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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Salvation And Eternal Life is in Jesus. (2013)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises
But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

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Salvation and Eternal Life is in Jesus.

INTRODUCTION: since the overall and primary focus of this study is upon Scriptures (in various chapters of the New Testament) that relate to salvation and are relevant to eternal life there are far too many different topics and titles to make a topics list, but I have faith that most who travel through the selected verses will by the time they arrive at the end not only be enriched in their understanding of salvation and eternal life being in Christ, but also be enriched in their understanding of God's love and God's grace in Christ.

John 14.

Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Jesus.

John 14:10-11 ----- ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am 'in' the Father and the Father is 'in' me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am 'in' the Father and the Father is 'in' me or else believe on account of the works themselves.

I am in the Father and the Father is in me means that God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son are of one mind in purpose and have the same goals and plans and are both motivated by the same love.

The expression: -

- I am in the Father and the Father is in me.

Does not mean they are one and the same person, but that they are identical in mind meaning God the Father and Christ his Son have the same mind, purpose, goals, plans, motivation and character, this is what Jesus means when he says: -

- I am in the Father and the Father is in me.

There is no division or tension between them everything Jesus does is the will of the Father they are perfect in love, perfect in unity and have the same purpose.

Believe on account of the works themselves: Jesus understands the eleven apostles are having difficulty in understanding what he is saying so he tells them to: -

- Believe on account of the works themselves.

The miracles they have seen should have been enough to testify that Jesus was who he said he was. The miracles' Jesus performed authenticated and testified that he was the prophet to come like Moses, the promised seed of Abraham and the promised seed of David, Israel's Messiah the Christ the Son of God and Saviour of the world. No man on earth could do the things Christ did without the full power of God flowing through him, thus his sign miracles evidenced that he was approved of God, sent by God, had God's favour and was God's beloved Son and the one Moses and all the prophet spoke of. We know Jesus miracles were to authenticate that he was sent by God the Father because when John the Baptist was in prison he sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he was the one who is to come.

Jesus answered them with the following words: -

- Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me (Matthew 11:2-6) (Luke 7:18-23).

It is stated in the Old Testament that the Christ will open the eyes of the blind, heal the ears of the deaf, cause the crippled to walk and the mute to speak with joy all the miracles that Jesus did (Isa. 29:1-24) (Isa. 35:1-10) (Isa. 42:1-10)

Jesus when speaking to the Jews said: -

- The works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very WORKS that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me and the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me (John 5:36-37).

Jesus is in his Father, Believers are in Jesus and Jesus is in Believers.

John 14:20 ----- ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

The words, "In that day" Refer to the day Jesus appears to them after his resurrection and the expression: -

- The disciples are in Jesus.

Obviously does not mean that the disciples are Jesus, rather it carries the idea that they fully embrace all that Jesus is in character, mind, purpose and love, likewise the words: -

- I am in my Father.

Does not mean Jesus is the Father, but that he completely embraces all that the Father is in character, mind, purpose and love similarly the expression: -

- Jesus is in the disciples.

Cannot mean Jesus is the disciples, but that Jesus embraces all that the disciples are in character, mind, purpose and love, thus; the words: -

- I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Simply mean; the Father, Jesus and those who belong to him are all together in unity, purpose and love and have totally invested their life in each other. Likewise the expression: -

- You in me and I in you.

Carries the idea that a person entirely embraces another person and accepts all that they are and do, it means that both will do everything they are able to do to benefit each other because both have the same purpose and embrace the same plans and goals it means that they are both completely devoted to each other in purpose, mind, unity and love.

John 17.

INTRODUCTION: Jesus is about to be crucified, he lifts up his eyes to heaven and prays to his heavenly Father that all those who believe in him would be one in the same way that he and the father are one. Since there is a lot of confusion amongst Christianity upon what the expression, "We are one," means and since Jesus uses it many times in this prayer, we will look at the expression, "We are one" in this prayer of Jesus in some detail.

Jesus has Authority to Give Eternal Life.

John 17:1-3 ----- ¹When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ²since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, 'and' Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

The statement, "When Jesus had spoken these words," refer back to the previous chapter in which Jesus was explaining to the eleven apostles at the table of the Last Supper that the time has come for him to leave them and go to the Father and though they will leave him and return to their homes he will come back to them.

Father glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you: God had already glorified Jesus by pouring His Spirit upon him without limitations at his water baptism and through the miracles and wonders he did, and Jesus had glorified the Father by perfectly manifesting God's character and His word in his life and in power, but Jesus words, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you." refer to his death and resurrection. Jesus glorified the Father by surrendering his will to his Fathers will even unto death.

We know Jesus had to surrender his will because in the Garden of Gethsemane he asked his Father in agonising prayer and fully aware of the horror that awaited him, "If there was any other way to save mankind take this cup away from him" and then ended the prayer with, "Nevertheless not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). God glorified his Son by raising him from the dead to his right hand side and everlasting glory and giving him authority over all mankind and the power to grant eternal life to those the Father gives him.

Jesus manifested God's glory by: -

- The compassion, mercy and love he showed to the weak and poor.
- The grace and forgiveness he showed to sinners.
- The power of God he used to miraculously heal all kinds of sicknesses.
- The fruits of the Spirit he manifested in his own life.
- His total obedience to the Fathers will.

In verse three Jesus said: -

- Eternal life is, knowing the only true God, and Jesus Christ who he sent.

These words of Jesus clearly show that he is not God as some in the Christian faith believe him to be. Since they shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that there is only one true immortal, invisible almighty God the source of all life and creator of all things and His Son Jesus Christ who He sent. Since the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states: -

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God the Son will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim: -

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life.

For further information see the title: -

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The ensuing notes have been entered to help those who have been taught that Jesus is God understand what the Bible means when it states that God the Father and Christ His Son are one.

The following Old Testament verses show that God the Father is the only God and that there is no other. The LORD God of all creation says: -

- He is the LORD who alone stretched out the heavens, and spread out the earth by Himself (Isaiah 44:24).
- I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; though you do not know me, there is none besides me; I am the LORD, there is no other (Isaiah 45:5-7).
- There is no other God besides me, a righteous God and a Saviour; there is none besides me turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other (Isaiah 45:21-22).
- Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me (Isaiah 46:9).

The following New Testament verses show that God the Father is the only God and that there is no other. The LORD God of all Creation says: -

- This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent (John 17:3).
- For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18).
- James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (James 1:1).
- Jesus himself said, "The most important thing is to know that the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Mark 12:29-32).
- Paul said, "For the apostles there is one God, the Father and one Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 8:6).
- Jesus said, "Call no-man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven" (Matt. 23:9).
- It will be counted to us who believe in God who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord (Rom. 4:24).

These verses shine a spotlight on the truth that there is one true God and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour and Redeemer.

God and Jesus are One.

Jesus prayed to his heavenly Father that: -

- Those in Christ may be one as he and the Father are one (John 17:11).

Jesus is praying that that a collective group of individuals would be one as God the Father and Jesus Christ are one. Obviously being one does not mean that a collective group of disciples become one single individual, but that they become one in thought, mind, motive, goals and purpose and one in love and unity. This idea of being one carries the same idea when Jesus and God are spoken of as being one.

It does not mean they are the same person, but that Jesus and God the Father are one in purpose plans and motivation they have the same mind and are in perfect unity together this is what Jesus means when he prays that his disciples will become one as he and his heavenly Father are one.

Being one is about becoming one in mind, love, purpose and unity. (John 17:21-23).

God Jesus and the Disciples are One.

Jesus prayed that his disciples: -

- May all be one just as the Father is in him and he is in the Father that they also may be in the Father and the Son so that they may be one even as the Father and the Son are one, I in them and you in me that they may become perfectly one (John 17:21-23).

It is in relationship to being one that the Father is in Christ and Christ is in the Father. Jesus is saying that he is in the Father and the Father is in him in the sense of being one in mind and purpose. Putting these verses together it becomes very clear that God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (the Son) are not the same person, but one in perfect unity and one in perfect love. Jesus tells his disciples when he appears to them after the resurrection that: -

- They will know that he is in his Father and they are in him and he is in them. (John 14:20).

I am in my Father does not mean Jesus Christ is the Father, just as the expression the disciples are in Christ does not mean that the disciples are Jesus, the same principal applies to the expression Jesus is in the disciples, obviously this does not mean that Jesus is the disciples.

God is in Jesus, the disciples are in Jesus and Jesus is in the disciples:

Jesus words, "I am in the Father," simply means Jesus Christ completely embraces all that the Father is, likewise the expression, "The disciples are in Jesus means they completely embrace all that Jesus is and the words, "Jesus is in the disciple's, means that Jesus has totally invested his life in those who will believe in him while Jesus words, "I in you and you in me," carry the idea that one person entirely embraces another person and accepts all that they are and do. It means that they will do everything in their power that they are able to do, to benefit the other person and vice versa, both persons embrace the same plans goals and purposes and have the same mind and both are completely devoted to each other in love and unity (John 17:22-26).

