

Tenets of the Faith
Week 7
New Creation/Salvation

Introduction (John)

John 3:3 - "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

2 Corinthians 5:17 - "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

John 1:13 - "...who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

1 Peter 1: 3 - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Gal. 6:15 - "For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation."

Romans 6:4 - "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

Ezekiel 36:19 - "And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh..."

Ezekiel 36:26 - "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

Eph. 4:24 - "and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth."

Col. 2:11 - "and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ..."

Titus 3:5 - "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit."

The Gospel of Jesus Christ leads to Salvation (John)

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Only Christ lived the sinless life and died as a sacrifice for our sins, in order that we can live through him and the blood shed on the cross. He imputes his righteousness to us by vicariously atoning for our sins. It is through both his perfect life and his sacrificial death on the cross that those who truly repent and receive God's free gift of salvation by grace are liberated from the bondage and

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condemnation of sin. The evidence of a true conversion can be seen in the desire to live a life free of sin - although this is impossible in our current fleshly state - and there should be much evidence of the transformative nature of salvation, called in the Gospels, "rebirth" or "putting on the new man." There is also evidence, especially in Romans 7, that there is a constant struggle between this "new man" and the old, fleshly man. Yet, as becomes so clear in Romans 8, the "new man" ultimately prevails for there is "no condemnation" for those who have truly been redeemed. It is important to not lose sight of man's depravity. Depravity is moral corruption; wickedness. Depravity is a phrase used to summarize what the Bible teaches about the *spiritual condition of fallen man*. The doctrine of depravity is an acknowledgement that the Bible teaches that as a result of the fall of man, every part of man - his mind, will, emotions and flesh - have been corrupted by sin. Genesis 3:6 - "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." In other words, sin affects all areas of our being including who we are and what we do. It penetrates to the very core of our being so that everything is tainted by sin. Isaiah 64:6 - "All our righteous acts are like filthy rags before a holy God." It acknowledges that the Bible teaches that we sin because we are sinners by nature. Jesus says in Matthew 7:17-18 - "... every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit." The depravity of man is seen throughout the Bible in Jeremiah 17:9 Psalm 51:5, Psalm 58:3, Ephesians 2:1-5, Ephesians 2:5 John 3:19; John 8:34; Romans 3:10-11; John 3:19; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Romans 1:18; Proverbs 14:12; 1 Corinthians 1:18 and Romans 8:7. So, when one considers even these few verses, it becomes abundantly clear the Bible does indeed teach that fallen man is totally depraved, because sin affects all of him including his mind, will and emotions as in Romans 3:12 - "...there is none who does good, no not one.

The Entire Trinity is Involved in Salvation (Gary)

We often emphasize the role of Jesus Christ in our salvation and that is not wrong, but it is equally important to note that all of the Trinity is involved in true salvation. In the words of Arthur Pink, "First, I owe my salvation to God the Father, who ordained and planned it, and who chose me unto salvation (2 Thess. 2:13). In Titus 3:4, it is the Father who is denominated "God our Savior." Second, I owe my salvation to the obedience and sacrifice of God the Son incarnate, who performed as my Sponsor everything that the law required and satisfied all its demands upon me. Third, I owe my salvation to the regenerating, sanctifying, and preserving operations of the Spirit. Titus 3:5 makes it clear that God 'saved us by the washing and regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost'; and it is the presence of His fruit in my heart and life that furnishes the immediate evidence of my salvation."

The *Ordo Salutis* or Order of Salvation (John)

The work of Salvation truly begins with election, then our hearing the gospel call, our being regenerated by the Holy Spirit, our responding in faith and repentance, and God forgiving us and giving us membership in his family, as well as granting us growth in the Christian life and keeping us faithful to himself throughout life. At the end of our life, we die and go into his presence, then when Christ returns, we receive resurrection bodies, and the process of acquiring salvation is complete. Although, there is a temporal perspective to salvation and new birth, we can also see that it is a spiritual event and takes place beyond the time/space continuum. This seems irrelevant but we must keep it in mind as we study this because much confusion has come about in the Christian Church due to

arguments and misunderstandings around the *Ordo Salutis*, or Order of Salvation. We will look at the major components or parts of Salvation as derived from the Word of God.

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1. **The Gospel Call and the Effective Call: Proclaiming the Message of the Gospel**
 2. **Regeneration: Begin Born Again**
 3. **Conversion: Propitiation, Faith and Repentance**
 4. **Justification: Right Legal Standing**
 5. **Adoption: Membership in God’s Family**
 6. **Sanctification: Right Conduct of Life**
 7. **Perseverance: Remaining a Christian**
 8. **Glorification: Receiving a Resurrection Body**

I. The Gospel Call: Proclaiming the Message of the Gospel (Gary)

Romans 8:30 - “Those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.” Here Paul points to a definite order in which the blessings of salvation come to us. It is clear here that the “calling” is an act of God, specifically God the Father. 1 Peter 2:0 - “But you are a *chosen* race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who *called you* out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Cor. 1:9 - “God is faithful, by whom you were *called* into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” 1 Thess 2:12 - “we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.” It is clear this calling is supernatural and not of human origin. God calls his elect to be a part of his family through his Son. This calling has the power to draw us out of the kingdom of darkness and into the Kingdom of Light.

The gospel call or *effective calling* of God the Father can be defined as following: “An act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the gospel, in which he summons people to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith.” Unless God works in people’s hearts to make the proclamation of the gospel effective, there will be no genuine saving response. Jesus said, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.” - John 6:44 The *effective call* differs from the *gospel call* in that the *gospel call* is given to all people but not all accept. All those who receive the *effective call* accept as this is the Power of God to save. The clearest example of the effective call is seen in the parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:1-23.

Three Key Elements of the Gospel Call:

- 1) Explanation of the Facts Concerning Salvation:
 - a. All people have sinned (Romans 3:23)
 - b. The penalty for our sin is death (Romans 6:23)
 - c. Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins (Romans 5:8)
- 2) Invitation to Respond to Christ Personally in Repentance and Faith. Matt 11:28-30 - Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

This is a genuine personal invitation that seeks a personal response from each one who hears it. In John 1:11-12 we see the following, “he came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who *received* him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.” John points to the necessity of an individual response. And in Acts 20:21 - “...testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of *repentance* toward God and of *faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ.” Any genuine gospel proclamation must include an invitation to make a conscious decision to forsake one’s sins and come to Christ in faith, asking Christ for forgiveness of sins. If either the need to repent of sins or the need to trust in Christ for forgiveness is neglected, there is not a full and true proclamation of the gospel.

