

## **What does it mean to be lost? Study #1**

The Bible presents the truth that mankind is lost. Understanding what it means to be lost and how it can be fixed is the difference between eternity with God or without God; of heaven or hell. So, we will start by examining how the Bible describes man as lost.

### **The Biblical concept of “lost”**

The New Testament idea of “lost” is found in the Greek verb *apollumi* [απολλυμι]. This word comes from *apo* - “away” and *olethros* [ολλυμι] - “destruction, ruin, death” [A New Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament, F. Wilbur Gingrich, p. 138]. Therefore it meant to “completely destroy” or to “ruin away.” It is illustrated in the following verses. In Matthew 2:13 Herod desired to kill the child Jesus. In Matthew 8:25 the disciples feared they would perish in the boat. Specifically, they feared that they would drown. These are physical examples. Let’s look at some passages which use lost in a spiritual sense. Lost described Israelites who needed to be saved (Matthew 10:6; 18:11). Lost describes those to whom the the good news about Jesus Christ is hidden (2 Corinthians 4:3). Lost describes the condition of those who have not believed the good news and do not have eternal life (John 3:15, 16). Finally, it describes those people who have not loved the truth so that they should be saved (2 Thessalonians 2:10). So, lost in a spiritual sense describes those who who are not saved, who do not know the good news about Jesus Christ, and those who do not have eternal life.

### **The Bible represents the lost as dead ones.**

Part of being lost is being dead. This is not physical death but spiritual death. We were once dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). God views the world of the unsaved as a a graveyard full of dead people (Ephesians 5:14 ). The unsaved man is dead because he is alienated from God’s life (Ephesians

2:18). We needed God to make us alive (Ephesians 2:5). None of these passages describe physical death but spiritual death. Spiritual death is separation from God's life.

### **The man who is lost rejects God.**

The fool has said in his heart that there is no God (Psalm 53:1). In contrast, the believer is one who knows God and is known by God (Galatians 4:9). Think about that last part "known by God." If you believe in Jesus Christ, God knows you! How important this is becomes plain when we read Jesus' words in Matthew 7:23 "Depart from Me, ... I never knew you."

"Knew" is the Greek word *ginosko* [γινωσκω] and means experiential knowledge. As God, Jesus knows everything and knows who everybody is. He knows who they are but He has no relationship with them. The lost deny God or do not know God.

### **The Biblical expression of man's lostness.**

In Ephesians 4:17-18 we have a description of how the lost man lives his life. When a person is lost, he has a number of problems. First, his mind is empty (v. 17). The Greek word for vain or empty looks at the result and indicates that the mind is ineffective. He can't relate to the world as God intends. Second, his thoughts are darkened (4:18). He can't think about things as God intends because the lights are off. He might think about many things but when it comes to the things about God, he has no light to see them. Finally, he is alienated [cut off] from God's life (v. 18). He doesn't have God's kind of life. He is alienated because of ignorance, because He doesn't know God. He is alienated because of the hardness of his heart. He doesn't want to know God. He's too stubborn to do what God wants him to do. Is this true? Well, we can read Psalm 14:1-3 which states that there no one who does good. We then read Romans 5:12 and see that the whole human race sinned. Together, these verses help us see that every one is lost without salvation.

Jesus Christ stated that man [mankind] has three primary problems. He said that the Holy Spirit would convince the world [of mankind] of these three problems. John 16:8-10. After each problem, note how Jesus clarifies what that problem is or how God solves each problem. The first problem, found in verse 9 is sin. Many claim to believe in Jesus Christ, but they do not believe in the Jesus Christ of the Bible. What does the Bible record that one must believe in order to be saved? Christ said that one needed to believe that He was "I AM" (John 8:24). "I AM" is the Old Testament name of God -"Jehovah." This name is usually translated LORD [capitals] in English Bibles. It is necessary to believe that Jesus is God, not just a god or a good man! Read the rest of the verse, Jesus said that if one didn't believe that "I Am" or that He is God, he would die in his sins. In John 3:18 Jesus said that the one who has believed into the name of the special Son of God is not judged but the one who has not believed into Him is already judged. Now look at 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 . Here we find two more things which one must believe to be saved. First in verse 3 we find that Christ died for our sins. His burial is a proof of His death. Then in verse 4 we see that Christ rose again the third day. Many witnesses to His resurrection are a proof of His resurrection. Therefore, when one is convinced of sin, he knows that he has not believed that Jesus is truly God, that Jesus Christ died for his sins and that He was raised the third day.