Jesus prayed: -

- That they may be one even as we are one (John 17:11).

Here Jesus is praying that multitudes of believer's would be one just as he and the Father are one. This clearly shows that Jesus and the Father are not one God or one individual because multitudes of believers cannot become one person just as Jesus the Son and God the Father cannot become one individual showing that becoming one in this context means becoming one in mind, it is about having the same plans goals and purposes and becoming one in perfect love and perfect unity. A few verses on in the same prayer Jesus prays: -

- That they may all be one just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us (also may be one in us in KJV) (John 17:21).

The words, they may all be one does not mean they will all become one person, it carries the idea that multitudes of individual believers will all become one in love, unity, mind plans, goals, motivation and purpose. Jesus prayer is that multitudes of individual believers become one in perfect love and perfect unity. Jesus and the Father are one in the same sense that multitudes of individual believers are one in Jesus Christ. God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son are both the same in mind, plans, goals, motivation and purposes making them both one in perfect love and perfect unity.

Jesus prays that: -

- Multitudes of individual believers will be in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:21).

This means that the believer's lives would become entirely devoted to the will of God and to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It carries the idea that the emotions, affections thoughts and feelings are set on God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ and that the heart and minds greatest desire of those who belong to Christ is to be a good testimony to the name of Jesus and to honour his heavenly the Father.

I am in the Father: when Jesus said, "That he is in the Father" (John 17:21) he did not mean that he is the Father, the expression, "I am in the Father " carries the same idea as his prayer for his disciples to be in him, it means that Jesus has the same mind plans goals motivation and purposes as God the Father and that they are in perfect love and perfect unity together in all that they think, do and plan.

That they may be one even as we are one: Jesus prayed, "That multitudes of individual believers will be one as Jesus and God the Father are one. Obviously multitudes of believers cannot be one person, just as Jesus Christ the Son cannot be God the Father or God the Father be Jesus Christ the Son. Jesus words, "That they may be one even as we are one" (John 17:22), means his desire is that multitudes of individual believers would become one in mind, plans, goals, motivation and purposes, so that they will be one in perfect love and unity just as God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are one in mind, plans, goals, motivation and purposes and are therefore one in perfect love and perfect unity together.

SUMMARY: Jesus desires, "That the love with which his heavenly Father has loved him would be in his disciples, and that Christ's love would also be in them" (John 17:26). These words of Jesus show that God the Father is in Jesus by His love and Jesus is in Father by his love toward Him. It is by love that God is in Jesus and Jesus is in God. Jesus desire is that the love of God that is in him would also be in his disciples.

Jesus is in his disciples by his love toward them and likewise they are in him by their love toward him. When two people love each other with all their heart, soul and mind and all their affections, emotions and feelings it can be said that they are in each other and have become love in love and unity. Jesus desire is for those who belong to him to have this kind of relationship with himself and with his heavenly Father.

Jesus Prays that All maybe One.

John 17:20-21 ----- ²⁰I do not ask for these (the apostles) only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they (the apostles and all who hear their word) may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they (the apostles and all who believe) also may be in us, (may be one in KJV) so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

In this prayer Jesus is not only praying for the eleven apostles who literally walked with him and were personally taught by him for three years, but for those who will come to him after his death and resurrection because of the testimony of the eleven and those who believed in him prior to the resurrection which means he is praying for all those who will come to him until he returns and his prayer is that all (Jew and Gentiles) who belong to Christ, "May all be one just as he and the Father, are one so that the world may believe God has sent him" (v21). This carries the idea that they will become one in mind, purpose, plans, goals, motivation, and one in love and unity.

Jesus is praying this prayer fully aware that Judas has betrayed him and that the soldiers sent by the religious leaders are coming with Judas to take him captive (John 18:1-14). Jesus prays for the apostles and for those who will believe the apostles teachings. He is praying that the apostles and those who hear and believe their message (Jews and Gentiles) will become one in the same way that Jesus and the Father are one for the following two reasons: -

- 1 So that they would be a good testimony to the world.
- 2 By their good testimony the world would believe that God sent Jesus.

For further information concerning being one, see the title: "God and Jesus are One" (following John 17:1-3) (above).

Jesus prayer continued: -

John 17:22 ----- ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them (the apostles) so that they (the apostles and all who believe their message) may be one even as we are one

Jesus in these verses is saying that the glory God the Father gave him he has given to the apostles which means that the glory in this context refers to the following two things: -

- 1 The Gospel that unites Jews and Gentiles together and leads to eternal life.
- 2 God's Spirit of God's love.

It is the Gospel and God's love that unites us all together as one people regardless of whether we are born a direct descendant of Abraham, a Hebrew or Jew or born of a Gentile nation it matters not if we are male or female, rich or poor, noble or lowly, a church leader of thousands or a layperson we are all united as one people by the Gospel and by God's love.

Jesus prayer continued: -

John 17:23 ----- ²³I in them (the apostles and all who believe) and you, in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you, sent me and loved them, even as you loved me.

God gave Jesus the Gospel and the Spirit of His love so that the apostles and all who believe (Jews or Gentiles) would be one. Jesus is praying that the apostles and the Jews and the Gentiles who believe their messages would be united together in love and unity in the same way that Jesus is united together in love and unity with his heavenly Father. The reason Jesus is praying for us to be united together in love and unity is so that: -

- By love Jesus would be in the apostles and in all who believe their teachings.
- The apostles and all (Jews and Gentiles) who believe would be perfectly one in love and unity.

The reason Jesus prays that we would all be one in perfect love and unity is so that by our unity and love for each other and for Jesus the world would know that: -

- Jesus is from God and sent by God.
- The world would know that God loved Jesus and loves us with the same love that He loved Jesus with.

NOTE: this prayer is not limited to the era of the apostles, but applies to everyone who believes the messages of the apostles throughout all generations until the Lord returns in glory.

Jesus prayer continued: -

John 17:24 ----- ²⁴Father, I desire that they (the apostles and all who believe) also, whom you have given me may be with me, where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Jesus still in prayer tells the Father that he desires that the apostles and all who believe would abide in their faith with him so that they would inherit eternal life and see the eternal, majestic and royal glory that God has given him in heaven. The words, "Whom you have given me" does not mean God has predestined some to be saved and others to be condemned if that was the case proclaiming the Gospel would be pointless since whoever had been predestined to be saved would be saved and it would not matter how many times those who had been predestined to condemnation heard the Gospel it would have no power to effect a change in them since they are predestined to condemnation. Added to this it would totally violate our free will if God had predestined some to be saved and others to be condemned.

Since God is the source of all life and planned in his eternal mind the eternal plan of salvation for mankind before the foundations of the world began and purposed that the Lord Jesus Christ would be the central focus and foundation of the plan it is right and proper for Christ and by extension for anyone who shares the Gospel to thank God for anyone who is saved through their testimony and give him the credit for it.

God's eternal foreknowledge: is a stunning mystery to the human mind but majestically manifests the wisdom of God who has given mankind free will. By foreknowledge God is able to allow us to do as we please and come what may our free will is still mysteriously working within God's sovereign will and bringing about His eternal plan that He set in motion before the beginning of time such is the wonder of God's eternal foreknowledge. God in the book of Isaiah says through the prophet: -

- My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Jesus continues his prayer: by saying that God the Father has given him this glory because God loved him before the foundation of the world. This does not mean that Jesus pre-existed with God as a conscious spirit being before the foundation of the world and then descended from his glory in heaven and became a foetus in the womb of Mary as some believe. What it does mean is that that Jesus was foreknown before the foundation of the world, meaning Jesus was the central focus of God's eternal plan that He purposed in His eternal and divine mind before the world began. It is in this sense that Jesus is saying, "God loved him before the foundation of the world."

An architect long before a building is constructed plans the entire structure in his mind, he sees every detail of it in vivid clarity long before the builders begin to construct it and long before the workers even set foot on the site where it is to be built. An excited expectant mother plans in her mind her baby's room long before the baby is born, she not only sees in her mind the design and colours of that room, but also the lighting, furniture and clothing long before the child even exists. In the same manner God planned and purposed in his timeless mind that Christ would be the central focus of His sovereign plan for mankind's eternal salvation long before Jesus came into the world.

A mother's love, joy and excitement for her baby does not begin when the child is born, but as soon as she begins planning to have a baby, likewise God's love, joy and excitement for Jesus didn't begin when the Virgin Mary gave birth to him, but from the moment God began to plan his eternal majesty and royal glory (i.e., before the foundation of the world). It is Christ who was predestined to be the centre of God's plan of salvation. Then it was predestined that those who from their own free will choose to accept all that Christ is and did and will be saved and receives a predestined inheritance.

NOTE: we must always keep in mind when we are speaking of God's sovereignty, God's timeless mind, predestination and God's foreknowledge that it is with a fallen and finite mind that is limited to time (as we understand it) that we are attempting to understand God's eternal wisdom and God's eternal knowledge which is far higher than our limited fallen mortal mind can comprehend therefore we should never be dogmatic and absolute in our understandings and explanations concerning God's eternal sovereignty, but always allow for certain amount of mystery.

