# Audio file

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# !977 – God’s Way of Salvation Study 7

To come back now to our series of studies on God's way of salvation. We look so far at the actual problem which every person faces in their conflict with the power of sin. Namely, that we do what we do because of what we are, and the victory is gained not by trying, but by dying. We move on tonight a little further to study more of the practical steps by which the victory is to be personally gained.

Let's turn now to Romans, the first chapter, again in verses 16 and 17, Paul gives to us the clearest and most direct definition of the gospel to be found anywhere in written form. Even for that matter, in the scriptures. Romans chapter one verses 16 and 17. And here the great apostle says, or the Holy Spirit says through the great apostle,

“for I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith as it is written, the just shall live by faith.”

I want you now to notice what verse 16 does not say, even though I shall read only the actual words, or at least some of the words in the verse. Let’s note what the verse does not say.

It does not say, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone. It doesn't say that. It says to everyone that believes it. And those two words of course, classify a certain kind of person from a certain other kind of person. In short, the believer from the unbeliever. Let's think for a moment about what this means then. the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. But it is not the power of God unto salvation to everyone who does not believe.

Bear in mind, of course, that the expression ‘the power of God unto salvation’ is unto salvation from sin. If we turn back for a moment to Matthew chapter one and verse 21. We will find a statement uttered by the Angel to Joseph, the husband of Mary, just prior to the birth of Jesus. And in verse 21 the Angel said, and she shall bring for a son, and they shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, not in them, but from them. Now obviously, of course, there is a very large difference between being saved from sin and being saved in sin. being saved in sin is rather pointless, because after all said and done, it's sin that separates us from God, and it's quite impossible to be saved in sin and at the same time be saved anyway. because salvation of course, means being saved from the effects that sin has produced in this old world, namely death, sorrow, pain and so forth.

So therefore, salvation itself is obviously salvation from sin. And there are various theologies in existence today, which talk about being saved from sin, and at the same time telling these people who accept these theologies that they do not have to obey the commandments of God, they do not have to live righteously, that they more or less live as they did before, because Christians are not perfect, they are only forgiven. That's the catch word, or the slogan that you find these people using, let's ask ourselves a simple question today or tonight. And the question is if I am saved from sin I must be saved into righteousness. and in as much as sin is law breaking, then to be saved from law breaking is to saved into law keeping. And if I'm saved from disobedience, I'm saved into obedient. If I claim to be saved from sin, but I still live therein, then it is the same as if a man who'd fallen overboard and claims to be saved from the ocean, while still swimming in the ocean. Obviously, of course, he's not safe from the ocean, nor from the danger of very speedy death by drowning in that ocean. Only when he sat upon the deck of the ship again, could he say I am saved from the ocean.

Let’s now concentrate tonight upon the expression, as found in this verse 16 that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. Now if the gospel is the power of God to those who believe then that means the gospel is a working power in the life of those who believe to save them from the power of sin.

Let's notice the next verse again, verse 17: “for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith as it is written, the just shall live by faith.”

now this is the most quoted verse in the Scripture, comes from the book of Habakkuk. And Paul quotes this verse at least three times in the New Testament. once in Romans, once in Galatians and once in the Book of Hebrews.

Now turn to 1st Corinthians, Chapter 15 where Paul talks again about the living victory that God gives to His people. Verse 57, “but thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” our Lord Jesus Christ, of course, is the power of God, as Christ said just before his ascension that all power was given unto him in heaven and in earth, and therefore, victory through Jesus Christ is victory through He who is the power of God unto salvation. And now a very important scripture in first John Chapter 5 and verse 4. “For whatsoever is born of God, over-cometh the world, and this is the victory which overcometh the world even our faith.” So, what, then, is the victory? Our faith.