- 3) A Promise of Forgiveness and Eternal Life. John 3:16 - “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.” In Acts 3:19 - “Repent... and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out. For those who truly repent, God promises in his Word that he will grant forgiveness of sins. True repentance, or metanoia, means “change of mind” or “to turn around” and literally means taking on a new mind, a new way of doing things. It is essential that we communicate the gospel of repentance, which means transformation to love the things that we used to hate and hate the things we used to love.

The gospel call is so important because without it, who could be saved? Mark 16:15 - “And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.” Romans 1:16 - “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” Acts 10:42 - “And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.”

II. Regeneration: Being Born Again (John)

Regeneration can be defined as following: “An act of God in which he imparts new spiritual life to us, also called being ‘born again.’” John 3: 3-8 - “Jesus answered him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.’”

Regeneration is Totally a Work of God:

Regeneration is totally a work of God; we play no active role in this at all. In the original Noah Webster's Dictionary, regeneration is defined as:

REGENERATION, noun

1. Reproduction; the act of producing anew.
2. In theology, new birth by the grace of God; that change by which the will and natural enmity of man to God and his law are subdued, and a principle of supreme love to God and his law, or holy affections, are implanted in the heart.

He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5. John 1:13 - "... who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." Being born of God is not something that can be humanly earned or achieved. Birth is the perfect analogy for regeneration, as we did nothing to accomplish it. In like manner, our spiritual re-birth is something God does for us and to us but we do not do it for ourselves! Key passages: James 1:18; 1 Peter 1: 3 - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..."

Regeneration and the New Birth was prophesied by Ezekiel chapter 36: 26-27 - "And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules."

It is primarily the role of the Holy Spirit to cause regeneration. Jesus speaks of being "born of the Spirit" in John 3:8. God the Father is also involved in regeneration; Paul talks about God who "made us alive together with Christ" in Eph 2:5 and Col. 2:13. James 1:17-18 - "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."

The Nature of Regeneration:

We do know that we start out spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1) and have been made alive to God and in a very real sense we have been "born again" (John 3: 3,7; Eph 2:5; Col. 2:13). We know God gives us new spiritual life. Scripture teaches us that regeneration is something that affects all of us as in 2 Cor. 5:17 - "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." Regeneration is also an instantaneous event. This miraculous regeneration event becomes evident over time in patterns of behavior and desires that are pleasing to God and in line with the Word of God. We learn how to become less dependent and addicted to the things of this world and aware of God's will for our lives. Rom. 12:2 - "Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind so that you may prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God." (NOTE: Use Kelli and my testimonies as an example of the two extremes of this event.)

Regeneration :

It is the act of God in regeneration that gives us the ability to react in faith and receive the free gift of salvation. Eph 2:8-9 - "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." John 6:44 - "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." John 6:65 - "No one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." The act of regeneration is described in Acts 16:14 of Lydia: "The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul." First, the Lord opened her heart, then she was able to give heed to Paul's preaching and to respond in faith.

It is God that draws us to Him. 1 Cor. 2:14 - "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned." Romans 3:11 - "... no one understands, no one seeks God." It is God and God alone, through the working of the Holy Spirit and by the sacrificial love of the Son that we are regenerated! We see this clearly in Eph. 2:4-5 - "But God, being rich

in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved..." Col. 2:13 - "And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses..."

Genuine Regeneration Must Bring Results in Life:

1 John 3:9 - "No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's[a] seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God." It is important to note that this verse does not mean that we shall attain perfection in this life, but it does mean that we should live a life free of besetting or habitual sin. As regenerated sons and daughters of the Most High, we should live a pattern of life free of continual indulgence in sin.

A genuine Christ-like love will be one sure result in life: "Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God." - 1 John 4:7. Those who have been delivered from the kingdom of darkness should overcome the world. 1 John 5: 3-4 - "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith." Another result of regeneration is protection from Satan, the prince of this world. 1 John 5:18 - "We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him." The power of the Holy Spirit protects us from harm from the attacks of the evil one.

The "fruit of the Spirit," is an obvious result of the work of regeneration. Gal. 5:22-23 - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." If there is true regeneration, these elements should become clearer and clearer in our lives. Those who are not regenerated will clearly lack these characteristics in their lives. It is important to note that Jesus does not claim miraculous works or prophecy as evidence of regeneration, rather character traits of day-to-day life are shown as evidence. Matt. 7:22-23 - "On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'" Prophecy, exorcism (or deliverance) and many miracles and mighty works in Jesus' name do not provide convincing evidence that a person is truly born again!

III. Conversion: Propitiation, Faith & Repentance (Gary)

Conversion can be defined as follows: Our willing response to the gospel call, in which we sincerely repent of sins and place our trust in Christ for salvation. The word conversion means "turning" and is also connected with the word repentance, which is *metanoia* meaning "to turn around, or change of mind." This whole process of conversion and repentance takes place through faith.

Propitiation:

Romans 3:24-25 - "Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation (*hilasterion*) by his blood, to be received by faith." In this great passage, Paul is explaining the glorious truth of justification by grace alone through faith

alone in Christ alone, and speaks of notice, we did not put forward Jesus to God to turn away his wrath. God put forward Jesus to provide a propitiation. Our sins deserved God's wrath, but he gave Jesus as a propitiation, a sacrifice turning away his wrath and appeasing his just indignation. All we do is receive it by faith!

Propitiation is defined as the act of gaining or regaining the favor or goodwill of someone or something. God publicly displayed his own dear Son as a blood-sacrifice to turn away, quit, and satisfy his own just indignation with sin, the benefits of which are received by faith.

This stunning action demonstrates God's righteousness and his mercy! It shows how he can be patient and forbearing without compromising his justice. It shows how he was able to pass over the sins of his people in the Old Testament and why he was able to allow the sins of the Gentiles to go on without immediate final divine judgment and still be perfectly righteous. This act of propitiation between the Father and the Son is the great mystery of our faith, yet we can grasp that in this single act God's perfect mercy and perfect righteousness are on display! Hebrews 2:17 - "Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation (*hilaskethai*) for the sins of the people." The priestly, saving work of Christ is depicted as propitiation, which says: conveys the sense of an atoning sacrifice that puts away sin and satisfies God's wrath. Deut. 21:8; Ps 25:11; 65:3; 78:38; 79:9; Luke 18:13.

This is where the propitiating love of God comes in. To obtain our salvation for us, God himself met the demands of his holiness in Christ, which, because of the oneness of the Trinity, means he met the demands of his holiness himself. He has, in a manner of speaking, propitiated himself in our place! Thus, we see that God, through Christ, our priestly propitiator, has done everything for us.

