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The Bible teaches us that salvation is the work of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit (1 Pet. 1:1-2). This booklet therefore is in three parts.

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Introduction, Please read 1 Peter 1:2.

In this verse Peter says those who are saved, “Have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood.” If we read the verse very carefully we notice that it is saying two very important things:

1. Peter in this verse is talking about salvation. He is talking about people who are saved and how they got saved.
2. In this verse, Peter mentions the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Look again at the verse and you will see each one is mentioned: “Who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood.”

What this means is that our salvation is the work of the triune God. It means that all three Persons of the Trinity were involved in our salvation. This is something that will surprise many people. We often think of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour but we do not think of salvation as being the work of God the Father and we rarely think of salvation as being the work of the Holy Spirit. For most Christians, God the Father is in heaven and has very little to do with our salvation and God the Holy Spirit came to give gifts and to enable people to have exciting worship in church, but they do not understand that His main work was salvation.

Now when we study the Bible, we find that each person of the Trinity played a certain role in our salvation. In other words we find that there were certain things that God the Father did for our salvation, there were certain things that God the Son did for our salvation, and there are certain things that God the Holy Spirit does for our salvation. All three are fully involved in our salvation and each one does certain things. This tells us that our salvation was a well planned event. It is something that the three persons of the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit planned out carefully before time began. In this booklet, we are going to look at the role that each person in the Trinity plays in our salvation. We can summarise it like this:

1. God the Father planned our salvation.
2. God the Son carried out the Father's plan of salvation.
3. God the Holy Spirit applies our salvation to us.

This booklet, therefore, is divided into three parts. We will look first at the work of the Father, and then the work of the Son and then the work of the Holy Spirit in our salvation.

Part One, The Work of God the Father in our Salvation.

Lesson One, John 6:37-40, God the Father plans our salvation.

In this passage the Lord Jesus says that He came to do the will of God the Father and it is quite clear from His words that the will of the Father is that Christ should save His people. Jesus says, “I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day” (Jn. 6:38). When we look at the teaching of the Bible, we find that there are three things in particular that God the Father did when He planned our salvation.

1. God the Father elected those who are going to get saved.

This is something that many people find difficult to accept. We like to think that we are in control of our salvation and that we choose to get saved. But actually the Bible does not teach this. The Bible teaches that God is the one who controls everything. This, of course, is obvious when we think about it. God is the all-powerful and the almighty one. We are mere human beings. Who is going to decide who gets to heaven, man or God? The answer is obvious: God is the one who decides everything and He is the one who controls everything, including who is going to get saved.

The Bible teaches us quite clearly that God has chosen those who are going to get saved. Paul writes to the Ephesians: “For he chose us in him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight” (Eph. 1:4). The point he makes in this verse is clear: God chose us before the foundation of the world and designed our salvation before He even made the earth so that we would be saved in Christ and would be holy and blameless through faith in Christ. Writing to the Thessalonians, Paul says, “We ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth” (2 Thess. 2:13).

The Bible makes it very clear that “Salvation is of the Lord” (Jonah 2:9) meaning that it is God who plans it and it is God who works it all out.

2. God the Father gave the elect to God the Son.

When the Lord Jesus was here on earth, He spoke about those whom the Father has given to Him. He said:

“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who

sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day”
(John 6:37-39)

The people whom the Father has given to Christ are the ones whom the Father has elected for salvation. Jesus says two things about the elect of God.

(i) He says that all whom the Father has given to Him will come to Him for salvation. It is not the case that some of those who have been elected for salvation will refuse to come to Christ and so will be sent to hell. He says that every one of those whom the Father has elected will definitely come to Him for salvation. The reason for this is found in Jn. 6:44, “No-one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.” Jesus is saying here that no one can come to Him for salvation. This is because we are all slaves of sin and are unable to come to God by ourselves to be saved. The only way a person can come to Christ is if the Father draws him. Before anyone comes to Christ there must be a work of God in his heart. Without that work of God going on inside him first, he will never come to Christ.

(ii) He says that His purpose in coming to earth was to save the people whom God the Father had given to Him. He says, “I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me.”

We see in these verses very clearly, then, that the Father first chose those who are going to get saved, and then He gave the elect to the Son to save them. We also see in these verses that the Lord Jesus Christ came to save the elect whom the Father has given to Him. He came to make sure that none of the elect should be lost but that everyone of them should be saved.

3. God the Father sent the Lord Jesus Christ to earth to save His people from their sin.

We see in this passage that the Lord Jesus tells us why the Father sent Him: “I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me.” The Lord Jesus came to earth because He was sent by God the Father on a mission. The mission was that He should save all those whom the Father had chosen for salvation before the foundation of the world. He came to live a life of perfect obedience on their behalf and He came to die for them. This is why Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep” (Jn. 10:14-15).

Lesson Two, 1 Pet. 2:9-10, God the Father calls us to Himself.

In these verses, Peter says, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” There are three things that Peter is saying in these verses.

1. Our condition before we were saved.

Peter uses three phrases to describe the condition of those who are not saved.

- (i) They are in darkness.
- (ii) They are not the people of God.
- (iii) They have not received mercy.

When we examine these three phrases we see how serious is the condition of the unsaved. They are without Christ who is the light of the world, they are not the beloved children of God and they have not received mercy from God, which means they have not received the forgiveness of their sins. They are in sin and are on their way to hell. This was the condition of all who are now saved and it is still the condition of those who are not saved.

