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## **Salvation in Titus.**

(2019)

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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 perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

# Salvation in Titus.

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**INTRODUCTION:** since the primary focus of this study is upon Scriptures (in the three chapters of Titus) 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 each chapter will by the time they arrive at the end not only be enriched in their knowledge of salvation, but also enriched in God's love and God's grace in Christ.

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## TITUS 1:1-3

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### The Knowledge of the Truth is in Agreement with Godliness.

- **Titus 1:1-3:** Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness,<sup>2</sup> in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began<sup>3</sup> and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;

The words, their knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness means that the truth of God's word is in accord with living a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. It means as people read and study the Scriptures with a right heart attitude the knowledge they learn will not only guide them to God, the Lord Jesus Christ and eternal life, but also call them to live a lifestyle of doing what is right and good and living in the fruits of the Spirit (i.e., love, compassion, kindness, mercy, grace and forgiveness etc.), against which there is no law. The knowledge of the truth in this context does not refer to every aspect of the Bible such as the many laws recorded in the book of Leviticus since these are irrelevant for us today and no-one needs to understand the detail of Israel's history or the family tree of their kings to be saved to eternal life. The primary focus of the truth in this context is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which leads to salvation and the Lord Jesus Christ himself who said:

- I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6).

So, the truth Paul has in mind is those teachings concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus himself said to religious Jews who believed in God, read the Old Testament Scriptures daily and held fast to ceremonial rites, holy days and legalistically kept every religious custom and tradition:

- You do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life (John 5:38-40)

These verses shine a spotlight on the truth that the purpose of the Scriptures is to bring us to Christ. When we all stand before the Lord's judgment seat Christ will not sit us down to do a written doctrinal exam, but he will examine our lives to see if our religious actions stemmed from a devoted and loving heart toward him and his Father or from self, ego, and pride and will measure us against Jesus command and the royal law:

- Love your neighbour as yourself (James 2:8) (Matt 22:37-39) (Mark 12:28-31).

This means treating others with love, kindness, compassion, grace, mercy and forgiveness especially our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**NOTE:** this does not mean that studying the Scriptures is of no value, quite the contrary, since the more we understand the Bible the stronger our faith and our H grows and the more we learn of the nature, character will and the heart of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. To give a simple

example: a young man may meet a girl that he is attracted to, so he takes her out on a few dates and finds she has a pleasant personality and caring nature, now, he knows this girl, no-one can say anything against her that he would believe because he knows her nature and her character, but if he never takes her for another date, it won't be long before that relationship will dissipate and other things will take its place. So, it is with the Scriptures they are our date with Christ and through them we gain eternal and heavenly insights into treasures of God that touch our hearts and minds in a manner that nothing in this world can.

**Hope and faith:** when salvation to eternal life is spoken of as the hope of the faithful in Christ, it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future. The hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and he cannot lie. (Rom. 8:24). The apostle Paul wrote:

- In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began" (Titus 1:2).

The Christian hopes to be resurrected from the grave to be raised up to eternal life and everlasting glory to be made perfectly free from sin; to be everlastingly happy, but it is faith that gives these things a mental reality in the mind and it is under this influence of faith that those in Christ allow these unseen and yet future events to control their mind as if they were a reality now. The difference between faith and hope is that by faith alone we are sure of eternal salvation it is certain and guaranteed by faith whereas by hope we look forward with confidence that we will be raised to eternal life. All Christian hope stands on faith since it is faith that secures and guarantees the promise of God. Faith and hope go together they are partners that complement each other since the same things that are the focus of our hope are the same things that our faith is trusting in. Faith secures while hope looks forward to what is secured by faith.

**God manifested His word through preaching:** the words, "God manifested eternal life which he promised before the world began in his word through preaching" (v3) means that it is through preaching and teaching of God's word that God's eternal plans, purposes and promises that He purposed in His eternal mind before the word began are manifested. Jesus came and perfectly manifested God's character love, compassion grace and mercy etc., and God's miraculous power and His eternal plans and purposes in his flesh (meaning through his lifestyle and teachings). Paul is now saying that he manifests God's plan of eternal life that God planned and purposed before time began through preaching. This glory is not limited to Paul only, but by extension to everyone who proclaims the Gospel of Christ since it is through this message that God's eternal plan of salvation that He purposed in His eternal mind before the word began is manifested to others.

