

# Faith, Works and the Reward

## A Discipleship Study

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### Part IV

## Understanding the Faith Required of Christians

**I Corinthians 2:5 that your faith should not be in the  
wisdom of men but in the power of God.**

As we come to Part IV in our study, we will begin looking more closely at what was introduced in Part I ó THE FUNDAMENTALS OF CHRISTIANITY. Here we will look at a more comprehensive explanation of Scriptural faith, especially with respect to the *full scope* of our salvation. In some instances we may need to *narrow* our concept of faith, and in other instances we may need to *broaden* our concept of faith; but in doing either, we would want to do it according to Scripture. We will remember that Scriptural faith must be based upon what God has said in His Word, so that that which Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church in the passage above would be where the foundation of our faith rests!

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### **Part IV — UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH REQUIRED OF CHRISTIANS**

#### **Lesson One: The Need of Salvation (Part 1 of 2)**

NOTES:

By now in our study it should be relatively clear that *there is more* to our salvation than simply believing that Jesus died for us as our Passover resulting in our spiritual birth. By now we should easily see that our spiritual birth is only the beginning of a journey towards our complete being ó spirit, soul and body ó reaching the full scope of God's intention for us, ultimately fulfilling our created purpose.

In this Part of our study, we are going to take a much closer look at the Scriptural technicalities concerning the full scope of salvation and see how faith plays into the overall picture. At this point, will you take a moment and write out a definition of Scriptural faith?

The most important effect faith should have on each of us is with respect to God's overall Will for us. We have already seen that God created man for the purpose of rulership; and along with understanding our created purpose, we would have to see that salvation was given to mankind by God for the *exact* same purpose. If God created man to rule, and sin brought about death, which thwarts man from being able to rule, and salvation is God's remedy for sin and death, then we would have to see that in the end the reason God provided salvation is so that man would be able to fulfill his created purpose. Understanding this paragraph will be paramount to our correct understanding of Scriptural faith with respect to the overall scope of salvation. So would you mind

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thinking this paragraph through, and writing out what you learned from it?

In order to more clearly understand that God's purpose in providing salvation is one and the same as his stated purpose for creating man, we would first have to understand what it means that *we have been created in God's image and likeness*. **Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us [personal, plural pronoun] make man in Our [personal, plural pronoun] image, according to Our [personal, plural pronoun] likeness..."** This passage, being given very early on in God's Word, clearly reveals that God exists in a plurality. Then in subsequent revelation of God about Himself, we know that He exists in *three parts* ó Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And while we may not be able to understand *exactly* what the Trinity looks like, we would have to believe that it is true, as it is so clearly stated in His Word.

It is easy to see then that man (having been made in God's image) is also three parts ó spirit and soul and body. One of the ways we can see this in the New Testament is to look at how Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to pray for the believers in **I Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your *spirit and soul and body* be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** The significance of Paul praying for all three parts of man (spirit *and* soul *and* body) becoming *entirely sanctified* will be brought to light as we work through the remaining lessons in this Part, but for now suffice it to say that man, who was made in God's image and likeness, is like God, three parts.

Then another facet of God's image and likeness can be seen in a description of God found in **Psalms 104:1 ...Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with splendor and majesty, 2 Covering Thyself with light as with a cloak...** Here we see God is covered in light (i.e., glory) and clothed in splendor and majesty. This description is often seen in the OT where the very description itself portends His rulership as well. One place where we can see that is in **I Chronicles 16:23 Sing to the LORD, all the earth; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. 24 Tell of His glory among the**

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nations... .... 27 **Splendor and majesty are before Him**, Strength and joy are in His place. 28... **Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength**. 29 **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name**; ...31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; And let them say among the nations, “**The LORD reigns**.” Please give a brief description of God’s image and likeness from what you have learned in these two passages.

God the Father is enthroned in the heavens, covered in glory and clothed in splendor and majesty as He executes His sovereign rule over all of creation. And Jesus sits at His Father’s right hand, Himself glorified, as He awaits His return to the earth when the Father will send Him back. This passage in I Chronicles is a description of the time when Jesus comes back to the earth in order to reign supreme over all the earth. How can we see this from the passage?

Nowí since man was created in God’s image and likeness for God’s stated purpose of rulership, it is evident that glory, splendor and majesty were to be his as well. The Psalmist wrote in **Psalm 8:4 What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? 5 Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, And dost crown him with glory and majesty! 6 Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet, 7 All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, 8 The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.** Speaking about man in this passage, how does the last half of v. 5 reflect what we have learned about God’s image and likeness?

Then how do vv. 6-8 reflect back on **Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and**

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over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth”?

We must also add into this mix of passages something from the Book of Hebrews that clearly shows that man is not yet in that position of rulership. In speaking of man, it says: **Hebrews 2:7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. 8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.**

And so, we do not presently see man glorified and clothed in splendor and majesty, fulfilling his created purpose, do we? So what happened? If God created man to rule over the earth and 6,000 years later man is not yet in this position, then were God’s plans and purposes for man somehow thwarted? We have seen this passage from Isaiah revealing that *all* of God’s plans and purposes will be established: **Isaiah 46:9 “Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’.** How would this passage relate to what God has declared about man?

So let’s go back to the Garden, 6,000 years ago to see what happened, because here is where our understanding of the full scope of salvation must begin. Look again at **Genesis 1:26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over...”** all created things on the earth. So as we have seen, not only does God’s image and likeness portend rulership; but here God specifically states *why* He is creating man in

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His image and likeness. Now, if we understand the WHY of creation, then we can understand the WHY of salvation. Would you write out a statement of how these two things must relate to each other?

