

LESSON 10

GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION II

I. INTRODUCTION (PG. 38)

Paul says in Philippians 1:6, “**He who began a good work in you will carry it through to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.**” God doesn’t quit. He completes his plan of salvation. So it is necessary that we complete our study of God’s redemptive plan this morning.

In lesson 9, we said that salvation is spoken of in all three tenses in the Bible: past, present, and future. We saw that in the application of redemption there’s a logical order, and the overall order is one of progression until it reaches its consummation in the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

So to begin, let’s number the first five steps that we spoke of last lesson, as we considered the order of salvation:

- 1) Election (*God’s choice of people to be saved*)
- 2) The Gospel Call (*proclaiming/hearing the message of the Gospel*)
- 3) Regeneration (*being born again*)
- 4) Conversion (*faith and repentance*)
- 5) Justification (*right legal standing; righteousness of Christ imputed*)

Today, we will discuss the last half of this order of salvation, and we’ll talk about...

- 6) Adoption
- 7) Sanctification
- 8) Perseverance
- 9) Death
- 10) Glorification

II. ADOPTION (PG. 38)

The first subject we want to think about is Adoption. This idea of adoption isn’t a foreign concept to us. It’s where the believer, who was once a stranger to God, enters God’s family and becomes a child of God. It’s an act of God’s free grace where He grants the right to all of the privileges He secures for his children.

Adoption comes after a sinner is converted and expresses faith in God. John 1:12 says that, “**to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.**” The sinner, having been pardoned and constituted righteous in God’s sight (that is, justified), also becomes the recipient of sonship. The justified sinner then is adopted into God’s family. You gain freedom and a father all in the same moment! This relationship is what we most desire as Christians. The gospel isn’t primarily about facts but being brought into a relationship with God (Phil. 3:7-8).

If you’re a Christian here this morning, I wonder how this strikes you. In a fallen world where relationships are broken, divorce is widespread, and children are estranged from their parents and other siblings, does it matter to you that you always have a Father in Heaven who loves you and cares for you?

Whereas the doctrine of justification speaks to the relationship of the Christian to God as *Lawgiver and Judge*, the doctrine of adoption speaks to the relationship of the Christian to God *as his Father*. And so we see that God does more than justify us – He gives us an intimate relationship with Himself as children of the Most High.

Let's first consider the Biblical support for this doctrine:

First, in love the Father predestinated the believer's adoption in Christ before the foundation of the world. Ephesians 1:4-5 says, **"For He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He [the Father] predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ."**

Second, we see that the Father sent his Son into the world to do the redemptive work necessary for not only our salvation, but for the elevation of our adoption. Galatians 4:6 says, **"But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons."** Adoption was in Christ's view as he went to the cross.

Third, the Father sent forth the Spirit of his Son into the heart of the believer, subjectively assuring him that he is the Father's child. Romans 8:14-17 says, **"Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."**

Finally, the child of God, having received the Spirit of adoption, awaits the final stage of his adoption, when his fallen mortal body will be redeemed from its corruption and brought to a state of glory like that of Christ. Romans 8:23 says, **"...we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies."**

Let's look at the implications of the Christian being adopted. The fact that God relates to us as Father means that:

- He loves us! 1 John 3:1, **"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"**
- He understands us! Psalms 103:13-14, **"As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust."**
- He provides for us and gives good gifts! Matthew 7:11, **"If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"**
- He leads us by the Holy Spirit! Romans 8:14, **"because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."**
- He disciplines us and keeps us on the path of life! Hebrews 12:5-6, **"And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: 'My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.'"**
- He makes us a family! 1 Timothy 5:1-2, **"Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity."**
- He makes us an heir! Galatians 4:7, **"So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."**

An heir of what? In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul addresses a division in the Corinthian church where people were boasting and grumbling in the stuff of this life. He says, **"So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God."** (1 Co 3:21-23) John Newton told of a man traveling to NY to inherit a million dollars. His wheel breaks and he has to walk the last mile and grumbles the entire way about his wheel being broken. See the folly of that? We can do the same.

Well, when a person is adopted into God's family, the old adage "like father, like son" begins to ring true, as true sanctification begins, which leads us to our next topic.

III. SANCTIFICATION (PG. 38)

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means, - especially, the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer.

Sanctification: A progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives.

