Life in the Som A Journal of Grace and the In-Christ Message

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> Founder/Editor: Warren Litzman Executive Editor: Robbie Litzman Assistant Editor: Teresa Ferraro

PRODUCTION OFFICES

Manager: Robbie Litzman P.O. Box 170307, Dallas, Texas 75217-0307 Phone (214)391-0488, Fax (214)391-5035

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BOTSWANA Dave and Marge Venter P.O. Box 623 Mahalapye Botswana

AUSTRALIA Jenny Asibal clf_australia@optusnet.c om.au Preston, Victoria 3072 Australia

ENGLAND Lance and Sharon Hayes lance_hayes1@msn.com 07906688667

GERMANY Dr. Mark Asante masante@excite.com Grabenstr. 31 Essen 45141 Germany HARARE, ZIMBABWE Margaret Fleming P O Box 66526 Kopje Harare, Zimbabwe MALAWI Lovemore Kadam'manja PO Box 40680 Kanengo Lilongwe 4 Malawi PHILIPPINE ISLANDS/ASIA Roger Bodary

rbodary@hotmail.com Bangladesh USA PRISON MINISTRY

Mike and Debbie Robinson Christ-life Fellowship P.O. Box 170307 Dallas, Texas 75217-0307

Editorial

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RELIGION AND THE TRUTH

By Warren Litzman

I want to be careful to not strain at a gnat and then swallow a camel, using the old Scriptural adage. But the idea that religion, any religion, has the truth must be investigated. There are two things to investigate.

One, I must define what I mean by religion. To me a religious person is anyone doing anything within himself to please God. I base this conclusion on Galatians 2:20. Here Paul says that "I", the old way of living, am crucified with Christ; there is a new life, and the new life is Christ. The new life has come out of the death of the old life. Consequently, this believer has been re-birthed, born again, and the new life in the believer is Christ. It is conclusion that mv Christianity is made up of rebirthed humans with Christ as their life.

Two, if my first point is so, then religious acts are those that are devoid of Christ as the do-er, and anything anybody does to make himself righteous, noble or ignoble, could be called religious. The point I want to make, however, is that religion is basically made up of human effort, ignoring the Christ that is in every re-birthed believer, and this brings me to the fact of what is truth?

You see, every religious person believes they have the truth about what they believe, and they believe every thing they do is a religious act. Most all religions are based on people who felt good about what they were doing and passed it on to others who got the same feeling. But, the fact that they have the truth, a Godtruth, about what they are doing, can never be because truth, Bible truth, is based on what Christ did and never on what some believer, even a very righteous believer, said or did.

So, what has happened in religion is that some very righteous person, or persons, took the Bible and saw that the things they believed, or the things they were doing, had ample Scripture to back them up, and they formed their own doctrines. They are sure they are right because they have Scriptures to prove it. To them, what they believe is the truth, and in time it is the only truth. Actually, many of the things they believe are good, but the problem with religion is that it is lacking in the real truth.



Now what is the truth? The Scriptures have not been silent in what is truth. In John 14:6, Christ plainly says "I am the truth." Christ, nor the Bible, offers truth. Truth is not a religious thing. Truth is not a special revelation people receive. Truth is not a generalization of all the Scriptures. Truth does not belong to Israel, and truth does not belong to the earthly kingdom message. Hopefully, you are getting my point. Truth is a person, Christ, and unless a believer knows Christ as his life, he can never have the truth. At this point, religion takes the things of Christ—His works, His words and His historyand draws from them what it wants to believe about Him and calls this truth. Thus, many religious groups have some good things about Christ, but these things are not truth. It is Christ in the believer that constitutes having the truth. The Apostle Paul never veers from the point of every idea and truth he presents is "in Christ." He uses this term, "In Christ," over 146 times.

John 1:17 says, "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." What Christ was

KNOWING CHRIST

By Linda Kenebrew

I have had Christ as my Life for over 20 years, but I am just recently coming to the realization of what it truly means to be born again. Our heavenly Father is so gracious and patient. He waits for us to come to the end of who we think we are. When we see our efforts are to no avail and we want Him to come to our rescue, He graciously reveals His Son in us by His precious Holy Spirit.

Over the past few years, He has revealed Christ as my peace. No matter what trials, tribulations, hurts, pains or crises I might be experiencing, He is my calm in the storm. I tend to deal with situations and circumstances by attending pity parties. Some time ago, I was attending them quite regularly. One day, I realized this was not Christ, and I asked my Father to take these pity parties away. First of all, He doesn't need my pity parties, nor my failures, weaknesses, short-comings, or sins. (He doesn't need my talents, good deeds, time or money either.) Second, Ι can decline the invitation to such events. Third, when I saw the uselessness of such vanities, I was willing to

give them up, and this created a void which my Father then filled with the revelation of Christ by His Holy Spirit. This is when He began to reveal His love within and through me.

As Jesus of Nazareth used parables to teach His truths, so today the Holy Spirit uses what we know to reveal Christ. To those who are plumbers, He will use plumbing terminology; to those who are in the medical field, He'll use medical terminology. For housewives, He'll use housekeeping and nurturing terms. In this third-dimensional world, I am an elementary school teacher, and I've learned that discipline is an important aspect of education. One needs to be firm and consistent. At times, however, my colleagues and I questioned how firm one needs to be by saying, "You might want to lighten up. These kids don't know what they're doing." That quote quickened me to the time when Jesus, hanging on the cross, said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." This angered me! They had mocked Jesus, spat on Him, beat Him beyond recognition with a whip with sharp edges attached to the strands,

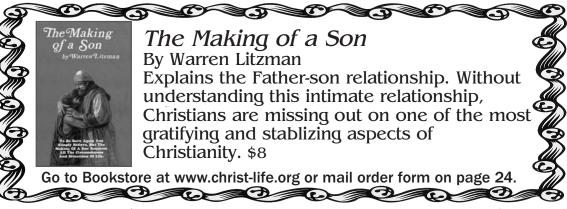
made a crown of thorns and embedded it into His scalp until He bled, thrusted nails through His hands and feet! How could they not know what they were doing? The precious Holy Spirit took that question and said, "Linda, they thought they knew what they were doing. They thought they were doing God a favor by crucifying a heretic and blasphemer; but, Jesus knew His Father's plan from the beginning." He knew He had to endure the Cross. Did He ever not want to? Oh, yes, in the Garden of Gethsemane, He said, Dad, if there's another way, let's go for it; but not my will, but thine be done. How could He endure such pain and suffering? The love of His Father was within Him.