Let's look at a few more details from the beginning in which God declared the end. It is quite exciting how this all fits together!

God formed the man from the dust of the earth and He breathed LIFE into the man! **Genesis 2:7 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.** From what did God create the man?

Then what did God do with him and what happened to him?

*God breathed His breath into the man and, at that moment, life entered the man! The man became a **living** being.* Man was very unique in this, as it is not stated that God created any other being in His own image and likeness. This is unique to man, and it is this that man became an *eternal* being. (A passage from the Book of Job says: **Job 32:8 But there is a spirit in man, And the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.**)

And then ten verses later, God warns the man about *death*: **Genesis 2:16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."** In this passage there is a command and a consequence for not obeying the command. What is the command?

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What is the consequence for not obeying the command?

It is after this point in chapter two that God makes a statement about the man, which is really connected with God's stated purpose for the man back in chapter one. Here in chapter two God follows the command that He gave the man with this: **Genesis 2:18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."** If we allow Scripture to interpret Scripture, then staying within the context of the information that God has thus laid out in these first two chapters of Scripture with respect to man, what was the woman to help him do?

This helper must be seen in connection with God's stated purpose for the man that we read in Genesis 1:26. So let's put this piece together (which will eventually help us to understand more about the full scope of salvation).

Let's begin by reading Gen. 1:26 along with the two verses that follow it: **Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."** Now think for a moment about how this passage relates to Gen. 2:18. Write out what you think.

God specifically reveals how He made a helper suitable for the man. He caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept, God opened up the man's side, took a part of his body, and from that part



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of the man God fashioned (Lit., *built*) a helper suitable to him, an individual who was made up of the very flesh and bones which had been taken out of his own body. When God brought her to the man, Adam named her *ōwoman*, for she was taken out of the *manō*. These things are instructive to us.

Now, we can really begin to put the puzzle pieces together to get the picture. After God built the woman and presented her back to him, and after Adam named her *woman*, then the Scripture then says: **Genesis 2:25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.** The Hebrew word *naked* used here is a word that *can* mean *partially naked* ó *naked in the sense of having an under covering, but not possessing an outer garment*. Based upon several Scriptural factors, this would seem to be the case for Adam and the woman in the Garden.

With man having been created by God in His own image and likeness for the expressed purpose of ruling over the earth, and just as God covers Himself in glory (Ps. 104:2 seen above), so God covered the man and the woman in glory, yet we see the man and the woman were *ōnaked* [literally *partially naked*], and *not ashamed*.ö They could not yet be fully clothed with the royal garments, nor could they step into the ascribed position of rulership because *the man and the woman had to be tested first*. Before they would fulfill their created purpose, they had to prove their worthiness to rule through a test of obedience. Hence, the partial *nakedness*, as they awaited the outer garments. And it was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that was the point of testing. Would they prove themselves worthy (through obedience to the command of God) and replace the incumbent ruler, or would they fail the test? And if they failed the test, what would it mean that *they would surely die*?

We will stop here for this lesson, and pick up the story in our next lesson. For now, do you have any questions or comments about what you have learned at this point?

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### Part IV — UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH REQUIRED OF CHRISTIANS

#### Lesson Two: The Need of Salvation (Part 2 of 2)

NOTES:

In our last lesson we looked at how the man and the woman were created in God's image and likeness, and what that meant. We saw that God's image itself portends sovereign rulership, and we know that rulership was the very purpose for His creating man. We also read that initially the man and the woman were *partially* naked ó they had the covering of glory but not yet the outer garments of splendor and majesty. These garments would await their proving themselves worthy through the test of obedience before they could step into their created purpose. Hence we see this command: **Genesis 2:16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."** From your knowledge of Scripture, what happened? Did they eat the forbidden fruit? Did the man and the woman *die* at the very moment they ate the fruit? Write out your answers as best you can.

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The woman ó being deceived by the incumbent ruler of the world, Satan ó ate the forbidden fruit and she gave to her husband and he ate also. It was at this point that the two became *utterly ðnaked*” and hid themselves from God’s presence: **Genesis 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. 8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.** A different Hebrew word is used here for *naked* than previously used in chapter two. This time the English word used is taken from a Hebrew word which can mean *utter nakedness* ó i.e., no covering whatsoever. And this would seem to be the case here, as with *this* nakedness, they shamefully hid themselves, attempting to cover themselves with fig leaves ó the works of their own hands. They had surely lost something ó they had lost their covering of glory! But again the question is: *Did the man and woman die when they ate the forbidden fruit?* And if so, *how* did they die on that day? Write out your thoughts.

God’s Word is *always* true; we only have to understand it correctly. The man and the woman *did die* in the day they ate the fruit. But in order to understand *how* they died that day, we would have to understand how God presents *life* and *death* at the very beginning of His Word. In so doing, we would have a better understanding of *the need we have for salvation*, as well as *how salvation addresses life and death*.

The federal head of mankind, Adam (along with his wife), lost the covering of glory, thereby forfeiting their right to rule. And this *completely naked* condition has affected every person ever born to a man and a woman since then. **Genesis 5:1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. 3 When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.**

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According to this passage, how is being born in Adam's likeness different from how Adam had originally been created?

When Adam sinned in the Garden, his complete being was affected by that sin ó his *spirit*, and his *soul*, and his *body*. Adam's three parts were affected by death at the moment of his disobedience, as was his wife's. And all three parts of man must be redeemed through salvation if man is going to fulfill his created purpose. This is the reason for Paul's brief prayer at the end of his first letter to the Church at Thessalonica: **I Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** In this very short prayer, what is Paul praying for those in the Thessalonian Church?