Now in John 16:10 we find that righteousness is the next problem, because Jesus Christ goes to His Father and you see Him no more. Jesus Christ alone is righteous and has the right to enter the presence of the Father! Therefore, one needs the kind of righteousness Christ has. This is the problem seen in the following verses. Romans 3:10 states, there is none righteous, not even one! Romans 4:5 states that "...faith is logically counted for

righteousness.” Since the lost have not believed in Jesus Christ they don’t have this righteousness. Then Romans 5:7-8 states that Christ didn’t die for righteous people but for sinners! He had to, because no one is righteous, not one! So, one convinced of righteousness knows that Christ alone is righteous. He knows that he can receive that righteousness by faith, by believing in Christ as we saw in the last paragraph.

The last thing which the Spirit convinces the world is found in John 16:11. He convinces of judgment because the prince of this world is judged. The prince of this world is Satan. If God judges him, and Satan is more powerful than man, no man can escape that judgment without God. Judgment will come upon those who do not believe and are therefore unrighteous before God! We already saw in John 3:18 that the one who has not believed is already judged. In John 3:19 we find, this is judgment, that light [the Person of Jesus Christ] came into the world but men loved darkness rather than light because their works are evil. Then in John 5:24 we are told that those who have believed have passed out of death into life and will not come into judgment. So, one who is convinced of judgment, knows that he will be judged if he does not believe in Jesus Christ and does not have Jesus’ kind of righteousness by believing.

Let’s turn to 2 Thessalonians 2:12. All three of the above problems come together in a future time of God’s judgment of mankind upon the earth. Those who have not believed the truth will be judged. Those who have not believed take pleasure in unrighteousness. Now look at 2 Peter 2:9. We find that God reserves the unrighteous for a day of judgment.

What does it mean to be lost? It means that one doesn’t know God. It means that one doesn’t believe in Jesus Christ as the Scriptures describe Him. Being lost means that one has no righteousness before God. The final state of one who is lost is

that he will be judged. He will hear Jesus tell him to depart into the lake of fire, because He [Jesus] never knew him.

## **What has God done for the Lost? Study #2**

In our last study we saw that mankind is lost. Mankind is lost because they do not believe in Jesus Christ. Because they don't believe in Jesus Christ they don't have righteousness and will one day be judged. This is not the end of the story. We now wish to see what God has done for us. God is a good and gracious God and despite our sin He has provided a means by which man can be right with God.

### **God became man - Jesus Christ**

The first thing to know is that only God could provide salvation to man. God did this Himself. He did not call on some lowly created being to save us but He Himself did what was necessary. We see in Hebrews 1:8, 9 that the Son is God. We could multiply many passages which also state that He is God (see for example John 1:1; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1; Philippians 2:5). Though the Son is God, He became a little lower than the angels so that He could taste death for every man (Hebrews 2:9). He had to become like us so He could die in our place. If we read on in the same chapter we find that the Son became flesh and blood because we are flesh and blood (Hebrews 2:14).

### **God was motivated by His love.**

The Father loved us by sending His Son (John 3:16). The Father demonstrates His love by the Son dying for us when we were still sinners (Romans 5:8). The Son didn't die for us because we were good people. We were sinners.

### **He died in place of our sins.**

When Jesus Christ died in place of our sins, He did three works to secure our salvation. He satisfied God concerning sins. The big theological word for this is PROPITIATION. God had

been wronged as mankind rebelliously disobeyed Him. Jesus Christ's death satisfied God regarding man's offenses against God. We didn't have to satisfy God for our sins, Jesus Christ did it for us. He satisfied God regarding our sins (1 John 2:2). He also satisfied God regarding the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2). He satisfied God regarding our sins as a demonstration of God's love (1 John 4:10).

Second, when He died, He paid the debt we owed for our sins. The big theological word for this is REDEMPTION. A violation had been committed and the fine or debt for that violation had to be paid. Christ paid that price by His death in place of our sins. He paid for us by His precious blood (1 Peter 1:18, 19). He paid the price we owed for our sins, so our sins are forgiven (sent away) (Colossians 1:14).

Finally, He made peace between God and man. The big theological word for this is RECONCILIATION. Man is at war with God. Man is a God-hater (Romans 1:30) and an enemy of God (Romans 5:10). Jesus Christ made peace by the blood of His cross (Colossians 1:20). He reconciled us to God by His death (Romans 5:10). He was the means by which God reconciled the world to Himself, that means He doesn't immediately destroy the world for their sins (2 Corinthians 5:19).