Jesus prayer continued: -

John 17:25-26 ----- ²⁵O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these (the apostles) know that you have sent me. ²⁶I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them"

Jesus continues his prayer by saying that even though the world does not know God he knows that the apostles know that God has sent him because he has made God known to the apostles and will continue to make God known to them so that the

love that God has loved Jesus with would be in them and by this same love they would be in Jesus and Jesus in them. This means that God loves every faithful brother and sister in Christ with the same love that he loves Jesus with this is the glory of the Christian faith and the abundant riches of God's love and grace.

Acts 12.

There is No other Name by which we must be Saved.

Acts 4:12 ----- 12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

This verse shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that there is no other way to salvation and eternal life other than through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Believing in Jesus name does not mean intellectually believing in his name only, during the time of Jesus and the apostles the expression "To believe in a person's name," carried the idea of believing in everything that person said, did and stood for which means believing in the name of Jesus means believing that he is the promised Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world and believing everything he did and spoke.

The following highlights how the understanding of believe has changed over the years in some circles of Christianity. In the last four hundred years the word, believe has undergone a radical change of meaning, so that in modern meaning in some circles of Christianity it is very different from its pre-modern meanings. For most modern Christians believing means believing a set of claims, a set of statements:

- Believing that God exists.
- Believing that the Bible is the word of God.
- Believing that Jesus is the Son of God born of the Virgin Mary.
- Believing that he died for our sins and that he rose from the dead.
- Believing that he is the only way to salvation.
- Believing that he will come again and so on and so forth.

This is what many modern Christians think believing means today. Many are taught that providing they believe and affirming a fixed set of beliefs (i.e., doctrines) to be true they are saved (these doctrines will vary depending on what church a person is in), but prior to about the year 1600s the word believe had a very different meaning in Christianity as well as popular usage. It did not mean believing statements to be true, but rather the object of belief was always a person, not a statement. This is the difference between believing that and believing in. To believe in a person is quite different to believing a series of statements about that person. In pre-modern English believing meant believing in and carried the idea of a relationship of trust, loyalty, and love (i.e. to most to believe meant to beloved). Until about four centuries ago, believing in God and Jesus did not mean I believe that the following statements about God and Jesus are true rather to believe in God and Jesus had the following two primary meanings: -

1. To trust in God and Jesus in contrast to trusting in statements about God and Jesus for this would be, believing that (true biblical faith is to trust in God as known in Jesus).
2. To commit one's allegiance, loyalty and love to God and Jesus.

This believing faith, fidelity, loyalty, allegiance and commitment to God as known in Jesus in contrast to believing statements about God and Jesus are very different, the first leads to an emphasis on believing right statements, the second leads to a transformed life.

NOTE: this does not mean that it is wrong to believe in statements about God, Jesus and the Bible, but believing in statements will not save a person rather the statements are to lead a person to Christ who is the only one who can save anyone to eternal life, it is trusting in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ that saves a person not trusting in statements about him.

Acts 13.

Salvation is in Christ.

Acts 13:38 ----- ³⁸Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything.

Forgiveness could be said to be the most needful blessing since it brings in every other blessing and is the first experienced blessing of the Gospel. It means the removal of the power, guilt, and pollution of sin by a non-imputation of them, a non-remembrance of them, a covering of them and putting them away, and blotting them out. All of this is an act of God's free grace and mercy and it is through the blood of Christ that the guilty condemned by the law receive it. Paul's words, "Through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed" refers to the risen Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world only through him does God offer pardon.

The Old Covenant of law acts as a schoolmaster designed to awaken us to our sin before it brings us to ruin and takes us to the grave without any hope of being delivered from its darkness. The great concern of convicted sinners is to be justified to be acquitted from all their guilt, and accepted as righteous in God's sight, for if any guilt is left charged upon the sinner they are undone, but whoever humbles themselves before God in honest heartfelt repentance and accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour should never doubt God's forgiveness that comes to them through Christ or God's grace.

This is because whoever is redeemed in Christ is fully justified from all things; from all the guilt; from all the stain of sin and from all things that the Law of Moses could not justify them of. Every faithful brother and sister in Christ is fully forgiven and fully justified, not only by God the Father, but also by Christ as their Judge and by him as the Lord of their righteousness. What the law could not do for us, in that it was weak, the Gospel of Christ does.

Acts 16.

Salvation is in Christ and Water Baptism.

Acts 16:29-33 ----- ²⁹And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. ³⁰Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³²And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family.

Some today teach that after Christ's death and resurrection water baptism was done away with, but these verses clearly show that neither Paul nor Silas believed that to be true. Another teaching that this story shows to be false is the idea that it takes weeks to share the word of the Lord before a person is ready to be water baptism. The jailors family clearly show that this thinking is also not true and that once a person repents and believes the Good News of the Gospel in Christ they are fit for Gods Kingdom and ready to be baptised.

For further information see the title: -

- Water Baptism (ON WEBSITE MENU).
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Salvation is in Repentance and Belief in Jesus and the Resurrection.

Acts 17:30-31 ----- ³⁰The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

The resurrection of Christ should assure everyone that God will judge the world and that the standard of righteousness that all mankind will be judged against is Christ. Whoever denies Christ and falls short of living up to the perfection the law demands and the sinless and righteous life of love, compassion, mercy, grace, kindness and forgiveness that Jesus lived is already judged because they have failed to attain to the perfection the law demands and denied the only Saviour who not only reconciles us to God, but also has the power to give eternal life. This is brilliant; God does not need to personally judge us since we bring judgment on ourselves every-time we fail to attain to the perfect standard the law demands and every-time we fall short of the sinless and righteous life Jesus lived.

This is why the Gospel is called the Good News since it proclaims that we are saved by faith and God's grace and that God imputes righteousness to every faithful brother and sister in Christ as a free gift to all who come to God through honest heartfelt repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTE: if anyone thinks they attain to Jesus standard of love and righteousness they should read his famous Sermon on the Mount because if anyone does think this way they are either horribly deceived or full of self-righteousness. If we could attain to the perfect standard the law demands and to Christ's perfect standard of righteousness by self-effort then he died for no purpose.

For further information concerning Jesus Sermon, see: -

- Matthew 5:20-48 in, Commentary New Testament (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Salvation is Repentance and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 20:21 ----- ²¹testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul in this verse shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that Jews and Gentiles alike are both saved to eternal life in the same manner and that the only way to God is through honest heartfelt repentance before God and by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It also highlights the truth that no one can be saved without repentance.

- Paul proclaimed that Jews and Gentiles alike should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance (Acts 26:19-20).

The Gospel of Christ commands that everyone repent. Repentance is essential it is the beginning of Christian faith because repentance changes the will. The rebellious will toward God becomes a will that desires to serve the Lord. Only repentance before God can change the heart in such a manner. Repentance is the work of God in the heart because by repentance the heart turns to God to find mercy, surrenders to Christ as Redeemer and Saviour and with a heartfelt passion desires to forsake sin and live to honour both God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus himself told us to go into all-the world and proclaim this message of repentance over and over again.

The Old Testament Levitical law required Israel to continually offer for a sin offering slain animals over which they confessed their iniquities for the forgiveness of sin and freedom from guilt. Whereas now, under the Gospel of Christ no Jew or Gentile needs to signify repentance in this way; since Christ unlike the animal

sacrifices died once for all, this means no-one has to continually ask for forgiveness to be saved and accepted by God since every faithful brother and sister who is by faith in Christ are loved by God and saved to eternal life.

NOTE: this is not about repenting and feeling sorrow over offenses we many have done while in Christ that is another topic altogether. Here the focus is repentance that leads to eternal life in Christ it is that repentance that delivers a sinner from the domain of darkness and transfers them into the Kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col 1:13). Once a sinner is transferred into this Kingdom they do not need to continually repent to get back into it, unless they have consciously and deliberately turned away from the faith and against Christ.

Certainly we should feel sorrow and regret and change our behaviour when we act or behave in a manner that dishonours God and brings a bad testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, but it is not necessary to continually repent again and again to be saved to eternal life. In a natural family where love is the bond, the children often act in a manner that is not according to their parents best desire, but no loving parent casts their children who love them away simply because they did not attain to the high standard they desired, likewise it is with God, He does not cast out His children who love Him when they fall short of his glory.

Repentance is the beginning of entering into the eternal Kingdom of God it does not need to be laid again and again. Christian maturity, and spiritual strength and mental peace with God cannot be attained by lingering at the earliest stages of salvation. Those who are devoted to Christ can only move forward spiritually by accepting God's forgiveness and by trusting in God's grace. No one can be delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred into the Kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col 1:13) without honest heartfelt repentance before God and outward deeds fitting for repentance will evidence the honesty of a person's repentance. This is because genuine repentance before God and acceptance of Christ as Lord and Saviour affects the mind, the heart and the will in such a manner that the repentant sinner rises from their regret and their sorrow with a transformed desire to live their life to honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 6.