Will you go back to this verse and underline the specific three parts of man?

The only way that man would be able to fulfill his created purpose is to do so as a completely *alive* being. So, from God's perspective, what would both life and death look like? At this point, do you have any thoughts about this?

I suppose that for most of us, the first thing we would think of concerning *life* is that *the body is not dead!* On the other hand, the first thing we would think about *death* is when *the body no longer lives*. And although these concepts are certainly part of it, these are **not** the *primary* idea of life and death as God presents them in His Word.

The basis for understanding life and death would have to be found in the first three chapters in Genesis, as this is where both ideas are

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initially presented in Scripture. As seen within the first two chapters of Scripture, *life* is:

- **having God's Spirit within an individual, *as well as***
- **knowing only good and not knowing evil, *and***
- **being covered with God's glory (while awaiting the reception of the garments of splendor and majesty, reflecting God's image and likeness).**

**The full scope of life then would allow an individual to step into the position for which they were created – that to rule.** Each of these three facets of *life* would reflect on the three parts of man's being – spirit, soul and body (in that order). So!

Would you go back to the three facets of life and line each one up with the three facets of man's being? Draw a line from the first point to the right hand column and then write *spirit*. Do the same with second and third points as they relate to the *soul* and *body*, respectively. This gives us a good visual on how *life* can be seen with respect to man as God initially presents it in Scripture. Do you have any thoughts about this?

Death, on the other hand, would be seen as the opposite to life *in all three respects*. As seen in the second and third chapters of Scripture, *death* is:

- **not having God's Spirit within an individual, *as well as***
- **not only knowing good, but now knowing evil experientially, *and***
- **not being covered in God's glory (thereby being unable to receive the garments of splendor and majesty, and so *not* reflecting God's image and likeness).**

**The full scope of death then would *not* allow an individual to step into the position for which they were created – that to rule.** Each of these three facets of *death* would reflect on the three parts of man's being – spirit, soul and body (in that order). And so again!

Would you go back to the three facets of death and line each one up with the three facets of man's being as you did above – spirit, soul and body respectively? This gives us a good visual on how *death*

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can be seen with respect to man as God initially presents it in Scripture. Do you have any thoughts about this?

For Adam and the woman, life involved:

- God's Spirit indwelling their human spirits,
- Their knowing only good and not knowing evil, *and*
- Their being covered in glory while awaiting the reception of the garments of splendor and majesty.

It is only in this *fully alive* state that they would be able to rule. But take *any of this away*, and they would not be able to rule.

Now, we'll remember that when it comes to mankind, death only ever means separation! Death *never* means ceasing to exist. So, at the risk of being redundant, let's look at death from the perspective of *separation*. For Adam and the woman, here is *how they died* on the very day they ate of the forbidden fruit:

- God's Spirit was now separated from them, bringing about the *death of their human spirits*.
- They were now separated from only knowing good; they now knew evil experientially (by partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), bringing about the *death of their souls*.
- They were now separated from the covering of glory, finding themselves in an *utterly naked* state ó separated from being in the image of God Himself. (It is in this state that God would eventually allow their bodies to *return to dust*.) In understanding death as it is initially presented in Scripture, we would have to see this as at least a facet of the death of their bodies (*cf.* Rom. 7:18-24; 8:10).

And so, if we keep within the context of the first mention of both life and death in God's Word, we would then come to understand from God's perspective *the need* for salvation in its full scope. Salvation must deal with the spirit, *and* the soul *and* the body of man, as there will be no stepping into rulership apart from the fullness of salvation being brought to completion. Would you put this last sentence in your own words? This is an important concept to grasp as we continue.

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So now let's bring this full circle to the rest of mankind! In Genesis 5:1-3 we saw that Adam and Eve could only procreate offspring after their own image and likeness, which would be bringing about offspring in a completely dead (i.e. separated) state. And in seeing that, then we can see how salvation must address all three parts of man. Here is a picture of the full scope of salvation for us:

- We are born dead spiritually, being separated from God even at the moment of conception. It is our *spiritual birth* that addresses this facet of death, and must be the initial facet of our salvation. (We'll look more closely at that next week.)
- We are born dead in relation to our soul in that we are born with a natural propensity to evil, walking in darkness. It is the *salvation of the soul* that addresses this facet of death, and is the second facet of our salvation. (We'll look more closely at that in two weeks.)
- And we are born dead in relation to the body in that our body is completely naked, being separated from the glory of God. In this state, we are unable to receive the garments of splendor and majesty. It is the *redemption of the body* that addresses this facet of death, and is the final facet of our salvation, *being inextricably linked to the salvation of our soul*. It is also in this naked state that our body will eventually turn back to dust, ultimately being separated for a time from our human spirit and soul. This has been and will continue to be the lot of every human being since Adam with a few exceptions ó Enoch, Elijah, Jesus Christ, and the Christians alive at the moment the Church is raptured. (We'll look more closely at that in a few weeks.)

Please go back into these bullet points and *circle* the three aspects of the full scope of salvation.

As shown, the remaining lessons in this part of our study will address these three facets of salvation more thoroughly. But for now we need to understand that the need for salvation has all to do with the way in which *life* and *death* are initially presented in God's Word.

As we come to the end of these two lessons which have laid out the need for salvation, do you feel that you have a better grasp as to why God needed to save us? Write out your thoughts.