Romans 3:24, 25 - "Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood." Christ, our perfect priestly propitiator, saved us in a way that kept God's holiness (indeed Christ's holiness) intact. Revelation speaks of his righteous wrath as the wrath of the Lamb. Rev 6:16 - "...calling to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." In this beautiful passage, John says this about Jesus Christ, our Advocate: 1 John 2:2 - "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." John is pointing us to the person and work of Christ as the source of our strength and hope and ultimate victory over sin. He specifies three aspects of Christ's person and work: Jesus our Advocate, Jesus as Righteous and Jesus as Propitiation.

It is vital to understand that the picture is not Jesus' pleading with his Father to be loving and merciful to us. Jesus is not trying to get God to love his people; rather, he is the provision of the loving Father so that he can love and his people with perfect rectitude and justice. The case is not that of love pleading with justice, but justice pleading with love for our pardon.

What we want to concentrate on is verse 2: He is the propitiation (*hilasmos*) for our sins. Again, to propitiate means to satisfy the wrath of God against sin, to turn away God's wrath, or to offer a sacrifice that appeases God's just judgment and righteous anger against us and our sin. Jesus is not simply the propitiator but the propitiation. He is what satisfies the justice of God. The term points to Jesus as covenantal sacrifice and to what the effect of his death was, what it effectively - not just potentially - accomplished.

John is teaching us this here so that we understand that Christ's person and work are:

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- (1) the ground of our fight against sin.
- (2) the source from which our holiness flows.
- (3) the basis on which our forgiveness rests.

As a result, those who trust in Christ are not frozen or paralyzed in the admission of their sin or hopeless in the fight against it. Christians are able to deal realistically and hopefully with sin because of who Jesus is and what he does. He is Advocate, Righteous, and Propitiation.

1 John 4:10 - "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation (*hilasmon*) for our sins. Here John, like Paul in Romans 3:25, makes it crystal clear that God in love provides his Son as the propitiation we need. The Christian doctrine of propitiation is NOT that of our trying to get God to love and forgive us by placating him by a sacrifice that we take the initiative to bring to him. Instead, God takes the initiative toward us in love - even though we have betrayed him and rebelled against him - and provides for us precisely the propitiation we need. God's love for us is supremely manifested in the cross; Jesus Christ provides propitiation. In response, we ought to love one another in in this kind of costly, self-giving way.

Faith and Repentance:

Repentance can be defined as follows: a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ. Repentance, life faith, is an intellectual understanding that sin is wrong, an emotional approval of the teachings of Scripture regarding sin, and a personal decision to turn from it. Repentance comes in a moment of time and happens before we actually live it out, it is not the result of a process of good works. Although, it may be the result of the Holy Spirit working on an individual's heart over the course of much time or in some cases it happens almost spontaneously. Genuine repentance always results in a changed life. Repentance is something that happens in the heart and involves the whole person in a decision to turn from sin.

2 Cor. 7:9-10 - "As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death." According to this passage, feeling bad for sin is not enough, repentance also means turning from sin!

One of the clearest elements of the invitation to salvation on the pages of Scripture is the issue of repentance. Repentance is the action of repenting, sincere regret or remorse. And a good place to start is Isaiah 55:6-7 - Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Here we have an invitation to salvation that incorporates repentance.

Seeking the Lord is important, calling upon Him is critical, but so is forsaking wicked ways and unrighteous thoughts. Salvation is a life-altering event, this repentance. It affects the whole man. First, and basically, it affects the center of personal life; then logically from the center it begins to impact all the conduct and the thought life, all situations, all actions. The whole proclamation of Jesus, then, is a proclamation of a once-for-all, complete, unconditional turning from sin to God, unconditional from all that is against God to all that honors Him.

It is total surrender. It is total commitment to the will of God and the word of God. It embraces the whole life of a person. One writer says, It embraces the whole walk of the new man who is claimed by the divine lordship. It carries with it the founding of a new personal relation between a man and God. It awakens joyous obedience for a life lived according to God's will. It is not just to change your mind about who Jesus is. It is not just to change your mind about your circumstances and decide to try something else.

Scripture puts repentance and faith together as different aspects of the one act of coming to Christ for salvation, both occurring simultaneously. Another way we can look at this is when saved we take Christ as Savior (through Faith) and Lord (through repentance leading to obedience). There are some who have taught that only repentance is necessary and as long as someone has intellectually believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior, that taking him as Lord is something that can take place later. They argue that to view it any other way is to believe in a works-based salvation. This one-sided view of salvation is dangerous and can lead to "easy believism" or "cheap grace" in which just saying a prayer one time is enough to be saved. We see this view is very prevalent in our churches as altar calls have become the rage and just as long as someone raised their hand and prayed "the prayer" they are saved! The testimony of Scripture as well as the long history of orthodoxy shows us this view is incorrect. One example can be seen in Isaiah 55:6-7 - "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Rom.10:17 - "So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ." Heb. 6:1 - "Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God." Hebrew 4:2 - "The word they heard did not profit them, because it was not mixed together with faith in those who heard." Eph.3:17 - "So that Christ might dwell in your hearts through faith."

Both Faith and Repentance Continue Throughout Life:

Faith and repentance are attitudes of the Christian's heart that continue throughout life. Jesus commands his disciples to pray daily in Matt.6:12 - "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." In Rev. 3:19 Christ speaks to the church in Laodicea - "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent." And in Gal. 2:20 Paul says - "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Although, it is true that initial saving faith and initial repentance occur only once in our lives, and when they occur it is true conversion, it is at the moment of conversion that the heart attitudes of repentance and faith begin. These same attitudes should continue throughout the course of our Christian lives. Each day there should be heartfelt repentance for sins that we have committed, and faith in Christ to provide for our needs and to empower us to live the Christian life.

The Bible tells us that the gift of eternal salvation with God the Father can only be received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by any type of works that we could do, no matter how holy and how pure those works may appear to be. The Bible tells us that every single one of us has sinned and has fallen short of the glory of God and that there is no one who is now truly righteous before God the Father. As a result, no one can earn their way into heaven, no matter how many good works they may try and do for the Lord, and no matter how holy and pleasing they may try to make themselves in His sight.

The gift of eternal salvation is a direct free gift being given to all of us by the Lord and it is simply received by grace through our personal faith in Jesus. Here are many powerful verses perfectly spelling all of this out for us:

Ephesians 2:8 - "For by grace, you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."

Galatians 2:16 - "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified."

Romans 3:20,23 - "Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."



We are simply saved by His grace, and love and mercy toward all of us. This is the beauty and simplicity of the Gospel, that God loved us so much, that He was willing to send down and sacrifice His one and only Son on a cross so His death on that cross could then pay the full penalty for all our sins. Jesus has already done all the work for us. That is why Jesus said it was finished right before He died on the cross for all of us. That is why the Bible tells us that we have already been crucified with Christ, as Jesus has already taken our place on that cross and died for all our sins against His Father.