"That they all may be one, [just] as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be one in us, so that the world may believe and be convinced that you have sent me. I have given to them the glory and honor which you have given me, that they may be one [even] as we are one: I in them and you in me, in order that they may become one and perfectly united, that the world may know and [def-

initely] recognize that you sent me and that you have loved them [even] as you have loved me. Father, I desire that they also whom you have entrusted to me [as your gift to me] *may be* with me where I am, so that they may see my glory, which you have given me [your love gift to me]: for you loved me before the foundation of the world. O just and righteous Father, although the world has not known you and has failed to recognize you and has never acknowledged you, I have known you [continually]; and these men understand and know that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them and revealed your character and your very self, and I will continue to make [you] known, that the love which you have bestowed upon me may be in them [felt in their hearts] and that I [myself] may be in them" (John 17:21-26, Amplified).

Jesus was returning His Father's love to His Father. He was simply being who He was birthed to be. One step further, that same love is within me and every bornagain believer! So, now I have a new perspective. As I shared once before, I can honestly say that I love my ex-husband more today than I ever did the 23 years we were married. How can I say this? It is now my Father's love, His compassion, that is being expressed. I communicate with my daughters differently, for now I know it is Christ as me speaking to the Christ in them. My colleagues and students can sense a contrast within me toward the things of this world. It is no longer I who is teaching; it is Christ as me meeting the needs of those whom He has brought into my earthly journey. I'll conclude with Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:16 (Amplified):

"May He grant you out of the rich treasury of His glory to be strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the [Holy] Spirit [Himself indwelling your innermost being and personality]. May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell [settle down, abide, make His permanent home] in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love. That you may have the power and be strong to apprehend and grasp with all the saints [God's devoted people, the experience of that love] what is the breadth and length and height and *depth* [of it]; [That you may really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]; that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]! Now to Him Who, be (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do *super-abundantly*, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [indefinitely beyond our highprayers. desires. est hopes, or dreams]. To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen so be it]." (Author's interpretation added.) 🕆





May the world see the real reason of Christmas shining through you. Love, Warren and Robbie

THE INTIMACY BETWEEN FATHER AND SON

By Warren Litzman

One theologian greatly stimulated me with his writings when he said we have totally misread the four Gospels. We think the four Gospels are the story of what Jesus did. That is not the story at all, he said, that's an outer thing! It doesn't have anything to do with what was inwardly taking place in Christ. He said the Gospels are the story of the relationship between a Father and a Son.

The Gospels are not about Jesus' works; the Gospels are about Jesus and His Father. What we have not seen in Scripture is the very intimate relationship between Christ and His Father. When Christ came to Earth, the big thing He tried to show people was the priority of His relationship with His Father. If we look into the record, we will immediately see the intimate relationship. It is a love affair between a Father and a Son that reaches a deep, intimate union.

Jesus, at the age of twelve, was in the temple at Jerusalem talking to the big wheels in religion. They had never heard anything like what He said. Joseph and Mary were returning with the troop to Nazareth when they realized they lost Jesus. Thev had returned to Jerusalem to find Jesus in the temple. Jesus wasn't lost; Joseph and Mary had lost Him! Mary was provoked and said, Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you. Now, there's not many times that Jesus was angry, but in anger He turned to His mother and said, Don't you know I must be about My Father's business?

Two things are in that statement. First, Jesus did-

n't like it when Mary called Joseph His father, so He let it be known who His real Father was. The second thing was that He was that stern in making known His relationship with His Father, that He would willingly rebuke His own mother and step-father. If necessary, He would just cross them off'. His statement says: You must not interfere. I'm about My Father's business. These are His first spoken words recorded, and the words concern His relationship with His Father, His highest priority!

In John 8, Jesus argues with the Jews as they make the point that they are the children of Abraham, following Jesus' statement that God is His Father. If He had said Abraham was His father, then everything would have been all right because He would be like the rest of the Jews! But, eventually, as the argument heated up, Jesus told them they were not Abraham's children but were, in fact, children of the Devil. He is saying this to His own people! These are the ones He came to save. He has alienated His purpose on Earth to a great extent. Why did He do that? Why would He just cross them off? Because that is exactly what happened in John 8; they were crossed off by His words, and He never retrieved the relationship He lost in John 8. In fact, most believe it was the John 8 experience that caused the Jews to want to kill Him. The relationship between Him and the Father was so great, so deep and so rich that He would cross off the very people He had come to save before He would let anybody interfere with the intimate relationship He had with God.

E V E R YT H I N G JESUS DID, HE DID AS A RESULT OF A LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN HIS FATHER AND HIM.

To have intimacy, a relationship must work two ways, and on the Father's side it was just as rich and deep. In John's baptismal service, Jesus had just come up out of the water when the Holy Spirit, as a dove, lighted upon Him. It's John's great moment. He had just baptized the Messiah. He had a big crowd. They had all come to see John the Baptist. The Holy Spirit had provoked John to introduce Jesus as the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world. This didn't satisfy the Father. God, for the first time recorded in Scripture, spoke to a crowd, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). That's intimacy! God takes the focus off John, and lets it be known that no one carries more glory with Him than His Son.

At the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus takes three of His disciples up with Him; and there, Moses and Elijah were transfigured before them. Peter, James and John saw Moses and Elijah, the greatest Old Testament prophets, the ones they revered the most. This stirred Peter, James and John, who said nobody has seen anything like this, these great prophets appearing right before our eyes! They then did what all preachers do. They said, What we need to do is to build a building!

