

God's Plan of Salvation

Outline - Chapter One

1. The Origin of Man:

Page 2

- A. Special Creation - man's environment in the beginning
 - 1. The "Old-Earth" view
 - 2. The "Young-Earth" view
- B. God's purpose in the creation of man
 - 1. Man was created to glorify God
 - 2. Man was created to know God's mercy and grace

2. The Introduction of Sin:

Page 4

- A. The Biblical definition of sin
- B. The origin of sin
 - *Why would God place such a "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" in Eden?
- C. The consequences of sin
 - *The Scriptural meaning of "death"

3. The Plan of Salvation:

Page 7

- A. Conceived in the heart of a loving God
- B. Accomplished in the gospel of Jesus Christ
 - *Saving grace, believing faith and the precious blood of Christ
- C. Executed by the power of the Holy Spirit

4. Eternal Life: the Security of the Believer:

Page 15

- A. Eternal life defined
- B. The Biblical basis for the security of believers
- C. The believer's assurance of eternal life
- D. Salvation and sin in the life of believers

5. The Most Important Questions You Will Be Asked:

Page 21

- A. If you were to die today, do you know that your sins are forgiven?
- B. Do you know that you are saved and are going to Heaven?

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

Introduction:

The study of man's salvation must begin with an elementary understanding of his creation, fall, and redemption from sin; therefore, we begin at man's beginning. But when was his beginning and how did he come to the need for salvation? From a *secular-humanist* view man evolved randomly on his own, as did the material world from primitive life forms over vast spans of time, so the Biblical account of creation is rejected. For this reason alone the accommodation of Darwinian evolution, in any form, is foreign to the Scriptures and God's plan of Salvation.

Two concepts argue the humanist view: *Agnosticism* contends that it is humanly impossible to verify the existence of God so no relationship with Him is possible. *Atheism* is a belief which denies the existence of God. The attitude of the former, *I won't bother God if He won't bother me*, and the latter, *There is no God*, bring this response from the Bible:

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse"
(Romans 1:20)

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good" (Psalms 14: 1)

For ages man has pondered the questions, *What is the purpose of life*, and, *Why am I here?* The stark conclusion of secular-humanism is that life is simply the survival of the fittest. Religion is man's attempt to reconcile the hopelessness of agnosticism and atheism with the yearning of the human heart to know the truth. If Genesis 1:1, is true, (*"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"*), then Man is responsible to his Creator:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12: 13)

God's Plan of Salvation is a study of the plan of redemption, not by a man-made system of good works, but by and through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the gospel. In His death, burial and resurrection, Christ does for man what he cannot do for himself and does not deserve, by grace through faith establishing man righteous before God:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Peter 3: 18)

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5: 21)

1. The Origin of Man:

A. Special Creation - Man's Environment:

In contrast to the secular-humanist view, the Bible doctrine of special, or divine creation states that God created the material world out of nothing. The simple declaration of Genesis 1:1, actually provides the scientific answer to man's beginning which cannot be explained at all by the evolution model; at some point, somewhere, matter must have come from something, or somewhere, or someone. Only the Bible offers that answer: *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."*

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

1. The "Old-Earth" View:

During the infancy of the evolution debate some religious theologians, most notably Dr. C. I. Schofield, in an effort to reconcile the Bible record with Darwin's insistence upon a very old universe, suggested a gap of time of indeterminate length between the first and second verses of Genesis Chapter 1. This accommodation would allow for the *countless ages* required by evolution to coexist with the Bible record. The Gap Theory must be examined in light of the following considerations:

The Concept Was Absent from Ancient Thought:

The Gap Theory was unknown to the New Testament Church and the Scientific community before the atheistic concept of evolution was proposed. Dr. Schofield, editor of the Bible which bears his name, advanced a principle which compromised both theology and science.

It Began the Capitulation of Bible Truth to Atheism:

Until Darwin's proposition of evolution began to find favorable acceptance among secular scientists, the Bible model of special creation was the accepted view of all scientists.