As such, God's gift of eternal salvation must be accepted as a free gift, and this is simply done by believing on Jesus and what His death on the cross really means for all of us. Here is the major key verse from the Bible spelling all of this out for us: Romans 10:9 - "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 in righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." This is why the Bible says that we are simply saved by grace through our personal faith in Jesus. The bottom line: Ritualism, legalism, and works are out the door when it comes to being able to receive our eternal salvation through Jesus.

IV. Justification: Right Legal Standing Before God (John)

Justification can be defined as an instantaneous legal act of God in which he thinks of our sins as forgiven, and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us and declares us to be righteous in his sight.

Justification Includes a Legal Declaration by God:

The verb *justify* (*dikaioo*) in the New Testament means "to declare righteous." As we see in Romans 4:5 - "And to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness." God declares the ungodly to be righteous in his sight, not on the basis of their good works, but in response to their faith. This same word in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament gives further clarity to its legal use. In Duet. 25:1 - "If there is a dispute between people and they go to court, and the judges decide their case, *and they justify the righteous* and pronounce the wicked guilty..." Proverbs 17:15 - "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord."

In this sense of “declare to be righteous” or “declare to be not guilty” Paul frequently uses the word to speak of God’s justification of us, his declaration that we, though guilty sinners, are nonetheless righteous in his sight. This legal declaration does not change our internal nature or character at all. In this sense of “justify,” God issues a legal declaration about us.

God Declares Us to Be Just in His Sight:

The declaration that we are just in God’s sight has two aspects. First, it means that he declares that we have no penalty to pay for sin, including past, present or future sins. Romans 8:1 - “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” This means that we are not subject to any charge of guilt or condemnation: “Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn?” - Romans 8:33-34. This is a full forgiveness of sins as we can also see in Romans 4:6-8 - “just as David also speaks of the blessing of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven. And whose sins have been covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.” This justification clearly involves the forgiveness of sins. David speaks about this in Psalm 103:12 - “As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.”

Yet, the forgiving of sins is still not enough to earn favor with God. The second aspect of justification is that God must declare us not to be merely neutral in his sight but actually to be righteous in his sight. Not just righteous, but perfect righteousness, like the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Even the Old Testament speaks of this perfect righteousness as in Isaiah 61:10 - “He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness.” In the New Testament Paul speaks of this in Romans 3:21-22 - “But now apart [a]from the Law the righteousness of God has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, but it is the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those [who believe; for there is no distinction...” and in Romans 5:19 - “by one man’s obedience many will be made righteous.” The second aspect of justification is that we have the merits of perfect righteousness before God. How is this great miracle of our faith possible? Is there not consequences for our actions? Is there not a penalty for sin?

God Can Declare Us to Be Just Because He Imputes Christ’s Righteousness to Us:

To impute Christ’s righteousness to us it means that God regards Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us. Or seen another way, God “reckons” Christ’s righteousness to our account. Rom 4: 3 - “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” Paul goes on to explain in Romans 4:5-6 - “But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works...” In this way, Christ’s righteousness became ours. Paul says that we are those who received “the free gift of righteousness” - Romans 5:17.

There are actually three different “imputations” that take place in the scriptures:

- 1) When Adam sinned, his guilt was imputed to all of humanity
- 2) When Christ suffered and died for our sins, our sin was imputed to Christ
- 3) Christ’s perfect righteousness is imputed to the redeemed

God declares us to be just or righteous, not on the basis of our actual condition of righteousness or holiness, but rather on the basis of Christ's perfect righteousness. As we mentioned before, justification does not alter us internally for then (1) we could never be declared perfectly righteous in this life, because there is always sin that remains in our lives, and (2) there would be no provision for forgiveness of past sins committed before we were changed internally. Although this seems subtle it is incredibly important to grasp this aspect of justification because so many lies have been sown into the church through those who would say that justification changes us internally. The internal change is an aspect of regeneration, which we looked at earlier. To confuse regeneration with justification can lead to serious doctrinal issues.

Justification Comes to Us Entirely by God's Grace, Not on Account of Any Merit in Ourselves:

Romans 3:23-24 - "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a *gift by His grace* through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Because we are completely unable to earn favor with God, the only way we could be declared righteous is if God freely provides salvation for us by grace, totally apart from our work. Eph. 2:8-9 - "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Grace is the reason that God is willing to justify us, not our works. It is only because of God's unmerited favor that we are granted pardon from our sins and access to heaven through Jesus Christ. It was this very issue of justification that was at the heart of the Reformation. Luther and the other Reformers insisted that justification comes by grace alone, not by grace plus some merit on our part.

God Justifies Us Through Faith in Christ:

It is important to remember that Justification precedes saving faith. Gal. 2:16 - "nevertheless, knowing that a person is not justified by works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law; since by works of the Law no flesh will be justified." Faith comes first and it is for the purpose of being justified. Why does God choose faith as the means by which we receive justification? Faith is the one attitude of heart that is the exact opposite of depending on ourselves. When we come to Christ in faith we say, "I give up! I will not depend on myself or my own good works any longer. I know that I can never make myself righteous before God. Jesus, I trust you and depend on you completely to give me a righteous standing before God." Faith depends not at all on our own merit but entirely on God's free gift of grace. Romans 4:16 - "For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.." And again from Eph. 2:8-9 - "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast." This same idea is repeated in Romans 3:20 - "because by the works of the Law none of mankind will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes knowledge of sin" and Gal. 2:16 - "nevertheless, knowing that a person is not justified by works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law; since by works of the Law no flesh will be justified." This point is made abundantly clear in the scriptures, there is no excuse for those who would try to twist Justification into a works-based act.

Practical Implications of the Doctrine of Justification:

First, this doctrine enables us to offer genuine hope to unbelievers who know they could never make themselves righteous before God: if salvation is a free gift to be received through faith alone, then anyone who hears the gospel may hope that eternal life is freely offered and may be obtained. Second, this doctrine gives us confidence that God will never make us pay the penalty for sins that have been forgiven on Christ's merits. We may continue to suffer the ordinary consequences of sin but have been released from the ultimate penalty of death. God may discipline us if we continue to act in ways that are disobedient to him, yet he does this out of a love for us and for our own good. Once again let us always remember Romans 8:1 - "There is therefore now no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus." This should give us much confidence and joy as we have been declared "not guilty" by the Lord of the Universe!

V. Adoption: Membership in God's Family (Gary)

The doctrine of adoption can be defined as an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family. Or, according to the Westminster Confession of Faith: "Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God." In John 1:12 we see this doctrine clearly - "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God." Paul tells us in Romans 8:14-17 - For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons and daughters of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons and daughters by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him." And as we as believers have been adopted into the family of God, we are brothers and sisters in Christ.