Now this must have provoked God, for God let a cloud come down to swallow up Moses and Elijah; and the voice spoke for the second time. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him" (Matt. 17:5). We don't know what was happening on the mount of transfiguration, but God was not going to let it continue. He swept it away. God removed Moses and Elijah when those boys focused their honor on them rather than Jesus. God drew the focus onto Jesus by speaking right out of heaven. That's a love affair. So much for Moses and Elijah! 'This is my Son, my Son!'

Jesus said, I do only the things I see My Father do. Jesus would say, I have no life of my own; the only life I

have is my Father's. We think Jesus was out healing the sick and casting out devils because He was great in Himself, God the Son. No! Everything He did, He did as a result of a love affair between His Father and Him. One day, when Jesus did a miracle and the crowd marveled, He said, These are not my works; they are the works of Him that sent me. After preaching a great sermon, He said, The Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.

If you really want to know about a love affair, read John 17. Jesus prayed His last recorded prayer in John 17; and the heart of the prayer is: Father, I pray not for the world, but for those you gave me, that they will be one with you as you and I are one. Some preachers would have us believe that Jesus came only to save the world and win souls. The big thing with Jesus was not to spoil His relationship with His Father, so He prayed only for those God had given to Him that they may be one with Him. The amazing grace of God is that there is the possibility of intimacy between us and God through the Christ who is in us, so intimate that He would protect that intimacy unto death. It looked as though Jesus would cross off the world before He would let anything happen to those God had claimed as His own and had given to Jesus.

I'll tell you how intimate it was. The most desperate

GLEANINGS FROM HEBREWS Part 4

By Don Byrd

My last three articles have been from the Hebrews epistle. I trust by now that you have seen the great transition God made from "time past" to the Father-Son relationship. The emphasis of the Hebrews epistle is on the greatness of the Son over all else that exists, whether created or self-existent. The reason there is such great emphasis on the Son is because the more magnificent the Son appears the greater it makes His Father because His Father birthed Him. The greatest thing God will ever be is Father. He cannot be Father without a Son! It is the Son that gives the Father-part of God His greatness. These are the words of " M_{ν} Jesus: Father...is greater than all..." (John 10:29).

First, the greatness of the Son over the angels is demonstrated.

"For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?" (Heb. 1:5). "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" (Heb. 1:13).

The greatness of the Son over the angels is found in the fact that angels are created but the Son is birthed by His Father. This gives great significance to the birthing over all else that has ever happened.

Second, the Son is better than Moses: Moses was a servant in his house in contrast to the Son who was over His own house.

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after" (Heb. 3:5).

"But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:6).

Third, the Son is better than Joshua: *"For if Jesus* [Joshua] *had given them rest, then would he not after-* ward have spoken of another day" (Heb. 4:8, author's translation added). Although Joshua led Israel into the land of promise, they never entered into God's rest! Entering the Land of Promise was only a type or shadow of the believer found in the Son who becomes the believer's eternal abode of rest. Actually, Israel never fought battles until after they entered the Land of Promise! Entering the Land of Promise is what started all the wars and battles for Israel. No rest there!

Fourth, the Son is better than Aaron: (Heb. 7:22-28). What Aaron did in his priestly duties had to be repeated over and over again. The Son performed the same duties as did Aaron, and so much more, but the Son only had to do it once!

The Son offered a better sacrifice when He offered up Himself as the sacrifice unto His Father.

"Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then THE SON IS "NOT ASHAMED TO CALL THEM BRETHREN!" WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BROTHER? THIS MEANS THEY HAVE THE SAME FATHER AS DOES THE SON! must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:25-26).

The Son is better than the Universe, Heaven, Earth and all of creation!

"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail" (Heb. 1:10-12).

These verses reveal the fact that all things may change but the Son does not ever change now or throughout eternity. The believer should spend time researching the use of the word better as found in the Hebrews epistle.

The whole point of the book of Hebrews is to show the excellency of the Father's Son over everything else that exists! The Son is better than Messiah, the King of kings, the Lamb, the Mighty One of Israel, the miracle worker, etcetera. How can I say these things? I base this on the birthing! Our Father did not birth a Messiah; He did not birth a King; He did not birth a Lamb, or the Mighty One of Israel! Our Father is not Father to Messiah; King of kings; Lamb, or Mighty One of Israel. Our Father can only be Father to His birthed Son! Yes,

the Son is Messiah, King of kings, Lamb and Mighty One of Israel, but, to His Father, He is much greater than all of these combined. He is His birthed Son! The Son can do the things Messiah must do, but Messiah cannot be to the Father a Son. Only one who is birthed can be a Son to our Father!

The of author the Hebrews epistle takes everything the Hebrew people considered to be of value and places them next to the Son and says now take a look at the value of these things next to the Son! Of course, these things have no value when compared to the Son. He even places Heaven itself next to the Son and says now take a look at Heaven compared to the Son! Had you rather be in Heaven or in the Son? Heaven is a created place compared to being "in Christ" which is not a created place (Heb. 1:10-12).

The Son is better than everything created, including Heaven. However, there is one verse of Scripture in Hebrews that the believer should know and understand.

"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren," (Heb. 2:11).

Do you realize what this verse declares? The Son is "not ashamed to call them brethren!" What does it mean to be a brother? This means they have the same Father as does the Son! Both have the same Father; this is why He is "not ashamed to call them brethren!" This means the only begotten Son of our Father did not want to be better than you! No doubt about it; He is better than everything that exists except the bornagain believer with Christ in him! The born-again believer is everything that the Son is in His Sonship!

Please understand what this means. The bornagain believer is not a god; he or she is a brethren, meaning they have the very same Father as does the only begotten Son.

"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" (Rom. 8:29).

This states, "that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." This does not say that He might be the firstborn among many gods! The word brethren is the key word in this verse and in Hebrews 2:11. This simply means they have the same Father! The emphasis is on the birthing.