**God our Saviour:** since every Christian knows that the Lord Jesus Christ is their Saviour some religious teachers use Paul's words, "God our Saviour" (v3) to support the mistaken theory that that Jesus is God. Sadly, this stems from ancient religious teaching, tradition and a lack of understanding the relationship between the heavenly Father and His most beloved Son the Lord Jesus Christ. God is the Saviour of us all since he is the source of all life. Before time began God in His eternal mind planned and purposed that salvation to eternal life would to be in his Son, so Jesus is the fulfilment of God's foreordained plan of salvation for all mankind. But without Christ no-one can be saved, this is the reason both God and Christ are the Saviour, but in a different manner.

God is the Saviour in that He is the source of all life and planned and purposed the eternal way of salvation before the foundations of the world, but Christ is our Saviour in that he is the fulfilment of God's eternal plan. Without God there would be no Salvation, but God's eternal plan without Christ would be left bankrupt this is the reason the Bible in various contexts can refer to God the Father or the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour.

**Words of comfort and encouragement:** 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 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. Jesus himself said:

This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

For further information see the title:

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

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## **TITUS 2:1**

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### **Teach what Accords with Sound Doctrine.**

- **Titus 2:1:** But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

This command of Paul’s to teach only, sound doctrine raises the following four questions:

1. What teachings do sound doctrines refer to?
2. Does this mean that we have to divide from all those who do not believe every detail of the Bible in the same manner as we do?
3. Does it mean we have to be walking Bible encyclopaedia’s before we can teach sound doctrine?
4. Should we cast out of our midst those whose statements of faith are not in line with ours?

Paul’s letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome helps us find the answers to these questions, he wrote:

- Watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them (Rom. 16:17).

The four major doctrines Paul had in mind and taught throughout the book of Romans for brothers and sisters in Christ to avoid were:

1. Doctrines that led people away from the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Doctrines that led people away from God's grace.
3. Doctrines that taught that Israel and Gentiles in Christ are two separate nations.
4. Doctrines that led to ungodly behaviour.

These are the three major doctrines throughout Paul's letter to the Romans that he warned the brothers and sisters in the city of Rome to avoid. Based on what Paul considered in his letter to the Romans the four major doctrines that are contrary to sound doctrine is any doctrine that leads people away from Christ, any doctrine that leads people away from God's grace; any doctrine that does not teach that Jews and Gentiles are saved in the same manner (i.e., through faith in Christ) and become one nation in Christ and any doctrine that leads people to ungodly behaviour. Certainly, all other doctrines are important, but it was only teachers who were teaching these four doctrines that Paul told the Roman brothers and sisters to depart from. In regards to all other teachings brothers and sisters differ on Paul's ideal was that they would remain together in the faith and in the love of Christ and reason their differences out in a spirit of peace and grace with each other. Remember the early church was called to humbly submit to each other and grow in love showing each other grace.

**Consider for a moment:** during the early church Jews who had been steeped in Moses Law and Jewish customs and traditions for about four-thousand years were coming together in Christ with Samaritans who had married pagan woman and had adopted many of their wives pagan practices and Gentiles who had absolutely no idea of God's dealing with Israel, God's promises made to Abraham and the prophetic messages of the prophets all coming together in home churches (there were no church buildings or religious institutions and religious dominations at this time). The difference would have been astounding, had they divided over every difference there would be no hope of Jews and Gentiles ever growing together in Christ. It is most certain that the early church in their new found faith had much excitement discovering together the glorious truths of the Bible. When brothers and sisters with various levels of understanding come together and pride, egos, dogma and legalism are left outside the door meetings of spiritual discovery can be enormously exciting and rewarding. Paul's concept of the early church was to reason together in love, understanding and grace (i.e., in the fruits of the Spirit) (perhaps today over a coffee) and discover the wonder and beauty of Bible, prophecies promises and doctrine together, but should any brother or sister be teaching any doctrine that leads away from the Lord Jesus Christ and away from the truth that salvation is by faith and God's grace or teaches contrary to the truth that Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ and saved in the same manner or teaches doctrines that lead a brother or sister toward ungodly and corrupt behaviour they should be avoided.