2. The "Young-Earth" View:

The Historical View of the Church:

Those theologians who accepted the Gap Theory most often supported their position from Genesis 1: 2, "*And the earth was without form, and void,*" proposing that it was not logical that God could, or would create something in such a state, so there must have been some chaotic pre-Adamic judgement which left the earth in ruin. However, the phrase *without form and void* does not mean *chaotic*, but rather *unformed and uninhabited*, an appropriate description of the immediate state of creation as it was unfolding. If it is unreasonable to think that God would create the material world in such a progression, remember that He could have simply thought all things into existence. The process of creation, then, must have served divine purpose for all that God would do in the world He created.

Empirical Scientific Evidence:

Today the secular scientific community is experiencing a growing shift toward creationism because of the bankruptcy of evidence in evolution. In fact, evolution is not a "*theory*" (a scientific concept which may be subjected to observation and analysis), but an "*hypothesis*," because it can be neither observed nor proven!

Consider the term "*prehistoric*," long a favorite of secular humanists; it is used to suggest very ancient age, (before history!). The truth is, anything unearthed is "*historic!*" That is, it can be associated within its geological and historical period. Not surprisingly, evidence of man is always present with such prehistoric discoveries. The scientific truth in the creation model is that man's history extends back no further than 6,000 to 7,000 years. Using the chronology of the Hebrew Old Testament, most Bible historians put the creation of man at approximately 4045 B.C. From the date of this writing in 2015 A.D., that would be a total of 6060 years.

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

B. God's Purpose in the Creation of Man:

1. God Was Not Lonely:

It is a mistake to reason that God created man out of loneliness, desiring his companionship; long before God made man He enjoyed the most sublime fellowship of the Holy Spirit and His blessed Son:

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17: 5)

2. Man Was Created to Glorify God:

The age-old questions, *What is the purpose of life?*, and *Why am I here?*, then, find their ultimate answer in the Bible. Man was created for the purpose of expressing intimate praise, honor, and glory to God:

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Revelation 4: 11)

3. Man Was Created to Know God's Mercy and Grace:

"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2: 7)

2. The Introduction of Sin:

A. The Biblical Definition of Sin:

*To fall short of God's glory (acts of omission):

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)

*To break the law of God (acts of commission):

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law"
(1 John 3: 4)

B. The Origin of Sin:

1. Sin Was Born by the Fall of an Angel - **Lucifer** (Satan):

"Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire" (Ezekiel 28: 14-16)
(Study also Luke 10: 18, 1John 3: 8, Revelation 12: 3-4)

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

What was the sin which resulted in Lucifer's fall and expulsion from Heaven? **Pride!** Five times in the following verses the phrase "*I will*" reveals Satan's perverted desire to usurp the power of God Almighty:

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit" (Isaiah 14: 12-15)

2. Sin Was Spread by the Fall of a Man - **Adam**:

"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die . . . 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"
Genesis 2: 16-17, 3: 6)

Note: Why would God place such a tree in the midst of a perfect paradise? Surely not to cause man's fall . . . most emphatically no! But the special relationship God desired with man would be nothing if he were unable to choose anything else. The tree represented that choice, which made man a free moral agent, and as all familiar with the Bible know, Adam chose to disobey God, and mankind was plunged into sin:

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5: 12, Study also 1 Corinthians 15: 22)

3. What Part Did **Eve** Play in the Fall? :

Beguiled by Satan, Eve was first to succumb, then enticed Adam also to disobey God. Why did the devil approach the woman first? Because she was the perfect way to reach the heart of Adam, the federal head of the human family.

C. The Consequences of Sin:

1. Sin Resulted in the Judgement of Death:

"For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6: 23)

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18: 20)

Note: Death nowhere in the Bible means *ceasing to live*. Scripturally, it means *Separation*. Three deaths are described in the Bible:

Physical Death:

Physical death is the separation of the body from the soul and spirit. The body returns to the dust from whence it came and the soul and spirit enter into eternity (see Genesis 3:19, Job 34: 15, Ecclesiastes 12: 7, 2 Corinthians 5: 6-8). At physical death believers go to Heaven, unbelievers go to Hell! There is no Biblical basis for the false doctrine of *soul-sleep*.

