

## HOW WILL YOU MAKE IT TO HEAVEN? December 13, 2020

How are you, as a Christian, going to successfully make it to the end of your life?

- How are you going to keep going when times get really hard, and if you're here when the Antichrist is ruling and bringing great tribulation and persecuting Christians?
- How will you be glorified? How can you get a brand-new body? How will you be transformed so you have a perfect, immortal body that will never die but live forever?
- And how will you ever get from earth to heaven so you can be with Jesus, and with other believers who went on ahead of you? It is certainly not by what you do.

The simple answer is from Zech. 4:6 - *"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord*" Only God can do it. There is nothing that you or any human can do to enable you to get through life, to be glorified, and to make it to heaven.

- Rev. 7:10 is about Christians who have just made it to heaven, and they are saying, *"Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."* When you finally get to heaven and are finally glorified, you will say, *"Salvation to our God."* You will be so excited, and you will give all the credit not to yourself, but all to God.

- Another answer is found in Rom. 8:18-39, for it tells you about your hope, your future, and how it's guaranteed - for your salvation, from beginning to end, is the work of God, the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Let's then look at these verses:

Romans 8:26-27. Your salvation is by the work of the Spirit. Let's be honest, you are a physically weak person, for you get tired, you get sick, and you have aches and pains. And you know how you are spiritually weak, how you struggle, how you still sin, and don't always obey God. Rom. 8:23 says, *"We ourselves groan within ourselves."* Psalm 40:12 says, *"My iniquities have overtaken me."*

This is why God gave you the Holy Spirit, and what a most wonderful gift and help He is.

- Titus 3:5 says, *"He saved us... by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Spirit"*
- John 14:16 says, *"He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever, that is the Spirit of truth."*
- Rom. 8:13 says, *"By the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body."*
- Rom. 8:14 talks about Christians as *"... being led by the Spirit."*
- Eph. 1:13-14 says we are *"... sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise... with a view to the redemption of God's own possession."*
- 2 Cor. 13:14 talks about having *"fellowship of the Spirit."* How incredibly encouraging, knowing that God gave you the Holy Spirit, and that you have Him now and forever!

Now Rom. 8:26-27 emphasizes one aspect of the Spirit's work on your behalf, which is that He is praying for you, interceding for you according to God's will. Because you are weak, because you are still prone to sin, you can't make it without the Spirit's continual prayers. And the Spirit's prayers are fervent and intense, "*groanings too deep for words.*" - The Spirit wants God's will to be carried out in your life more than you do, and He is praying that this happens. As for the Father, He knows exactly what the Spirit is asking, for they have this perfect relationship and perfect communication, and so your heavenly Father is answering the Spirit's prayers, meeting needs you don't even know about.

You are going through life, and all kinds of things are happening, different trials, difficult relationships, attacks by the devil, temptations to sin, and the Spirit knows everything you are going through, and knows how to help you, and how to pray for you. - And if it is God's will for you to be on earth when the Antichrist is persecuting the church, know that the Spirit will be with you, and be praying for you, asking the Father to give you whatever you need so you can persevere, so you can keep living for Him all the way to the end. Be thankful that the Holy Spirit is your personal Helper and will keep doing His part to make sure you make it to heaven to be with Jesus and everyone else.

Romans 8:28. This is a famous verse, and a favorite verse for many Christians. This verse conveys an essential truth about God's sovereignty that you need to know, believe, and understand relative to your life here on earth at this time. - It talks about God, meaning that God Himself is the One who is sovereign, for He is personally involved in every aspect of your life. It says God is causing. God is the One behind the scenes who is causing things to happen, to take place in just the way that He wants. He is what we often call the "*First Cause.*" Acts 2:23-24, Judges 14:1-4

Rom 8:28 says God is causing all things, and this means everything - little things, big things, good things, bad things, your job, your finances, your family, your relationships, your school, your sickness, your sin, and many more things I won't take time to mention here. And so God is involved and overseeing the minutest, smallest details of your life. - It says God is causing all these things to work together. This phrase "*work together*" is from the Greek word from which we get the English word synergy. Your life may seem like a huge puzzle, with a million different pieces seemingly scattered all over the place, but God is perfectly putting all the pieces together, making one beautiful picture. God is purposely, powerfully, lovingly, and wisely working in all aspects of your life, ensuring that all His plans for you are carefully and correctly being carried out.