2. Those who are saved are called out of this condition.

Peter says we were, “Called out of darkness into his wonderful light.” When we call someone it means we speak to him and ask him to come to us. Perhaps a mother in the home wants her child who is playing outside to come to her. So she looks out of the window and calls to the child, “Come here!” This is what the word call means. The Bible tells us that God the Father calls us from the kingdom of darkness into His kingdom.

There are four things about the call that we need to notice:

- (i) It is the sovereign work of God, not the work of man. Peter does not say, “You came out of the darkness and made your own way into the light.” He says we were called out of darkness. It is God who does the work of calling us out of sin and darkness. If God did not call us we could not come out of darkness, we would remain in our sin. God must call first before a person can get saved. The call is a sovereign work of God, which means that God decides who to call, when and how. The preacher cannot tell God who to call. He cannot command God to do anything. He can only prepare a sermon that is a faithful exposition of the word of God and then preach it clearly and simply. He cannot do any more than that. It is then the work of God to take the preaching of the word and use it to call someone out of darkness into His wonderful light.

- (ii) The agent whom God the Father uses to call sinners to Himself is the Holy Spirit. This is seen clearly in Acts 13:1-3 when the Holy Spirit spoke to the church at Antioch and asked them to set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work that He had for them. The Holy Spirit then took the two missionaries into an area called Galatia and used them to win souls into the kingdom of God. The work of calling sinners to repentance is the work of God and He does this work through the Holy Spirit.

- (iii) God uses the word when He calls a sinner out of darkness. This truth is taught very clearly, particularly in the book of Acts. On the Day of Pentecost when a large crowd gathered, Peter did not preach his own ideas, he preached what the Scriptures said and quoted from the Bible to show that this was the word of God he was preaching. When Stephen was called to defend himself, he did not do so with his own ideas, he preached the Scriptures to the Jewish leaders (Acts ch. 7). During his first missionary journey when Paul was invited to preach in a synagogue, once again he preached the Scriptures (Acts 13:16-47). The result of Paul's ministry was that, “The word of the Lord spread through the whole region” (Acts 13:49). Notice it does not say, “Paul's thoughts and ideas spread through the whole region,” but, “The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.”

The word of God is always central whenever someone is saved. Some people are called by the Holy Spirit when they are reading a Bible or some other Christian literature in their home. As they read the Bible or a tract, the Holy Spirit works in their heart so that they understand what they are reading. Other people are called by the Holy Spirit as they are listening to a sermon from God's word. As they sit in a church and listen to the preacher, the Holy Spirit works in their heart and so they come to Christ and get saved in Him.

- (iv) The call of God through the Holy Spirit is effective: it brings a sinner out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of God. Sometimes, when a mother calls her child to come to her, the child hears but does not come. He is playing with his friends and does not want to come, so he pretends that he has not heard, or just ignores his mother. But the call of the Holy Spirit is not like that. When the Holy Spirit calls someone, it is a work that He does inside that person's heart, so that the person is enabled to come. He cannot resist, he will come.

3. We are called into the kingdom of God.

Peter uses a number of phrases to describe the people of God: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light....you are the people of God; you have received mercy.” Each of these wonderful phrases tell us what great privileges we enjoy as the saved people of God.

- (i) We are a chosen people. God chose us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless in Christ. Our salvation was planned in eternity.

(ii) We are a royal priesthood. In the Old Testament, one particular tribe was set aside and called to be priests. This meant that they had the task of representing the people before God. They were the ones who offered the sacrifices that the people brought into the temple. But in the New Testament we do not have priests. There are churches today who still claim to have priests but they have gone away from the New Testament when they say this. In the New Testament all believers are priests, which means all believers are equal in the sight of God and all have equal access to Him.

(iii) We are a holy people belonging to God. In this verse the word “holy” means a people who have been set aside for the special use of God. We notice once again that it is not just some few very special people who are “special” and “spiritual” in the sight of God who have been set aside for the special use of God. All who are saved are holy people who belong to God. They have all been called out of darkness into God's wonderful light so that they may declare the praises of Him who has saved them. The person who is saved, therefore, has the duty to declare the praises of God wherever God has placed him. If he works in a government office then he should ensure that he behaves and works in such a way that he is bringing praises to God. This is a duty that has been placed upon all saved people. Jesus said, “You are the light of the world. Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

Part Two: The Work of the Lord Jesus Christ in our Salvation.

In this second part, we are going to look at what the Lord Jesus did in order to save us. We will look at His work under four headings:

- I. The Life of Christ.
- II. The Death of Christ.
- III. The Resurrection of Christ.
- IV. The Ascension of Christ.

I. The Life of Christ.

The Bible tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ was born of a virgin and that He lived here on earth for about 30 years. Many of the details of His life are found in the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. What we need to understand clearly is that the life that He lived here on earth was essential for our salvation. Most people think that it is by His death on the cross that Christ saves us. That, of course, is true. However, we need to understand that if the Lord Jesus did not first live a life here on earth then we would not be saved. His death on the cross is only a part of his work of salvation. The Lord Jesus saves us by His life, His death, His resurrection, His ascension to heaven and His coming again. All of these events are for our salvation.

Lesson Three, Romans 5:19, Christ is our righteousness.

In this text, Paul says that the sin of Adam made the whole human race sinful, and the obedience of Christ makes His people righteous. We will examine this matter in some detail.