The Son is better than everything except His brethren! This means they are who they are through the birthing by the Father! Do you realize who you are with Christ in you? The born-again believer is better than the angels, better than Moses, better than Aaron, better than Joshua, better than Abraham, David, Sarah, Ruth, Rebecca, etcetera. Why is this true? It is the birthing of Christ in you that makes that true. The Son never wanted to be better than you because He gave you His Father to be your very own Father! The Son wanted you to be everything He is in His Sonship! The believer with Christ in him is better than the Great High Priest, better than Melchisedec because Melchisedec was without father (Heb. 7:3). With Christ in you, you have the only true Father that has ever existed. With Christ in you, you are better than Heaven itself because Heaven will wax old and be hung up as an old garment and shall be changed! With Christ in you, you will never need to be changed because you were birthed by our Father. You were birthed, not created!

Your birthing by our Father through Jesus Christ our Lord was perfect and shall remain that way throughout eternity! No other creature in time or eternity is to be compared to who you are in your birthing by our Father. You are the only creature that will ever be able to truthfully utter "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15, Gal. 4:6). The birthing makes you better than everything else because everything else is created. Creation is not part of the birthing! \clubsuit

(EDITORIAL-CONT. FROM P. 3) this? It could not be the Christ of the Old Testament. It was the Christ that died on the cross, who, Himself, brought the final truth, the truth that would live and move into every re-birthed believer. It takes the death of

(INTIMACY-CONT. FROM P. 8) moment Jesus had on the cross was when you and I, with our sin, were in His body. And then our sin, that had separated us from God, now separated Him from God. And He cried those Christ as the starting point of truth. Christ does not give truth; He is the truth. His death, where "I am crucified with Christ," is what produces truth in believers today. Why would I want a truth and doctrines of my own when Christ, who is truth

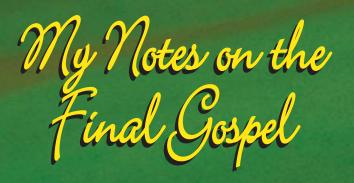
heart-rending words: My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? That's the first time Jesus ever called Him "God." He was always Father; there was a break in the union because of sin. personified, lives in me? The day is over when believers can base their doctrines on what they or someone else thinks. Real truth is in Christ, and Christ lives in every born-again believer. Outside of Him, there is no truth. \clubsuit

The oneness had been shattered because of our sin. That's why He died quickly. The mercy of God was to let Him and our sin die quickly. That's intimacy; that's a relationship. ♣

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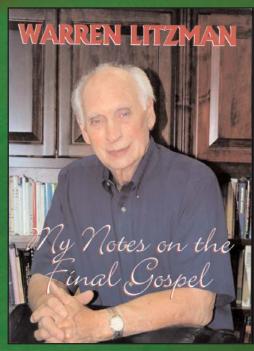
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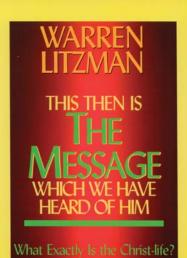


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— Warren Litzman



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THE BEST IS YET TO COME! Part 2

By Richard Cassidy

From the 2007 Christ-life Ridgecrest Conference

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

Salvation Is Yet Here

Salvation has indeed come, and hopefully you have gained a bit more insight in your spirit that has testified to your secure position within its coming.

Salvation is Come! That may sound like improper English—and indeed could be—but it is thoroughly proper theology in that salvation came two thousands years ago in its full range of power and grace and has not diminished in either power or grace. Salvation was not simply an act of God that was completed in and through the work of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross and then at the Ascension of Christ back to His eternal Father and home. Salvation was left here to work on its own. By no means was this the plan, nor was it the ultimate outcome of Christ's completed work. The Lord has ascended to Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father, no denying that whatsoever; but, and that but is the most phenomenal prepositionalinterjection that I can use in pointing out to you the answer to the mystery which Paul spoke about in Colossians 1:26-27, and that is that the Spirit of Christ resides in the spirit of those who have believed and trusted in His salvation. Christ comes to us, remains in us in order that our salvation position with the Father is made eternally secure and that our salvation be perfect and complete in our spirit, while the finishing work that must occur in our body and mind while on the Earth, must and indeed, continues. That phenomenal work by Christ tends to the spirit of our being, which is the essence of our eternal creation, saved or lost; but Christ's work tends to the spirit alone, and nothing more can be, or needs to be, accomplished there. Now then, our mind—or as

some will call it, the souland body is another matter altogether, and this is where the "Salvation that is Come" keeps us in the process of becoming more and more appropriate in our mind-life and our bodylife. But the eternal perfection of mind and body will come once we have entered into the presence of Christ Jesus and, sad to say, not before, and thus can never be otherwise. Even now in our salvation state of spirit perfection, if it should be that we were to be whisked off to Heaven in current mind and body condition, would contaminate we Heaven and that simply can never be the case.

At this point in our salvation position with God in Christ, we do not possess the likeness of full-fledged children of our heavenly Father. I am hesitant to use the term that I have assigned to that thought, but for the lack of a more appropriate one I have concluded in my salvation status and to some degree with Paul's thought on the matter, that we are but 'half-saved saved!' Please, don't throw rocks at me just vet, and please, hear me out.

SALVATION HAS A FUTURE TENSE AS WELL AS A PAST AND A PRESENT TENSE, AND THE WORDS COMMON TO THESE TWO VERSES ARE WE "SHALL BE SAVED."

Remember, we possess eternal salvation for the remainder of our life on the planet and nothing can alter that, not even ourselves. We are left with our mind and our body in order to continue on in Earth life until that life ends. That which is guiding and influencing our mind and body is our spirit in which Christ Jesus resides keeping it (our spirit) as only He is able to keep it: perfect. The Holy Spirit is the resident teacher for instructions to our mind and body, teaching us of those things that are appropriate to being in Christ. This is the process or the work which salvation has done for us and is now doing with us. Simply said, we are not saved in our mind or our body, not yet; but we will be on that great resurrection morning.