Now the word “good” means a positive result, a godly result, a blessing, that which is not bad, but good. And it can refer to the result of God’s work in your daily life.

I am sure you have seen God causing both little things and big things to happen in just the right way at the right time with the right person, something only He could have done.

- Prov. 16:9. Remember that you may plan your way, but it is God who directs your steps. He continually intervenes in your life so as to carry out His plans, to fulfill His purposes in your life. Now this “good” also refers to the final part of your salvation, described in vs. 29.

Romans 8:29. Your salvation will not be complete, will not be finished until you become like Jesus Christ, until you are glorified. 1 John 3:2

- Now this word foreknew means that God knew all about you in eternity past, but it means more than just knowing the details of your life. It means God had you in His heart, He loved you before you loved Him, He was spiritually and relationally connected to you way back in eternity past, looking forward to that time when you would know and love Him.

- In eternity past, God predestined, He determined all the details of your life. Think about it - God knew who your parents would be and their parents and their parents, all the way back to Noah. God knew all the details of your physical body and planned out who your ancestors would be so you would turn out to be who He wanted you to be. Ps. 139:14-16

- Of course, He predestined, He planned out all the other details of your life too. Acts 17:26

Then the time came for you to be physically born, and then God worked out all the details for you to be born again, to be justified in God’s sight, to be forgiven of all your sins.

And so, here you are, and you are living your Christian life on earth, and you are being sanctified, you are learning to be holy, and to love God, and to serve God.

- But at this time, your salvation is not yet complete. Only when Christ returns to rapture the church will you be fully saved, be glorified, or as it says in Rom. 8:29, be “conformed to the image of His Son.” To experience life to the full, you need to be like Jesus, you need to be raised in glory, raised in power, and be given an imperishable body. 1 Cor. 15:40-42

- Then, in a way you can never imagine, you will wholeheartedly worship the Lord, learn from Him, fellowship with Him, be full of joy, and be fully satisfied by His love!

Romans 8:30. This vs., and all these verses we are looking at today are to assure you, are give you confidence that you will make it all the way through this life and all the way to heaven to be with Jesus. And God wants you to have this confidence, this assurance, this guarantee from Him that your entire Christian life, from beginning to all eternity is in His hands, and is secure, is solid. “Faithful is He who calls you, and He will bring it to pass.”

What God started in your life, He will complete, He will finish. Every step in your life, every day of your life, has been planned out by God, the One who is the most powerful, most loving, most wise, the One who is sovereign over all things, the One you can trust. You are God's child, and God will hold your hand all the way, and make sure that you, as His child, will never lose your salvation, but rather, are fully saved. Psalm 73:23-24

Now the right way to think about your salvation is that it is all the work of God.

- First, God predestined you - He determined and planned out all the intricate details of your life so you could be saved.
- Second, the time came for you to be physically born, and then God called you, which means that His Spirit worked in your heart, convicted you of sin, and revealed Christ to you, a process that doesn't always happen in a short time. This calling, this convicting work of God can take months if not years, but it always leads to the 3<sup>rd</sup> step.

Third, God justified you, meaning you were made righteous in God's sight, were forgiven of all your sins, were reconciled to God. And this all happened when you were born again, and you became a child of God. This then leads to sanctification, which is actually talked about in vs. 28, which then leads to the 4<sup>th</sup> step.

- Fourth, you were glorified, you received a brand-new, Christ-like body. But notice that "*glorified*" is in the past tense. Now you and I know that it has not happened yet, and so this means that what God planned to do for you will be done, for God will do it, for God, who sees the end from the beginning, will most assuredly make it happen.
- Some have called this verse the golden chain, that your salvation from beginning to end, from eternity past until that time when you are glorified is a chain of events that is unbreakable, for once a person is foreknown and predestined, it's an absolute certainty that he will be called, justified, and glorified.

Indeed, Rom. 8:30 is one of the greatest assurance verses there is, giving you 100% confidence that you are a child of God, and that nothing can or will stop God from fully completing your salvation, from making you like His Son, which takes place at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ, when the church is raptured. 1 Cor. 15:23, 50-53; 1 Thess. 4:15-17.

- John 10:27-29, 1 Cor. 1:8-9, Phil. 1:6; 2 Tim. 4:18, 1 Thess. 5:23-24, Jude 24-25