1. The demand of God.

God says to us, “Be holy, because I am holy” (Lev. 11:44), and the Lord Jesus said, “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). To be holy means to live a life that is completely pure and sinless, a life where we obey the whole law of God every minute of our lives from birth until death. The Bible makes it clear that if a person is not pure and holy then he cannot enter heaven. This is a matter on which a lot of people are confused. They think that entering heaven is like entering a secondary school after KCPE. We all know that in order to enter a good secondary school a child does not need perfect marks in his KCPE. He does not need 100% in every subject in order to pass KCPE. The examiners who mark the KCPE look at the paper to see if the student has tried hard and has made a good effort at answering the questions. If they are satisfied that he has tried his hardest and has made a good effort at answering all the questions, then they will pass him and he will enter secondary school.

In the same way, a lot of people think that as long as we try hard and do our best to keep the Law of God then God will acknowledge our efforts and will allow us to enter heaven. They think to themselves, “We don't need to be perfect, because, after all, there is no one perfect. So God is not saying to us, 'Be completely perfect and completely sinless,' He is saying, 'Do your best to live a good, decent, religious life and you will enter heaven.’” This is how a lot of people think about entering heaven. But this thinking is wrong. Jesus did not say, “Try your hardest,” He said, “Be perfect.” He did not say, “Make sure you are not as bad as other people,” He said, “Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

In other words, the Lord Jesus says to us that we are not to compare ourselves with other people, we are to compare ourselves with God Himself. We are not to look at the lives of other people to see if we are better than them, we are to “Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.” A person may be more religious and live a better life than all his friends and family and all other members of his church. But that will not get him into heaven. It is not good enough that he is better than others, he has to be as perfect as God and as holy as God if he is to enter heaven. If he is not as perfect as God is then he will be sent away into hell for eternity because God will not allow anyone who is not perfect and sinless to enter heaven. In the book of Psalms, we read these verses:

*“You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell.
The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong.
You destroy those who tell lies; bloodthirsty and deceitful men the Lord abhors”
(Psalm 5:4-6).*

*“Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill?
He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous,
who speaks truth from the heart and has no slander on his tongue,
who does his neighbour no wrong and casts no slur on his fellow-man” (Psalm 15:1-3).*

Look very carefully at what the Bible is saying here. It is not saying that those who have tried hard and have done quite well will enter heaven. It says about God, “You hate all who do wrong.” It says the the person “whose walk is blameless” is the one who will enter heaven. Anyone who does even the smallest wrong thing is unfit to enter heaven. In fact the Bible tells us that God is so pure that He cannot even look at sin (Habakkuk 1:13).

2. The problem of sin.

We can see straight away that there is a great problem here. If we need to be completely pure and perfect and sinless, how are we ever going to enter heaven? We know that no matter how hard we try to keep the Law of God we fail millions of times each day. We know that there is not a single person here on earth who is perfect. Even the person who claims to be a great servant of God and a great saint is not perfect. The Bible says, “There is no-one righteous, not even one” (Rom. 3:20). How, then, can we ever hope to enter

heaven?

3. The righteousness of Christ.

The answer is that Christ is our righteousness. The righteousness which will enable us to enter heaven does not come from us, it comes from God. The Bible says, “But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe” (Rom 3:21-22).

Perhaps an illustration will help us to understand what the Bible is teaching here. Imagine that on the day you were born, God took an exercise book and wrote your name on the cover. Then, from that moment, every sin you have ever committed is recorded in that book. By the time you are in your twenties and thirties that book will have a record of perhaps millions of sins because we sin all the time, even when we are not aware of it. Now imagine that on the day the Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem, God did the same thing: He took an exercise book and wrote the name of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cover. After some 30 years, Jesus was crucified and died. What is written in His book? The answer, of course, is that there are no sins recorded there, since He never sinned: “He was tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin” (Heb. 4:15). He lived a life of perfect obedience to God. And so the first page of His book says, “This person has obeyed the Law of God completely and perfectly, He is completely righteous.” This is what is written in His book.

Now when we get saved, a great exchange takes place. God takes our record of sin and rebellion and puts it into Christ's exercise book. He then takes Christ's record of perfect obedience and puts it into our exercise book. And so Christ takes our sin and rebellion and is punished for it whereas we are given His righteousness. The Bible says, “Through the obedience of the one man, many will be made righteous (Rom. 5:19). The “one man” is, of course, Christ. It is through His obedience and not ours that many will be made righteous. The Bible also says, “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21). Look again carefully at this verse. Christ had no sin for He was perfect, but God put our record of sin onto Him so that He who knew no sin became sin for us. God then took His righteousness and gave it to us so that we became the righteousness of God in Him. And so when God the Father looks at us, He does not see our record of sin and disobedience, that has been taken from us and given to Christ. What He sees is Christ's perfect obedience to His Law which has been put into our record. This is how we are pronounced righteous by Him: Christ is our righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30). Without the perfect life of Christ here on earth we could never enter heaven; we enter heaven because He obeyed the Law of God perfectly and then gives to us His obedience.

II. The Death of Christ.

The Lord Jesus lived here on earth for some 30 years and then died on the cross of Calvary. Why? The answer is that God had sent Him to save His people from their sins and He had to die in order to save them. Without His death there would be no salvation for them. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary did two things in particular.

1. By His death on the cross, the Lord Jesus defeated Satan and bound him so that he should deceive the nations no longer.
2. By His death on the cross, the Lord Jesus dealt with the sin of His people.

Lesson Four, Matt. 12:29, Christ defeated and bound Satan by His death on the cross.