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

Every Person Has an Appointment with Physical Death:

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9: 27)

This scripture refutes the false doctrine of *reincarnation*. The Bible reveals that man has one (and only one) appointment with physical death; not many deaths, over and over! Reincarnation is a satanic ploy to divert lost souls from the truth that man must prepare to meet God at death.

Spiritual Death:

Spiritual death is the separation of man from God. Since the fall of Adam, every person born into the human family is born dead, spiritually. Man is a trinity, created in the image of God; body, soul and spirit. Physical birth imparts to man a living body and soul, but his spirit is dead in sin:

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2: 1)
(Study also Genesis 2: 16-17, Romans 5: 12)

It was because of this spiritual death that Jesus Christ told Nicodemus, *“Ye must be born again.”* (John 3: 7)

Eternal Death:

Eternal death is just as the name implies, the eternal separation of man from God, forever, in the Lake of Fire:

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20: 14-15)

Physical death is appointed to every man, but **Eternal** death (or the *second* death), is reserved only for those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life!

2. Sin Resulted in the Fallen Nature of Man:

“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath” (Ephesians 2: 3)

Man is not a sinner because he commits sin; man commits sin because he is a sinner. It is man's nature to sin! New Years resolutions fail, as does *turning over a new leaf* . . . all because the sinner's nature has not been changed.

3. Sin Resulted in the Curse upon the Earth:

“And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” (Genesis 3: 17-19)

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

3. The Plan of Salvation:

A. The Plan of Salvation Was Conceived in the Heart of a Loving God:

Sin brought judgement. Death and hell, the result of man's disobedience, waited at the grave, but God was unwilling to let him die without hope. In all that had brought man to such despair, nothing had taken God by surprise; before the world began He finished the wonderful plan of redemption through His precious Son:

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" (1 Peter 1: 18-20)

1. God's Role in Salvation:

He Gave His Only Begotten Son:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3: 16)

He Invites Man to Be Saved:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11: 28)

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3: 20)

2. God's Attributes Exercised in Salvation:

The Foreknowledge of God:

An expression of God's attribute of omniscience, foreknowledge at work in the plan of salvation means that an all-knowing God knows who will be saved.

God's Sovereign Will:

Sovereignty is God's attribute of omnipotence, exercising His divine will in the plan of salvation:

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2: 4)

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3: 9)

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10: 13)

B. It Was Accomplished in the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus Christ, the **Source** of Salvation:

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

Salvation is not in a religion, not in a denomination, but in a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is both able and willing to save:

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7: 25)

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19: 10)

2. The Divine Provision for Salvation:

Salvation Is by Grace Through Faith:

"But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" (Romans 5: 15)

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2: 8-9)

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2: 11)

Saving Grace:

Grace, the unmerited favor of God, is that expression of His character by which He acts on man's behalf, to man's benefit, with no merit on man's part, doing what man cannot do for himself.

Believing Faith:

Faith is that attribute in man, imparted by God (Romans 12: 3), which draws him to respond to God's grace, receiving as truth the promises of God. The Bible defines faith as *"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"* (Hebrews 11: 1)

Believing faith, not mere intellectual assent, is the sincere appropriation of the heart which causes man to acknowledge and turn from sin, accepting the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ:

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4: 5)

Salvation Is by the Shedding of Blood:

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9: 22)

3. The Blood in the Old Testament:

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17: 11)

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

The Blood Was Atoning in Application:

Atonement in the Old Testament means *to cover, to pass over*. In Egypt the Hebrews observed the passover, wherein the blood of the lamb was applied to the side posts and lintel of the door (Exodus 12: 1-29). On this solemn night when the judgement of death befell Egypt, wherever the blood was applied God passed over, sparing the firstborn of that home.