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### Part IV — UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH REQUIRED OF CHRISTIANS

#### Lesson Three: Our Spiritual Birth

NOTES:

**John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

**... 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men**

**...14 And the Word became flesh, and we beheld His glory...**

In the past two lessons we have seen *life* juxtaposed to *death* as presented at the very beginning of Scripture. We have seen that death ó through sin ó affected all three parts of man: his spirit and soul and body; hence Adam and the Woman were no longer in God's image and likeness. Procreation for mankind would be according to *Adam's* own image and likeness shown in **Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.** Also, we can read this simple statement in I Cor. 15:22a **For as in Adam all die...**

Then in previous lessons we have seen what Paul says about a facet of our salvation: **Ephesians 2:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins... . ...4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)... . ...8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast.** But then we have also seen that these verses are exactly followed by this verse: **10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand**

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**that we should walk in them.** In your own words, how is v. 10 different from vv. 1, 4, 5, 8, 9?

We have seen that this *gift of God* is **not** a result of [our own] works, but is something that can only be received by faith. And since the *spirit* is the God-conscious part of man, then we can see that it would be the spirit that needs to be redeemed/reconciled first, for apart from union with God's Spirit, nothing in the spiritual realm would be possible for an individual who is spiritually dead. (We see this in man's creation when God breathed His breath into the man, and he became a living being.) This *salvation by grace through faith* (not of works) is exactly what needs to be addressed **initially** in the overall scope of salvation.

### SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

The term *salvation* is used in several different ways in Scripture. Most generally, the word *salvation* refers not only *being delivered out of something*, but also *delivered into something else*. For example: **John 5:24** "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment [*Lit.*, condemnation], but has passed out of death into life..." So in this facet of salvation, what does a person pass *out of*? And what do they pass *into*?

In order for a person is to pass out of death and into life, *he must believe* that which God has said/done about the provision He has made for us. Paul explains most succinctly to the Philippian jailer exactly what it takes *to be saved*: "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved...**" (Acts 16:30, 31). According to this passage, how does a person pass out of death into life?

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Of course, Paul was referring to *believing in the death of Jesus on the cross for the forgiveness of sin* ó sin, which brought forth death in the first place. In Part III, Lesson One, we looked at some of the OT types that were part of forming the word picture in the OT which pointed to Christ's death. We looked at:

- The death of Adam when he entered into the sin of the woman.
- The death of the innocent animal in the Garden at the hand of God.
- The death of the brother, Abel, at the hands of his brother, Cain, while in the field together.
- The death of a beloved son offered on an altar by the hand of the father on the mount shown him<sup>1</sup>.
- The death of a spotless lamb slain in the stead of the firstborn sons in the houses in Egypt.

In His death, Jesus fulfilled all of these OT types:

- In the antitype of Adam when He entered into our sin when He became sin for us.
- In the antitype of the slain animal in the Garden when He became the Lamb of God Who took away our sin.
- In the antitype of Abel when He was slain by the hand of His Brother, Israel.
- In the antitype of Isaac when He was the Son offered as a Sacrifice by the Father on Mount Calvary.
- In the antitype of the paschal lambs in Egypt when He became the perfect and spotless Lamb, Our Passover.

When Jesus died on the cross, He cried out: "It is finished." The way the grammar of this statement was used in the Greek indicates that the work He did on the cross exists in a *past completed state*, and will *always exist in that same completed state into all time and eternity*. Nothing can ever be done to change the completeness of what Christ did on the cross. He died on our behalf, and through faith in His death, we can have the gift of eternal life ó life which once received through faith *will also always exist in a completed state for all time and eternity*. Jesus said: **John 3:18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe**

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<sup>1</sup> I state it as if the son was offered on the mount, because from God's perspective ó he was, only via a substitute. This is the same way God sees us as having died, via a substitute.

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**is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.** What is the difference between the one who believes and the one who does not believe?

Who made that statement in John 3:18?

Do you believe Him?

And once a person believes in the finished work of Christ on the cross, then that person receives that which His death accomplished ó eternal life! And once this life is in place, it also exists in a perfectly completed state for all time and eternity, a state which cannot be changed for all time and eternity. Do you believe that?

The initial step of bringing about our redemption would need to be work done on God's part, not man's part. How can a person who is born dead in trespasses and sin do anything to effect life for himself? He cannot! God had to be the one to step into the situation in order to begin the process of redemption for the man and the woman; and this is exactly what we see in the Garden.

### **The Free Gift as Seen in the Garden**

After Adam and the Woman sinned, God promised a Redeemer through the seed of the woman: **Genesis 3:15** [God speaking to Satan] **And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.** And as a result of this promise, Adam gave a new name to the one he had previously named *Woman*: **Genesis 3:20** **Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.** This name change indicates that the man and the woman had faith ó they believed what God had said about a Redeemer in 3:15. And it is at this point, based upon their faith *alone*, God killed an innocent animal, shedding its blood, for a covering for the man and the woman, bringing them back into

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spiritual union with Him. **Genesis 3:21 And the LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.** Then, everything that follows would have to be seen in the light of moving toward the *complete* redemption of their soul and body, which we will see in upcoming studies.

### A New Creation

The moment an unsaved person becomes saved through faith apart from his own works, he becomes a new creation: **II Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.** According to this passage, what happens to the one who believes in Christ?

What is it that has passed away, and what do you think that means?

When a person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, a *separation occurs within that individual*. **Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit...** What division is made?

What is it that causes the division?

This passage reveals how it is that the Word of God can cause this division. How is it able to do so?

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Now look back at our opening passage at the beginning of this lesson. Who is the Word of God?

In your own words, can you put all of this together concerning our spiritual birth?