The Wages of Sin is Death.

Romans 6:23 ----- ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Law of Moses and the Ten Commandments carved in letters on stone is called the ministry of death (2 Cor. 3:7) because it states, "Whoever does not perfectly keep all its commandments is condemned (2 Cor. 3:9). This ministry of death carved in letters on stone is also called the, law of sin and death because it states that "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

This means that whoever does not perfectly keep all the commandments of the law is condemned to death (2 Cor. 3:9), but the Good News is that there is a much higher law that overrides the law of sin and death. This divine law (called the, law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus) states that death has no legal right or power to hold in the grave those who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ this glorious law supersedes the, law of sin and death. Paul in his writings states that all who trust in Christ have been granted the free GIFT of God which is: -

- Eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 6:23), because, the law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2)

This means that the law of sin and death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him. This promise is guaranteed because it is not dependent on our self-effort, but on our faith this is why the Scriptures state: -

- Faith is counted to whoever believes in God who raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead who was delivered up to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification (Rom. 4:22-25).

And why Paul wrote: -

- The promise to Abraham depends on faith in order that it may rest on grace and in this way be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring (Jews and Gentiles) (Rom. 4:16).

God in his foreknowledge and knowing human nature knew if He had made eternal salvation dependant on our self-effort there is no-way He could guarantee or promise it to any of us. This is the reason God in His great wisdom made eternal salvation dependant on faith and upon His grace. This is another reason the Gospel of Christ is called the Good News.

NOTE: it is not the Ten Commandments that are at fault, since they are not only perfect, but also express God's perfect will, it is our corrupt fallen nature with all its sinful dysfunctions and aberrations (self, ego, pride, greed, lustful thoughts, jealousies, anger and such like things) that that are the problem since they prevent all of us from attaining to the perfection the law demands.

1 Corinthians 1.

God is the Source of Our Life in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:30 - ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

The King James Bible says: -

- But of him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

John in his letter tells us that eternal life was with the father from the beginning (1 John 1:2). God is the eternal source of all life and all creation and the source of every believer's life, through their faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. It was God who raised Jesus from the dead and it was God who gave him eternal life and it is God who has given Jesus the power to give this eternal life that was with the Father from before the foundations of the world to the redeemed (John 17:2).

God is the source of our life in Christ Jesus carries the following two ideas: -

1. God is the beginning of our life in the Lord Jesus Christ in that God before time began planed and purposed in his eternal mind mankind's eternal salvation.
2. God gave Christ to accomplish His divine and eternal plan which originated with God before the foundations of the world.

It is not by the efforts or the wisdom of man, but by God's free grace and mercy that we are engrafted by faith into Christ Jesus, who is to all who believe the way of salvation and the way to God. God is not only the source of all life, but the source of eternal life since God is eternal and it is this eternal life that God has given to Christ and that flows through Christ.

God firstly casts us down in humble repentance and shows us all our unworthiness before Him and our inability to attain to the perfect standard the law demands and to attain to His perfect Holiness and then lifts us up in Christ higher than all men in spiritual wisdom in such a way that we clearly see by the eyes of faith that all our righteousness that leads to eternal life is outside of ourselves and rest in another, namely the Lord Jesus Christ.

God the Father is the source of our lives in that he imputes this righteousness to whoever is devoted to his Son by faith and love. God is the source of our lives in that Salvation comes from His own rich free grace and mercy in Christ and not because of any merit, goodness or desert of ours, it is to God and His free favour in Christ that we are saved and made heirs of all His eternal promises. God the Father is the source of eternal life and Jesus God's Son and our redeemer is the golden and royal path to obtaining it.

God made Jesus our wisdom: Christ is to us the source of wisdom it is by Him that we are made wise. This does not mean that His wisdom literally and perfectly becomes ours, but that in Him we have become wise in the following things: -

- To the work of Christ and to his instructions.
- To the true character of God and to His law.
- To the great truth that there is a glorious immortality beyond the grave.
- To the way to God and the way to eternal salvation.
- To the ways of living and behaving that brings honour to God and a good testimony to Christ and the Christian faith.

It is to these things that the redeemed in Christ have been made TRULY WISE by the teachings and the work of Christ. Paul in his letter to the Colossians wrote: -

- In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3).

It is through Christ that the faithful who belong to the global family of God are made practically wise in the true knowledge of God, and of those great truths which pertain to their salvation, because he has by his word and Spirit led us to see our true condition before God and made us wise unto repentance and thereby turned us from the ways of foolishness and death and led us by love to walk in the path of true wisdom (i.e., doing what is right and walking in the fruits of the Spirit). Added to these it is Christ who enlightens the mind in the time of perplexity and confusion and guides in the way of God's truth, God's love and God's grace.

Proclaiming the Gospel (the wisdom of God) will have different effects on different groups of people: -

- To the Greeks (the intellectuals) and those who are perishing it is foolishness.
- To those who are saved it is the power of God.
- To the Jews it is a stumbling-block.

In spite of all the learning and wisdom that had been obtained by the investigations of Jews and Greeks, the heathen politicians, the philosophers, the Jewish rabbis and doctors, men of wealth and power, the curious searchers into the secrets of life after death, the deepest statesmen, the greatest seekers of learning, all the famous scientists and the mighty and noble not one of them can bring the world to God.

The Gospel of Paul: had been raised in Jewish learning at the feet of Gamaliel he had a brilliant mind and spoke about five languages, but in proclaiming the Gospel he laid his learning aside and preached a crucified Jesus in plain language and not with the enticing words of man's wisdom since he clearly understood that all the learning that this world valued concerning God and eternal life was confounded, baffled, and eclipsed, by the glorious triumphs of the message of the cross.

Paul's central message concerning eternal salvation is: -

- The cross (Jesus crucified and resurrected).
- The Son of God and Saviour of the world laid his life down to a brutal, bloody and cruel death to reconcile those who would repent of their sins to God.
- Salvation to eternal life is through faith in Christ and God's grace.
- Whoever accepts Christ by faith as their Saviour and trust in him for their righteousness and not in their own self effort or religious works will be raised to eternal life and everlasting glory.

In proclaiming these glorious truths Paul understood they needed no artificial dress; no enticing words of man's wisdom; no flourish of flattery or brilliance of oratory or

the soothing words of philosophical language, upon which many pride themselves since the message of the cross and the Gospel of Christ crucified and God's grace triumphs over human wisdom and shines out with the greatest majesty in its own light. The Gospel preached is foolishness in the eyes of those who are worldly-wise to them: -

- Our living through one who died.
- Our being blessed by one who was made a curse.
- Our being justified by one who was himself condemned and crucified as a common criminal.

Are all foolishness since they are blinded by self-conceit and blinded by their own prejudices and puffed up in their own discoveries and puffed up in their own prideful reasoning and philosophy, it is a just thing with God to leave those to themselves who pour such proud contempt on His divine wisdom and grace.

NOTE: in the global body of Christ worldwide it often happens that lowly and unlearned brothers and sisters in Christ have more, true, real and practical knowledge and more understanding of what is important to the Heart of God than many who are filled with all the religious learning of a Bible college or have religious diplomas and certificates.

Often, a humble Christian, though poor as to this world, has more true knowledge of the Gospel than those who have made the letter of Scripture the study of their lives, but who have studied it as the writings of men rather than as the word of God. Christ is the highest wisdom of every brother and sister in Christ since it is through him and his blood (death and resurrection) that they have the knowledge of salvation the knowledge of eternal life, forgiveness of sin, favour with God and attain to the righteousness that leads to eternal life.

God made Jesus our righteousness: it is by Christ's merits alone that our sins are pardoned, and we are justified, and treated as righteous in the sight of God. Christ's righteousness through faith obtains justification that leads to remission of sins something the following two verses show that the law could not give.

- I (Paul) do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose (Gal 2:21).
- If a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law (Gal. 3:21).

Paul's purpose in these verses is to highlight the truth that not one of us have any perfect thing dwelling within that we can take before the perfect demands of the law or the throne of God and His Holiness and claim that we are worthy of eternal life. Righteousness that leads to eternal life is not in ourselves nor does it lie in anything within us or done by us; but in Christ as our head and Saviour, who by imputation is made righteousness to us; and in the same way we are made the righteousness of God in him.

In other words, Christ's righteousness, by an act of the Father's grace is imputed, reckoned, and accounted to us as our justifying righteousness. This righteousness justifies from all sin, and discharges from all condemnation. Jesus brought this righteousness to us through the Holiness of his nature, the obedience of his life, and by his sufferings and death.

God made Jesus our sanctification: sanctification carries the idea of putting on the new-self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Ephes. 4:24). Though sanctification and justification cannot be separated since they go hand in hand and complement each other they nevertheless primarily deal with two different things sanctification deals with the power and workings of sin, whereas justification deals with the guilt of sin. God imputes the whole fullness of the righteousness of Jesus human nature to the redeemed he is the sanctification of his people by imputation of the righteousness of his nature, the merits of his blood, and the efficacy of his grace.