Stages of Sanctification:

1. Begins at Regeneration:

- Slaves to sin before conversion. Romans 6:6, **"We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin."**
- Union to Christ in death and resurrection. Romans 6:3-4, **"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."**
- We are no longer slaves of sin. Romans 6:18, **"and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness."** – no longer under law but grace (Romans 6:14 – which means I can say no to sin and yes to God.)

Bonus: Ephesians 4:17-24, **"Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!—**

²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed

in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Colossians 3:5, **“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”**

2. Grows throughout life:

- 2 Cor. 3:18, **"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."**
- Philippians 3:12-14, **"Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."**

Bonus: Romans 12:2, **“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”**

1 Peter 2:2, **“Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation.”**

John 17:17, **“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.”**

Philippians 2:12-13, **“Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

3. Perfect holiness - at death

- 1 John 3:2-3 **"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure."**
- Philippians 3:21, **"[Jesus Christ], Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."**

*Never completed in this life

Bonus: 1 Thessalonians 5:23, “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Lies that hinder our sanctification

1. “I can do this myself!” (*we are deceived, self-righteous, or soon defeated and discouraged.*)

Lie - Romans 7:18, “**For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.**”

Truth – Romans 7:24-25, “**Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.**”

2. “I can’t do this!” (*we become discouraged and stop fighting*)

Lie – Romans 3:8, “**And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.**”

Truth – Romans 6:4, “**We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.**”

3. “I can do this perfectly!” (*we are discouraged by failure*)

Lie – 1 John 1:8, “**If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**”

Truth – 1 John 1:9, “**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**”

4. “It doesn’t matter!” (*we belittle sin and don’t fight*)

Lie - Romans 2:4, “**Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?**”

Truth - Mark 9:43-47, “**And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell.**”

Questions or Comments?

IV. PERSEVERANCE (PG. 40)

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

So if God is sanctifying those he elected, regenerated, justified and adopted, then can a believer fall from their justified state?

The doctrine of the *perseverance of the saints* states that “all those who are truly born again will be kept by God’s power and will remain Christians until the end of their lives, and that *only* those who remain Christian until the end have been truly born again.” In other words, true Christians cannot lose their salvation.

Let us take a closer look at the two parts of this definition.

1. All Who Are Truly Born Again Will Persevere to the End (pg. 40)

This idea, while somewhat controversial, is clearly borne out in scripture...

In John 6:38-40 Jesus says, **“I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me; and this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose none of all that He has given Me, but raise them up at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”**

Note the certainty in the language of this passage – Jesus will lose none, or no one, as it were. Jesus makes the emphatic statement that He *will* raise up Christians on the last day. It’s not “He hopes” or “if all goes well.” And it’s not “if they hang in there and don’t lose their salvation.” He says that he *will*. That’s God making a promise.

Later in John 10:27-28, Jesus declares, **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father’s hand.”**

Again, there is no ambiguity. No one – not other people, not Satan, not even we ourselves – can separate us from God once He has brought us to Himself.

Also, we see further evidence for this doctrine because God has placed His “seal” upon us...

“In Him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory...” (Eph. 1:13-14)

2. Only Those Who Persevere to the End Have Been Truly Born Again (pg. 40)

While the first part of our definition stresses the fact that God’s power will keep the one who has been born again until the end, the second part of our definition stresses the fact that the one who is truly saved will continually evidence faith and repentance until death. We must remember that God guarantees that

those who are truly saved will make it. God does preserve the Christian in his faith – so perseverance is really a sign that one is truly a believer.

In Colossians we read that, “[God] has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body...in order to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation – *if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.*” (Col. 1:22-23)

The point here is that remaining in faith is one of the clear signs that someone is truly in the fold. This idea is *not* meant to cause true believers fear or anxiety that because they struggle with a certain sin they have fallen away from God’s grace and are not truly saved. If we’re saved by God’s grace and that is our basis, then we can be sure that we won’t fall away by our own works! Rather, it’s meant to call to account and warn those who have fallen away and continue in their sin and cease to exhibit the fruit of salvation, that their continued unrepentance is a very good indication that their faith was never real.