And so, at the moment an individual puts faith in Christ's death as Passover, there is a division that takes place within the person believing. It is the *division between the spirit and the soul*! Whereas both had previously existed in a darkened state, now *life* and *light* has come into the spirit which is immediately separated from the soul, as the soul remains in darkness. (Remember that salvation in Scripture often refers to being *delivered out* of something *into something else*. So the spirit is *delivered out of darkness and brought into the light*.) This change within the spirit is what is *made new* in becoming a new creation in Christ. The old things ó old things concerning the spirit being dead and in darkness ó is now passed away, and the spirit has become new.

So even though this deliverance from darkness to light has taken place *within the spirit*, that individual still has a propensity toward evil as their soul remains in darkness, and their body is still naked, separated from glory. Herein the need for the salvation of the soul and redemption of the body becomes quite evident.

Now perhaps we can understand more clearly what is meant by v. 4 in our opening passage. Go back to the beginning of our lesson and

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reread the passage. Can you see how this all fits together? Do you care to comment?

And so, it becomes easy to see that the *spiritual* birth (the salvation by grace through faith) is what brings a person to life and light, and is what sets this individual on a journey toward reaching the goal of becoming *completely sanctified at the coming of the Lord – spirit, and soul, and body* (I Thess. 5:23). Paul had this goal for himself as well, saying: **Philippians 3:12b ...but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.** Obviously Paul had already been saved at this point in his life. And now he knows he has work to do! In this passage, what does Paul say he does?

According to this passage, what is Paul's goal?

Paul also tells us that once we are saved, we have work to do. In this same epistle, he gives this command: **Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling...** What does Paul tell saved people to do in this passage?

And it is *the working out of our own salvation* that is exactly what we will deal with in our upcoming lessons.

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Do you have any comments or questions about this lesson<sup>2</sup>?

NOTE: Next week's lesson is an important one to understand, and may be challenging. Please begin your studies early enough in the week to give yourself time to process all the information.

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<sup>2</sup> For a more comprehensive look at this facet of salvation, refer to this online book: <http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/SGF.pdf>.



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### Part IV — UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH REQUIRED OF CHRISTIANS

#### Lesson Four: The Salvation of the Soul

NOTES:

**Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.**

Last week we discussed our spiritual birth, which is provided by grace through faith in the death and shed blood of Jesus upon the cross, apart from any works that we can do. This *spiritual birth* is the salvation upon which our being sanctified entirely ó spirit and soul and body ó must rest. It is the beginning point of the life-long process of our being preserved *complete* at the coming of the Lord (I Thess. 5:23).

Just as our physical birth places us within a particular family on earth, so our spiritual birth places us within the family of God. And it is because of this birth, an individual becomes a child of God. **Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God...** Notice that it is *the Spirit that bears witness with our spirit* that we are children of God. Apart from our spirit *being born from above* (born again), we could not receive the witness from God's Spirit that we are His child. And it is our spiritual birth that places us within the family of God, and that is apart from any works that we have done.

This week we will look at *what is expected of us* as God's child within His family. Knowing that man is a three part being ó spirit and soul and body (having been originally created in the image and likeness of God, but now fallen due to the sin of Adam), we have come to realize that salvation must affect all three parts of man. With the initial facet of the overall scope of salvation in place, we must now look at things beyond the free gift and consider what is

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expected from us as a Child of God. This is where *our own works* come into play.

So, what do the Scriptures say about salvation with respect to the soul and the body? We have already seen that Paul says in **Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.** What have we been created in Christ Jesus for? What is it that we should walk in?

And when were these good works prepared for us?

That's quite an amazing thought, isn't it?

We touched on this next passage last week, but let's look at it again. **Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.** According to this verse, what is it we are supposed to be doing?

It is easy to see that this verse is dealing with a facet of salvation. According to this verse, *how* would one work out their own salvation in fear and trembling?

It is faithful obedience to what God says in His Word that is the work that we are to do as a child of God. And *this* salvation ó the one we are *to work out in fear and trembling* – has to do with the salvation of the soul.

So one might wonder what it would look like to gain your soul at the JSOC, or to lose your soul. Let's think about this for a moment. Obviously, to lose something is the opposite of finding it, or gaining it. Right? To gain the salvation of the soul would be to be a co-heir with Christ in His kingdom (Rom. 8:17). That is he/she would be ruling with Christ as His Consort Queen, covered in glory and

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clothed in the garments of splendor and majesty, thus fulfilling God's purpose. This would be life in the Coming Age ó living in the LIGHT of Christ's glory, totally and fully sharing His inheritance as the First Born Son of God.

But to *lose* the salvation of the soul would bring about utter remorse and sadness on the part of the saved person, because that person would see and realize what he gave up in the Coming Age by not laying his life down in this present age. He/she would not be covered with glory, nor clothed with the royal garments, *not* be Christ's Consort Queen, *not* share Christ's inheritance as a First Born Son of God. This would place someone in the outer darkness! for *one thousand years*, completely and totally separated from Christ and His glory. This individual will weep bitter tears during that time, being fully aware of what had been lost. This would be death in the Coming Age ó separated from Christ and His glory, and not being His co-heir.

Herein is gain or loss of the salvation of the soul. Let look at some specific passages that explicitly spell out the salvation of the soul:

**James 1:21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. 22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.** According to v. 21, what are we supposed to do?

And according to the same verse, if we humbly receive the Word that has been implanted in us, what will be the result?

According to v. 22, what are we supposed to do and not supposed to do?

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Let's spend a bit of time on these next passages. Read and study them carefully, making notes in the margin of what you can learn from them.

