

BEING BORN AGAIN IS BOTH AN EVENT AND A PROCESS

The Present, Personal Salvation
*He who denies certainty of salvation
 rejects faith.--Luther*
Not that I have already laid hold.--Paul

Redemption is Christ is at once being and coming to be. The individual has through faith a full, free, present salvation, which, nevertheless, he at the same time experiences only in most effective, combined counter-workings.

I. IT IS A FULL, FREE, COMPLETED SALVATION

Paul especially pictures his Christian experience in ever new colours. In harmony with his preference for juridical thought he describes it in five chief sets of pictures all taken from the realm of law. For him it is justification, redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, and adoption as a son. To the apostle his experience of salvation is as a son. To the apostle his experience of salvation is as a clear shining sun, with its full brightness--Christ--in itself, but with five chief rays which go out from it in all directions, unlimited, immeasurable.

With Paul all the five chief pictures are no mere theological conceptions, but first and foremost are purely everyday expressions of Roman-Greek legal life, especially:

dikaiosis, acquittal -justification;

apolytroisis, buying out -redemption;
aphesis, remission of debt -forgiveness;
huiiothesia, adoption, acceptance -sonship.
 as son

All theological “dogmatic” lies far from Paul. “He is far more a man of prayer and witness, a confessor and prophet, than a learned exegete or philosophical theologian.”

1. In justification the sinner stands before God as the accused and is declared free (Rom. 8:33).
2. In redemption he stands before God as the slave and receives freedom by ransom (Rom. 6:18-22).
3. In forgiveness he stands before God as a debtor and receives his discharge (Eph. 1:7’ 4:32; comp. Matt. 18:21-35).
4. In reconciliation he stands before God as an enemy and is led to peace (II Cor. 5:18-20).
5. In adoption he stands before God as a stranger (or slave) and receives adoption, sonship (Eph. 1:5).

But each of these five chief pictures displays another side of the same experience of salvation.

1. Forgiveness refers to the fruit, the individual deeds of our life, the sins (Eph. 1:7; comp. Rom. 3 and 4).
2. It is also a process, a race, an ongoing battle in a war we have already had won for us.

II. COUNTER WORKINGS

Future and present, position and condition, God’s work and our work, heaven and earth, eternity and time, spirit and body--these all continue in Him in a living, vital, unresolved conflict.

1. Future and Present. We *have* redemption (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14) and we *await* redemption (Rom. 8:23). Therefore is the “day of redemption” still future (Eph. 4:30; 1:14).

We *have* eternal life (Jn. 3:36) and we *lay hold of* eternal life (I Tim. 6:12).

We *are* sons of God (Rom. 8:14) and we *await* sonship (Rom. 8:23).

We *are* already in the kingdom (Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:22) and we *enter hereafter* into the kingdom (Acts 14:22), we *inherit* the kingdom (I Cor. 6:9, 10; Eph. 5:5; I Thess. 2:12).

God *has* glorified us (Rom. 8:30) and He *will* glorify us (Rom. 8:17).

This is the contrast between present and future, being and coming to be, not having and yet having. “Faith brings the fulness of the future into the poverty of the present.” Christ the firstfruits (I Cor. 15:20) gives to His own even now the gift of firstfruits (Rom 8:23).

We enjoy the present, and at the same time it is not yet the fulfilment. In Christ the new age is livingly present and yet the old is not yet gone. Salvation is at once present and future, for it is eternal.

All that we have we await, all that we await we already have. We are “saved in hope” (Rom. 8:24). The centre of gravity lies in the past--at Golgotha: the zenith lies in the future--the appearing in glory. But it is the future that is the background of all New Testament ideas. The gaze toward the goal is the pulse-beat of all sanctification and salvation. For Christ is at once the embodiment of both promise and fulfilment.

From this arises the New Testament conception of all things becoming manifest (Col. 3:4; Rom. 8:19; I Jn. 3:2), for only things already existing can become manifest (uncovered). The faithful and

super-temporal God vouches to us the future as already present, yes, as having already taken place in the past. “He *has* glorified us” (Rom. 8:30).