So far, Paul has concentrated on what God has already done for us through Christ. So then the question begs to be asked, what has God done? He has justified us, and in that justification we have with peace God. Remember, God did it! We are also standing in grace, abundantly supplied for the remainder of our life. Hence, we are then able to rejoice in our hope in all of our sufferings. Yet, there is more, so much more to come, which is not yet ours. Remember, God provided the grace! In fact, verses 9 and 10 are notable examples of the familiar New Testament tension

between the already and the not yet, between what Christ has accomplished at His first coming and what remains to be done at His second, between our past and our future salvation.

For salvation has a future tense as well as a past and a present tense, and the words common to these two verses are we "shall be saved." If, therefore, we are asked by some brash, busybody evangelist whether we have been saved, it would be just as biblical to say no as it would be to say yes, although the correct answer would be, yes and no. For yes, we have been saved through Christ from the guilt of our sins and from the judgment of God upon those sins. But no we have not yet been delivered from indwelling sin in our mind and, as seen in our deeds, nor have we been given new bodies that will be fit to live in the new world that is to come.

What then, or even a better question be, why then are we left here at all? Why didn't the Lord just whisk us up to Heaven at the moment He became our Savior and Lord, rather than leave us here to live in an almost-perfect state of salvation? Well, let's be perfectly frank about the answer to that question. How many would actually come to Christ and His salvation knowing that the moment they did they would no longer be on the Earth? I rather doubt that many, if any, would do such a thing. That would be

especially true for those like me when I came to Christ. I was okay with my place in life. I was young, healthy, married with two children, an excellent job, living very comfortably. Then, for me to suddenly hear my two witnesses say, Richard, the moment you accept Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior you will immediately leave the Earth and ascend to Heaven. I most likely would have sent them packing, don't you think? I believe that you would have done likewise. Obviously, these men said no such thing, for that was not the plan, not the plan at all. The plan for my salvation was for my continued life and in that life I was to know that I was fit for eternal life in my spirit and could then live my life for the one who gave to me His life, and who yet lives in order that I may have life in His eternity. If salvation meant immediate entrance into eternal glory, the gospel message of Christ's salvation would have been extinct within a few generations; then what? The saved ones remained and salvation remained and is yet working its work to the ends of the Earth. Salvation working in the first century is the exact same salvation that is working in this century and will always be the same in all centuries. However, religious systems have tampered with this grace plan to the extent that it is scarcely recognizable as the finished work of Christ Jesus. Yet, Salvation remains and continues its mysterious work in those who will not be denied its promises and gifts.

So, what then is the future salvation which Paul has in mind here? Remember, we are working with the past and the present as well as the future; all three being the workforce that has secured us within our salvation to see to the ultimate perfection of the whole being. Paul uses two expressions as he writes to his friends in Rome, the first of which is negative, the second positive.

First, his negative thought is, "We shall be saved from God's wrath through Christ Jesus" (Rom. 5:9). Of course, we have already been rescued from that wrath of God in the sense that, through the Cross, God has Himself turned His wrath away from us so that now we have peace with Him and are standing in His grace.

Through the centuries of Christian history, certain men have notoriously taken liberties with the two major issues resolved in Christ's Salvation: wrath and grace. You talk about clever and clandestine minds manipulating the work and Word of God. It was apparently in the religious minds of particular men of the first century, and Paul was the only apostle and writer-preacher who stood in stark opposition to this aberrant and ugly teaching, and did so until there was no breath left in his body to speak—yet his words linger, and yet clearly give testimony that such teachers and teachings are with us till this very day. Persuasive personalities, cunning counterfeits, classic snakes, devilish dogs, and religious renegades of the Gospel of Grace are spewing out their maligned messages; not to the lost man, per se, but at the those precious and blessed saints who have unwittingly giving over their ears to hear their messages and are now beside themselves with fear and grief and pain and uncertainty and doubt as to who they really are to their heavenly Father. The Clarion Call of this first century Gospeleer of Grace was:

"It was for freedom that *Christ set us free; therefore* keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal. 5:1). It is true, beloved friends, that not all have fallen away; for each of us have been touched deeply by this Gospel of Grace and the Christ-life and have thus come out of such slavery and bondage which for a very long time had robbed us our liberty and freedom, as well as our peace of mind. But not any more and never again! Amen!

At the end of history, there is going to be a day of reckoning which Paul has called, *"the day of God's wrath, when His righteous judgment will be revealed"* (Rom. 2:5). God's wrath will be poured out on those who have rejected Christ (Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6). From that fearful coming wrath we have been saved, for as Jesus put it, the believer will not be condemned; he has already crossed over from death to life (John 5:24). Paul again assures the saints later in this Roman letter that, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). This statement from the pen of Paul is one of those rare thoughts in Scripture that can be taken from its place the context of his in thought, leave all the rest behind, and the truth of his words stand alone as the pure testimony of the love of God the Father towards those who have believed in the Grace work of His Son. I could spend countless hours substantiating Paul's stand in that statement and just how much security there is in Christ for those who have trusted in His salvation work on the Cross, but I must move along to the next point in Paul's thought concerning future salvation.

Second, Paul's positive thought is, *"we shall be saved through His life"* (v. 10). For the Jesus who died for our sins was raised from death and lives, and thus means for His people to experience for themselves the power of His resurrection. We can share His life now, and will share His Resurrection on the last day. Paul will elaborate these truths in Romans 8; he does no more than sketch them here in promising that we "shall be saved through Christ's life."