The Blood Was Sacrificial in Nature:

The Passover Lamb was a type of Christ, the Lamb of God. Atonement for sin, or the passing over, represented the forbearance of God (Romans 3: 25). It was the withholding of divine wrath, looking forward to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, once for the sins of man:

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 9: 11-12)

The Old Testament Sacrifices Typified Christ:

They were *innocent*, which represented Christ's righteousness. They were *without blemish*, representing His sinlessness. They were *slain*, representing God's judgement: *death for sin*. The blood shed, was then applied, resulting in atonement for sin.

The Old Testament sacrifices thus offered signified man's admission of sin and guilt; his acceptance of, and obedience to God's plan of atonement. By the sacrifice man offered a substitute to die in his stead. By atonement, God withheld His wrath (the Old Testament covenant of grace! - salvation has always been by grace). Atonement anticipated the coming of Jesus Christ, no longer to cover or pass over sins, but to take away sin:

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1: 29)

“Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 9: 25-26)

4. The Blood in the New Testament:

The Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ:

The virgin birth established Christ's perfect righteousness. A natural father would have imparted the sin nature of Adam (Romans 5: 12); thus, Christ's sacrifice on the cross would have been rejected by God! The virgin birth is absolutely essential to the plan of redemption:

“Therefore the Lord Himself Shall Give You a Sign; Behold, a Virgin Shall Conceive, and Bear a Son, and Shall Call His Name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7: 14)

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1: 18-20, 22-23)

His Sinless Life:

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4: 15)

Though He was tempted, yet Christ lived without sin, thus fulfilling the requirements of the law. His sacrifice at Calvary was truly without blemish.

His Vicarious Death upon the Cross:

Jesus Christ Was God's **Sacrifice**:

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5: 8)

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit” (1 Peter 3: 18)

Jesus Christ Was Man's **Substitute**:

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5: 21)

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness” (1 Peter 2: 24)

The Blood of Christ Is Applied:

Christ's Blood Is Man's **Propitiation**:

“And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2: 2)

Propitiation means *to satisfy*. The justice of God demands the death penalty against man's sin (John 6: 23). At the cross God judged sin and executed the death penalty. Christ's death satisfied that judgement.

Christ's Blood **Redeems**:

Redemption means *to purchase, by paying a price*. The price paid to purchase sinners from the slave-market of sin was the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ:

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1: 18-19)

The Sinner Thus Redeemed Is **Bought with a Price**:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's” (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20)

Christ's Blood Effects **Remission**:

Remission means to *take away, or be set at liberty* from one's sins. The blood of Christ applied cleanses (washes away) sin:

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1: 9)

“Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Revelation 1: 5)

The Blood Is Applied to the Heart of Man by **Faith**:

“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Romans 3: 22-25)

C. It Is Executed by the Power of the Holy Spirit:

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22: 17)

1. The Recipients of Salvation: **Whosoever Will**:

A preacher once Said, *Salvation is not for Everyone - it is for Anyone!* Liberal, modernistic theology rejects Bible truths concerning judgement and condemnation, reasoning instead that *a God of love would never send anyone to such a place as Hell!* The result is a religious belief that *all men will ultimately be saved.* Consider God's warning:

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7: 13-14)

2. Man's Role in Salvation:

He Cannot Save Himself:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2: 8-9)

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3: 5)

Man must Believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15: 1, 3-4)

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1: 16)

Man must Repent of His Sins:

“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13: 3)

Repentance, in the Bible means, *a voluntary and sincere change of mind toward sin that causes man to turn from it unto God*. It is the result of a broken heart, produced by Godly sorrow for sin that provokes a genuine willingness to confess it to God and turn away from it:

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death” (2 Corinthians 7: 10)

Repentance Is Not **Reformation**:

Reformation, often expressed in a vow to *turn over a new leaf*, or a resolution to *quit sinning and do better*, fails because unsaved man is a sinner by **nature** (Ephesians 2: 1-3), and is only doing what comes naturally! Man's fallen nature must be changed:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5: 17)

Repentance Is Not **Remorse, Guilt, or Penitence**:

Though *remorse* (regret for the results of sin), and *guilt* (condemnation of the conscience), and *penitence* (making up for past sins by doing good works), may play a role in moving a sinner toward repentance, none of these attributes, by themselves, constitutes true Bible repentance.