We now face the important question how to exercise faith, how to exercise it. how to reach out and lay hold upon this wonderful power by which we gain a living personal victory over sin and walk in the light of God's leadership. Let’s turn first of all, to Romans the 10th chapter. Where we find these tremendous words of encouragement from the Holy Spirit once more through inspired apostle Paul.

Romans ten, start at verse 9. Perhaps we should go back to verse 8, I think. “The message is very close at hand, it is on your lips and in your heart, and that message is the very message about faith that we preach; if you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scripture tells us, Anyone who trusts in Him will never be disgraced.”

Note those words again: “Whosoever believes on Him, shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him, of whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent, as it is written,

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things. They have not all obeyed the gospel, as Isaiah said, Lord, who hath believed our report? so then, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”

This last verse I need to emphasize very strongly because there is only one basis for faith and that is the word to God. That's the only basis. And because the word of God never changes, then a faith based upon that word, likewise will never change. it will not be up in the sky one day and down in the depths the next, and somewhere in between the day after, it will be a level, even steady connection with the God of our salvation. Feelings, of course, are based usually upon what you see, of the circumstances that surround you. And very obviously, of course, in as much as circumstances always changing, then what happens to our feelings? They likewise tend to change with those circumstances with what we see. but not so with that faith, which rests upon the word of God. It is firm, it is unshakeable, it is immovable. and obviously of course, that person who gathers to himself the great and precious promises of God's Word is the one in whom living faith shall spring up.

It doesn't matter who around you believes in these promises or who around you does not believe in these promises. I had the experience several years ago of being approached by a young married man with his wife and child and this gentleman said to me, Now, he said then, these great promises in the word of God, they don't really mean what they say because I have never seen a person in whom these promises are truly working. I've never seen a perfect man. And then he said to me if you can introduce me to one perfect man who is the product of these great promises, then I shall believe in those promises.

Now I think I had enough experience not to fall for this kind of trap. I made no attempt to introduce him to any man of this of this caliber. I didn't cast around in my mind, thinking about who I might present to him, because I know that to the unbeliever, even the most perfect man is still filled with thoughts. after all is said and done, who was the most criticized person when Jesus Christ walked this earth? Christ himself, isn't that true?

So, I said to him, whether this promise is true or not, whether it's going to work for you or not, does not depend upon who else in the world may believe it. In fact, every other living being upon the face of the earth, can be a total unbeliever, and yet you, if you are a believer, can experience exactly what these promises say. they are written for you individually, and why should you allow yourself to be deprived of the power in the word of God just because you can't find somebody else who is likewise believing it?

For instance, the story is told about a very wealthy, overbearing landowner in England, or at least his tenants thought he was. This story comes from the days of the Manor, when the landowner had built himself a fancy house up on the hill, painted it white, put a picket fence around about it, and lived there in ease and luxury, while a number of tenant farmers farm this land and paid rent to him in which he lived.

And when bad seasons came as bad seasons do, the poor tenant farmers found themselves slipping very seriously into debt. Until there wasn't one of them who didn't owe the landlord, quite a large sum of money. Well, the time came when one day he was struck by a very philanthropic or merciful state of mind. And sent out word to all his tenants that on a certain day he and his wife would be inside a little counting house, just inside the Manor gates between the hours of 10 and 11. And if any tenant during that one hour of time, on that particular day, would come and present his debts to the landlord, that debt would be completely forgiven. And the tenant could get home with a fresh start altogether.

Well, when the day arrived, the tenant farmers gathered quite early and stood in a little group at the gate discussing this proposition. And one man said it's a trick, there's no doubt about that. It's a trick the old skinflint, he won't let us out of our debts. He's only going to check and make sure that our books tally with his books. And they argued back and forth, very suspicious of the landlord and the precious minutes tick by. 10:15, 10:30, 10:45, 10:55. Only 5 minutes left there in the counting house in clear view of all sat the landlord and his wife.

