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:18 proclaim that Jesus came to set the captives free, those in bondage. Bondage is the state of being bound physically, mentally or spiritually, as enslavement.²² Bondage may be in the form of slavery, being indebted to another person or slavery to sin. In keeping with the New Testament, the scripture informs us that we are slaves to the one we obey, whether sin or obedience (Rom. 6:16). Bondage may be an individual's fear resulting

²² Strong's, 37

from guilt, shame, hurt or past failures. Bondage may be feelings of inferiority incurred from others through emotional, sexual or physical abuse and abandonment; believing they are unworthy or unacceptable. In John 8:32, 36 we read, “the truth shall make you free, and if the Son sets you free you will be free indeed.” Believers of Christ are set free from bondage, free from persecution, free from oppression, free from feelings of inferiority, free from self-destruction, and lack of self-worth. Jesus came that we could be free from the penalty of sin (Rom. 6:7).

Freedom from bondage begins with recognition. Professor and Author Terry Wardle, (2005) of Ashland Theological Seminary articulate wholeness/ freedom through Inner Healing Prayer.²³ The Bible teaches us to always pray but Inner Healing Prayer reaches beyond our every day or routine prayers. It is a prayer of deliverance, comfort, restoration, healing and freedom. Inner Healing Prayer is guided and directed by the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:13; Rom. 8:26, Ps. 46:1; 124:8). The first step is to recognize something is wrong.²⁴ To have change or transformation admitting our weakness, limitations or hurts is the beginning of freedom. Once we are able to identify that we are not right within ourselves then we are able to move forward. After recognizing something is wrong, we have to admit that we are powerless and cannot do it alone, God has given us a Counselor.²⁵ Trust Him, listen to Him, remember nothing is impossible with God, “He has provided all one needs to live free from emotional bondage and live victoriously.”²⁶ Allow the Holy Spirit to speak or move upon your heart, then express whatever is revealed to the Lord, regardless of pain, hurt or embarrassed emotions. Francois de Fenelon expresses that we ought to “let God act in our lives in whatever way He chooses. He points out that the darkness and uncertainty of our life’s path must bring us to rest peacefully in Him.”²⁷ Sometimes the cause is imbedded so deep from our past that we do not realize the

²³ Terry Wardle, *Wounded how to find wholeness and Inner Healing in Christ*. (Leaf Wood Publishers, 2005), 24-41

²⁴ Wardle, 24

²⁵ Wardle, 27

²⁶ Wardle, 30

²⁷ Francois de Fenelon, *The Seeking Heart*. (Christian Books Publishing House, 1992)161

severity.²⁸ God knows everything about us, do not be afraid lay it out before Him. Finally, ask for forgiveness and move according to the will of the Father.²⁹ Moving may mean asking forgiveness, forgive others, and/or to forgive and accept forgiveness of self. Whatever circumstances that caused the pain, sin or bondage the Father is in the midst, He is waiting for us to admit, receive and forgive. Freedom comes with acknowledgment and acceptance as the Father leads.

In the Gospel of John, the Samaritan woman met Jesus at the well, she had a history of having several husbands, and the one she was with was not hers. This woman was going about her business, nothing unusual. She was alone, isolated from the community and doing her daily chores obtaining water. The Samaritan woman did not realize her own situation, because the story tells us that after talking with Jesus she was amazed and went running telling everyone who she had encountered. She was liberated from her past, from the isolation, from the hurt of being alone, and from trying to prove who she was with different men. Jesus had set her free (Jn. 4:4-42).