The status of adoption into God's family was not fully realized until the New Covenant. In Gal. 3:23-26 we read "But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the Law, being confined for the faith that was destined to be revealed. Therefore, the Law has become our guardian to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. For you are all sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus." Full adoption into the family of God came about when Christ came and died on the cross, ascended and left the Holy Spirit with us.

Christ, the Son sent by the heavenly Father, arrived at "the fullness of time" (Gal. 4:4), and took on human flesh "to redeem those who were under the [curse of the] law" (Gal. 4:5a). His gracious redeeming act possesses a stated purpose - adoption! As expressed in Galatians 4:5, adoption marks the Son's supreme reason for coming to earth. The adoption purposed before time (Ephesians 1) and prefigured in corporate Israel's experience (Romans 9) is the adoption secured by the incarnate Son of God. Christ came, suffered and died for our full and final adoption. Adoption is the result and goal of the Gospel, the Good News that through Christ's perfect sacrifice we have been invited to become sons of God. Wow!

Romans 8:18-23 puts it this way - "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the eagerly awaiting creation waits for the revealing of the sons and daughters of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only that, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves

groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons and daughters, the redemption of our body.” Is there any greater privilege or honor than what we read about here? Is there anything in this life that can possibly compare with being called a child of the Most High?

Adoption Follows Conversion and Is An Outcome of Saving Faith:

Adoption is connected with saving faith in the Bible. As we read earlier in Gal. 3:23-26 “In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith” and in from John 1:12 “But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.” These two verses make it clear that adoption follows conversion and is God’s response to our faith. Furthermore, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to give us assurance of our adoption, as we read in Romans 8:15-16 “...God causes his Holy Spirit within our hearts to cry, Abba! Father!”

The Privileges of Adoption:

There are two primary ways the privileges of adoption are seen: 1) by the way God relates to us and 2) in the way we relate to one another as brothers and sisters in God’s family.

One of the greatest privileges we have is to be able to speak to God directly and as a loving Father! Jesus taught his disciples to pray to God as “Father” in the Lord’s Prayer (Matt. 6:9). In Gal. 4:7 we are to realize that we are no longer slaves but sons! This privilege of approaching God as Father becomes the foundation of many other Christian blessings and is the primary way in which we are to relate to God the Father. The fact that God relates to us as Father shows clearly that he loves us. 1 John 3:1 - “See how great a love the Father has given us, that we would be called children of God; and in fact we are. For this reason the world does not know us: because it did not know Him.” In the role as our Father, God gives us many good gifts: “So if you, despite being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!” He especially gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit to comfort us and to empower us for ministry and for living the Christian life (Luke 11:13).

God also gives a great inheritance in heaven! We have become joint heirs with Christ, “... to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you...” All the great privileges and blessings of heaven are laid up for us and put at our disposal because we are children of the King, members of the royal family, princes and princesses who will reign with Christ over the new heavens and new earth (Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21). Even now angels are sent by the Father to minister unto us, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to provide service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?” - Heb. 1:14

The privilege of being led by the Holy Spirit is another benefit of adoption. The Holy Spirit puts into the sons of God the desire to live according to his will. Romans 8:14 - “All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” The Holy Spirit should be our guide and show us how best to obey the Father’s will.

God also disciplines his children, which although it may not always seem like it, is indeed a privilege of being a part of God’s family. Heb. 12:5-7 - “and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are punished by Him; for whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He punishes every son whom He accepts. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?” Just as earthly children grow in

obedience and righteousness when they are disciplined properly by their earthly fathers, so we grow in righteousness and holiness when we are disciplined by our heavenly Father.

As regards to our relationship with one another as believers we enjoy additional benefits. We are able to have far deeper and intimate relationships with believers than with anyone in the world. We are all one family and should treat each other than way and enjoy the results of loving and harmonious relationships. 1 Tim. 5:1-2 - "Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, and to the younger men as brothers, to the older women as mothers, and to the younger women as sisters, in all purity." The church is God's family and to truly understand this should change the way we approach "church." We should encourage one another, uplift one another, help each other, pray for each other, carry each other's burdens, work together, play together, eat together, worship together, serve together, etc. It is truly a great privilege to be adopted in the Family of God and to share that privilege with so many brothers and sisters in Christ.

One final thing to point out and very important to understand to avoid all kinds of heresy rampant in the church today. Although Jesus does call us his "brothers" (Heb. 2:12) and he is therefore in one sense our older brother in God's family, and can be called "the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29), he is careful to make a clear distinction between the way in which God is our heavenly Father and the way in which he relates to God the Father. He says to Mary Magdalene, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (John 20:17), thus making a clear distinction between the far greater and eternal sense in which God is his Father, and the sense in which God is our Father.

VI. Sanctification: Growth in Likeness to Christ (John)

Sanctification can be defined as a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives. It is the continuing work of God in the life of the believer making them closer and closer to the likeness of Christ. As we saw in the section on Justification, we have been given a "not guilty" legal status in God's eyes through the perfect work of Jesus Christ. Sanctification is the process by which our moral condition is brought into line with our legal standing with God throughout the course our life. The aim of this divine working is likeness to Christ himself. Romans 8:29 - "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." The Greek word *summorphous* translated "to be conformed to" indicates a likeness to Christ that is not just an external or superficial resemblance. It signifies the whole set of characteristics or qualities that makes something what it is.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast." We are not saved by our works. In fact, Paul argues that even our faith is a gift from God, and therefore, there is no room for man's boasting. Salvation is a work of God. However, salvation is not simply a work that happens when we are born again. It is a work that continues till we are made into the full image of Christ. It will end at death or at the rapture, whichever happens first.

Romans 8:29-30 - "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. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified."

It should be helpful to better understand the nature of sanctification if we contrast it with justification. To begin, justification is an instantaneous occurrence, complete in a moment, and sanctification is a process requiring an entire lifetime for completion. When it comes to justification, one is either justified or they are not but in terms of sanctification there are different degrees or levels that we move through during our walk with Christ. As we saw in the section on justification, our inner state is not changed by justification rather it is a declaration in the eyes of God of our freedom through Christ. Sanctification does result in the transformation of our character and condition.

Justification	Sanctification
Legal standing	Internal condition
Once for all time	Continuous throughout life
Entirely God's work	We cooperate with God
Perfect in this life	Never perfected in this life
The same in all Christians	Greater in some than in others

It is important to note here that sanctification is a supernatural work done by God, not something we can do ourselves. A misunderstanding of this can lead to many humanist traps that would elevate self-help to the status of sanctification. Sanctification is not something we can create with our willpower. 1 Thess. 5:23 - "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" and Heb. 13:20-21 - "Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, that is, Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

What is the proper way to progress in holiness - to work out our salvation? Paul teaches a paradox. We must work and God works. We must work alongside God in the process of our sanctification. Philippians 2:12-13 - "God works in us to will and do of his good pleasure. He gives us the very desires to grow in Christ and he works in us to do it. This is why, when we get to heaven, there will be no room for boasting." Why? Because God did it all. However, both realities are true. We must work and God is working.