As we have seen in previous lessons, God elected a very large number of people whom He wanted to be saved, and then He sent the Lord Jesus into the world to save them. Now we need to understand that the first thing the Lord Jesus had to do in saving the elect was to defeat and bind Satan. This is because Satan was holding the nations of the world under his power. He first had to be defeated and dethroned. This is the point that this verse in Matt. 12:29 is teaching us. In this verse, Jesus says, “How can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house.”

The parable is about a house which is full of very expensive things. A strong man is guarding the house. One day, a man who is stronger comes and fights with the man who is guarding the house. The stronger man overcomes the guard and ties him up. He then goes into the house and starts taking the things in the house. There are three things we see in this parable in v. 29.

1. A strong man is guarding a house.

The Bible tells us that before the coming of Christ God allowed Satan to have authority over the nations of the world. God chose the nation of Israel to be His people, but He did not reveal Himself to the other nations, He allowed Satan to keep them in darkness. This is why Paul said, “In the past, He let all nations go their own way” (Acts 14:16). So in this parable, the house with the treasures in it represents the nations of the world and the strong man guarding the house represents Satan.

2. A stronger man comes and defeats the strong guard and ties him up.

The Bible tells us that the Lord Jesus by His death on the cross of Calvary defeated Satan

and bound him:

“Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death” (Heb. 2:13-14).

This is why the book of Revelation says,

“And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time” (Rev. 20:1-3).

This passage refers to the death of Christ on the cross. It tells us that through His victorious death on the cross He defeated Satan and bound him, “to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore.” The passage is not saying that Satan is now completely inactive. We know that he tempts us and seeks to lead us away from God and into sin. But the passage in Revelation says that Satan was bound to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore. This means that Christ has bound Satan so that he can no longer keep the people of the world in darkness.

3. The stronger man goes into the house and takes its treasures.

At the cross, the Lord Jesus defeated Satan and bound Him, and after His resurrection, Jesus said to His disciples, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:18-19). The Lord Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth. Satan had at one time been given the right to keep the nations of the world in darkness, but he is now defeated and bound. This is why Christ sends His disciples out into the world: it is to expand His kingdom. We must never think of a country like Somalia, for example, and say, “They will never get saved.” When the time is right, the Holy Spirit will work in the people of that nation and bring them into the kingdom of God.

This, then, is the first reason why Christ died. It was to defeat Satan and bind him so that he could deceive the nations no longer. The work of bringing the people of the world out of their darkness began when Christ rose from the dead and continues today because Satan can no longer hold them in darkness and deception.

Lesson Five, 1 Pet. 3:18, The Death of Christ reconciled the people of God with God Himself.

In this verse of 1 Peter 3:18 Peter says, “Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God.” In this text, Peter tells us the purpose of Christ's death: it was to bring us to God. In other words, there is a separation between God and man. They are not in fellowship with one another, they are not together. It is only the death of Christ that can bring them together. When we examine the Bible, we see that on the cross of Calvary, Christ did certain things in order to bring about this reconciliation.

1. Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins.

The Law of God is like the law of Kenya: when a person breaks the law then he has to pay a penalty. He will be taken to court, found guilty and then will either have to pay a fine or serve a prison sentence – he has to pay a penalty for his crime. In the same way the Law of God declares that if a person breaks the law then he has to pay a penalty. The penalty for sin is death: “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 3:23). When the Bible speaks about death in this verse, it does not mean physical death of the body but eternal separation from God. The Lord Jesus on the cross of Calvary paid the penalty for the sins of His people. When He hung on the cross the sins of His people were laid upon Him and He paid the penalty for them so as to remove their guilt:

*“But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities;
The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.
We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:5-6).*

This is the reason why on the cross the Lord Jesus was separated from His Father and cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46).

2. Christ died to cleanse us from our sins.

Not only do our sins make us guilty before God, they also make us unclean in the sight of God. Sin is an unclean thing and when we fall into sin, we are like a child playing on the road during the rainy season, we become unclean. The Bible tells us that there is only one thing that can cleanse us from our sins and that is the blood of Jesus Christ: “The blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1:7). Cleansing from the filth of sin is not found in the waters of baptism or in animal blood. The person who wants to be cleaned must pray to Christ alone for cleansing and he will be cleansed from his sin by His blood.

3. Christ died to redeem us from slavery to sin.

The Bible tells us that when we are born into this world, we are slaves of sin. This is something that a lot of unsaved people find difficult to believe. Most people in the world

believe that they are free to do whatever they want to do and would be really shocked if they were told, “You are a slave.” And yet this is true. Paul writing to the Christians in Rome says, “But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted; when you were slaves of sin, you were free from the control of righteousness” (Rom. 6:17; 20). The Bible's teaching is quite clear: the person who is not saved is a slave of sin. He may not realise it and he may not accept this teaching when he hears it but it is true because it is found in the word of God. In fact many people in the world know that they have habits which they do not like but they are unable to set themselves free from these habits.

When the Lord Jesus died on the cross of Calvary, He shed His blood which is the ransom to release His people from slavery to sin: “In Him we have redemption through His blood” (Eph. 1:7). This is why Jesus said, “The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28). A ransom is the price that is paid for the release of a slave and the blood of Jesus was the ransom that released His people from their slavery: they are bought out of slavery by the payment of His blood. This is why Paul says, “You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body” (1 Cor. 6:19-20). When we are saved, we become the property of Christ because He has bought us out of slavery and made us His own people. We cannot, therefore, live our lives as we want; we must live our lives according to His commands.