The high priest of the Old Testament would be fully clothed in his priestly garments as he stood before the throne of God, likewise through our faith in Christ God fully clothes us in Christ's righteousness. Though Christ's righteousness is perfect and complete in us before God our righteousness in this present world and our mortal body of flesh is imperfect and will continue to be so until the Lord returns at which time our sanctification will be made manifest for all to see when: -

- The last trumpet sounds and the dead in Christ are raised and our corruptible and natural body is raised a spiritual and incorruptible body in power and in glory and our mortal body must put on immortality (1 Cor. 15:41-44) (1 Cor. 15:50-54).

When this glorious, breathtaking and world changing event takes place all those who belong to the family of Christ will be literally and eternally fully made righteousness, fully sanctified and fully redeemed in the fullest and most complete meaning of the words.

God made Jesus our Redemption: the word redemption: means deliverance, to be released, freed, delivered, rescued and saved. A natural example would be a man who owes millions of dollars, but has absolutely no hope of paying the debt so he is judged and sentenced to prison, but a super-rich benefactor takes pity and pays the debt and the man is freed.

Biblically we stand before the throne of God and His Holiness absolutely undone, without any hope of attaining to the perfect demands of the law or the perfect Holiness of God, but Christ our benefactor has with his own life not only paid the debt and set us free from the laws legal right to judge and condemn us to death and set us free from the servitude and bondage, the dominion and corruption of sin and death, but also has redeemed us to be sons and daughters of God.

- The creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God (Rom. 8:21).
- 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. (Romans 8:23).

Through his sufferings and death Christ has obtained eternal redemption from sin and the law, and this present corrupt world and obtained every other blessing which is either a part of redemption and comes through it, or is dependent on it, such as justification, adoption, and remission of sins for all who will come to him through repentance and in faith. God through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ and his life of obedience, his sufferings and his death has fully and completely redeemed all who trust in Christ for their righteousness and delivered them from the domain of darkness and transferred them into the Kingdom of his beloved Son (Col. 1:13).

Faith in Christ fills the mind with spiritual knowledge and understanding and with a sense of sin and a detestation of it; it fills the heart with a desire to honour God; the affections with love toward divine things; the will with submission and surrender to the will of God in all respects; and is exercised in living a life of faith in Christ, and endeavouring to live a life that honours God and that brings a good testimony to the name of Jesus and to the Christian faith and though imperfect now, will be perfected when the Lord returns and our corruptible nature puts on incorruption (1 Cor. 15:41-44) (1 Cor. 15:50-54).

Redemption obtained by Christ embraces redemption past, present and future and seals up the redeemed until Christ returns in glory.

Galatians 3.

The Promised Spirit is Received by Faith.

Galatians 3:14 ----- ¹⁴so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Both Jews and Gentiles are saved in the same manner, by faith in Christ and by receiving the blessing of Abraham which is the promised Spirit of righteousness (also called God's Holy Spirit). Every repentant sinner is saved by that Spirit of righteousness that God imputes to all who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ so that they can be set free from the imprisonment, bondage and captivity of the law and by grace be justified, redeemed, forgiven and granted eternal life and everlasting glory apart from self-effort and adhering to ceremonial rights, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions.

All who have faith in promised seed of Abraham (the Lord Jesus Christ) are accepted by God and receive the same Spirit of righteousness as Abraham did regardless of whether they are Jews or Gentiles all are counted by God as the true children of Abraham.

The Promised Spirit comes through Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:22 ----- ²²the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

The expression, "The Scripture imprisoned everything under sin" (v22) means that the Ten Commandments given by God Himself are so perfect they placed all of mankind under sin because fallen human nature has so many sinful dysfunctions and aberrations (selfishness, ego, pride, lust, greed etc., just to name a few dwelling within) not one of us can attain to the perfect standard of the law. But the Good News is that God has a much the higher law that supersedes the law of sin and death' which states, "The promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." This means whoever has faith in Christ will be counted righteous not because of self-effort to attain to the high calling of the law, but because of their faith in Christ.

Justification is by Faith.

Galatians 3:24 ----- ²⁴So then, the law was our guardian (schoolmaster in KJV) until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

The idea here of a schoolmaster/guardian is of one who watches over his students for the sole purpose of restraining them from acting wickedly and from temptations that would bring their lives to ruin. The use of the word, schoolmaster/guardian in this context carries the idea of a principal of a school whose care students are committed to and who taught them in ways that would protect them and help them prosper in life.

The schoolmaster/guardian (the Law) made use of discipline and kept a strict eye and hand over the performance and duty those who were under his authority and restrained them from many things that their fleshy and sensual inclinations led them to by threatening them with the fear of death when disobedient and inflicting its penalties and punishments on those who broke its demands and thereby subjected them to bondage.

The schoolmaster/guardian taught the moral law, the letter of the law, the writing on the two tables, with many other statutes and judgments, the duty to God and to mankind, what is to be done and to be avoided, what is righteousness and what is not, the nature of sin, its disadvantages, shortcomings, imperfection and consequences; but not one of these give any instructions about a saviour nor about righteousness that comes by faith and by God's grace in Christ.

The schoolmaster/guardian was only intended to be temporary, the fact the law is referred to as a schoolmaster/guardian shows that the use of it was always only intended to be temporary and the duration of its use only for a certain period of time. No child or student is expected to remain forever under a schoolmaster/guardian since the goal of every teacher is to bring their students to a proper and mature age for a greater and higher exercise of life and the role of a guardian is to protect a child until they are able to support themselves so the law was designed to continue and did continue to be of this use and service to the Jewish nation until Christ came.

The ceremonial law: the ceremonial law gave Israel some hints of the Gospel and the way of salvation by Christ by signs and by types and figures, by rites and ceremonies, by shadows and sacrifices. It had something both awful and tremendous in it, the awfulness was in the reality that every beast that was slain in sacrifice was not only an instruction to those offering it that they deserved to die as that creature did, but also carried in it an acknowledgment and confession of their own guilt and that God's handwriting of ordinances was against them.

The sacrifices and offerings were designed to shadow and echo the Messiah and to introduce him to the world while the moral law of God was designed to show people their sin and the danger of living a life of sin. The purpose of the law is to condemn and thereby lead us to right behaviour and God's forgiveness and grace that come through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ the redeemer of us all.

The entire focus of the law is designed to show us our sin and condemn us and even under the preaching of the Gospel it still does so that we see our hopelessness of achieving righteousness by self-effort and are therefore led to Christ the Redeemer. This is the effect the preaching of Gospel should have since it is right that people should be made to feel that they are sinners in order that they may be prepared to embrace God's offer of mercy and grace that is received by faith in the Lord Jesus who is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Rom. 10:4).

The schoolmaster acted like a military guard: there is no such thing as justification by the law it is clear that no blessing could be expected from a schoolmaster who acts like a military guard keeping those under it shut up as in a prison and who treated all who were under its rigid and severe discipline as convicted and condemned criminals until Christ the deliver came and by God's free gift of grace through faith ended the schoolmasters unrelenting bondage of achieving righteousness by self-effort and by keeping the demands of the law and religious rites, practises and traditions. The following words of Paul should be of enormous comfort to every brother and sister in Christ since they clearly show that we are counted righteous and justified, and saved to eternal life totally apart from the law; -

- Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Rom. 10:4)

These majestic words beautifully show that the law has no power to condemn those who are faithfully trusting in God's free gift of righteousness which comes by grace and through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTE: obviously keeping the law should be the aim of every Christian since it is not only the right and loving thing to do, but also fulfils the royal law of God, Love your neighbour as yourself (Mark 12:31) (Jas 2:8) meaning do good to others and not harm. Added to this it honours God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Aiming to keep the law only becomes wrong when our motivation to keep it is not to glorify God and to benefit others, but is driven by our own self-effort to attain to our own standard of righteousness to make us worthy of eternal life rather than trusting in God's righteousness that comes by grace and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whoever, is in Christ is a Son and Daughter of God.

Galatians 3:26-29 ---- ²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

In Christ carries the following ideas: -

- Entering into a new race by faith of which Christ is the head (Adam is the head of the old race).
- Having no division or tension between our will and Christ will everything Jesus did and desires is fully pleasing to us we are of the same mind and the same goals in love, unity, motivation and purpose.

- Entering into Christ's interests and copying, his ways, his manners and his behaviour.
- Fully belonging to Christ and by faith being together and in union with him.
- Agreeing with and sharing in the divine nature of Christ.
- Having the same mind as Christ (i.e., desiring to honour his heavenly Father).
- Being in Christ by love.

Not only are we in Christ by love, but Christ is also in the Father by love and the Father is in Christ by love and Christ is in us by love. Love is the Spirit that unites the Father, Christ and those in Christ together. The following is a true story and a good example of how Christ can dwell in our hearts by love. An eight-year old disabled girl, whose best friend was her mother was doing her first live stage show at her school. The mother loved her daughter, but could not be at the opening show as she was in hospital with terminal cancer. A television reporter asked the young girl if she would be sad and miss her mother at the opening of the show. The small girl with tears in her eyes said, "Yes I will miss her, but she will be in my heart where she belongs."