Listen to what Paul said about this reality in his own life in 1 Corinthians 15:9-10 - "For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." Paul said he worked harder than everybody else but not him, the grace of God within him. He said that God's grace was not without effect in him. The reality is that God's grace works in each one of us to grow spiritually, but for some it is without effect. We must work with God in the process of sanctification - responding to his conviction, allowing him to empower us to accomplish his will for our lives.

Three Stages of Sanctification:

First, sanctification has a definite beginning at regeneration. 1 John 3:9 - "No one who has been born of God practices sin, because His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin continually, because he has been born of God." A definite moral change occurs in our lives at the point of regeneration. Here there is an overlap between

sanctification and regeneration, for this initial moral change is a part of our regeneration by the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor 6:11 - "Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were *sanctified*, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God." This initial step of sanctification involves a freeing step from the power of sin in our lives, the believer is no longer in bondage to and dominated by the power of sin and no longer loves sin. Romans 6:14 - "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under the Law but under grace" and Rom. 6:18 - "... and after being freed from sin, you became slaves to righteousness." In this context, to be dead to sin or to be set free from sin involves the power to overcome acts or patterns of sinful behavior in one's life. Sin will no longer be our master, as once it was before we became Christians.

Paul says if we are going to work out our salvation - our sanctification - we must follow the model of Christ. He is the person we must seek to study and to emulate. The writer of Hebrews said this in Hebrews 12:2-3 - "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." The author says that we must fix our eyes on Jesus. The word fix means to focus on something to the exclusion of everything else. It essentially means to be single-minded.

There is a balance to sanctification that we have to be aware of. On one hand, we can never say, "I am completely free from sin," because our sanctification will never be completed in this life. On the other hand, a Christian should never say, "this sin has defeated me. I give up. I have struggled with this sin for 30 years and will continue to struggle with this until the day I die!" To say things like this is to say that sin has dominion over you. It is allowing sin to reign in our bodies and to admit defeat. This is to deny the Word of God such as Rom. 6:11 - "So you too, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

In John 15:5 Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." If we make our home in Christ, if we make him our focus, then all good fruits will grow out of that relationship. Love, joy, peace, self-control all come from an abiding relationship, an abiding focus on Christ.

In Philippians 3:10-12 - "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me." Paul said he wanted to know Christ. He wanted to know his power and have fellowship with his sufferings. For Paul, following Christ did not mean skipping the cross to go to glory, it meant being like Christ even in suffering. Paul said he pressed or ran after this since it was the reason that Christ took hold of him. Christ took hold of him for a relationship and for Paul to be made into Christ's very image. Therefore, Paul challenged the Philippians to pursue the same path he took - an endless pursuit of Christ as his goal Phil 3:15-17. In order to be sanctified, like Paul, we must focus on Christ. He must be our ambition and focus.

Second, sanctification increases throughout life. The New Testament clearly shows that sanctification is a process that continues throughout a Christian's life. Rom. 6:12-13 - "Therefore sin is not to reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the parts of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your body's parts as instruments of righteousness for God." Paul recognizes that we will continue to struggle with sin as we carry on

our lives. Just as we once grew in sin, now we are to grow in righteousness through sanctification. Rom 6:19 - "I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented the parts of your body as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your body's parts as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification." And in 2 Cor. 3:18 - "But we all, with unveiled faces, looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit." We are progressively becoming more and more like Christ as we go on in the Christian life.

Here are additional verses that support the ongoing nature of Sanctification. Phil. 3:13-14 - "Brothers and sisters, I do not regard myself as having taken hold of it yet; but 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." Col. 3:10 - "... and have put on the new self, which is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created it..." Heb. 12:1 - "Therefore, since we also have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let's rid ourselves of every obstacle and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let's run with endurance the race that is set before us..." Heb. 12:14 - "Pursue peace with all people, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord." James 1:22 - "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves." 1 Peter 1:15 - "but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior..."

Thirdly, sanctification is completed at death (for our souls) and when the Lord returns (for our bodies). Because there is sin that still remains in our hearts even though we have become Christians (Rom 6:12-13; 1 John 1:8), our sanctification will never be completed in this life. Our sanctification for our souls is completed once we die and go to be with the Lord. Heb. 12:23 - "...to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect..." However, sanctification involves the whole person, including our bodies (2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thess. 5:23) and will not be entirely completed until the Lord returns and we receive new resurrection bodies. Phil 3:21 - "... who will transform the body of our lowly condition into conformity with His glorious body, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself." And in 1 Cor. 15:49 - "Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly." It is at his coming that we will be made alive with a resurrection body and then we shall fully bear the image of the Man of heaven.

Sanctification happens through rigorous study of the Word of God. I tell most people I do not read the word, I study it. Jesus prayed this right before going to the cross.

John 17:17 - "Sanctify them by your truth, your word is truth." In order for us to grow in Christ, we must be people of the Word of God. We must be devoted to the study, memorization, and teaching of it. 1 Peter 2:2 - "Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation." The verb may grow here is passive; it literally means it may grow you. When a person is rigorously studying the Word of God, it makes him grow. Scripture says the Word of God is active and alive in Heb 4:12. It equips the man of God for all righteousness in 2 Tim 3:17. If you are consistently getting into the Word of God and obeying it, it will make you grow. It will make you look more like Christ. This is a discipline that all believers must develop in their lives so that they may grow up into their salvation.

Sanctification happens through rigorous prayer. Jesus said this to the disciples right before he went to the cross. Mark 14:38 - "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." Jesus had previously told Peter and the other disciples that they would deny him; however, Christ also taught

them how not to fall to the temptation, how not to sin. They needed to be disciplined in prayer. This prayer was not a quick arrow prayer but a disciplined time in prayer. He called them to pray for an hour so they would not stumble. He put a time limit on it. This amount of prayer would make them strong enough not to deny him. How many of us stumble into frustration, depression, anger, pride, or lust because we are not disciplined in our prayer lives? If we are not going to succumb to temptation, we must find time to pray, a space to pray, and people to pray with. It should be noted that when Christ was preparing for his own temptation, he not only prayed but called a prayer meeting.