In his fourteen letters of the New Testament, Paul makes mention in each of them his confidence and contentment in knowing the reality of who he is to his beloved Christ and Savior. I have chosen the following thought, which I believe speaks most clearly to what we are to understand concerning our place in this salvation. This is a rather lengthy thought from Paul's phenomenal mind and a fascinating way of communicating those thoughts as he penned that which had been revealed to him in Philippians:

THE ONE WHO HAD KNOCKED SAUL DOWN PICKED SAUL UP, COM-MISSIONED HIM AND REINSTATED HIS LIFE WHICH WOULD, IN TIME, TURN THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN BY DEFENDING THE ONE WHOM HE ONCE DENOUNCED AS SAVIOR.

"But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not

already Ι have that it, or have obtained already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:7-14)

Paul knew the meaning of being resurrected from the dead personally, for he came as close to being a dead man as is possible and yet continue to live. His first experience with his date with death was when he was descending on Damascus with his murderous intentions of annihilating Christians, both Gentiles and Jews, who had come to Christ for salvation and for the Gentiles they rejected because of their heathen heritage. It had been a very long time since God had seen the need to act violently in the life of an individual. He could have acted violently when Christ was being sacrificed, but this was in the eternal plan which had to be carried out, and so nothing was done to stop that death. Paul, really Saul at this point in his life, was another matter altogether. God's plan here was to step into history and stop Saul dead in his tracks. Saul

knew about violence, for he had become a violent man; but he certainly didn't understand why he was suddenly confronted with such violence. In that unprecedented moment, Christ halted Saul's hatred, and Saul would soon come to know that, when he had been thrown to the ground and all but buried in the Damascus dirt, he should never have been able to stand to his feet ever again. But stand again he did. The one who had knocked Saul down picked Saul up, commissioned him and reinstated his life which would, in time, turn the world upside down by defending the one whom he once denounced as Savior. Could Saul have resisted this confrontation with Christ and simply go on with what he had planned to do? Absolutely! So why didn't he? In order to answer that question you have to read every one of his epistles and then perhaps you could come to understand what really happened to Saul. It will be in that understanding that you could also come to understand equally as well when you yourself came to Christ's salvation and gained new life. The event for Saul and for you and for me is strikingly different. However, the end result is miraculously identical. That very same salvation is yet loosed on the Earth today and saving souls in the very same way! We can never expect to have a "Damascus Road" meeting with the Master as did Saul, but simply know that we had our meeting and are well on the way home.

The second time Paul knew what it meant to be resurrected out of a death experience was when he was preaching in Lystra, many, many years after his Damascus meeting with the Lord. Paul had been preaching for more than a few days about Jesus Christ to the folks in Lystra. The Jewish leaders got wind of his teaching which infuriated them to the point that they violently arrested him, took him out of the city and stoned him to death, so they thought. With Barnabas, Dr. Luke, and others surrounding Paul as he lay in a bloody-heap, nursed him back to life and health; and he later went on his way preaching Christ and His Grace love. This is most likely the event which Paul makes reference to in his epistle to the second Corinthians when he said:

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knowest;) such an one caught up to the third heaven" (12:2).

Biblical historians, for the most part, agree that this would fit very clearly in the episode which occurred at Lystra and Paul's near death experience, which is recorded in Acts 14:19 and 2 Timothy 3:11. The point is, however, that Paul should have been dead, in fact, could have been dead; but he didn't die. He was delivered by the hand of God, but he certainly did know the sting of death; of that, there is no denying.

I have heard some saints declare that what took place in the life of the Apostle Paul was accomplished through a special anointing from God that was never given to any other person. That is not so! It is true all right that Paul did receive a unique and special commission as the Apostle of Grace to the Gentiles, but he had nothing more going for him in his salvation than had any other saint, then or now. The work that Paul was to accomplish was for him alone. Likewise, the work which you and I are to accomplish is just as unique an assignment as was Paul's. There is no such commission on our life to either do or to be as Paul was, any more than vou have the same commission on your life that is identical to mine. That is critically important for us to understand, and the difficulty of getting that message across to twenty-first century Christians is so difficult because of all the error that has been promoted through the centuries, as well as the commingling of law and grace, Old Testament and New Testament and what the pure call of God on a persons life has come to mean

to the vast majority of Christians throughout the world. Yet the Salvation that Is Come is yet here, in you and me, and that message is declaring that the future of those who are in Christ is as sure and as secure as if nothing adverse to the message of Grace had ever come. This then is the hope for those who have not yet come to know His Life.

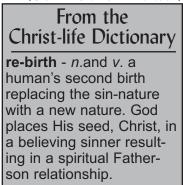
Salvation's Best Is Yet To Come

Finally, "We shall be saved through Christ's life." That is our eternal promise from the throne of grace, that: "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6).

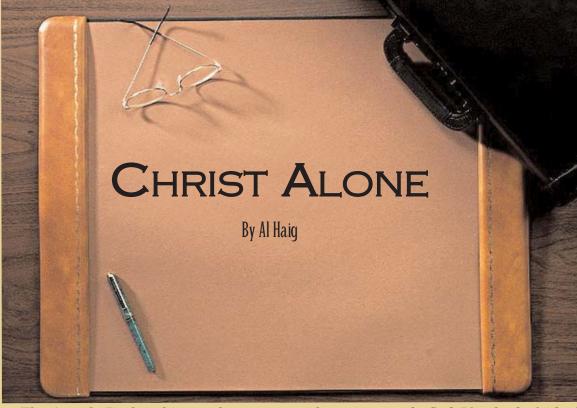
Perfection Day has not yet arrived, but it is clearly on its way. And once it has arrived, well, I will just say it this way: The best is yet to be!

In our present half-saved condition, we are eagerly looking forward to our full and final salvation. But how can we be sure of it? Far too many saints have not settled this issue in their lifetime; and many, if not most, will live and die and not ever know the answer to

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)



TO NOT KNOW THE CERTAINTY OF CHRIST'S FINISHED WORK IS TO NOT KNOW CHRIST AT ALL.



The Apostle Paul, in his second letter to the believers in Corinth, wrote:

"I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:2-3).

Paul wanted Jesus Christ to be absolutely front and centre in the life of every believer. He wanted Jesus to fill the whole horizon of our lives, becoming our all in all, the sole object of our attention and devotion.