And then, rather breathlessly, at 5 minutes to 11, a little lady arrived. She was a tenant on a very small piece of land down in the far corner of the vast estate. And something had delayed her, and she hurried up to the men and said, oh, she said, do I still have time? Is the landlord still there? Oh, yes, he is still there, but he won't pay.

She gave them one scathing look and hurried up to the little window. And after about four minutes, she returned with a beaming face. Her debt had been completely cancelled and they crowded around her and said, did he forgive you? Yes, she said, totally. And then there was a mad rush to go to the landlord, but 11:00 o'clock had struck and they all went home debtors still.

And this story aptly illustrates the principle that it is he who believes, it is to him who believes, that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

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Only one tenant believed in the landlord's word. What does she reap? The blessing of forgiveness. Debts cancelled. A complete new beginning. A great load, a great burden rolled away from her life and from her resources. What happened to those who did not believe? They retained their debt. They went home as indebted as they came, as enslaved as they came, as badly off as they came.

Now supposing that in all the 6000 years of human history, which so far have almost elapsed, only one person had believed in the promises of God. Then what did that one person experience? Deliverance. And if all the rest had not believed, then what would they have experienced? continuing bondage. And today, any person who stands around waiting for somebody else to believe before they will believe, are working very much against themselves.

Let’s turned to Revelation, in the third chapter to a statement made by Jesus Christ. When he offered a very glorious promise to those who are overcomers. Revelation, the third chapter. This is the promise and council given to the Laodicean church. We come back to verse 19, where Jesus said, Jesus being the true witness, “as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him. And sup with him and he with me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and then sat down with my father in his throne. He that has an ear, let him hear what the spirit said unto the churches.”

Do we find Jesus Christ saying here in verse 20: “Behold, I stand at the door knock, and if a multitude hear my voice and open the door, then I will come into them and sup with them, and they with me, because I don't bother the individuals,” is that the word of Jesus Christ? Not at all. He said that any man, and how many is that referring to? in the smallest unit? One person, if any one person hears my voice, and if that one person opens the door, then I will come into that one person and sup with that one person and that one person with me.

Is that the words of Jesus? And it's always been very much an individual matter. To him that overcometh, to him that believeth, to those who come unto me, the promise is sure, and the glorious and wonderful promises will be assured to that person.

So, let’s this evening, in the closing minutes of our study period, go back into the word of God and read together some of the radiant, glowing and gloriously sure promises made by God to us as his people.

I shall turn to Romans the 6th Chapter first of all and select one or two verses from this particular chapter in the Book of Romans. Paul, for instance, in verse 6, we read this verse previously, says: “knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

then passing on down to verse 14, he says: “For sin shall not have dominion over you for you’re not under the law, but under grace.” Now what is another word for Dominion? The word mastery. sin shall not have mastery or overlordship over you.

Moving on in the same chapter we find in verse, for instance 17 and onwards, “but God be thanked that you were the servants of sin, that you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made feed from sin, you became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh. For as you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity, even so, now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness. For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. What fruit had you then in those things where you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

In the 7th chapter of Romans, Paul describes the awful condition of bondage, which is the lot of those who have not yet experienced the mighty power of God. But in Chapter 8 we find a contrasting chapter of glorious victory and assurance in God's people.

Chapter 8, verse one: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ, Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.”

Now Romans 7 closes with a dismal note of defeat. Romans 8 with a glorious cry of victory. Let us then read verses 33 to the end of the chapter. 6 verses altogether, “who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifies us. Who is here condemned? It is Christ who died. Yay, rather that is written again. Who is even at the right hand of God who also make it intercession for us. who shall separate us from the love of Christ, shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword. And as it is written, for thy sake, we are killed all the day long. We are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor death, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Now these words are a glorious revelation to us as to what the Christians experience is to actually be. Not one of defeat, not one of separation from Jesus Christ, because of the presence of sin. But a life, wherein the believer is more than a conqueror through him that loved us. And we are more than conquers for the simple reason that Jesus Christ has already gained the victory for us.