Man must Receive Jesus Christ by Faith:

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1: 12)

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10: 9-10)

3. The Believer's Righteousness:

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

Salvation imparts the gift of eternal life and **much more**; it is that judicial act by which God **imputes** the righteousness of Jesus Christ to repentant sinners through faith:

“Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 5: 18, 21)

“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith”
(Philippians 3: 8-9)

The Bible Reveals Three Instances of **Imputation** Concerning Salvation:

Adam's Sin Was Imputed to Mankind:

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5: 12)

Man's Sin Was Imputed to Christ:

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed”
(Isaiah 53: 4-5)

Christ's Righteousness Is Imputed to Believers:

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Romans 4: 5, 8)

4. The Believer's Relationship with God:

Salvation Is to Membership in the Family of God:

The believer's **relationship** to God becomes that of a **child** by faith in Jesus Christ:

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8: 16)

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3: 26)

The believer's position in the family of God is that of a son by adoption (*the placing of a son*). In both Hebrew and Roman custom, as children came of age, they were legally adopted, which imparted to the child, who was already related by blood, the full privileges and inheritance of the father:

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1: 12)

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4: 4-5)

Salvation Produces **Abundant Life**:

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10: 10)

Life at its best begins with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is knowing the forgiveness of sins, and manifesting the Fruit of the Spirit, and living with the confidence of material blessings that imparts such assurance:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1: 9)

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5: 22-23)

"For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalms 84: 11)

With the promise of material blessings comes the admonition to always put God first, keeping a proper spiritual perspective on **things**:

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6: 33)

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12: 15)

5. Christian **Service** Is the Believer's Responsibility to Man:

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2: 10)

Believers Are to Be the **Light** of the World:

The Biblical aim for light-bearing is twofold; first, the believer's testimony is to illuminate a lifelong pattern of good works, which, second, brings glory to the heavenly Father:

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5: 14-16)

Believers Are to Be the **Salt** of the Earth:

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matthew 5: 13)

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

Good salt is a preservative. God's people are to exercise a preserving influence in the world. Consider Abraham's intercession with God regarding the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18: 20-32); both would have been spared had the Lord found just ten righteous men. Lot had no testimony or influence upon his own family or friends!

Good salt also provides a flavoring. Believers are to add a spiritual dimension to life by our very presence. Christians should rejoice when we appear; sinners should be very uncomfortable in our midst! Anything less is a sign of compromise.

Spoiled salt is discarded. Does this passage mean that a believer can somehow lose his salvation? Most certainly not! The Bible is abundantly clear concerning the salvation promise of eternal life. What it does mean, however, is that a believer may lose his *influence* and *testimony* with both God and man. Please note the Bible phrase, "*of the earth*," and its implications upon the proper interpretation of this scripture verse.

Believers Are to Bear **Fruit**:

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15: 16)

The *fruit* of a believer is *another* believer! Witnessing is the heartbeat of the gospel; note the Biblical ingredients to fruit-bearing:

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalms 126: 6)

4. Eternal Life: the Security of the Believer:

A. Eternal Life Defined:

That provision of the covenant relationship with God which preserves believers unto eternal life. It is entirely by grace through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ alone, and is vouchsafed by the seal of the Holy Spirit:

"Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Corinthians 1: 21-22)

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1: 13-14)

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"
(Ephesians 4: 30)

B. The Biblical Basis for the Security of Believers:

Often referred to as *eternal security*, or the *perseverance of saints*; or as described by some, *holding on faithful to the end*, and by others, *once saved, always saved*; few Bible doctrines have been so clearly set forth in the scriptures, yet so woefully misunderstood by men. Consider the Bible promise,

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (John 10: 28).

