

THE CONTINUING SALVATION OF CHRIST IN US

In the following reading Paul tells us that after being reconciled to God and eternally saved, we shall be continually saved by His life.

“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” Rom 5:10-11.

The Greek word ‘*sozo*,’ which is translated here as ‘saved,’ has these additional meanings, “to heal, preserve, do well, be made whole, (*Strongs*). The words, **“we shall be saved,”** is in the continuing tense, and so the extended meaning is that, after having been reconciled to God, we shall be continually saved, preserved, healed, made whole, and made to do well, by His life.

As an example of the power of the life of Jesus in us continually PRESERVING us, we will look at putting on our spiritual armour described by Paul in the Sixth Chapter of Ephesians. In the following reading, Paul tells us that we are in a continual state of warfare, and that our antagonists are Satanic powers of darkness, and in particular, **“spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*,”** or demon spirits that dwell in the atmosphere around us. He then advises us to put on spiritual armour to protect and preserve us. We shall also see that the components of the armour are attributes of the life of Jesus in us, and that putting on the armour is in fact clothing ourselves with Jesus Christ. Paul told us to **“...put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts.”** Rom 13:14. It is the flesh and its lusts that enable Satan to legitimately accuse and attack us.

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God...” Eph 6:12-18.

The components of the spiritual armour - FAITH, PEACE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, SALVATION, and TRUTH, are all facets of Christ’s life in us. To put on our spiritual armour is to clothe ourselves with Christ, and all of the attributes of His life in us that brought about the defeat of Satan. For instance:

FAITH

Paul told the Galatians, **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”** KJV. Gal 2:20.

Other translations say **“by faith in the Son of God.”** Whilst both translations are legitimate, I prefer the King James Version because it is almost impossible to successfully live this life in union with Jesus Christ in our own faith, but Jesus invited us to feed on Him, that we might have life through Him.

We can legitimately draw on His faith to supplement our own, so that through His faith in us we are more able to stand.

“As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.” John 6:57-58

PEACE

Paul lists peace as a part of our spiritual armour, but puts it in this unusual way- **“having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”** Our ‘feet’ speaks of our spiritual walk or direction. Peace is our spiritual guardian. We should never present the gospel truth where there is no peace. In our daily walk our decisions are tested by our peace. If we lose peace, we should be prepared to adjust our decision.

The readings below show us that it is the Lord who is our peace, by His Spirit, or life in us. We see also that His peace is superior to the peace of the world, because it remains with us in adversity.

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you...” John 14:27-28.

“For He Himself is our peace...” Eph 2:14-17.

Aligned with peace are joy and patience, which are also from the Lord.

“Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.” 2 Thess 3:5.

“Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” Neh 8:10.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

There are two forms of righteousness.

1. Imputed righteousness, received by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus who payed the debt for our sins on the cross. In accepting and receiving this truth, the spiritual reality is that we are the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ.

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Cor 5:21-6:1

We may clothe ourselves with this righteousness as an impenetrable piece of armour that resists all accusations of Satan.

2. This is the actual righteousness of Christ in us. As we walk in union with Him, we may partake of His righteousness, and it is gradually formed in us, to the end that throughout our lifetime we are changed into His likeness.

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God — and righteousness and sanctification and redemption — that, as it is written, *“He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”* 1 Cor 1:30-31

Again we may confront Satan’s accusations with the claim, “I have been made eternally righteous through Jesus Christ, and His own righteousness is being manifested in me.

SALVATION

Paul tells us to **“take the helmet of salvation.”** The helmet protects our heads, or minds, the area most attacked by Satan. He accuses people of their sinfulness, throwing doubt on their eternal salvation. This is where physical truth gets in the way of spiritual truth. The physical truth is that we are still sinners, being conformed gradually into the righteousness of the Lord. The eternal truth is what the Scriptures present, that by the cross of Jesus we are made righteous and eternally saved – transferred out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Col 1:13-14.

Putting on the helmet of salvation is receiving the above truth into our minds, our spirits, and into our hearts so that it becomes an unshakeable part of us. Paul enjoins us to be grounded and steadfast in this truth,

“And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight — if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel.” Col 1:21-23.

Christ’s Ongoing Salvation

At the start of this study we presented the truth that after our redemption, Christ’ salvation is continuous and ongoing: **“having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”** This applies to our bodies, which are continually healed, preserved and made whole. Before our redemption we had bodies of sin and death.

“[Jesus] bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed.” 1 Peter 2:24-25.

We are now subject to a new law - the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus **“for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”** Rom 8:2-3.

Romans 8 goes on to say, **“And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”** Rom 8:10-11.

Not only is the saving life of Christ in us, we also have the Spirit of God continually breathing life into our mortal bodies **“because of righteousness,”**

TRUTH

Jesus said of Himself, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”** John 14:6. He is the fulfilment of Scriptural prophecy and truth. His life on earth demonstrated the truth of His message and His representation of the character of God. When we clothe ourselves in the armour of truth, Satan’s lies and deceptions are defeated. Paul told us to **“...take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God...”** Eph 6:17.

The truth (also called the sword of the Spirit), is not only a defensive piece of armour, it is also an offensive weapon to wield against Satan to negate his attacks. E.g.

“He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it [the cross].” Col 2:13-15.

HOW DO WE LIVE THIS LIFE IN UNION WITH JESUS?

Jesus used the analogy of the true vine and its branches to show how to live this life in union with Him:

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser... Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” John 15:1-5.

To abide in Jesus Christ is to live consistently in union with Him, dependant on Him as a branch is dependent on the vine, and draws on the life of the vine. Through knowledge of Him we have all things to enable us to walk in godliness and victory over Satan.

“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:2-4.

Whether or not we attain all things pertaining to overcoming life and godliness depends on our heart attitude. We can start each day looking with negative eyes at troubles, burdens, and the hum-drum of labours, or we can determine in our hearts to walk in the joy, the well-being, and the overcoming and victory that is available to us through Jesus Christ.

This is a matter of choice - to maintain our self-will and self-dependence, or to reject them and choose to know Jesus as our way, our truth, and our life. This matter should be settled at the start of each day, and stated in our morning prayers. E.g. “Jesus, I choose to abandon my self-will and self-life, and live this day in union with You, drawing on Your life to meet each need. I draw on your faith in receiving Your love, peace, joy, righteousness, patience. I choose to do all things in Your name trusting You to meet each need, and bear fruit to Your glory.

Our daily walk should be a matter of putting these things into practice, knowing that we are united with the Lord and continually drawing on His life. This is not a matter of saying the right words, but one of walking and receiving by faith. For instance we may claim the Lord’s joy, and then we must receive it into our hearts, and walk as if it is already there. At the start it may be receiving experientially, but as the fruit appears it becomes a way of life.

So many Christians live their lives burdened with care, struggling to overcome negativity, depression, and downcastness. The alternative is to live in union with the Lord, receiving from Him peace, joy, and well-being.