Let’s turn across to Ephesians now to learn that thrilling principle. Ephesians the third chapter, in the second chapter rather, and verse 14. Which says: “for He is our peace, for He is our peace.” now what is the enmity? The carnal mind, as you read in Romans 8 and verse 7, the presence in the individual of the offspring of Satan, the presence in the individual of the controlling power of sin. That is the enmity.

Now when we have Jesus Christ in us his seed, his very life and his righteousness, and that presence in us is peace, peace with God. As you read in Romans the 5th chapter and verse one. the Christian does not go out to get the victory. The Christian doesn't go out to war against the devil. The Christian doesn't go out to war against sin, because Jesus Christ gained that victory already in the great battle upon Calvary and during, of course, the previous 33 1/2 years of his life history upon the Earth.

And having gained the victory, he came to give us the victory. As we read earlier from First Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 57. “But thanks be to God, that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Now some people, I think, interpret that verse in the following way. They say all right, they have a picture in their mind of the believer, the Christian going out to fight against Satan and God comes down and assists him by giving him additional power and added to his own power and effort, so that with God's help, that man actually fights against and gets the victory over the devil.

But this is not quite the picture. The real picture is that upon calvary’s cross, Jesus Christ, defeated Satan once and for all time. The battle does not have to be fought again. Instead, every single morning, or first of all I should say, at the beginning of our Christian experience, the believer reaches out and lays hold upon the life of Christ in himself, and that life in him is the life which gained the victory over Satan.

So, if we have the life in us, which gained the victory over Satan, then what have we got? We've got the victory; we've got the peace, already in our hearts. We have that life that Satan cannot conquer, because it is the life of Jesus Christ. And then each day we go out to do battle with the devil, I beg your pardon, each day we go out and when we meet the devil, and he wants to enter into controversy or battle with us, we simply tell him the simple truth. That we are no longer the person that he once had the victory over. We are now new men and women in Christ Jesus. We are the possession of Jesus Christ, and if he has any controversy or argument, then go and talk to Jesus Christ about it.

And if we shall meet the devil, as already victorious Christians and what we he do? the Bible says he will flee from us. He'll run away. And wait, of course, for another opportunity on another occasion.

So, Jesus Christ, then is our peace. Let's turn now for a closing verse or two, to first Thessalonians chapter 5. Where the role of Jesus Christ as the Conqueror, as the weapon in our salvation, is very, very clearly brought to view. First Thessalonians chapter 5 and verse 23.

“And the very God of peace, sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Before we go on, let's just look at the wonderful words of this particular verse. Where Paul says, “and the very God of peace sanctify you holly” What does the word sanctify mean? It means to make a person holy. H O L Y. Because we have the word holy, W, H, O, Double L, Y which means, completely, so the first part is really saying, and the very God of peace make you completely whole. Then he says, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved, how? - blameless.

Now preservation does not make something different from what it already is. preservation maintains what that thing already is. So, if we are to be preserved blameless, what must we already have been made? Blameless. And some folks say this is an impossible attainment beyond my power to achieve it.

And that's quite true. It is beyond OUR power to achieve it, as the very next verse says: “faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

So, who makes you blameless? God does. Who preserves you, blameless. God does. It’s His work and that work which he has begun so effectively, he will carry on to its ultimate final conclusion and completion.

Let's turn to Jude, verse 24 as our closing verse, for this particular presentation. Jude 24, the last book before Revelation.

“Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before his presence, the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, he is able to keep you from falling, to maintain you as a victor in the battle against sin every day.”

Now this is the experience of those who believe, because to them the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. To the unbeliever it is just simply words and theories that have no meaning and no power whatsoever.

Next week we'll, or next study period rather, we'll look into the way in which we are to exercise faith, having developed it very powerful and effectively of course on the basis of the absorption of the great promises found in the living word of God, and his truth.

as Paul says: “The just shall live by faith and faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.