This thought is expressed in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). We are to be rooted and built up in Him (Col. 2:7). We are to let our roots down into Him and draw up our nourishment from Him. According to the Apostle John, we are to eat His flesh and drink His blood (John 6:53). Don't look anywhere else for spiritual nourishment, for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete in Him. (Col. 2:10)

You and I are to be like a chaste virgin having eyes and heart for no other, only Jesus. We are not to let anyone or anything deflect us from our one and only lover, Jesus Christ.

Total identification with Christ is to be our aim. So total is that identification that it can only be expressed in the words "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 2:27). So identified am I with Christ that I can say with Paul:

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, 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).

A little Greek lesson might help us here because Paul wrote his letters in the Greek language. A little prefix Paul used frequently was sun, pronounced "soon." This important little word means "union with" "together." or Sometimes Paul would tack this little word sun on the front of a bigger word. An example: when Paul writes, with *"I* am crucified *Christ,*" he puts *sun* on the front of the Greek word for crucified, which is estauromai making it sunestauro*mai.* Now the meaning is clear, "I am crucified in union with" or "together with Christ." What Paul means is that the old, cruel, legalistic, hateful Paul died on the cross with (sun) his beloved Savior Jesus. Paul's old Adam nature, with all its sin, was gathered up by Jesus and died on the cross together with (*sun*) Jesus or in union with Jesus (Gal. 2:20).

Paul carries this further when he says we are not only crucified with Christ, we are also buried with (sun) Him (Rom. 6:4).

Next step: "Even when we were dead in sins, [God] hath quickened us together [sun] with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" (Eph. 2:5, author's words added). Furthermore, God has raised us with (sun) and seated us together (sun) with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6).

I draw all this to your attention to accentuate the absolute oneness of our betrothal and marriage to Christ. He is in you for certain and forever. Jesus, in John's gospel, chapter 17, prays that our union with Him would be made perfect. "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17:21). "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one" (John: 17:23).

In the Greek, Paul uses the prefix *sun* to declare that you and I were with Christ when He was crucified. We were co-crucified with Him. He took you and me with Him; and our old man, our old life was killed outright with Him on the cross. The old me is dead. *"Reckon yourselves dead,"* says Paul in Romans 6:11. Jesus took me and all my sin that is wrapped up in the old man and nailed it to the cross where the old me died with Jesus. Do you know that Jesus nailed you and all your sin to the cross?

That little prefix sun was used to express that I was also co-buried with Christ. I was in Christ when they laid him in the tomb (Col. 2:12). Again, I am so one with Jesus that I was also co-quickened with Him, brought fully alive in Him when He rose up from the dead. I have a totally new life within me because I am one with Jesus. He is in me, and I am in Him. Paul says this 146 times in his letters. John, the beloved disciple, says that this new eternal life is in the Son. He that has the Son has that life. He that does not have the Son does not have that new and glorious life (1 John 5:12).

If these great truths don't yet seem to be solidly yours, don't despair. The Holy Spirit, the great teacher. will eventually reveal the truth about what Paul is saving in his letters. Keep reading Paul's letters, especially the ones He wrote from prison-Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. Sooner or later the Holy Spirit will reveal what Paul is seeking to express when he says "Christ is my life." There will come a time when you will say, "Paul, now I see what you mean." Love for Jesus is the key that unlocks the mystery. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," says Jesus (John 12:32). Just remember, you are betrothed as a chaste virgin to Jesus. Don't

let the Devil or anything or anyone in all creation divert you from full love, full allegiance, full concentration, and full union with Christ. Don't slip away from the simplicity and purity that is in Christ (2 Cor. 11:2-3).

When our union with Christ gets out of focus even in the slightest, the Devil is delighted. One way believers get out of focus is when they over emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit. Some even give the Holy Spirit more authority and importance than Jesus, and they get into serious error. The Holy Spirit does not distract our attention from Jesus; He in fact heightens it and makes our love for Jesus more intense. The experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit can be extremely exciting with speaking in tongues and signs and wonders, and it can also shift us away from the full simplicity and purity of our union with Christ. Our experiences of the Holy Spirit can muddy the waters and the pearl of great price—the blessed assurance that Christ abides in me as my eternal hope, my enduring solid rock, my internal intimate friendbecomes less real.

Those who count on the experience of the Holy Spirit live an up and down life, going from experience to experience with valleys in between. This is because they place the emphasis on the Holy Spirit making them someone important with their power and their gifts, while ignoring Christ JESUS TOOK ME AND ALL MY SIN THAT IS WRAPPED UP IN THE OLD MAN AND NAILED IT TO THE CROSS WHERE THE OLD ME DIED WITH JESUS.

CHURCH, ΙN WE OFTEN SING HYMNS AND SAY PRAYERS THAT CRY OUT FOR JESUS AS IF JESUS WERE SOMEWHERE FAR OFF AND WE HAVE TO CALL HIM INTO OUR MIDST. THE TRUTH IS THAT JESUS ABIDES IN EVERY BELIEVER, AND WE GET TOGETHER то SHARE THE CHRIST WHO IS IN US WITH EACH OTHER.

as the only life they have. This may sound like I'm downgrading the Holv Spirit. I would never do such a thing. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the living God, and the Holy Spirit is the one who has given me the revelation of Jesus Christ as my new life. The Holy Spirit teaches me all about the Christ in me. He is in me to glorified Jesus, and He made Him alive and real to me. He has made me to know Jesus and has assured me that Jesus is anchored forever in me, and nothing can separate me from Him. The Holy Spirit has made a real believer out of me. The Holy Spirit of God has presented me as a chaste virgin to Christ, and I will never take the eyes of my heart off Jesus. I must never let anything dilute and blur the simplicity and purity of the indwelling Christ. I must never leave my first love.

When my security is in the Christ living in me, sin and guilt are no longer an overwhelming problem. The Devil trembles because He who is within me is greater than he who is within the world (1 John 4:4). The one who has overcome the world lives his life in me, and, as Martin Luther says, "He must win the battle." I no longer live.