The issues of life that persisted were displayed through her relationships. Regardless of the reasons or causes of bondage, like this woman fulfillment is found in different ways. For her it was relationships with men. For many of us it is through job satisfaction, social status, and financial wealth, being accepted and approved by others. We have also found fulfillment through relationships. A quotation of C. S. Lewis is “the past does not have to be your prison. You have a voice in your destiny. You have a say in your life. You have a choice in the path you take.”³⁰

Brent Curtis and John Eldredge, (1997) expresses environmental satisfaction or an external source does not fulfill an internal need for freedom.³¹ Relationships did not fulfill the woman’s internal need. True satisfaction and freedom is achieved with Jesus. The encounter with Jesus touched her heart and she was transformed. She was liberated from the bondage of her situation; she found mercy, freedom, confidence and self assurance. Romans 8:1-2 ensures that

²⁸ Wardle, 31, 34

²⁹ Wardle, 37

³⁰ Lewis, Famous Quotes

³¹ Brent Curtis and John Eldredge, 6-9

there is no condemnation to those in Christ. Liberation is freedom to be accepted and accept others. Yes, there is a cost to our liberation, but the price has already been paid. Jesus paid it all; He shed His blood that we would have freedom in Him. Our responsibility is to accept that Jesus paid the price. Accept what has already been done, share your testimony. Tell others like the woman at the well about the good news of Jesus. Sharing testimonies is the process of baring witness to others about the bondage and how to overcome, whether it is chemical addiction, being abused or being oppressed. James Cone, Professor at Union Theological Seminary, (1993) shares “Testimony is an integral part of the Black religious tradition. It is the occasion where the believer stands before the community of faith in order to give account of the hope that is in him or her.”³²

Our testimony is our hope to others that Jesus can bring liberation to every situation. We may have been through extreme circumstances but freedom came with an encounter with Jesus. Being in the presence of the Almighty and knowing that He is ever present is ultimate Liberation/Freedom. J. Hampton Keathley, III (2004) reinforces that “a sinner's standing before God is permanently and completely settled when he believes the gospel. The believer is justified and given a standing before God that can never be taken away. Our state may vary greatly at different times but never our standing.”³³ The believer is rooted in the Love of God, who is the author and finisher of our faith. Salvation is irrevocable.

Conclusion

The nature of salvation lies in the essences of God and His Holiness. Man was in a broken state because sin entered the world through Adam and Eve. The intimate relationship that was once established was damaged and broken. Man was separated from the presence of God because of disobedience. Because of sin, mankind could not prevail in the presence of God. God knew from the beginning that mankind needed to be transformed from sinfulness to

³² James Cone, *My Soul Looks Back* (Orbis Books, 1993), 11

³³ J. Hampton Keathley III, 2004. Soteriology-The Doctrine of Salvation. http://bible.org/byauthor/23/J_Hampton_Keathley

righteousness. To restore the relationship between mankind and Him, God gave His Son.

Atonement rectified sin. In the Old Testament, animal sacrifices such as bulls were used to atone for sin. However, animal sacrifices were temporary. In the New Testament, Jesus became the sacrificial Lamb. The ultimate atonement; no other sacrifices were needed after Jesus. Salvation is God's love for the world; He so loved that He gave His only Son, Jesus Christ to die for the sins of the world. In the words of Groeschel (1993), "Christ came to bring us eternal salvation by our adoption through Him as children of God. Jesus did this by obedience—taking on our miserable, fallen human condition."³⁴ A separated relationship was restored through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The only payment required for salvation is faith; believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is the Son of God, crucified, buried, and resurrected for the sins of the world. John 14: 6 emphasizes that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Him. God through His Spirit moves upon the heart and mind of His people who enables them to believe the work Jesus did on their behalf. Salvation is a gift of love from God and is irrevocable, Jesus died and was resurrected therefore no one can replace or undo what has already been done.

Salvation is not complicated nor is it meaningless. Everything that surrounds life is predicated upon an individual's belief. Once we acknowledge and accept Jesus and the work He did on our behalf, the Word of God declares we are saved. We are saved, forgiven, and made righteous from the moment we confess our belief. God's Spirit dwells within our inner being; we are being transformed daily into a new image, God's image. Therefore, all that is within that is not born of God we should surrender to God that conversion may evolve and that we may live an abundant life in harmony and peace with one another. As believers share the good news, what God, has done through His Son, Jesus the Christ. Salvation restored our fellowship with the Father, allowing us to enter His presence with confidence so we can receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (Heb. 4:16).

³⁴ Groeschel, 76

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