Love for a person creates the reality and spiritual presence of that person in the human heart. This spiritual presence is in direct proportion to the love, the greater the love the greater the spiritual presence of that person dwelling in our hearts). Every Christian, by looking at the bloodstained cross of Calvary knows that God and Jesus love them. A wise Bible teacher once asked his new students, "How do you make someone love you without controlling their free will? After a moments silence he told the young students, "Die for them." Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Putting on Christ means: -

- Putting on his nature (i.e., treating others with decency and respect as Christ did while ministering on earth).
- Walking as he walked in love, compassion, kindness, mercy, grace, forgiveness and such like things.
- Doing what is right and living as his faithful servants in honesty and integrity
- Putting on his sentiments, opinions, characteristic and traits,
- Imitating and desiring to walk as Christ walked following him as our example in the faithful exercise of grace, mercy, love, compassion and forgiveness.
- Taking on the character of Christ and act on his behalf upholding his reputation and good name.
- Embracing the character of Christ that he has left us as an example and following in his steps.
- Taking on the mind in us which was in him (i.e., the mind of a humble and faithful servant).

To put on Christ means to be clothed with the nature and character of Christ it carries the idea of our lifestyle, duty and service being clothed with Christ himself as person clothes themselves. Throughout the Bible the righteousness of Christ is compared to a garment called, the best robe; the wedding garment; the robe of righteousness; a garment down to the feet and fine linen, clean and white this style of language was common among the ancient writers.

God the Father through a gracious act of His imputes this garment of righteousness to every faithful brother and sister in Christ. God clothes covers and puts upon those who belong to His Son Christ's robe of righteousness. It is put upon them by the Spirit which faith receives; it puts off its own rags of self-

righteousness and replaces it with Christ's robe of righteousness as its proper dress to appear in before the most High God. Whoever declares Christ to be their Lord and King and places their faith upon him as their Saviour and Redeemer and imitate and follow him as their pattern may be said to put him on. The allusion of putting Christ on is either to: -

- The putting off of old rags and the putting on of new clothes by faith at water baptism by immersion.
- To the priests putting off their common clothes, and then bathing or dipping themselves in water and, putting on the holy garments of the priesthood before they entered into their priestly service.

Literally to put on Christ means: -

- Accepting Christ as our Lord and Saviour and relying on him alone for justification and salvation in contrast to trusting in any form of outward works to make us righteous before God and worthy of eternal life.
- Endeavouring to make Jesus character, feelings and works of love and compassion our own.
- Accepting Christ not in outward imitation, but by a new birth which brings about an entire change of mind, passions and life.
- Setting our minds and heart upon the eternal city of God and living as citizens of heaven in contrast to living as citizens of this world.

Sons and daughters of God: Jews and Gentiles who have believed the Gospel and been water baptised into Christ and declare themselves to be his servants, are all sons and daughters of God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. No one is a child of God by any of the following outward religious acts: -

- By circumcision, or by any observance of the Mosaic Law.
- By adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days, or by keeping religious customs and traditions.
- By outward religious acts of self-effort or good works.

Whoever has put on Christ, meaning whoever is devoted to him in love and by faith and endeavour to live their life in the fruits of the Spirit (i.e., love, compassion, kindness, mercy, grace and forgiveness etc.,) as Christ did are family members of Christ and by their faith in him adopted, owned and accounted as children of God. Everyone (Jew and Gentile) who by faith accepts Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and rely on him alone for justification and salvation are accepted into the global family of God and are showered with all the blessings and privileges that belonging to the eternal family of God rightly entitles them to (i.e., God's, love, forgiveness, grace and favour, and eternal life in everlasting glory).

Jews and Gentiles, the rich and the poor, the noble and the lowly all stand on the same level, and are all one in Christ Jesus. No one is accepted in to the global family of God on account of any national or personal advantage they may have above another. All who sincerely believe on Christ regardless of what nation, or sex, or condition they maybe in are accepted by Christ and become the children of God because of their faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the promised seed, in whom all the nations of the earth are to be blessed, whoever (Jews or Gentiles) sincerely believes on him are the true seed of Abraham, the father of the faithful, and as such are heirs according to God's promise and therefore are entitled to the great blessings and privileges of all God's eternal promises since justification is not attained by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ.

NOTE: the design of the law is to discover our transgressions and to show us the need we have of a better righteousness than that of the law and that self-righteousness of our own which before God is as dirty rags. The law discovers our

sinful wounds, but has no power to heal them. It shines a spotlight on our corruptions and inward sinful dysfunctions and aberrations and by its legal power rightly declares us guilty, but it has no ability to remedy them and is totally insufficient in power to cleanse us from our sinful wounds and corruptions. This is why the foundation and great design of God's salvation for all mankind is founded on God's promises and upon faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ so that eternal life was not dependent our self-effort, but could be given to all who are convicted and convinced of their guilt and understand the insufficiency that the law has to effect a righteousness for them and are thereby brought to repentance and persuaded by their own guilt to believe on Christ as their Redeemer and Saviour.

CONCLUSION: whoever has faith in Christ and is water baptised it matters not if they are biologically born as offspring of Abraham's or born a Hebrew, a Jew or a Gentile all who are in Christ are children of God and all are counted as offspring of Abraham. In some circles of religion today there is a mindset that Israel will have an exalted position in the eternal Kingdom of God, but these verses clearly show that this is a mistaken theory since God is now establishing one nation in Christ made up of both Jews and Gentiles. There are no favourite nations in Christ we are all one in him as Paul states: -

- There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female.

This clearly shows that all are equal in Christ it matters not if one is born a direct descendant of Abraham, a Hebrew or a Jew or of any other nation or how noble or how common, how gifted or how lowly, how rich or how poor, how powerful amongst nations or how ordinary, whether a leader of a global church or the church cleaner we are all equal in Christ, no-one is superior to another. If you are Christ's, you are Abraham's offspring and heirs according to promise.

Galatians 4.

The Sons and Daughters of God Cry Abba Father.

Galatians 4:6-7 ----- ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

The Spirit in this verse refers to the Spirit of love it is the Spirit of Christ's love that God has sent into the heart of every faithful brother and sister in Christ that cries, "Abba! Father!" The spirit that motivates anyone to praise and exalt another with such heartfelt endearment is love. God through Christ's horrific, cruel, brutal and bloody death has produced in the heart of all who have faith in Christ such great love for God that they are by this love and their faith in Christ not only adopted by God as His sons and daughters and thereby heirs of everlasting life and eternal glory, but are also delivered from the bondage of the law, the deception of all other false religious systems and from any form of self-effort as a means to know God and to attain to righteousness that leads to salvation and eternal life.

This is the reason why every son and daughter of God who understand Christ's love and God's grace cry from their heart, "Abba! Father!" And why Paul states, "We are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God (Galatians 4:7).

Ephesians 1.

Redemption, Forgiveness of Sin and Grace is in Jesus.

Ephesians 1:7 ----- ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸which he lavished upon us.

God has glorified his grace by giving us redemption by the blood of his Son, and this redemption consists in forgiving and delivering us from our sins; so then Christ's blood was the redemption price paid down for our salvation. Redemption

denotes captivity and slavery, and deliverance out of it; biblically it refers to deliverance from the penalty of sin and from its bondage. God's people by nature are in bondage to sin, but through the grace of God in Christ, they are redeemed from all iniquity; ransomed out and are freed from the law, from the guilt and penalty of sin, from its bondage and its condemnation. God spared not his own Son, to bring this redemption to those whose ears and hearts are open to hear and embrace the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The forgiveness of sin: through faith in Christ we not only obtain forgiveness of all sins, original and actual, past, present and future, but also deliverance from sin's penalty through the blood of Christ, which was shed upon the cross of Calvary.

According to the riches of Christ's grace: we obtain forgiveness of sins according to the riches of Christ's grace which he manifested by his crucifixion on the cross of Calvary. Jesus from his own free will laid his life down not only for the best of us, but also for the lowliest of us. This is the abundant grace he lavished upon us. The sinless and innocent dying for the sinful and the guilty, such is the abundant grace and mercy Christ manifested on the cross. But Christ's riches go far beyond Calvary since the grace that began at the cross continues to flow through all ages covering the sins of the faithful and sealing and securing them until the Lord returns in glory.

The abundant glory of God's rich grace is manifested in the truth that He gave his Son, as a ransom price for sinners and the truth that Christ paid the highest price to procure redemption and pardon for all who would come unto him. Grace is a gift everyone who is redeemed is redeemed without money and without price sins are forgiven freely for those who have faith in Christ the Lamb of God without blemish, the Messiah, the Saviour and Son of God who from his own free will laid his life down to a brutal, bloody and cruel death.