**I Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7 that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.**

According to vv. 3 and 4, what have we been born again to obtain?

How is the inheritance described in v. 4?

According to v. 5, for whom is the inheritance?

Through what is one protected by God?

When is this salvation to be revealed?

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Right now ó in the present time ó we may find that we are being distressed by various trials. But there is a reason for these trials. What is the reason?

And if we pass the test, what will our faith (having been tested by fire) be found to result in?

**Hebrews 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 “For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.” 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition [Lit., ruin, loss, or destruction], but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. 11:1 Now faith [contextually ó faith *to the saving of the soul*] is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**  
According to v. 36, what do we have need of?

And we have need of endurance to do what?

Once we do the will of God, what will we receive?

What is the promise? What does it have to do with?

Verse 37 is a quote from Habakkuk 2:3, 4. How shall the just live?

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And if one who has been justified, draws back (from that faith), what happens?

According to v. 39, if we do not draw back, but continue to believe, what happens?

Explain what the very next verse says? (This is an unfortunate chapter break!)

In all three of these passages, the English word for *soul* is the Greek word *psuche*. Why some translators in some of the various translations of the Bible chose to drop this Greek word, even though it appears in the text of the original manuscripts, is a conundrum. (An example of this can be noted in the NIV translation. Translators completely dropped the word *soul* in James 1:21.)

### **Spirit/Soul – One and the Same Or Separate and Distinct?**

To understand the nuances of salvation as it is presented in Scripture, we must realize that the Greek word *psuche* (most often translated *soul*) is separate and distinct from the Greek word *pneuma* (translated *spirit*). To help us see that man's spirit and soul are not one and the same (as many Christians have been taught to believe) it is easy to see that The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Greek NT used two separate and distinct words.

- The word *pneuma* is used 350 times in the NT, being translated *spirit* 349 times; and *breath* one time (Rev. 13:15). *Pneuma* is **never** translated *soul*.
- The word *psuche* is used 95 times in the NT, being translated 88 either *soul* or *life*. One time it is translated *doubt* (John 10:24), three times *mind* (Ac 14:2; Php 1:27; Heb 12:3); one time *you* (II Co 12:15); one time *heart* and one time *heartily* (Eph 6:6; Col 3:23 respectively). *Psuche* is never translated *spirit*.

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We can easily see an example of this distinction in a verse that is already quite familiar to us. **I Thessalonians 5:23** **Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ** (NASB)<sup>3</sup>. In the original manuscripts, the Greek conjunctive word *kai* ó translated *and* ó is used to separate the three parts of man, revealing that they are all separate and distinct. (Be sure to see footnote.) Also remember that God is three parts, and man was originally made in His image and likeness. Sin brought about death in all three parts of man; it didn't do away with one part!

**I Corinthians 3:11** **For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.** [This foundation is laid through spiritual birth.] **12** **Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,** **13** **each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is [to be] revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.** **14** **If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward.** **15** **If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.**

In this passage, we can see that once a person believes in Jesus, the foundation is laid; a foundation that must be built upon. It is our works that are built upon that foundation ó gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw. Verse 13 speaks of Judgment Day. What does this verse say will happen to each man's work? (Be specific.)

Contextually, what type of works will remain after the fire tests its qualities?

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<sup>3</sup> Also the KJV has both conjunctives in the English (being translated from the original manuscripts). Why the NKJV dropped the first *and* is not clear.

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What will happen to the individual with these types of works?

What type of works will be burned up?

What will happen to the individual with these types of works?

Is this individual saved?

### **Faithful Obedience**

Succinctly stated, *the salvation of the soul is attained through faithful obedience* (i.e., obedience based upon full faith) to what God has said in His word about things beyond the death of Jesus. **Hebrews 11:1** reveals that *faith as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not yet seen*. Contemplate that passage for a moment! What would *the substance of things hoped for* consist of? And how can *the substance of things hoped for* actually *be the evidence of things not yet seen*? In essence, this passage teaches that faith is the undergirding support for confident expectations (expectations that are necessarily based upon the Word of God) of the things that we cannot yet see! Faith is our choosing to believe what God says and is in itself the support for things that we cannot yet see. We believe it, *because He said it*, and that settles it!

Our faith should come from hearing the word of Christ (Rom. 10:17). And our faith should rest not on the wisdom of man, but on the power of God (I Cor. 2:5) We can rest knowing that God has the power to bring about that which He has said about future things, but that which we do not yet see. **Numbers 23:19 Has He said and will He not do, or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?**



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### **Gain Life/Forfeit Life, OR Forfeit Life/Gain Life**

What would this adjustment look like in our present life? The NT is replete with admonitions for the children of God to die to the flesh (to our old nature), and live to the spirit. For example, let's look at what Jesus said to His disciples: **Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life\* will lose it, but whoever loses his life\* for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul\*? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul\*? 27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works..."**

According to v. 24, what are the things an individual must do if they want to follow Christ?

From this, we can know that Jesus is dealing with things beyond the free gift (the spiritual birth), because He is dealing with work on the part of an individual. So then, would Jesus be dealing with the salvation of the soul? Look at vv. 26 and 27. Circle the words that have an asterisk by it. You should have four circles. Each one of these words is translated from the Greek word *psuche*, the word for soul. Go back to the first two asterisks and write the word *soul* above the word *life*. Now read what Jesus says. What do you think He is talking about?

According to v. 27, what will the Son of Man do for the ones who have laid their lives down in this present world, in order to take up their lives in the next world?

And when is this reward to be given?