### **He rose again - He's alive**

After He died and was buried, Christ physically arose. He didn't rise as a ghost or apparition. In fact, He's alive right now! He was seen by others, even those who doubted his resurrection (John 20:25-28). He has a body of flesh and bone (Luke 24:39). He even ate food (Luke 24:42-43). Now, He is coming in flesh (2 John 7).

Christ's resurrection is more than a technicality or a stamp of approval on Christ's death on the cross. It is the basis of our salvation as is His death on the cross. We are born again by His

resurrection (1 Peter 1:3). Christ can't give us life if He's still dead. We are justified (declared righteous) because of His resurrection (Romans 4:25). To be saved we must believe God raised Him (Romans 10:9).

Regarding justification [a declaration of righteousness], we find that it is due to redemption. Redemption paid the price. When the price [penalty] is paid, the sin is sent away. God calls that "sending away," forgiveness. When the sin is sent away, God the judge declares righteous the one believing in Jesus Christ. That's Justification. Therefore, if Christ is not raised, we are not in Christ, we are still in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:14, 17). The price wouldn't been applied and the sins wouldn't be sent away. **This message of Christ's death and resurrection is called GOOD NEWS.**

Our English Bibles often translate this word "gospel." It is good news for us because Christ bore the penalty we owed for our sins. It is good news for us because Christ did not remain dead as every other religious leader has but He rose again from the dead and is alive right now!! Is it good news to you?

### **What must a man do to be saved? Study #3**

We've seen that all men are lost. All sinned and all will be judged. We also saw that God became man so that He could provide salvation for mankind. We saw three works which Christ did on the cross: He satisfied God [propitiation]; He paid the price of our sins [redemption]; He made peace [reconciliation]. **BELIEVE!**

In Acts 16:31, the Philippian Jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Man still needs to ask this question. Paul responded, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ..." Why believe? In the context, believe to be saved. Believe who? Upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Each one of His names tell us part of the good news.

Lord means that Jesus is deity; He's God. The Jailer thought Paul and Silas were "gods" represented by the word "Sirs" (v. 30). Paul spoke to him the word about the Lord (v. 32). Paul explained that Jesus is God. The name Jesus means that He is man. He is the Savior Who died for our sins. Christ means He is the resurrected and glorified One. Paul explained these truths about the Lord so that the Jailer could believe. He could not believe without knowing what and in whom He was to believe. The members of the Jailer's house had to believe for themselves and they did (v. 34). This passage doesn't mean that a parent can believe for his kids.

**It isn't easy to believe! - It's impossible!**

**Believing isn't a work!**

One is to believe, not work, therefore believing can not be a work (Romans 4:5). One is saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). No one is saved by his own works (v. 9). No one can boast in his own works since he is not saved by his works but by Jesus Christ's work on the cross (v. 9).

**What is Biblical faith?**

Faith gives substance to or makes real the things being hoped for (Hebrews 11:1). "Substance" is *hupostasis* [υποστασις] the undergirding, the substance or solid frame work. Faith makes a thing hoped for "real"; it gives a solid frame work so that one can act upon it. Hope results from a promise (Acts 26:6). "Hope from..." Hope involves something which one doesn't see (Romans 8:24). The promise of the gospel is salvation! The following scriptures illustrate promises connected with the good news. In Acts 10:43 one who believes in Jesus Christ is promised forgiveness of sins. In Acts 13:38 the same promise is found. Acts 13:39 adds the promise of justification (see last study). So, when a person believes the gospel, he is believing that he will be forgiven and declared righteous with God.

## **Biblical faith is not self-generated.**

The word faith in Ephesians 2:8 is part of a gift. The apostle Paul wrote this letter in Greek. In the Greek gift is a neuter noun. Grace and faith are feminine nouns. “Saved” is a masculine participle. So to what does the neuter pronoun refer? Greek uses the neuter pronoun with gift to describe the whole, “being saved by grace through faith.” It is all a gift. We find in Philippians 1:29 that it has been graciously given you to believe. The word “given” is the Greek word *charidzomai* [χαρις- a verb form of “grace”] and it indicates that it is a provision from God not something which God gave them to do. 2 Peter 1:1 states that we have obtained an equally [like] precious faith. This faith is found in 2 Corinthians 4:4 where it is God commanding light to shine into darkness. Finally, Acts 16:14 pictures this faith as an act of God, opening Lydia’s heart.