4. Christ died to remove the anger of God that was due upon His people.

God is pure and sin is an offence to Him, it provokes in Him a righteous and holy anger. We see something of this anger in the Lord Jesus when He saw the traders in the temple (Jn. 2:12-16), or when He saw the hypocrisy of the religious leaders of His day (Matt. ch. 23). God is angry with sinners everyday: “God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath everyday; The wicked and those who love violence His soul hates. On the wicked He will rain fiery coals and burning sulphur; a scorching wind will be their lot” (Ps. 7:11; 11:5-6).

When the Lord Jesus died on the cross of Calvary, He took the sins of His people upon Himself and so bore in His body the anger of God for His people. The anger of God was poured out on Him as He hung on the cross. The Bible calls this “propitiation” and says that Christ is the one, “whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood” (Rom. 3:25).

This, then, is why Christ died for the sins of His people. He died to pay the penalty for their sins, He died to cleanse His people from their sins, He died to redeem His people from slavery to sin and He died to remove the just anger of God that was due upon His people.

III. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Lesson Six, 1 Cor. 15:17-19, The Resurrection of Christ for the salvation of His people.

In this passage, the apostle Paul writes about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost."

1. If Christ did not rise from the dead then there is no forgiveness of sins for His people.

Many people are surprised when they read v. 17 where Paul says, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins." We usually think that because of the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross of Calvary we have forgiveness of sins and that the resurrection is nothing to do with the forgiveness of our sins or the salvation of our souls. But this is not true. Paul says, "If Christ has not been raised, you are still in your sins." In other words, Paul is saying that if Christ did not rise from the dead, we would have no forgiveness of our sins and no salvation for our souls. It is in the resurrection of Christ that our forgiveness is possible.

2. Christ the High Priest of His people.

Why is it that if Christ did not rise from the dead then we have no forgiveness for our sins? In order to understand this, we need to think about the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament (Leviticus ch. 16) and about Heb. 9:11-28. You will find it useful before proceeding with this study to read these two passages in the Bible.

On the Day of Atonement (Leviticus ch. 16), the High Priest entered into the presence of God with the blood of an animal to seek forgiveness for the people of God. He was allowed to come into the presence of God just once a year and there were very strict regulations as to how he was to come: there were special clothes he had to wear and the animal that was sacrificed had to be perfect and spotless. If the priest made any mistake at all when he came into the presence of God, he would be killed. If the animal whose blood he came to offer was not perfect or there was something wrong with the clothes he wore then he would not come back alive from the presence of God. Therefore, if the priest did come back alive from the presence of God after making his offering on behalf of the people, then the people knew that God had accepted the sacrifice and that their sins were forgiven. If he did not come back again alive, then they knew that there was some problem with the offering, it was not accepted and that they were still in their sins.

Now in Heb. 9:11-28, we are told that the Lord Jesus Christ, as our High Priest, also

entered the presence of God with an offering of blood. The place that He entered was not a man-made tent in the desert, and the blood He offered was not the blood of an animal. Rather, as the writer to the Hebrews says,

"When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:11-12).

So the Lord Jesus did exactly what the priest in the Old Testament did, He entered the presence of God with an offering of blood. The big difference is that He entered the real presence of God and the blood He offered was His own blood.

3. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is proof that our sins have been forgiven.

Now, as we have seen, in the Old Testament, when the High Priest came out again alive, it was proof that the offering he made to God had been accepted and God had therefore forgiven the people their sins. If he did not come out again alive then the offering had not been accepted and the people were still in their sins. In the same way, the fact that the Lord Jesus was resurrected is proof that the offering He made to God on our behalf was accepted by God: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:17).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is therefore important for our salvation.

IV. The Ascension of Jesus Christ.

Lesson Seven, Acts 1:9-11, The Ascension of Jesus Christ.

In this passage, we read about the ascension of Christ. The Lord Jesus, after His resurrection, gave teaching about the kingdom of God and then was taken up to heaven. Why did the Lord Jesus ascend to heaven? There are two main reasons in the New Testament.

1. The Lord Jesus ascended to heaven in order to send the Holy Spirit.

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples, “It is good for you that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you” (Jn. 16:7). The Counsellor in this verse is the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus told His disciples that unless He returned to heaven the Holy Spirit would not come. The reason for this is that our salvation was carefully planned in heaven before the creation of the world. It is not that the Holy Spirit is stubborn and will not come. It is because all these things have been carefully arranged beforehand. God the Father chose those whom He is going to save before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). He then gave the elect to the Son, so the Son came to earth to secure their redemption by His death. The Son then sent the Holy Spirit to continue the work of salvation by convicting and calling into the kingdom those whom the Father has chosen and for whom the Son has died.

2. The Lord Jesus ascended to heaven to begin His High Priestly work.

The work of the Lord Jesus Christ does not finish with His ascension into heaven. We who are saved are “in Christ,” we are His people united to Him. He therefore continues His work of salvation as our great High Priest. His work as our great High Priest involves two things in particular:

(i) He prays for us. It is a thing of great comfort for us to know that everyday the Lord Jesus Christ prays for all His people. He prays particularly for our spiritual well-being, that we would grow in our Christian lives and make progress in our holiness so that we become more and more like Him each day. The great concern of Christ for His people is their holiness. The Lord Jesus is concerned about our purity more than anything else, He is concerned that we should be perfect and pure and holy in every way: in deed, speech and thought. And so He prays for us.

(ii) He makes our prayers and our service acceptable to God. The whole Christian life is lived by faith rather than by works. We cannot ever say that God will accept our prayers and our service because we have been such good people. It is only by faith that our prayers are acceptable to God because it is Christ our High Priest who makes them acceptable to Him.