The riches of the cross of Christ not only refers to God's rich grace to provide for even the lowliest of sinners such a surety as his own Son, and freely to deliver him up for them, but also to Jesus great sufferings and death on the cross and to the Gospel of salvation by a crucified Redeemer and by God's grace. The spiritual riches that come to the redeemed are the spring and fountain of all blessings that are gained in Christ such as: -

- Forgiveness of sin past present and future.
- God's love, mercy, grace and favour.
- A conscience that is at peace with God.
- The promise of eternal life in everlasting glory.

Colossians 2.

In Him the Whole Fullness of Deity Dwells Bodily.

The English Standard Bible states: -

Colossians 2:9 ----- ⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.

The King James Bible translates this verse in the following way: -

- For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).

From Strong's Concordance the word Godhead means, deity and divinity, from the English dictionary these words can refer to any of the following, an immortal or divine being (i.e., to God or to a goddess or an idol that people worship as a divine being). The words, "In him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily means that all the heavenly treasures and spiritual riches of God needed for salvation and eternal life are in Christ and that all the following spiritual blessings are in Jesus and in him alone: -

- Forgiveness of sins and redemption to eternal life.
- The eternal promises and inheritance made to Abraham, David and Israel.
- Entry into the Kingdom of God, eternal life and everlasting glory.
- Full assurance of salvation and all the wisdom and knowledge of God.

When Paul said "In Jesus the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily he was not mystically or secretly saying as some believe that Jesus the Son is actually God the Father (if that was the case Paul would simply say so) rather Paul was saying that God gave Jesus: -

- All dominion and a name above every name.
- The highest authority to rule and judge and the power to give eternal life.

Every power and authority that God has, He gave to Jesus His Son it is in this sense that Paul is saying, "In Jesus the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily. It means that Jesus is the perfect mirror reflection and image of God the Father's character, power, promises and Spirit, because Jesus was filled with God's Spirit without limitation. Paul's was not implying that Jesus is God, but that he has the Spirit of God and all the power of God dwelling in him without any limitations.

In Christ dwells the fullness of God also carries the following two ideas: -

1. Jesus Christ was the fullness of God and the perfect image of God in that he was God's word manifested in the flesh (human body) displaying the wisdom knowledge love, kindness, compassion, grace and mercy of the invisible God in heaven in absolute perfection while here on earth and the majestic miracles he did revealed God the Father's love for a lost and dying sinful world
2. Jesus was the complete fulfilment of God's eternal plan of redemption and salvation for all mankind that God had purpose and promised in His eternal mind and foreknowledge.

It is in this sense that Christ is spoken of as having, "The whole the whole fullness of deity dwelling in him." Paul is saying that Jesus Christ is not just another human man or great prophet, but the only begotten Son of God the Father, in who is the entire plan of God's eternal salvation. It means that in Christ alone is salvation in contrast to all other great prophets of the Bible who only had the power to lead people to Israel's Messiah, the Christ and Saviour of the world, whereas in Christ alone is forgiveness of sins and eternal life, he is the final Lamb of God without blemish to be sacrificed for man's sin and in him God's complete plan of eternal salvation for Jews and Gentiles alike is fulfilled and in this sense the whole fullness of God dwells in him.

Paul told the Ephesian brothers and sisters that they could: -

- Know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephes. 3:19).

No one reading this today believes that a brother or sister who is filled with the fullness of God actually becomes God, rather we all know that Paul is saying that we can be filled with God's Spirit, so why is it when Paul said, "For in Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" (Col. 1:19) that certain religious teachers based on these words of Paul's proclaim that Jesus the Son of God is actually God the Father? Rather than accept that God by His Spirit dwelt in Christ without any limitations in the same way that God's Spirit (with limitations) dwelt in the prophets and apostles and in all who faithfully trust in and follow Christ.

Moses and the abundance of God's Spirit: Moses and the seventy prophets are a good example of God's Spirit being poured out upon believers with varying levels of power. The following verses show that God is able to take a portion of His Spirit from one person and place it onto others as He chooses: -

- Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD and he gathered seventy men of the elders and placed them around the tent then the LORD came down in the cloud and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. but they did not continue doing it and two men named Eldad and Medad remained in the camp and the Spirit rested on them and so they also prophesied (Numbers 11:24-26).

These verses clearly show that God is able to pour out His Spirit in varying portions on whoever he chooses. Though brothers and sisters in Christ can be filled with God's Spirit, no one thinks they can become God no matter how much of His Spirit they maybe filled with, yet when Paul talks of Jesus being filled with God's Spirit it is used to support the mistaken theory that Jesus is God, but Paul is not teaching that Christ is God, but that he is filled with the fullness of God's Spirit in every way and without any limitations.

The Father and the Son are the Saviour: throughout the Bible both the Father and the Son are referred to as the Saviour this is because God the Father planned and purposed salvation before time began and Christ fulfilled that plan in his ministry, death and resurrection. This shines a light upon the following three truths that the words, "For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" mean: -

1. In Christ alone is the fullness of God the Father's plan of salvation for all or mankind.
2. There is nothing a believer can add to the Gospel of salvation of Christ to make themselves more saved.
3. Those who belong to Christ are complete (for eternal salvation), meaning they are totally justified and redeemed in Christ and in him alone because in him is the fullness of God's eternal plan of salvation.

This is what the Bible means when it says, "For in the Son dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" and "You are complete in Christ." Both of these statements mean that in Christ is God's full plan of salvation. Jesus the Son of God is the fullness of the complete and entire eternal plan of God's salvation for all mankind which God purposed before time, began. There is no other plan or way for man to be redeemed. In Jesus is God's promise of eternal life and it is through faith in him all believers are complete, meaning they are fully forgiven, justified and redeemed to be counted worthy of eternal life. For further information see the title: "Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity)" in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Buried with Christ in Baptism, and Raised with Him through Faith.

Colossians 2:12 ----- ¹²having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God who raised him from the dead.

The resurrection of Lord Jesus Christ is every brother and sisters guarantee that God will raise them to eternal life as He raised Christ from the grave to die no more, so likewise all who belong to the family of Christ will be raised from the grave to eternal life and everlasting glory instead of being judged by the law and condemned. Paul's words buried with him in baptism, is alluding to the immersions practised in the case of adults, wherein the person being baptised appears to be buried under the water. This is because water baptism is identification with Christ who died for our sins, was laid in the grave, where he continued for a while and then rose on the third day to eternal life and everlasting glory.

Likewise when a repentant sinner is baptized they are covered with water as if they were buried in it, because water baptism is a representation of the burial of Christ and a representation of our burial with him, as being dead to sin, to the law, and to the world by our faith in Christ and a testimony of a total change of life as a marriage is to a relationship of love.

In regards to water baptism three things should be noted: -

1. The words, "Buried with him in baptism, and raised with him" shows that water baptism was performed by covering the whole body in water because no other

form of administration of baptism, as sprinkling, or pouring water on the face, can represent a burial and a resurrection in such majestic fashion as going down into the water and being under it, represents Christ's descending into the state of the dead and his continuance in it, so the emersion, or coming up out of the water, represents his rising from the dead and that of his people in him, in order to walk in newness of life.

2. There is nothing spiritual in the sign or ceremony of water baptism itself since without repentance before God and faith in Christ and his death and resurrection water baptism will be of no use. The person being baptised is simply being dunked in water, but when a person has a right heart toward God and the Lord Jesus Christ and enters the waters of baptism in faith, God by His Spirit responds accordingly.
3. In climates where total immersion is safe the normal method of biblical water baptism and the one most in accordance with Scripture is full immersion, but where total immersion would be inconvenient (i.e., a third world country where there is not even enough clean water to drink) or where it could be dangerous to a person's health or life (i.e., sickness) to insist on total immersion in such cases is not only enforcing legalistic ceremonialism that is devoid of the Spirit of God and ignoring the faith of the one being baptised, but is also placing unnecessary hardship on the repentant believer since in these circumstances God who sees the honesty of the heart and responds to faith accordingly will accept any form of sprinkling or dipping in water that is administered in faith.

For further information on Water Baptism see the title: -

- Water Baptism (ON WEBSITE MENU).

1 Thessalonians 1.

Christians are in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ

1 Thessalonians 1:1 ---- ¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This verse is not limited to the church of the Thessalonians only, but by extension applies to the global body of Christ. The church is spoken of as being in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every repentant sinner when being water baptised should see themselves as being baptised into God and into the Lord Jesus Christ since biblical water baptism is not about being baptised into a particular church, a religious organisation or institution, but about being baptised into Jesus and becoming a member of his global family world-wide. Being called into the church in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ means being called by grace out of darkness and into God's marvellous light, it carries the idea of being called out of the world and into God's spiritual Kingdom it means our citizenship is not of this world, but of heaven.

The global and worldwide church of God: there is in the secular global world today a mindset that the church is a Sunday meeting in a religious building but the church should never be limited to the established religious institutions, denominations or church buildings though they may form a part of the global body of Christ they are not the only part. There are many individual Christians in all countries of the world who meet in coffee bars, social outings and mostly their own homes (as the early church did) to give thanks to Christ and share their discoveries of God's word and their spiritual experiences with Him. Many of these people are helping others and simply manifesting the reality of their faith to the people that come into their lives.