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In short, the salvation of the soul has to do with laying down your life (soul) here and now through dying to your fleshly desires, so that in the Coming Age, you can take, as we will see next week, this salvation is intrinsically connected to the facet of salvation that has to do with the body.

Do you have any questions or comments about this lesson?

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### Part IV — UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH REQUIRED OF CHRISTIANS

#### Lesson Five: The Redemption of the Body

NOTES:

We have looked at our spiritual birth, as well as the salvation of the soul. Now, what about the body? We'll remember that the facet of death which was directly related to the body (immediately after Adam sinned) was the utter nakedness which caused them to hide themselves from God. They had lost the covering of glory. In this lesson we are going to be considering the facet of salvation that deals with this loss.

There is a passage in the NT that spells out exactly what the redemption of the body is! **Romans 8:23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.** What does this verse say the redemption of the body is?

In this lesson, we will look at what the -adoption as sonsø means, and how *it is* the redemption of the body. We will answer the questions: Who are these sons? And what is adoption referring to? And, what is the -redemption of the bodyø? But first, it is important to understand that *only sons will rule in the Coming Kingdom*. And further, only firstborn sons will rule. Why do you think that is so?

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The larger context of this passage will help us understand the answers to the questions above: **Romans 8:12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"**

**16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God...**

**...23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.**

Let's consider a few questions from this passage. First, according to v. 12, to whom does Paul address these comments?

What is the consequence to *living according to the flesh*?

What is the consequence to *living by the Spirit*?

According to v. 14, who are the sons of God?

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This reveals a distinction between children of God and sons of God. All Christians are Children of God; but not all Children of God are looked upon as sons.

According to v. 16, what does the Spirit do?

And if we are children of God, what are we also?

But, there is a conditional clause in v. 17. What is the condition to being a fellow-heir with Christ?

And if we suffer with Him, what will we also get to do with Him?

There it is! *If we suffer with Him* (through dying to the flesh) *we will also be glorified with Him*. And as seen in the overall passage, all of this has to do with becoming a fellow heir with Christ ó our adoption as sons, which is the redemption of the body. Can you see that?

Our having become a child of God through our spiritual birth is established in v. 16. And in this light, Paul writes to Christians concerning how children in the Family of God are to live ó Christians are to *die to the flesh* (i.e., die to the perverted soul which has a bent towards evil); Christians are to *live according to the Spirit*, to *walk by the Spirit*. Why? Because of what is said in v. 14

**For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.** So let's look at the distinctions between remaining a child and becoming a son, and try to understand why it is so important.

### Child vs. Son

There are two different Greek words used in this passage in Romans. The word translated *children* in v. 16 is from the Greek word *teknon* meaning *a child*. But the word translated *sons* in v. 14, is from the

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Greek word *huios*, which literally means *son*. So not only can we see the distinction within the context, but also a distinction through the use of two different words in the original language. Notice that vs. 15 and 23 connect *sons* within the family to *the adoption*. But what makes the difference between a child and a son?

In v. 14, we see that a *child* is viewed as a *son* **when the child allows himself to be led by the Spirit of God**. And according to both the context as well as the words used in the original language, it will only be sons in the family who will be adopted. Now look at v. 19. We can see here that there will be *the revealing of the sons of God*. This revealing will take place at the JSOC, and it will only be firstborn sons who will rule, because it will only be sons who will have allowed themselves to be led by the Spirit through the whole process of working out their own salvation in fear in trembling. Is this beginning to make more sense to you now?

Let's look at the word *adoption*. It is translated from a compound Greek word *huiothesia*: *huios* is the primary word for *son*, and the word *tithemi*, which literally means *to place*. Hence the word literally means *to place a son*. Therefore, the word adoption in this passage literally means *to place a son within the family*. But what would it mean to *place a son*? The son is already in the family. The only thing that this could possibly be referring to is *the placing of a son within the family as a firstborn* or a fellow heir with Christ. And this is easily seen in v. 17 **or fellow heirs [co-heirs] with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him**.

All of this is important to understand because it will be only firstborn sons who will rule in the Kingdom of the Heavens. Children within the family who did not allow themselves to be led by the Spirit will remain as children in the family (their spiritual birth is secure), but only sons will be placed (adopted) as firstborn sons, and through this adoption, they will become fellow heirs with Christ. The text qualifies this statement, as within the text it is only in being led by the Spirit of God that individuals can receive the spirit of adoption as sons, which is the redemption of the body. And in not allowing oneself to be led by the Spirit, that individual will have walked according to the flesh, which can only lead to death (separation from

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the glory) in the Coming Age, thus not allowing that saved individual to become a fellow heir with Christ as a firstborn son.

One more thing before we go to a companion passage. Look at vv. 14 and 15 again: **14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”** Verse 15 further explains the sons of God (who are led by the Spirit). What have these sons *not* received?

Instead, what have they received?

There is another place where the adoption is mentioned in the NT ó a companion passage to this one in Romans. Here one can see that adoption has to do with the things beyond that of being a child, even comparing a child along the same lines as a slave in the family ó someone with no inheritance with regards to the Coming Kingdom of Christ. Let's look at the distinctions here. **Galatians 4:1 Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything, 2 but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father. 3 So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world. 4 But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.**

Compare the passage in Romans 8 with the passage in Galatians 4. What do you see in both passages concerning the children within the Family of God?

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How is the idea of slavery used in both passages?