Part Three, The work of the Holy Spirit in our salvation

In this course so far we have looked at the work of the Father and the work of the Son. We are now going to look at the work of the Holy Spirit in our salvation. To many Christians it is something of a surprise to learn that the Holy Spirit is involved in our salvation. People often think that the Holy Spirit came only to give gifts and to enable a preacher to preach in a lively and exciting way. This, however, is not true. When we read the New Testament, however, it becomes very clear that the Holy Spirit came for one purpose: the salvation of God's people. Everything else that He does like giving gifts to God's people are all designed to further this one central aim, the eternal salvation of God's people. This, then, is the work the Holy Spirit does as part of His saving work.

There are three things primarily that the Holy Spirit does in bringing us to Christ for salvation and in the next three lessons we will look at each of these.

1. The Holy Spirit makes us born again (lesson eight).
2. The Holy Spirit brings us to Christ (lesson nine).
3. The Holy Spirit sanctifies and perfects the people of God (lesson ten).

Lesson Eight, John 3:1-8, The Holy Spirit makes us born again.

In this passage in John's gospel the Lord Jesus gives teaching about being born again. There are four very important things He teaches here.

1. Unless a person is born again he cannot enter heaven.

Jesus says to Nicodemus, “I tell you the truth, no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again” (Jn. 3:3). There are many people in our country today who say that they are Christians but they are not saved or born again. They will say something like this: “I was born in a Christian home and I was baptised as a baby. I go to church regularly. I am not saved and I am not born again but I am a Christian. I live a good life and I believe in God, so I know I will enter heaven when I die.” This is something that many people in our country believe. But they are wrong. A person is not a Christian because he is born in a Christian home and because he was baptised as a baby, he becomes a Christian when he is born again. Until he is born again, he is not a Christian, and unless he is born again he will not enter heaven. Only those who are born again will enter heaven.

2. The reason we must be born again is because we are of the flesh.

Jesus said, “Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit” (Jn. 3:5). When

God created Adam, He first created Adam's body from the dust of the ground and then He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen. 2:7). This means that Adam had need for both material things and spiritual things. He was given a body and a soul and his life consisted in both these things. He could not live life on earth without being concerned about the needs of his body. No one can spend all his time in prayer and reading the Bible and go for days without eating. Similarly, Adam could not be concerned about material things alone and pay no attention to spiritual things. Jesus said, "Man does not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Adam was created with a body and a soul and he was required to live a material life and a spiritual life.

When Adam fell into sin, however, one of the consequences was that he was no longer concerned about spiritual things, he was concerned only for material things. This is what sin has done to man. It has made him concentrate only on material things and to ignore spiritual things. This is how we are born into this world. We are concerned only with life here on earth, with food and clothes and housing and so on. The people of the world are totally taken up with the things of the world. Their great ambition in life is to accumulate the things of this world. They want the best education so that they can get the best job to earn lots of money so that they can have the things of this world, a nice house, a big car, nice clothes, etc. This is how the people of this world are, they are born of the flesh and so they are worldly. They are dead to the things of God. The kingdom of God and its righteousness are of no interest to them.

This is how we are when we are born and this is how we remain, alive to the things of this world and dead to the things of God. And this is the reason why we need to be born again. Until we are born again, we will care only for the things of this world and we will pursue only the things of this world because we are alive to the world and dead to the things of God: flesh gives birth to flesh. But when we are born again, we are made spiritually alive. We are now alive to the things of God and so the things of God became a matter of priority to us. Paul says, "Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live according to the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires" (Rom. 8:5).

We can see now why we must be born again. If we are not spiritually minded then we will never be fit for heaven. In fact we will not be able to even see the kingdom of God. This is why Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" (Jn. 3:4). If our lives are taken up totally with the things of this world then we will never be fit for the kingdom of God because the kingdom of God is not about the things of this world: "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). We need to be born again so that we are alive to the things of God and we begin to pursue the things of God as our first priority. Jesus said, "Seek first his kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matt. 6:33).

3. Only the Holy Spirit can make a person born again.

Jesus said, "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit" (Jn. 3:8). Jesus uses the example of wind to show that being born again is beyond the control of man. The wind is not under that control of any man. A man cannot command the wind to blow in a certain direction at a certain speed. He can do nothing at all to control the wind. "So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." It is the Holy Spirit who decides who is to be born again and when and how. No one can control His activities. When a person is born again by the Holy Spirit, three things happen to him.

(i) He begins to realise that he is a sinner before God. He begins to realise that he has broken the holy law of God and is now a guilty sinner before God. He realises that his entire life and behaviour is an offence to God and God hates the way he lives and behaves. Conviction of sin is the first thing that happens when a person is born again.

(ii) He begins to realise that his situation is hopeless and helpless. He begins to realise that he is a sinner who is going to hell and there is nothing he can do about it. He knows that he cannot save himself and that there is nothing he can do in his own strength to get him out of his difficulty. He knows that all his good works and his religious works are no good, they will never please God.

(iii) He realises that the only one who can save him is Christ. As he reads the Scriptures and listens to preaching from the Scriptures, he realises that Christ is the only Saviour who has been appointed by God and that only Christ can do him any good. He knows he cannot do anything to save himself and that if he is to be saved he must come to Christ and seek Him for salvation.

From this we can see that there is usually a period of time before a person is born again when God is at work in his heart. The Holy Spirit gives that person knowledge and understanding over a period of time before the person is actually born again.