In church, we often sing hymns and say prayers that cry out for Jesus as if Jesus were somewhere far off and we have to call Him into our midst. The truth is that Jesus abides in every believer, and we get together to share the Christ who is in us with each other. So, one of the big mistakes believers today make is that they give the Holy Spirit the authority and the throne that Jesus only must have. But, perhaps the most subtle ploy of Satan to distract us from the sincerity and purity of Jesus is the Mosaic Law. Many believers live all their lives bound by the law to a greater or lesser degree. This means they will struggle along, crippled by guilt because no one lives free who is bound by the law. Our union with Jesus can be clouded by our attention to the details of the law. We're saved by grace, and we are sustained, guarded and kept by grace.

Take a look at yourself. Are you living depending on your obedience to the law, or are you living depending entirely upon the Christ in you? When we live governed by the law, we will inevitably fall into sin, come crashing down into guilt and depression and the Devil rejoices. Many bornagain Christians never reach the maturity in Christ where they enjoy the sustained liberty and freedom wherewith Christ has set us free. They may have spurts of freedom and joy, but sooner or later they become tangled again in the yoke of bondage, the law.

Grace—which is the unmerited love of the Father, the Son and the

Holy Spirit (the unmerited love of the Trinity)—and the law simply do not mix. They are like oil and water. The Greek translation spells it out, You were put to death to the law by the body of Christ (by the cross) that you might be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. 7:4).

So, we are not just betrothed to Christ as a chaste virgin; we are married to Him. Don't let your mind be corrupted from the simplicity in Christ (2 Cor. 11:3). Keep it simple; keep it pure.

Rest in the thought that Christ is your life, that Christ is in you and is your hope of glory (Col. 1:23). He is where the Father meant Him to be for all eternity. Don't mess around; don't let the Devil or the world move you away even slightly from Jesus, because only in Jesus are you fulfilled and complete (Col. 2:10). ♥

(Forty years ago, God brought Al Haig and I together. He was an associate minister at the Marble Collegeic Church in New York City. He came to see Christ as his life and joined the fellowship I was connected with. We served together a number of years before the Father took us in different directions. The Father brought us back together three years ago—a joyous occasion for me. I want readers to know Al as a devoted messenger of the Christ-life. —Warren Litzman)

(Best-Cont. from p. 17)

doubt-filled their most thought: How can I know for certain that I am saved and safe? I have on many occasions been literally scolded by saints as they fuss at me for saving that I know! They claim that no one can know for sure until they stand before God on Judgment Day, and it will be there and then that God will declare whether or not we are saved. That is the most pathetic thought to ever enter the mind of anyone who claims to know Christ as Savior and God as heavenly Father. To not know the certainty of Christ's finished work is to not know Christ at all. I honestly hope that you who are reading my words today have heard the ancient voice of the Apostle Paul and his assuring declaration in the verses we having been examining. So, just in case you haven't been listening very closely to Paul or to me. let's hear him for the final time.

Saved By His Life

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were vet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies. we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, We Shall Be Saved By His Life" (Rom. 5:8-10).

Paul's unique method of arguing his point in this passage is by his use of the term "how much more": "how much more justified" (v. 9); "how much more reconciled" (v. 10); "how much more grace abounds" (v. 15). God is not lacking in His grace gifts to those who are His. Paul would go on to say in verses 20 and 21:

"And the Law came in that the transgression *might increase; but where* sin increased. grace abounded all the more. that, as sin reigned in death. even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."

What Paul is saying here is that *if* one thing has happened, much more will something else take place. What then has happened to us? The answer is that we have been justified (v. 9) and reconciled (v. 10), both of which are attributed to the Cross of Christ. That was His work; that is precisely what He came to finished, and finish it He did!

On the one hand, "we have been justified by His blood"; (v. 9), on the other, "we were reconciled to Him [that is to God], through the death of His Son" (v. 10, author's words added). So the Judge has pronounced us righteous, and the Father has welcomed us home. There is no power on Earth or in Heaven that is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ or prevent us from going to that home which He, Christ, has gone to prepare for those who love Him.

Conclusion

And thus, ends my thoughts on the matter of "Saved By His Life." However, I would do Paul a tremendous disservice if I were to end and not bring his final thoughts to bear on the same matter, so I say this about that.

Understand, beloved friends, that it is essential to Paul's argument when he stresses the costliness of these things which he has enumerated for us, and that they not be simply glossed over and then dismissed. It was by His blood, shed in a sacrificial death on the cross, that we have been justified, and it was when we were God's enemies that we were reconciled to Him. Here then is the logic. If God has already done the difficult thing because we were unable to do the impossible thing, can we not trust Him to do the comparatively simple thing of completing the task? If God has accomplished our justification at the cost of Christ's blood, much more will He save His justified people from His final wrath! If He reconciled us to Himself when we were His enemies, much more will He finish our salvation now that we are His reconciled children. These are the grounds on which we dare affirm to that we "Shall...be saved!" ₽

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2.30 p.m. Thurs. 24 April - noon Sun. 27 April

Speaker: Warren Litzman

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These extra meals must be confirmed and paid for with final balance by 31 March 2008. Meal tickets will be issued.

Transport: (Airport/Bus) Please make these arrangements early to assist those in Gauteng who have kindly offered to provide transportation. Late notification of your flight arrangements could mean arranging your own transport to the conference centre.

Payment Options: All Delegates (incl. Day Visitors) must pay their final balance STRICTLY by 31 March 2008.

Cheque made out to: Christlife Fellowship

Send to: 112 Village 5, Ascot Road, Greenacres, P.E. 6045

Bank Deposits/Internet: Christlife Fellowship;

Standard Bank - Cheque Acc.; Branch: 050312; Acc: 082252564.

For further information, telephone041-3744741, Fax 0866556812, or email lanceh@iafrica.com

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