**SUMMARY: sound doctrines are messages that:**

- Teach Jesus is the Saviour of the world and teach God's grace.
- Teach the death and resurrection of Jesus and his return in glory.
- Teach a person is saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace.
- Teach water baptism and the resurrection of the dead in Christ to eternal glory.
- Teach Jews and Gentiles are one nation in Christ and saved in the same manner.
- Teach that those in Christ should live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith.

- Teach ways to develop good-character, self-controlled, love, compassion, a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Other than doctrines that led people to God and the Lord Jesus Christ the next doctrine that is given the highest priority throughout the New Testament (the entire Bible really) is teachings concerning godly behaviour (i.e., that instruct brothers and sisters in Christ on how to treat others and do what is good and right). This should not surprise us since Jesus summed all the Commandments in the entire Bible in the following two Commandments:

- You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind (Matt. 22:37-38).
- You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Matt. 22:39).

This means do not deliberately do harm to other humans. No sane person deliberately does things to inflict pain on themselves, loving others as you love yourself is not about feeling some warm and fuzzy emotion towards others, it is about not hurting others as you would not hurt yourself. The thing God hates the most is when we do harm to another person, physically, financially, sexually, verbally, mentally, emotionally or spiritually and the thing God loves the most is when we do good to others. It is interesting to notice that the major crime that God points out in Noah's time and one of the main reasons for the flood was because of all the violence in the land. These two commandments and the truth that everyone (Jews and Gentiles) are now save by faith in Christ and God's grace are what God and the Lord Jesus Christ considers the most important of all doctrines and what Paul calls sound doctrine.

**Consider for a moment:** if a brother or sister (especially those in leadership) live a life contrary to the law of love, contrary to the nature of God and contrary to the nature of Christ how can they possibly instruct and correct others in the ways of the Lord. But this is not the worst of it since whoever confesses to believe in Christ and lives a life of hypocrisy pretence, greed and selfish-ambition is going to turn those outside of God's Kingdom away from the Lord not toward him and since God desires that all should be saved this is grossly offensive to Him.

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## TITUS 2:11-12

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### The Grace of God has Appeared, Bringing Salvation for all People.

- **Titus 2:11-12:** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,<sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

The words, the grace of God has appeared refer to the Lord Jesus Christ himself (teachings do not appear) since it is by our faith in Christ and God's grace in Christ that we are saved to eternal life. No-one, no matter how good they maybe or how rigidly they adhere to ceremonial rites, holy days or keep religious customs and traditions etc., can be saved by these things. Everyone who will inherit eternal life will inherit it not because of their own self-effort to make themselves righteous, but because of their faith in Christ and God's grace. Jesus appeared and brought salvation by faith and through grace to all mankind and it is Christ who not only by his words, but also by his life teaches those who belong to his family the way to live a life that honours God his heavenly Father and bring a good testimony to Jesus himself and to the Christian faith. How does Jesus teach us to live such a life some may wonder? Simply this, by his words (see his Famous Sermon in Matthew 5 in Commentary NT (ON WEBSITE MENU) and by his life. Whenever we are in doubt all we have to do is look at the life of humility, love, compassion, kindness, mercy, grace and forgiveness Jesus lived and do-likewise. There is an important principle we can learn from Paul's words, "The grace of God has appeared" and

that principal is that it is not by dogmatically and legalistically demanding brothers and sisters to keep laws and rules that will motivate them to live a life that honours God, but by bringing them into greater levels and higher understandings of God's grace and love that is in Christ Jesus. For those who don't believe this statement consider this: no one will lay their life down for another because a law tells them they must, but millions worldwide have willingly laid their lives down for a man or woman they have deeply loved.

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## TITUS 2:13

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### **Waiting for our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.**

- **Titus 2:13:** waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Since every Christian knows that the Lord Jesus Christ is their saviour some religious teachers use Paul's words, Our great God and saviour to support the mistaken theory that that Jesus God's most beloved Son is actually God Himself, but this concept not only goes totally against what we understand of a natural father and son relationship, but also against Scriptural teaching as the following two verses show:

- God so loved the world, that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).
- This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent (John 17:3).