Thus we already have everything, but our enjoyment is as yet only partial. Until the redemption of the body, our coming of age (Rom. 8:23), our invested capital is reserved in heaven (I Pet. 1:4; II Tim. 1:12; Col. 1:5). And that which we already have is a proof that the capital sum is ours, and thus our present possession is a guarantee of the future, a firstfruits of the full harvest (Rom. 8:23), an earnest, a pledge of the coming sum total (Eph. 1:14; II Cor. 1:22; 5:5).

But it is precisely the certainty of the “new” which establishes the high contrast of the “not yet”. The very greatness of our today causes us to look longingly for the still greater tomorrow. Our very longing is a blessed enjoyment, and by being satisfied our hunger grows (Phil. 3:12; Matt. 5:6).

2. Position and Condition.

1. We *are* dead (Col. 3:3; Ga. 2:19, 20; 5:24; Rom. 6:6) and we *put to death* our members (Col. 3:5).
2. We *are* new men (Cl. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; II Cor. 5:17) and we *become* renewed (Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:23).
3. We *are* light (I Thess. 5:5) and *ought to* shine as the light (Eph. 5:9; Matt. 5:16).
4. We *are* saints of God (Col. 3:12; Eph. 1:1) and we *become* sanctified (I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 12:14; II Cor. 7:1).
5. We *are* perfect (Col. 2:10) and we *pursue after* perfection (Phil. 3:12).
6. Christ *dwells* in us (Col. 1:27) and He *should* dwell in us (Eph. 3:17).

This is the contrast between position and condition, dignity and

duty, reality and realization, standing in grace and character. The poverty-stricken beggar is taken from his miserable hut and set among princes, but then he is exhorted to behave as a prince (Eph. 4:1). The nobleman must be noble. Position imposes duty. Here enters the strife between flesh and spirit (Gal. 5:17), between the old man and the new man (Rom. 6:6, 11), and the constant work of faith, which is sanctification.

I. The Man Jacob (*like Esau, all-American)

A. Bio

1. v. 25 born
2. v. 26 grows up with a deceptive Dad
3. v. 27 deceives Esau - birthrite deceives Dad - Issac, blessing
4. v. 28 sent to Aram 600 miles N.E. and meets God on way
5. v. 29 meets wife Rachel, serves 7 years for wives and 6 for flocks
6. v. 30 prospers materially
7. v. 31 flees Laban
8. v. 32 meets God!

B. Geography

1. Jabbok = running or flowing
2. Jacob = deceiver or supplanter
3. Israel = pray God serve for Him

II. Meeting Deceivers Day of Reckoning

A. The Problems:

1. Self-sufficient -- God defend
2. Deceit -- Godly truth and sincerity
3. Esau murderous (27:41)
4. God chose to meet and master this servant of His and teach him the secret of power with God and man (Hos. 12:3-4)

B. The Plan:

1. Came to place God chose (22)
 - a) Joseph - prison
 - b) Moses -backslide
 - c) David -fugitive
 - d) Daniel -prisoner
 - e) Jonah -sea bottom
 - f) Paul -Arabia
2. Crossed over from possessions to God (23)
 - a) rich ruler wouldn't/John did... (Lk. 18)
3. Continued until he prevailed with God (24)
 - a) Hannah - Ccornelius
business/sports
4. Crippled by God (25)
 - a) Edison
 - b) Einstein
 - c) Curie
 - d) Missions
 - e) Exod. 21:5, public - painful - permanent
 - f) Paul's thorn
5. Clung to presence (26) + promises of God (9, 12)
 - a) Joseph in prison Ps. 105
 - b) David
6. Changed by God (27-28) Saul into Paul; Sons of Thunder into the Apostle of love
 - a) Deceiver -- prince
7. Clothed in power of God (28-32)
 - a) God conquest was seen in each step he took.
 - b) Are you Conquered? Is it Visible?

Missions Chronicles:

Hudson Taylor - buried wife and daughter

William Carey - wife debilitated

A. Judson - long conf., prison

C. T. Studd - lifelong illness

John Stam - beach