3. Those Who Finally Fall Away May Give Many External Signs of Conversion (pg. 40)

If you remember Jesus’ parable about the sower, you will recall that the seed that was sown actually sprung up in several different places. The seed grew for a time in the rocky soil; it grew for a time in the thorny soil, and it flourished in the good soil. Listen to how Jesus explains those stony-ground and thorny-ground hearers of the gospel in Mark 4:3-9, **“Some people are like seed sown on rocky places, they hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.”**

These are clearly not Christians, despite what might have been an encouraging appearance at the beginning. Whether these people are conscious “false brethren,” as Paul calls some who pretend to be Christians, purposefully being deceitful for whatever reason, or whether they are self-deceived in some way, thinking they are Christians when they’re not, these people can still outwardly look like genuine believers. In either case, though, Scripture is clear as to their fate...

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me...’” (Matt. 7:21-23)

Notice the language here; it’s not “I knew you and you turned from me,” it’s not “I no longer know you,” it’s “*I never* knew you,” again driving home the idea that there is no such thing biblically as the loss of *true* salvation.

I John 2:19 sums this idea up well, **“They went out from us, but they did not belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.”**

Questions or Comments?

V. DEATH (PG. 41)

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our

God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

We do not treat death as a light matter. Many of us have felt the grieving effects of death in our loss of family members and loved ones. At the same time, it's important for us to view death rightly through Scripture so that we do not grieve like those who have no hope for those who have died in Christ.

So what happens at death? For a Christian, death is a consequence of our sinful nature and of living in a fallen world, but it's not a punishment for personal sin. Christ has already borne that punishment on the cross.

Our entire penalty for sin has been paid by Christ on the cross. Therefore, we should not consider our own death or the deaths of fellow believers as a "punishment from God" for them or us. **"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."** (Rom. 8:1) Instead, although we will have appropriate grief for a brother or sister in Christ who dies because of the loss of fellowship with them, the sorrow we feel should be mixed with hope and joy that they've gone to be with the Lord.

That said, God has chosen to apply the benefits of redemption over time. There is still evil in the world, and there is still death, which God uses to His glory. But one day He will redeem us, and the physical creation, from death itself.

"Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." (1 Cor. 15:26)

In the meantime, God uses death in our lives to complete our sanctification and to bring Himself glory in how we trust Him during suffering and possibly even in sacrificing our physical lives for His name's sake. God uses even death for His glory.

So what happens to the body and soul of the Christian at death? Well, the souls of believers go immediately into God's presence. When physical death happens, the soul of a Christian is temporarily separated from his physical body and goes to be with God in heaven. Scripture shows this clearly.

When Paul thinks about death, he says... **"We would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord"** (II Cor. 5:8) Again, he says, **"I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body."** (Phil 1:23-24)

In other words, death is equated with being with the Lord. Jesus' words also give evidence to this when he says to the thief on the cross -- **"Today you will be with me in paradise."** (Luke 23:43)

VI. GLORIFICATION (PG. 41)

So if in death our souls go to be with the Lord, then what about our bodies? Didn't Christ redeem all of who we are, including our bodies? And so we come to what is known as glorification.

Glorification is "the final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive -- thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like His own."

This is the big one, the final step. At one moment, we will be completely redeemed, completely free from death and sin, and free purely to praise God in His very presence. We will be perfected.

Speaking of the end times, Daniel writes, **“Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.”** (Dan. 12:2)

If you are going to choose a text to meditate on glorification, all you have to do is turn to I Corinthians 15. **“Lo! I tell you a mystery...we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.”** (I Cor. 15:51-52)

But how do our bodies change and become glorified when they are six feet underground and eaten by worms? This is likely the question that Paul is responding to in I Corinthians. He answers it by using the analogy of a seed that needs to be buried in order to become the plant it was made to be. While not conclusive, it is suggestive that there will be some form of continuity with our old bodies once they become glorified. Romans 8:11, **“If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”**

Scripture tells us that our bodies will be like Christ’s. Philippians 3:21 says that Christ **“will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”**

Glorification applies to our *physical* bodies. **“The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable”** (I Cor. 15:42). This means that our bodies will be like Christ’s in that they will not wear out, grow old, be sick, or obtain injury.

Revelation 21:3-5, **“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”**

Our glorified bodies will be perfected. Our new bodies will be humanity made in God’s image, as He originally intended it, being conformed to the likeness of Christ.

So as a way of application, are you eagerly expecting the hope of Christ’s return when salvation will be consummated and our bodies will be like Christ’s? It is a good thing for us to think about.

Questions or Comments?