Of course, there are hundreds of other Scriptures that teach Jesus is the Son of God. Added to this all one has to do is punctuate the verse with a coma:

- Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God, and Saviour Jesus Christ (v13).

This not only clearly separates the Great God and the Saviour Jesus Christ, but is also in total harmony with the hundreds of other Scriptures that speak of God the Father and His Son the Lord Jesus.

For further information concerning this, see the title:

- God Our Saviour, in the notes under (Titus 1:1-3) (above).

It is interesting to notice that there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states we must believe that Jesus is God to be saved whereas in contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures that clearly state, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved" whereas there is not one verse that says, "Whoever believes that Jesus is God will be saved." Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God, Christ would have told the apostles at least once in his discourses with them and in his messages of salvation, but all we find in the Scriptures is Jesus and the apostles proclaiming that people must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3).

**Waiting for our blessed hope:** the words, waiting for our blessed hope refers to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the



Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## **TITUS 2:14**

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### **Christ Gave Himself to Redeem us from all Lawlessness.**

- **Titus 2:14:** who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Here is the glory the beauty and wonder of the Christian faith, it is not about being united with an overload of intellectual head knowledge, but being united in love with the Lord Jesus Christ himself who laid down his life to save us from sin (i.e. all wrong-doing in behaviour, attitude and thought). Jesus himself said:

- Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. (John 15:13).

It is from this great love that Christ has for his brothers and sisters (his friends) that their zealousness and desire to live a life that honours his heavenly Father stems from and flows out to others and not from the demand of the Law to obey. The greatest motivating power on earth is love people will willingly lay down their lives for someone they love. This truth shines a brilliant light on the reality that there is no greater power that influences the human heart to do-good than love. This of course is why God in his eternal mind and eternal wisdom purposed before the world began that salvation would be in his Son the Lord Jesus Christ and not in intellectual head knowledge or the strict adherence of ceremonial rites, holy days or legalistically keeping religious customs and traditions.



**A people for Christ's own possession:** at this present time Jesus is gathering out of the sea of people amongst all nations of the world a group of people to himself who love good works, meaning what is right and just (i.e., fairness for all). This Kingdom of people will become Christ's royal government when he returns to rule and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

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## **TITUS 3:4**

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### **When the Loving Kindness of God our Saviour Appeared.**

- **Titus 3:4:** But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared.

The words, the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared refers to the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was in him that the goodness and loving kindness of God appeared to all mankind (i.e., Jews and Gentiles). Christ manifested God's love, compassion, kindness, mercy, grace and forgiveness to all mankind when he appeared on earth. For information concerning the words, God Our Saviour, see the title:

- God Our Saviour, in the notes under (Titus 1:1-3) (above).

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## **TITUS 3:5-7**

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### **God Saved Us, Not because of Works but According to His Mercy.**

- **Titus 3:5-7:** he 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, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The words, "Not because of works done by us in righteousness," refer to ceremonial rites, holy days, religious customs and traditions etc. Paul is saying it does not matter how ridged a person has been in legalistically keeping holy days, Sabbaths, ceremonial rites, religious customs and traditions not one of them has any power to make us righteousness before God or save us to 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 love and grace in Christ. 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 now 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 live a sin-free life Christ died for nothing.

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.
- An expression of God's great mercy.
- 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.

**The washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit:** in the context of these verses regeneration and renewal carries the idea of a spiritual rebirth (the state or the act), such as a spiritual renovation, restoration or renewing, in order to gain a correct understanding of the words, the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (v5) it is necessary to determine whether it is referring to water baptism (as some believe) or whether it refers to something quite different. The context that the verse is seated in is of being saved to eternal life not by works of righteousness but by God's mercy. If the words washing of regeneration are referring to that outward washing of water baptism it would mean that people are saved by being water baptized. Certainly, water baptism is one of the ordinances connected with salvation as Jesus himself clearly stated:

- He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16).