4. The person who is born again is now a new creation in Christ.

The Lord Jesus uses the language of birth when He speaks about salvation. It is generally accepted that a person's life begins at birth in the sense that he begins to live his life from the moment of his birth. In the same way, the person who is born again begins a new life. He is a new person, a new creation. This is why Paul says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17). The person who is born again has the Holy Spirit living in him. The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost to make the people of God perfect and Christ-like so that they are ready for the Lord when He returns for His bride. When a person is born again, the Holy Spirit

comes to live in him and begins to work inside that person to make him perfect. Everyone who is born again has the Holy Spirit living in him, and the Spirit works in him both to will and to act according to His good purpose (Phil. 2:13). This means the Holy Spirit renews our minds so that we no longer think as we used to. He renews our affections so that we no longer desire the things we used to. Once our thinking and our affections are changed, our actions will be changed so that we no longer live as we used to, but now begin to live as the people of God.

Lesson Nine, 1 Thess. 1:2-10, The Holy Spirit brings us to Christ.

Paul, Barnabas and Timothy went to the city of Thessalonica to preach the gospel to the people there. The people of that city had never heard the gospel before and they worshipped idols. But, when the three men preached the gospel in the city, the Holy Spirit began to work in the hearts of the people in that city. The result of the work of the Holy Spirit was that these people were saved. This is why Paul says to them in this passage, “We know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction” (1 Thess. 1:4-6).

The Lord Jesus Christ sends us out to preach the gospel, but we need the help and power of the Holy Spirit if our preaching is going to bring salvation to those who hear us. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring a person to Christ, a preacher cannot do it. It is the Holy Spirit who makes a person born again, and it is He who brings that person to Christ.

Once a person is born again, he is able to respond to the gospel. The story of Lazarus in John chapter 11 is the best illustration of this. Lazarus had died and was buried in a cave. The Lord Jesus stood at the mouth of the cave and called to Lazarus to come to Him. The only way Lazarus could obey that command was to be made alive first. If a person is not first made alive then he can never come because men who are dead cannot hear anything and cannot obey any command. In the same way, we are dead in trespasses and sins. If we are to obey the voice of God when He calls us to Himself then we must first be made alive. Until we are made alive we cannot come to God. And so the Holy Spirit makes us born again by which we mean that He makes us spiritually alive. Once we are spiritually alive, we can respond to the call of God and come to Him.

This does not mean, however, that God’s work in our salvation is now finished and that we now take over and do everything in our own strength. Salvation, as we have seen, is the work of God from beginning to end. Even after we have been made alive, God is still at work in us to save us. There are two things that the Holy Spirit does when He brings us to Christ.

1. The Holy Spirit gives us repentance.

To repent means to turn away from sin and keep on turning away from sin. This is what Christ commands us to do. He said, “The time has come, the kingdom is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel” (Mark. 1:15). The Bible teaches us that repentance is a work that God does in our hearts. It says about Christ, “God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel” (Acts 5:31). Later in the book of Acts we read, “God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18).

These verses show us repentance is something God gives to us, and if He did not give to us, we left by ourselves, would never repent. We are born in sin and love our sin, we are not willing to hate our sin and to give it up. It is only when God works in our hearts that we see our sin as a hateful and destructive thing. Without the work of God we will continue to love our sin and to live lives of sin. There is a passage in the Bible which explains this clearly. It says,

“The Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will” (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

Notice carefully what this passage is saying. It is saying that “God may perhaps grant them repentance” meaning repentance is a work of God, it is God who grants it. Then it says, “Leading to a knowledge of the truth that they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil.” This means that when a person is unsaved, he is living a life of sin but he does not realise what he is doing. He does not have the knowledge in him to know that his life is displeasing to God and that he is going to hell for eternity. Then God leads him to a knowledge of the truth and the person comes to his senses and escapes from that form of life. This is repentance. It is both the work of God and the work of man. God gives us power to repent, and we ourselves must turn from our sins and keep on turning.

Imagine that a person is sitting in a dark room because there is no lamp. He puts his hand out to feel what is near him and finds that there is a rope just next to him. He takes the rope into his hands and begins to play with it. After a little while, someone comes into the room with a lamp and the man sees that what he is holding is not a rope but a dangerous snake. He quickly throws the snake away and begins to kill it because he knows the snake is dangerous and can kill him. This is how the unsaved person is. He is in darkness and is playing with sin. He does not realise how dangerous sin is because he has no light. Then God brings light into his mind and heart so that he realises that what he is playing with is a very dangerous thing. He immediately leaves that thing and begins to put it to death. This is repentance. It means we leave our sin and strive to put it to death. We can only do this when the Holy Spirit gives us light and knowledge and the ability to hate our sin and to put it to death. Until He brings light to us we will continue to play with sin until it takes us to eternal judgement.

2. The Holy Spirit gives us faith.

Just as repentance is a gift from God, so faith is a gift from God. The Bible says, “It is by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of your own, it is the gift of God so that no-one may boast” (Eph. 2:8). To have faith in Christ means to trust Him alone and totally for our salvation. It means that we say to Christ, “I am a hopeless and helpless

sinner. I have no hope of entering heaven beside you. If you do not save me then I am lost for eternity.” This faith can only come from the Holy Spirit Himself. It is not something that we are able to do by ourselves. If the Holy Spirit does not give a person faith in Christ then that person’s faith will be in himself and in his works.