It has been argued by some that though this verse is true, *one may pluck himself out of God's hand*. This is both theologically impossible and experientially false. Theologically, salvation is the result of the *new birth*; how can a person who has been born-again become of his own will *un-born*? Experientially, true salvation is a work so sacred and so fulfilling that no real child of God would wish it; admittedly, believers are sometimes *sorry Christians*, but none has ever been sorry that they are a Christian. Through the years of the author's ministry not one soul has ever repented on his deathbed of being a Christian!

If John 10: 28 can be made to mean anything less than what it clearly states, then either God is a liar, or men are wrongly dividing the scriptures. Difficulty in accepting these truths is most assuredly due to the latter, for it is impossible for God to lie (Titus 1: 2, Hebrews 6: 18). Eternal security is a doctrine based not upon man's ability to save himself or to maintain his relationship to God by good works, but upon the plain truth of the Bible itself:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2: 8-10)

1. Salvation Is the Creation of **New Life**:

“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” (John 3: 3)

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5: 17)

2. Salvation Is the Gift of **Everlasting Life**:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (John 5: 24, 6: 47)

C. The Believer's Assurance of Eternal Life:

1. Because of the Unfailing Promise of God's **Word**:

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5: 13)

2. Because of God's Almighty **Power**:

“As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him” (John 17: 2)

“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1: 5)

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

3. Because of God's Boundless **Love**:

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8: 38-39)

4. Because of the Comfort of God's **Presence**:

"I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28: 20)

"For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13: 5)

5. Because of the Witness of God's **Spirit**:

"The Spirit Itself Beareth Witness with Our Spirit, That We Are the Children of God" (Romans 8: 16)

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20)

D. Salvation and Sin in the Life of the Believer:

1. Is it **Possible** for a **True** Believer to **Sin**?:

Some religious denominations teach that once a person is genuinely saved, he possesses a completely new and holy character; the desires of the flesh are totally eradicated and he cannot commit sin. These same teachers then proceed to say, *but if he does commit sin, he is lost again*. Such inconsistent doctrine is not found in the Bible:

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Romans 7: 18-25)

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1: 8-10)

At the opposite extreme of Christianity is another typical error in doctrine which teaches that *no one is perfect; everyone has to sin a little each day*. This unscriptural attitude toward sin actually betrays a lack of concern for living a dedicated holy life. It is, at the least, a grievous affront to a Holy God, and may be an indication that such a person has never really been saved:

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man,

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4: 22-24)

Believers **Have No Right** to Practice **Habitual Sin**:

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Romans 6: 1-2)

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Romans 6: 12-14)

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2: 1)

2. The **Implications** of Sin:

Does the presence of sin mean that a believer is renouncing Christ, or leaving the faith? No! Would a real, true believer ever want to leave Christ? Some who reject the Bible doctrine of eternal security have argued, *why, if you believe that once saved, always saved, you could just go out and live like you want to and still go to heaven!* What is wrong with that statement? First, a true believer's “*want-to*” is changed at the new birth:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5: 17)

Second, is the fear of losing one's salvation and going to hell the only thing that keeps believers from “going out and living like the devil?” Not according to the scriptures; real Christians desire to live right out of **love** for the **Saviour**:

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Corinthians 5: 14-15)

This inward desire to please Christ is in direct conflict with the flesh and its appetite for worldliness:

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin” (Romans 7: 18-25)

Though this struggle is common to every Christian, even when believers are faced with failure, yet the intent of the heart yearns to live right. It is expressed best, perhaps, in the old saying, There have been times that I've been a *sorry* Christian . . . but I've *never* been sorry that I am a Christian!”

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

3. The **Effect** of Sin upon Believers:

In this Life:

There is no such thing as *peaceful-coexistence*; sin and righteousness are at war! For believers, unconfessed sin compromises the testimony and prevents successful spiritual living:

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Galatians 5: 16-17)

In the Life to Come:

Every believer will stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ, to account for our faithfulness (or lack thereof) in service to the Saviour. A lifelong weakness to, and preoccupation with, the sins of the flesh will result in the loss of rewards:

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5: 10)

“Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire” (1 Corinthians 3: 13-15)

The Implication of Dying in a State of **Unconfessed Sin**:

Can a believer so compromise God's will through continual disobedience and sin that he forfeits the right to continue to live? If he dies in such condition is he lost again? What does the Bible say?:

“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” (1 Corinthians 5: 1-5)

What about **Suicide**?