But it is not affirmed in these words of Jesus that water baptism is the actual means of salvation in fact his following words:

- But he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:16).

Point to the fact that the actual means of salvation is in believing and not the actual outward act of water baptism which is in harmony with all teaching regarding salvation (i.e., we are saved by faith and God's grace in Christ and not by our own religious works of which Paul has just gloriously stated in the previous verse (v5).

**A new life in Christ:** The Gospel message proclaims a new life in Christ and the words regeneration and renewal carry the idea of a new birth, reproduction or renewal. When used spiritually they apply to a person who has found new life or in some way new life has begun or commenced in them so that they may be said to be newly alive which is the state of those who are born again into Christ therefore the words washing of regeneration are referring to the new life in Christ that begins in all who the Father, delivers from the domain of darkness and transfers into the Kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom they have redemption and the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:12-14). The following are five reasons why the words, the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (v5) cannot be referring to water baptism.

1. Without faith on the part of the person being water baptised, baptism no-matter how high the religious standing of those doing the actual baptism it is no different to taking a bath and will certainly not bring about any change in the life of the person being baptised. For this reason it is to be understood that the words, the regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (v5) refer to the grace and love of God that inwardly renews and changes the heart and mind to a new way of living

which are a result of faith not works, while the act of water baptism beautifully testifies outwardly that this regeneration and renewal of God's grace by the Holy Spirit upon the heart and mind has been effected inwardly. Water baptism is a rite commanded by Christ himself clearly showing that all who confess to believe in the Lord should enter the waters of baptism. No-doubt one of the reasons Paul immediately links the new birth to water baptism is because water baptism is a visible sign which outwardly evidences that the inward cleansing, purifying influences of the Holy Spirit have transformed and converted the heart to a new way of living and it is only natural and should always be expected that the thing that is used to signify something is linked to the thing it is symbolizing.

2. Another strong reason that the words, the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (v5) cannot be referring to water baptism is the fact that if a person who lacks faith is being water baptised there will be no spiritual benefit, without belief it is no different to simply taking a dip in some cold water. The power lies in the person's faith not in the outward act. It is upon this faith that God by his Holy Spirit makes the outward act of water baptism an outstanding, wonderful and magnificent spiritual moment for the one being baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is God's Spirit of love, mercy and grace working on the inner man that cleanses and purifies, without believing faith water baptism changes nothing inwardly. This is why infant water baptism is not biblical, but simply a church tradition that has been passed down through the generations, mostly I expect because it's a nice thing to do and gives parents some sense of spiritual security for the new born child whether they themselves are committed to Christ or not.
3. Sinners should be regenerated before they are water baptised (though some may be baptized and not regenerated) therefore it is clear that, the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (v5) does not refer to the ordinance of water baptism, but to new life which is caused by the Spirit of God acting on the heart prior to a person being water baptised.
4. If a person was saved by water baptism that would contradict Paul's statement that no-one can be saved by works of righteousness (v5). Thus, the expression, the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (v5) means by the regenerating of God's grace on the heart and refers to being born of the Spirit (also called being born again) which carries the idea that a new life has begun. Washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit is naturally linked or compared with washing of water because of water's purity and cleansing virtue since those who are regenerated and sanctified are said to be washed and cleansed, having their hearts purified by faith and their consciences purged from sin by the blood of Christ.
5. The expression, the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (v5) not only refers to a sinner under the influencing effect of the Holy Spirit being converted to newness of life, but also to the gradual increase and progress of the work of grace renewing day by day the spirit of the mind and wooing those who have entered into this new life to greater depths of God's love and his service as they grow in the Lord. It is through this washing of regeneration that the new creature, the new man, the new heart, and new spirit, is formed in the inner most being. A sinner's first step toward salvation is the discovery of the love God has toward them, without this regenerating and renewing there is no entrance into eternal life since it is the foundation of all grace and the only means by which brothers and sisters in Christ are heirs of the heavenly inheritance.