This is how we are as human beings. We are proud and we think that by our own works and religious deeds we will be able to satisfy God and enter heaven. Most people in our country think that if they try their best to please God by their works and by their religious deeds then God will accept them and allow them to enter heaven. But the Bible says that only Christ can save us and we must put all our trust in Him alone.

The story of the apostle Paul (Phil. 3:1-11) is the best example of this. Before he was saved, Paul trusted in his good works and in his religious deeds: “If anyone thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless” (Phil. 3:4-6). Paul was sure he would enter heaven when he died and his confidence was based on his works and religion. But then he realised that these things could never save him: “But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ” (Phil. 3:7). He realised that his good works and religious deeds could never save him, and that if he wanted to be saved he must come to Christ. And so he writes, “What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith” (Phil. 3:8-9).

This is the saving faith that the Holy Spirit gives to all whom He brings to Christ, it is the gift of God and it is the duty of each person here on earth. The person who is getting saved realises that his own works will benefit him nothing and so puts no faith in his works. Instead he turns to Christ and puts his faith in Christ alone for his salvation.

These, then are the two things the Holy Spirit does when He brings a person to Christ: he grants that person repentance so that the person turns away from his sin, and He grants that person faith so that he turns to Christ and trusts Him alone for his salvation. Once a person does this then he is saved from all his sins eternally.

Lesson Ten, Eph. 5:25-27, The Holy Spirit sanctifies and perfects the people of God.

In this passage in the Bible Paul speaks about how husbands should love their wives and tells them that Christ is their great example. The Lord Jesus loves His church and He shows His love for His church by giving Himself up for her and also by cleansing and perfecting her so that she will be perfect when He comes back for her. This is the reason why the Lord Jesus sent the Holy Spirit when He ascended to heaven. There are two important lessons we learn about this.

1. The Holy Spirit is at work in all who are saved to sanctify them.

The apostle Peter writes about “the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit” (1 Pet. 1:2). The work of sanctification is a work in which the Holy Spirit works in us to make us perfectly like Jesus Christ. This work involves two things.

(i) The Holy Spirit continues to remove indwelling sin from within us. There is a form of teaching in our country today which is very popular which says that the moment a person gets saved he becomes sinless. There are people who say that to be saved means to be perfect and sinless. They say that if a person who claims to be saved is found in sin then it means he has lost his salvation. This is a very common form of teaching in our country today and it is completely wrong. Nowhere does the Bible tell us that we become perfect and sinless the moment we get saved. On the contrary, it is clear when we read the New Testament letters that believers still have sin dwelling in them even after they are saved, forgiven and adopted into the family of God.

For example, when we read 1 Corinthians, we find that these people were saved because Paul says, “To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy” (1 Cor. 1:2). Yet there were members of this church who were divided among themselves (1 Cor. 1:10-12); there was a member who was sleeping with his father’s wife and the church tolerated him (1 Cor. 5:1); there was a member who was taking another member to court (1 Cor. 6:1-11); there were some members who were visiting prostitutes (1 Cor. 6:12-20) and there were members who came to the Lord’s Table drunk (1 Cor. 11:21).

We know from our own experience that we do not become perfect and sinless when we get saved. We may be very good at hiding our sins from others but we know we are sinful even after we are saved. This is why Paul says, “For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want to do” (Gal. 5:17).

The work of the Holy Spirit in us as saved people is to remove this sin that still remains. The Holy Spirit uses the word of God to do this. He works in our hearts and minds to remove sinful desires and gives us godly desires: “It is God who works in you to will and

to act according to his good purpose” (Phil. 2:13). This does not mean that we make no effort to live a godly life. The work of sanctification is a partnership: the Spirit bears fruit in us and we are to “put to death the misdeeds of the body” (Rom. 8:13). It is a work that will go on for the rest of our lives here on earth. This is why God has given to us His armour. It is so that we may stand and fight against sin and overcome it.

(ii) The Holy Spirit changes us into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The work of sanctification is both negative and positive. On the negative side sin is being removed from us. On the positive side, our whole character is being changed so that we are being made more and more like Christ Himself. He is not only our example, He is also our pattern and goal. We will one day be exactly like Him, bearing all the marks of His character. We will be as loving and kind and gracious and merciful and considerate as He is. This is the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in us. He is changing us into the image of Christ.

The work of sanctification is a long and hard work. It is not something that happens quickly. We were born sinners and lived lives of sin before we were saved. We have many sinful habits and sinful desires in us. These are not easy to remove. This work of sanctification will go on for the rest of our lives until we stand before the Lord Jesus on His return.

2. The Holy Spirit will one day perfect us.

Usually when there is a war the final outcome is uncertain. Two nations fight each other, perhaps for many years, but no one is sure who will win. That is not the case in the believer’s war against sin. We know it is a long and hard battle and there are times we wonder if we will ever win. The devil is a strong enemy and the sin that still dwells in us seems equally strong. But the Bible assures us that if we are truly saved then we will overcome. This is something that God guarantees us. The Bible says that Christ will present the church to himself “as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” (Eph. 5:27). This is His promise to us. He has loved us and saved us. He has given to us His Holy Spirit who is at work in us and the Holy Spirit is at work to perfect us for the day the Lord Jesus comes back for us.

Remember that the Holy Spirit is God and His purposes cannot be defeated. Satan is a powerful enemy but he cannot defeat God the Holy Spirit. Our sins have a strong hold on us but they cannot resist the power of God the Holy Spirit. God is determined to perfect us and He will perfect us. No one can stop Him in His work. This is the great comfort and encouragement of all who are truly saved.