Both circumstances *presuppose as fact* that such a person is genuinely saved, which, of course, is known only to the individual and to God. The Bible warns of those who claim a relationship with Christ but have never really been saved (Matthew 7: 22-23). However, the same Biblical principles apply in the case of suicide, but with these sobering considerations; first, suicide imposes man's will over God's Will, and second, suicide involves entering into the presence of God Almighty without an invitation!

4. God's **Response** to Sin in the Life of Believers:

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

Believers Have a **Relief Covenant** to Help Avoid Sin:

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10: 13)

An honest self-evaluation of disobedience and sin is sufficient to convince believers that sin was not the only choice, and that it could have been avoided by following the path of righteousness rather than surrendering to the weakness of the flesh!

God Grants Believers **Time** and **Opportunity** to Repent:

Unconfessed sin brings the believer to a point of decision; either to repent and confess it, or to refuse and rebel. God is long-suffering and patient with erring saints; as a loving Father He gives His children opportunity for repentance:

"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Corinthians 11: 31-32)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1: 9)

Unrepentant Believers Face **Chastisement**:

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Hebrews 12: 5-6)

When a Christian sins does God deny or disown him? When our own children err do we disown them? Of course not! Knowing then, the depth of God's love for His children, can we ascribe to Him less love and care for His own than we do our children? Chastisement, then, is God's response to sin in the life of His children:

God Only Chastens His **Own**:

"If ye endure [or experience] chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Hebrews 12: 7-8)

One who claims to be a Christian, yet habitually practices sin without ever experiencing God's chastisement (if you can sin and it doesn't bother you until you get caught!), indicates by clear Bible doctrine that he has never been genuinely saved.

God's Motive Is **Never** to Inflict **Punishment**:

Chastisement is never for the purpose of *punishment*; the divine purpose is always for *correction*! Parents must use God's example in the discipline of children; God never chastens for the sake of hurting His children, but rather for correction:

"Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for

Chapter One: God's Plan Of Salvation

a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness” (Hebrews 12: 9-10)

God's **Aim** for Chastisement:

“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Hebrews 12: 11)

Of chastisement, the Bible says it *“yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness”* (that is, it is designed by the divine Author to make one *straighten up and fly right!*). Chastisement is one element used of God to conform believers to the image of His Son (see Romans 8: 29)

The Danger of **Rebellion** Against Chastisement:

“Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed” (Hebrews 12: 12-13)

Consider this sober warning which governs our reaction to chastisement; being turned out of the way, does not imply the *loss* of one's salvation . . . the entire text deals only with God's love and care for His own children! Taken in context with other scriptures on the subject, this verse may be a reference to the *sin unto death*, where, because of a rebellious attitude toward chastisement, God prematurely calls an unrepentant believer out of this life into His presence:

“If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it” (1 John 5: 16)

God has planned a **glorious** homecoming for His children, whether by death (Psalms 116: 15), or at His second-coming (1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18). Wouldn't it be tragic for one to so frustrate the will of God through unconfessed sin that a believer would have to face Jesus Christ before his time? These truths should be constant abiding principles to guide Christians throughout life in this world, and toward the world to come.

5. The Most Important Question You Will Ever Consider:

Before you study any further please ask yourself two questions: *first*, if you were to die today do you know without a shadow of doubt that your sins are forgiven, and *second*, do you know without a doubt that you are saved and going to Heaven. Nothing else in this study nor in life itself is as important as your answers to these two questions. If you are not certain of your salvation and eternal destiny please stop and pray the simple sinner's prayer:

“God be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18: 13)

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10: 9-10)