The Beauty and Joy of Sanctification:

Sanctification brings great joy! The more we grow in likeness to Christ, the more we will personally experience the joy and peace that are part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Gal 5:22 - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness..." We should also grow closer and closer to the kind of life we should live in heaven. Rom. 6:22 - "But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life." This realization of our eternal life in a hopeless world is the source of our true joy. Rom. 14:17 - "for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." As we grow in holiness we grow in conformity to the image of Christ, and more and more of the beauty of his character is seen in our own lives. This is the goal of perfect sanctification which will be ours when Christ returns. 1 John 3: 3 - "And everyone who has this hope set on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

VII. The Perseverance of The Saints: Remaining a Christian (Gary)

Perseverance of the Saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again. This first means that we can have assurance of our faith but that continuing in our Christian life until we die is one of the evidences that a person is truly born again. That being said, there are many in the Christian faith who do not believe in the assurance of salvation.

All Who Are Truly Born Again Will Persevere to the End:

There are many passages that teach that those who are truly born again, who are genuinely Christians, will continue in the Christian life until death and will then go to be with Christ in heaven. John 6:38-40 - "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of everything that He has given Me I will lose nothing, but will raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." Based on this, it seems hard to avoid that conclusion that everyone who truly believes in Christ will remain a Christian up to the day of final resurrection into the blessings of life in the presence of God. Those given to the Son by the Father will not be lost.

In John 10:27-29 Jesus says, "My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." And in John 3:36, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life." Now if this is truly eternal life that believers have, then it is life that last forever with God. It is a gift of God that comes with salvation. Evidence in Paul's writings and the other New

Testament epistles also indicates that those who are truly born again will persevere to the end. Romans 8:1 - "There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ." The entire penalty of sin has been paid for all eternity for those who are truly saved. It is important to remember that those who have been truly born again are those who have been supernaturally regenerated by the working of the Holy Spirit. They have been truly born again!

Further evidence that God keeps those who are born again safe for eternity is the "seal" that God places upon us. This "seal" is the Holy Spirit within us, who also acts as God's "guarantee" that we will receive the inheritance promised to us in Ephesians 1:13-14 - "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation - having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of the promise, who is a first installment of our inheritance, in regard to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory." The Greek word *arrabon* translated "guarantee" in this passage is a legal and commercial term that means "first installment, deposit, down payment, pledge" and represents "a payment which obligates the contracting party to make further payments." When God gave us the Holy Spirit within, he committed himself to give all the further blessings of eternal life. All who have the Holy Spirit within them, all who are truly born again, have God's unchanging promise and guarantee that the inheritance of eternal life in heaven will certainly be theirs. God's own faithfulness is pledged to bring it about.

In Phil. 1:6 Paul states, "I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." God's good work that begins in each and every true Christian will be completed at the day Christ returns. Peter says it this way in 1 Peter 1:5 - "...who are guarded by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." The word guarded in Greek is *phroureo* and can mean both "kept from escaping" and "protected from attack" and both are implied here: God is preserving believers from escaping out of his kingdom, and he is protecting them from external attacks. This guarding is not for a temporary goal but for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. "Salvation" is used here not of past justification or of present sanctification but of the future full possession of all the blessings of our redemption – of the final, complete fulfillment of our salvation.

Those Who Persevere to the End Demonstrate They Have Made Jesus Lord:

Perseverance in working out our salvation is important because of temptations toward complacent, apathetic Christianity. In this process of following Christ there will be temptations to give up the pursuit and just become spiritually comfortable and lethargic. The church is full of those who have not "persevered" in the discipline of "working out their salvation." We see this with one church in particular in the New Testament: The church of Laodicea.

Revelation 3:14-17 - "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm - neither hot nor cold - I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing. But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked." This church was of no use to God; they were lukewarm. They thought to themselves that they did not need a thing. They were content and apathetic in their spiritual life, and therefore, they brought great displeasure to God. The church is full of Christians like this. Practically, they are of no use, fit only to be disciplined by God. This is a temptation for all Christians. We must persevere in our work of being sanctified. We must fight against lethargy.

(c) Gary and Karen Budzinski and John Pugno

Romans 12:11 - "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord." We all have this responsibility to persevere in our pursuit of holiness and fight against apathetic, lukewarm Christianity. Perseverance in working out our salvation is important because of temptations to fall away from God all together. Paul confronts this reality commonly in his teachings. Colossians 1:22-23 - "But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation; if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel."

Paul writes to this church that was being attacked by a Gnostic cult who denied the deity of Christ and thus the gospel and said that they must continue in the faith, in the gospel. The church is constantly confronted with threats that cause many to fall away. Some fall away because of discord or moral failure in the church. Some fall away because of liberal, secular thinking that challenges the exclusivity of the gospel. Some fall away into cults, and others fall away because of persecution the church encounters. Christ talks about some of these realities in Matthew 24:9-13 - "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved."

Christ talked about how persecution, false teachers, and increased sin and wickedness in the end times will cause many to not persevere in the faith. They will simply fall away. He says that those who persevere are the ones who are really saved. Perseverance is a proof of genuine salvation in 1 John 2:19. There are many threats to us continuing this process of working out our salvation, but we must persevere.

Jesus speaks directly of the importance of persevering until the end. In John 8:31-32 he says, "So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you continue in My word, then you are truly My disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" Jesus is here giving a warning that one evidence of genuine faith is continuing in his word, that is, continuing to believe what he says and living a life of obedience to his commands. Matt. 10:22 - "And you will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved."

Col. 1:22-23 - "... yet He has now reconciled you in His body of flesh through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach - *if indeed you continue in the faith* firmly established and steadfast, and not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister." Because there are many who then as now claim to be Christians but are not, Paul knows that those whose faith is not real will eventually fall away from participation in the fellowship of the church. Those who continue show thereby that they are genuine believers. But those who do not continue in the faith show that there was no genuine faith in their hearts in the first place.

Hebrews 3:14 - "For we have become partakers of Christ *if we keep the beginning of our commitment firm until the end...*" Here the test is given to us on how we can be sure our faith is genuine, "... if we keep the beginning of our commitment first until the end." It is important to remember that there are other assurances of our faith but preserving until the end is a critical aspect of our salvation. There is also a warning at the beginning of this passage in Hebrews 3:12 - "Take care, brothers and sisters, that there will not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God." These warning are not given to make true Christians anxious about their faith. Rather, the purpose is to warn those who are thinking of falling away or have fallen away that if they do this it is a strong indication that they had unbelieving hearts. John makes this clear in 1 John 2:19 - "They went out

from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be evident that they all are not of us." Those that departed showed by their actions that they "were not of us."

The Importance of Continually Evaluating Our Salvation:

Is it always clear which people in the church have genuine saving faith and which have an intellectual persuasion of the truth of the gospel but no genuine faith in their hearts? It is not easy to tell but above all else it is most important to examine ourselves first before looking at others. Matt. 7: 3-5 - "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." And also Phil. 2:12 - "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling...*" Paul instructs us in no uncertain terms that we need to be vigilant to continue in the faith and to constantly evaluate our salvation with fear and trembling.