God is not limited to any one pattern or organisation; He is far too creative for that. Jesus church is global and is manifested in a vast variety of ways across the face of the earth. In many third world countries church is held outside under a tree (for shade) with its members sitting on the dusty ground often with dogs, chooks and other animals roaming around.

It is also important to be aware that the word church does not embrace everyone simply because they confess to be Christians (Matt. 7:21-23). When the Bible uses the term church it primarily refers to those who belong to Christ and those who do the will of his Father. The will of God in this context is: -

- Loving your neighbour as yourself (Matt. 22:37-39) (Mark 12:29-31).

Jesus brother James calls this the royal law (James 2:8) it means do-good to others. Those who deliberately harm or use people, especially those who belong to Christ for their own selfish gain and greed, sexually, financially, verbally, emotionally and spiritually are referred to by Christ himself as workers of iniquity. The Bible teaches that some will be cast out of God's Kingdom which means not everyone who confesses to know Christ is part of his church there are those in his present Kingdom who he calls wicked servants.

They use his name and his Gospel for their own selfish gain and line their own greedy pockets with the wealth and riches of this world by making merchandise of those who do belong to Christ. Nevertheless Jesus knows those who are his and those who are not and will not only reject anyone who uses his message of grace, mercy, compassion and love for their own selfish gain, but when he returns will deny them entry into his eternal Kingdom. (Matt 8:12) (Matt 22:13) (Matt 25:30).

Jesus said: -

- I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:14) (John 10:26-27).

Building God's church is not about financing opulent mega million dollar buildings, but rather about people gathering together to share their faith in any place they are able, nevertheless a building maybe required for practical purposes (i.e., the size of the congregation, protection from weather etc.), but if it is built from cleverly distorting Scriptures to manipulate money from faithful believers and by making them feel guilty if they don't give and borrowing such vast amounts of money that not only the oversight of that church, but also the congregation are put under financial oppression it is not in the will of God.

Building God's church is about becoming more Christ like, and living in the will of God. New Testament Christianity is fluid and not restricted to a particular building or even a special day. The Christianity Christ taught is so exciting and real, it cannot be contained within the walls of a building, no matter how opulent or how beautiful. The New Testament church has no limitations and overflows into every moment of a Christian's life, it is global, moving and manifested in the lives of all those who are faithful and who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Global family of God: since the Bible was written in an entirely different culture to ours and the body of Christ is a global family filled with people from different nations, countries, cultures, backgrounds, different levels of knowledge and education (especially religious) and its members are filled with various hurts and troubled pasts there is always going to be a certain amount of Scripture we will all understand differently.

Paul in the book of Romans tells us to avoid those who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine that he taught the brothers and sisters in Rome, but in the context of his letter the doctrines he has in mind are: -

1. Doctrines that are contrary to the teaching that salvation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ contrasted to works of the law, self-effort and keeping religious customs and traditions etc.
2. Doctrines that are contrary to the truth that Jews and Gentiles who accept Christ become one nation in Christ, contrasted to them being two separate nations.
3. Doctrines that are contrary to godly behaviour and that lead people away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

These are the three major topics Paul has focused on in his letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome and the doctrines he has in his mind when he says be careful of those who cause divisions and create obstacles. Naturally within the global family of Christ there are many varied understandings of many Scripture, but not all teachings are important to know to be saved to eternal life nor does one have to have perfect understanding of every teaching of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation to know Christ and be in union with him, but they must understand the message of the cross and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

No-one has to be a walking Bible encyclopaedia to be in the family of Christ and saved to eternal life, but should any teacher proclaim a message of works and self-effort to be saved or teach that Jews and Gentiles are two separate groups/nations in Christ, or teach doctrines that lead people away from God's grace, away from godly behaviour and away from Christ Paul says they should be avoided (Romans 16:17-19).

NOTE.

Though the visible global church in many regions has not presented a good reflection of Christ to the secular world, it should always be remembered that there are literally hundreds of thousands of humble Christian brothers and sisters in Christ spending their time helping the poor and the less fortunate, but sadly this type of news does not attract the attention of global T.V. or the world news since there is no profit to be made in good news. The body is the reflection of Christ on earth and therefore those who belong to it should be walking in the same Spirit of love, kindness, compassion and grace etc. that Christ walked in while on earth.

Titus 3.

Accepting Jesus makes a Person an Heir of Eternal Life.

Titus 3:6-7 ----- ⁵He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

There is only one power under all of heaven that has the power to save anyone to eternal life and it has nothing to do with the religious things we do, but rather is totally dependent on faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace. It does not matter how ridged a person has been in legalistically keeping ceremonial rites, holy days, Sabbaths, religious customs and traditions not one of them has any power to save us to eternal life. God's did not base His eternal plan on human self-effort or good works, nor are our good works the cause of our salvation.

Consider the following: -

- If people could have been saved by their own self-effort and good works, there would have been no need of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ.
- If our own deeds were the basis of our title to eternal life, the work of Christ would be equally unnecessary.
- If anyone of us could attain to the perfect state the law demands and to God's perfect Holiness Christ died for no reason.

It is a great and fundamental principle of the Gospel that self-effort and good works come in for no share in our justification. They are in no sense a consideration on account of which God pardons a person and receives them to favour. The only basis of justification is the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the matter of justification before God all mankind is on the same level because salvation to eternal life: -

- Is according to God's mercy.

- Has its origin in God's mercy.
- Is by God's mercy and compassion, and not by works.
- Is an expression of God's great mercy.
- Is conferred, awarded and granted only by God's mercy.

Whatever we have done or can do, when we come to receive salvation from the hand of God, there is no other element which enters into it but mercy. It is not because our deeds deserve it; it is not because we have by repentance and faith wrought ourselves into such a state of mind that we can claim it; but, after all our tears, and sighs, and prayers, and good deeds, it is a pure favour and gift of God. Here is the wonder, splendour and spectacular glory of the message of salvation, our justification and our redemption is not in our works or our own self-righteousness, but in the kindness and love of God who accepts us through the excellences and virtues of Christ alone and not from any desert in us, but according to his own mercy and by his grace and his free unmerited goodness. Clearly this is one of the glorious reasons the Christian message of salvation is called "The Good News."

Hebrews 5.

Jesus is the Source of Eternal Life.

Hebrews 5:9 -----⁹And being made perfect, he became the source (author in KJV) of eternal salvation to all who obey him.

Jesus being made perfect does not refer to his moral perfection, for he was always without sin, it carries the following two ideas: -

1. He was made a complete Saviour through his calling and his ministry, through his sacrifice and through his tremendous sufferings, through his death and through his resurrection to the right hand side of God in heaven.
2. He was made a Saviour suited in all respects to redeem people from sin and save them to eternal life.

Jesus is the sole author and source' of eternal salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike in the sense that he was the sower who came and proclaimed the Gospel to all nations that leads to eternal life and is the one who salvation is in.

To all who obey him: when Jesus was asked, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" He answered: -

- The most important is, "God is one and you shall love Him with all your heart, soul, mind and strength" The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" there is no other commandment greater than these two" (Mark 12:28-31).

Jesus brother James refers to Jesus commandment, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" as the royal law (James 2:8) and Paul wrote: -

- Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10).

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that the spirit underpinning God's laws concerning human behaviour is love, because each law protects the innocent from physical, financial, sexual, emotional, verbal and spiritual harm, this means that obeying Christ is about walking in love and showing compassion, kindness, mercy, grace and forgiveness to others as Christ did.

Micah wrote: -

- What the LORD requires of mankind is to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God (Micah 6:5-10).

Isaiah says: -

- The LORD loves justice, hates robbery and wrong doing (Isaiah 61:8).

Jeremiah said: -

- Those who know God practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, because it is in these things that God delights (Jer. 9:24).

The great prophets Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah clearly show us that the people the LORD loves are not only those who acknowledge God, but who also uphold justice, do not lie, deceive or make promises they do not intend to keep, but speak the truth, do what is right, show respect and give help to others when able and make choices that lead to peace. These are the things the LORD delights in and what it means to obey Christ.

The constant theme throughout Jesus famous Sermon on the Mount is doing what is right before God by seeking the way of peace in all situations. Jesus calls Christians to treat people fairly and with respect, dignity, decency grace compassion, kindness, mercy and to be quick to forgive.

This means living a life that honours God and the Lord Jesus Christ is about doing all we can do to protect people from harm and being dominated by the thought, "What action can I take or do that will help and encourage this person." It is all about doing right to others. This is the reason the message Jesus spoke on the mountain is referred to as, "The Famous Sermon" because the principals if followed not only by Christians but all humanity are the only way to peace (Matt 5). A wicked person is primarily one who deliberately and consciously denies the existence of God and does harm to other humans.

For further information on Jesus Famous Sermon see: -

- Matthew 5 in Commentary New Testament (ON WEBSITE MENU).

End