Can you put into your own words what we have just learned about the distinctions between being viewed as a child as compared to a son? (I know this is asking you to really think about all of this, and to put it into words, but this will be a good exercise for each of us to do. So please s-t-r-e-t-c-h your mind, taking the time to think this through and write it out.) ☺

Related to these passages on moving from a child to a son is a passage in the Book of Hebrews which deals with God the Father chastening His *children* as *sons*. It's a very interesting passage when seen in the light of what we have just seen concerning the distinctions between being a child or a son. **Hebrews 12:5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons... . 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Oh my! There is a lot here!)**

The Greek word for *chastens* or *chastening* is found five times in this passage. It literally means *to child-train* or *child-training*. Please go back through this passage and write the compounded word *child-trains* or *child-training* at each place you see the word



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chastens or chastening, and then reread the passage using this word. With what we have seen in the two previous passages, can you say how this passage relates? (Again, another brain stretcher! But you can do it.) Write it out.

The passage says that if we are without child-training, then we are illegitimate and not sons. Contextually, those referred to here as illegitimate and not sons would be Christians who do not accept the Father's child-training; they did not allow themselves to be trained as a son by their Father; they did not endure His discipline for the sake of spiritual maturity. A child despising the Father's child-training will not be seen as a son, but will remain only as an immature child (no different from slaves in a family with regards to the inheritance as a firstborn), and will not be adopted as a firstborn son. In comparing Scripture with Scripture, can you see this concept being laid out in these passages?

### **FYI...**

Just in case someone misses this concept, the context in Hebrews chapter twelve goes on to give a Scriptural example of a child in the family forfeiting his birthright as a firstborn son. Let's look at what the text says: **Hebrews 12:16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. 17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.** What caused Esau to sell his birthright?

In fact, we can even see God's perspective on what Esau did if we go back to His Own Commentary on this incident in **Genesis 25:34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and**

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**drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.** What does God say Esau did concerning his birthright?

But in the end, we can see what happens to Esau. What were his feelings about the birthright once it came to the time in his life when he could have received his inheritance as a firstborn son?

In the end, Esau wept bitter tears as he realized what he had given up. And in spite of the bitter tears, and his pleading with his father to reinstate the rights of the firstborn status, in the end no change could be realized (*cf.* Gen. 27:34, 38). Esau had established his fate, having forfeited his rights as firstborn when he despised the inheritance. Oh my! What a picture for us. What an illustration of how important it is to walk by the spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. All of this helps us to understand what is meant when Paul wrote: *For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.* Sons are children who want to mature and who will accept the child-training that the Father gives through His Word, as opposed to children who care nothing of growing into maturity. It will only be sons who will be adopted placed as firstborn sons within the Family. The original Greek word itself reveals this.

### THE RIGHTS OF THE FIRSTBORN SONS

We have already seen that Jesus' inheritance will be the nations, even the ends of the earth (Heb. 1:2; Ps. 2:8). We have also seen that our inheritance is something *reserved in heaven for us, as we are protected by God through faith for a salvation yet to be revealed* which is the salvation of the soul (I Pet. 1:3-9). We have seen that those who *suffer with Christ will be glorified with Christ* (I Pet. 4:12; Rom. 8:17). And finally we have seen that our *inheritance is a reward for the work we have done* which was prepared from before the foundation of the world (Col. 3:23-25; Eph. 2:10).

All of these passages are referring to the inheritance as a firstborn son, and not the inheritance as a child of God. From a Scripturally historical standpoint, receiving the inheritance of the firstborn son within a family consists of three things. Firstborn sons will:

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1. Be ruler of the father's household.
2. Be a priest of the family.
3. Receive a double portion of the inheritance of the father's goods.

Co-heirs with Christ will be kings and priests according to **Revelation 5:10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on [Lit., *over*] the earth.** (cf. I Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 20:6). The kingly position portends rulership over the Father's household; and the priestly position portends a priest within the Father's family. Then the double portion of the inheritance would consist of both heavenly and earthly realms of the kingdom. Co-heirs with Christ will rule *from the heavens over the earth* for 1,000 years, reflecting the reconciliation of both the visible and invisible thrones, dominions, powers and authorities in the heavens and on the earth (cf. Col. 1:16, 20).

In all of this, these three facets of the rights of the firstborn sons are inseparable. One facet cannot be experienced apart from the others. All three facets are part and parcel with the rights of the firstborn. And it is within the scope of the rights of firstborn sons that we can grasp the full scope of our salvation/redemption, from the initial facet of salvation (spiritual birth), to the working out our own salvation (of the soul) in fear and trembling, to the redemption of the body — the adoption as a firstborn son, which also means that these will be glorified with Christ.

Spiritual birth is the present possession of all Christians, but the realization of the salvation of the soul and redemption of the body is yet future and may or may not be ultimately achieved by a Christian. This future redemption/adoption is reserved for those Christians who allow themselves to be trained by the Father's discipline; for those Christians who choose to be led by the Spirit of God in their present pilgrim journey; for those Christians who are willing to suffer with Christ, dying to their fleshly desires and walking by the Spirit.

A person who receives the salvation of the soul at the JSOC will be glorified together with Christ and will be adopted as a firstborn. Then, once the inheritance is redeemed by the yet future work of Christ in the Tribulation (when He comes back to the earth with His

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angels in order to wrest the earth from Satan's grasp), *glorified* Christians will receive garments of splendor and majesty, which will have been attained through their own good works — their own righteous acts, performed through faith in conjunction with the inward work of the Holy Spirit. These righteous acts will, at that point be translated into royal wedding garments. **Revelation 19:7** “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” **8 And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.**

The summation of all of this is the reason for Paul's prayer — **Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. — I Thessalonians 5:23**