**Christ and the working of his Spirit:** God the Father is the fountain from which the Holy Spirit flows, to teach, regenerate, and save his fallen creatures; and this blessing comes to mankind through Christ God's beloved Son. The spring and rise of this fountain is the kindness and love

of God to mankind. Love and grace have, through the Spirit, great power to change and turn the heart of a person to God whereas the outward act of water baptism will avail nothing, thus washing of regeneration refers to that which is inward and spiritual it is the work of the Spirit of God on the inner man, while the act of water baptism is the outward sign that this regeneration of the Spirit on the inner man has been effected.

**Circumcision and water baptism:** in the Old Testament the LORD said to Abraham, "This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you as (Gen. 17:10-14) (Gen. 17:23-27). This was God's covenant with the people of Israel, but it was not the way by which they were saved to eternal life, but a sign of their lives being committed to God. Water baptism has in this sense replaced the covenant of circumcision and in the same way is an outward sign that a person's life is now going to be committed from here on to living with Christ seated on the throne of their minds and hearts influencing their choices, speech, actions and behaviour toward what is decent, right, good and loving.

**Water baptism and marriage:** water baptism is very much like what a marriage is to a courting couple the influence of love in the heart has taken place long before the couple enter into the act of marriage. The marriage is that final commitment to their partner that they are surrendering the rest of their life to live for the one they love. This is why when a man proposes to a girl she is over the moon with joy, because it is not only the ultimate evidence of his love for her, but also the ultimate evidence to the rest of the world that he is not available to any other lovers nor does he desire them. His wife to be is the only woman he desires to sit on the throne of his mind and his heart. Likewise, water baptism is the ultimate act of our love toward Christ and symbolizes in the same manner that the one being baptized has no desire for any other Lord or King to sit on the throne of their heart and their mind.

For further information see the title:

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- Water Baptism (ON WEBSITE MENU).

**Heirs according to the hope of eternal life:** (v7) this does not mean that it might or might not happen, it is called hope because it is unseen and yet future, but the hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and He cannot lie (Titus 1:2). Those who belong to the family of Christ have by their faith become brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ and therefore adopted children of God and legal heirs of God's promise of eternal life. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns all who belong to his family will gloriously be caught up to be with him. They will not only inherit an immortal body that will never again feel tired, depressed, sad, jealous, angry, lustful or have any other sinful thoughts or attitudes, but they will also never again experience pain, sorrow or sickness. Added to this they will also inherit an eternal family of brothers and sisters in Christ who will rule and reign with him as a Kingdom of priests to God (Rev 1:5-10) and all the wild animals will be harmless when this new age begins. During this glorious new age, the Lord reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:14-16) will establish God's Kingdom of righteousness and justice, joy and peace over the earth. But this is not the end of God's awe-inspiring and breath-taking promise of eternal life, but rather only the beginning since at the end of this glorious age of Christ's millennial rule God Himself descends to earth and is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in its royal and majestic fullness.

**A godly man named John, exiled on the isle of Patmos had a glorious vision of this climatic and awesome event, he wrote:**

- I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more and I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people,

and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new" (Revelation 20:11) (Revelation 21:1-5).

This is the splendour, the glory the wonder and the climax of God's promise of eternal life and the inheritance of all who belong to the family of the Lord. Is there any other religion on earth that proclaims such a glorious eternal hope? (This author has not found one). The Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in sharp clearness proclaims the stunning splendour of Gods salvation, and that the royal path to this eternal inheritance is not dependent on our abilities, our talents or our lack of them since before the beginning of time God planned and purposed in His eternal wisdom and eternal mind that salvation to eternal life and everlasting glory would be available to all through faith. No-one has any advantage over another because it is not by our own self-effort or works that we are saved, but through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace. Can there be any better news than this? I think not, this is the reason the Gospel of Christ is called the Good News. How sad it is that some religious teachers today have turned the glorious eternal Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ into a Gospel of prosperity, money, success, wealth and worldly possessions to be attained here and now. The faith that should have been the least materialistic has in certain religious groups today become one of the most materialistic religions on earth (is it any wonder many turn to New-Age faiths and spiritual teachings) when the spiritual riches, blessings and promises that are in Christ are being traded for the delights, pleasures and instant gratification of this mortal world.

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**For further information concerning Christ's glorious return, see:**

- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment)
- In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*