One of the most sobering, if not terrifying passages in the entire Bible is Matt. 7:21-23 - ""Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; leave Me, you who practice lawlessness.'" Just doing good works and even miracles in the name of Jesus is not enough to prove salvation. In 1 Sam. 16:7 God says the following to Samuel: "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for *God does not see as man sees*, since man looks at the outward appearance, *but the Lord looks at the heart.*"

Jesus also addresses the need for genuine faith in the parable of the Sower. In Mark 4:5-6 - "Other seed fell on the rocky ground where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of soil. And when the sun had risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away." Jesus goes on to explain this in Mark 4:16-17 - "And in a similar way these are the ones sown with seed on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; and yet they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution occurs because of the word, immediately they fall away." This is describing those who apparently had a genuine conversion but when the difficulty comes they fall away. It is important that we evaluate our own salvation and stand firm when difficulty and persecution come our way, as it inevitably will if we are truly redeemed.

What Can Give a Believer Genuine Assurance?

John 15:1-2,6 - "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. ... If anyone does not remain in Me, he is thrown away like a branch and dries up; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned." The message is clear, those who abide on Christ will bear fruit!

Paul goes into great detail regarding the proof of salvation in Galatians chapter 5. He explains the battle between the Spirit and the flesh and what that looks like as well as what it looks like to bear good fruit in verses 16-24: "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, in order to keep you from doing whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: sexual immorality, impurity, indecent behavior, idolatry, witchcraft, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

Do I have a Present Trust in Christ for Salvation? Paul tells the Colossians that they will be saved on the last day, "provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel which you heard" - Col. 1:23. If a testimony of saving faith is genuine, it should be a testimony of faith that is active this very day.

Is There Evidence of a Regenerating Work of the Holy Spirit in My Heart? Romans 8:14-16 - "*For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons and daughters of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons and daughters by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God...*" There should be a testimony of the Holy Spirit within our hearts bearing witness that we are children of God. This testimony will usually be accompanied by a sense of being led by the Holy Spirit in paths of obedience to God's will.

Do I See a Long-Term Pattern of Growth in My Christian Life? Peter shows us some character traits which, if we keep on increasing in them, will guarantee that we will "never fall" (2 Pet. 1:10). 2 Peter 1:5-7 - "For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities, you will never fall." These things should belong to believers and continually abound in our lives and by so doing we confirm that our salvation is genuine.

VIII. Glorification: Receiving a Resurrection Body (John)

Christ not only redeemed our spirit and soul but he also redeemed our bodies. His work of redemption will not be completed until our bodies are entirely set free from the effects of the fall and brought to the state of perfection for which God create them. The redemption of the body will be complete when Christ returns and raises our bodies from the dead. Romans 8:23-24 - "And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of

the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved..." The stage in redemption in which we receive resurrection bodies is called *glorification*.

The day of our glorification is also the day in which the last enemy, death, is defeated. 1 Cor. 15:25-26 - "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." And in I Cor. 15:54-55 - "When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" When our bodies are raised from the dead we will experience complete victory over the death that came as a result of the fall of Adam and Eve. Then our redemption will be complete.

Glorification can be defined as follows: "Glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like his own." (Grudem)

New Testament Evidence for Glorification:

The primary New Testament passage on glorification and the resurrection body is 1 Cor. 15:12-58. In verses 22 – 23 Paul says, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ." In verses 51-52 he says, "Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed." In 1 Thess. 4:14 Paul explains that the souls of those who have died and gone to be with Christ will come back and be joined with their bodies on that day, for Christ will bring them with him: "For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep." He also mentions that "the dead in Christ will rise first." (1 Thess. 4:16) Those believers who have died with Christ are also raised up to meet Christ in 1 Thess.4:17 - "Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord." The souls of the believers who have gone into Christ's presence at death will return with him and their bodies will be raised from the dead to be joined together with their souls, and then to ascend to be with Christ.

Paul continues in Rom 8:11, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you." He realizes that Christians should live in eager expectation of Christ's return and of the change in our bodies to be like his own perfect body. He says in Phil. 3:20-21, "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."

In John 5:28-29 Jesus says, "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment." Jesus also says in John 6:39-40, "And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

Old Testament Support for Glorification:

In Hebrews 11 Paul tells us that Abraham “looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Heb 11:10). And in Hebrews 11:13-16 we read, “These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had the opportunity to return. But as it is, *they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one.* Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.” In verse 19 it is said of Abraham that he “considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead.”

We see additional evidence in that there was a strong expectation of the resurrection to come. In Job 19:25-26 - “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God...” And in Psalms 49:15 - “But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me.” Daniel says in 12:2 - “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

Although Old Testament believers did not have as much detail about the nature of the resurrection or the way it would come about through the resurrection of the Messiah, and although they did not have as clear a basis for confidence in the resurrection as we do in the actual even of the bodily resurrection of Christ, nonetheless there was an expectation of a future day of bodily resurrection.

What Will Our Resurrection Bodies Be Like?

According to 1 Cor. 15:20, 23, 49; Phil. 3:21 our resurrection bodies will be like Jesus’ resurrection body. What will these bodies be like. In 1 Cor. 15:42-44,49 Paul explains using the metaphor of a seed growing into a plant, “So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body... Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall[a] also bear the image of the man of heaven.” The fact that our new bodies will be “imperishable” means that they will not wear out or grow old or ever be subject to any kind of sickness or disease. They will be completely healthy and strong for eternity! Our resurrection bodies will have no sign of aging and not evidence of disease or injury, for all will be made perfect. Our resurrection bodies will show the fulfillment of God’s perfect wisdom in creating us as human beings who are the pinnacle of his creation and the appropriate bearers of his likeness and image. In these resurrection bodies we will clearly see humanity as God intended it to be.

Paul also says our bodies will be raised “in glory.” There is a suggestion of beauty and attractiveness and also a kind of brightness or radiance surrounding our bodies that will be an appropriate outward evidence of the position of exaltation and rule over all creation that God has given to us. Matt. 13:43 - “Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.” And we read something similar in Daniel’s vision from chap. 12: 3 - “And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”

According to 1 Cor. 15:43, our bodies will be raised “in power.” This is in contrast to the “weakness” which we see in our bodies now. We will have the strength and power that God intended human beings to have in their bodies when he created them. It will be strength that is sufficient to do all that we desire to do in conformity with the will of God.

Finally, Paul says our body is raised a “spiritual body” in 1 Cor. 15:44. The word used in Greek, *pneumatikos*, seldom means “nonphysical” but rather “consistent with the character and activity of the Holy Spirit.” It is a physical body raised to the degree of perfection for which God originally intended it. When Christ returns he will give us a new resurrection body to be like his resurrection body. 1 John 3:2 - “When he appears we shall be like him.”

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