## **What about repentance?**

What is repentance? Many think of repentance as crying or sorrow. However, the Bible presents repentance as an activity of the mind. Repentance is a translation of the Greek word *metanoeo* [μετανοεω] from meta [μετα] which means “after” and noeo [νοεω] which means “to think, be mindful.” The word literally meant, “to think after.” Repentance is an after thought, a change of thinking or mindfulness. It is not a change of “feelings.” A change of feelings is represented by the Greek word *metamelomai* from meta and mello which meant to care or be concerned after. It is translated “repent” in Matthew 27:3 but would be better translated “regret.” Judas regretted what he had done but did not change his mind. He felt differently about it, he even sorrowed but still thought the same things. This illustrates well the idea that sorrow and repentance are not the same. Repentance is not sorrow but can result from sorrow as seen in 2 Corinthians

7:9, 10. Verse 10 reads “For the sorrow that is according to *the will* of God produces a repentance without regret.”

So, how is repentance related to faith and the gospel? Paul preached repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). Some people needed to change their minds regarding God and believe that Christ Jesus is God. Some people needed to change their minds regarding God and believe that there is only **ONE** God who is Christ Jesus! The Jews were the first group and Gentiles the latter. God announces that all men everywhere are to repent (Acts 17:30). In verse 29 they were to change their minds that God is not a god made of silver or gold or made by men’s hands. Then in verse 31 they needed to believe that God would judge the world of mankind by Jesus Christ who is raised from the dead.

So repentance is simply a changing of one’s mind. When one doesn’t believe in God, he needs to change his mind and believe in God. When one doesn’t believe that Jesus Christ is God, he needs to change his mind and believe that Jesus Christ is God. When one doesn’t believe that Jesus Christ died for his sins and rose again the third day, he needs to change his mind and believe that He did. When one doesn’t believe that his salvation is based on Christ’s death and resurrection alone, apart from any works he might do, he needs to change his mind and believe that he will be saved by God’s grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ. In each of these situations, repentance is the change from unbelief to belief.

### **What does one receive in salvation? Study #4**

We’ve seen man’s needs of salvation because mankind is lost. We’ve seen how God provides that salvation through means of Christ’s death for our sins and His resurrection. We’ve seen that

man must believe in what Jesus Christ has done and that he can do nothing else to save himself but believe. Now we wish to consider what happens when God saves an individual. What does God give to you?

Two key works describe the application of salvation to the believer. The first is regeneration, meaning to conceive anew and bear anew. It refers to the new birth with its results. The second is baptism meaning to place into. This involves the believer's position in the members of the Godhead.

### **Regeneration defined?**

Regeneration is a work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3, 5). A man needs to be born a new to see the kingdom of God (v. 3). This is not a physical rebirth. A man needs to be born anew in order to enter the kingdom of God (v. 5). The words water and Spirit refer to the same person. This can be seen in John 7:37-39. A man born from parents of flesh is flesh (v. 6). The birth from the Spirit involves a man's spirit (v. 6). The Spirit doesn't affect a man's body but a man's spirit.

Regeneration is a work of God. It is by mercy not our works (Titus 3:5). God does not save us by our righteous works. God saves us by His mercy. God saves us by a washing of (which is) regeneration. God doesn't wash us with real water but causes us to be spiritually conceived a new and born a new. God saves us by a washing of (which is) renewal. God doesn't wash us with real water but renews us. God saves us by this work of the Holy Spirit. Regeneration results in the believer becoming a child of God (John 1:12, 13).

### **What are the results of regeneration - the new birth?**

Regeneration relates the believer to all three persons of the Godhead. Because of regeneration, the Spirit is in the believer. John 14:17 states that Christ promised that the Spirit would be

in us. Romans 8:9 states that if one doesn't have the Spirit, he is not Christ's.

The Son is also in the believer. According to 1 Corinthians 6:17 the believer is united to the Lord. According to Colossians 1:28 Christ is in the believer. We receive two benefits because Christ is in us. We have eternal life (1 John 5:11) and we have the mind of the Lord (1 Corinthians 2:16).

Finally, the Father is in the believer (Ephesians 4:6). Some Bibles leave off the word "you" before the last "all" in Ephesians 4:6 but "you" should be there. It should read, "One God and Father over all things, through all things, and in you all." He is everywhere, but He is only in believers in this special way. In 2 Corinthians 6:16-17 we find that God the Father promised us that He would indwell His people and so we are sons and daughters. Therefore, God indwelling the believer causes the believer to be a child of God. God is not in unbelievers and so they are not children of God. To be a child of God one must be born from God (1 John 5:1). This is only true of those who believe that Jesus is the Christ, meaning He is the one who is raised from death. By God's great promises the believer can share in the divine nature (2 Peter 1:3, 4). The believer has the ability to share in common in God's kind of nature. He doesn't become God or a god but in a limited way, he shares in that nature because he has been born again as a child of God.

The results of regeneration make it possible for us to live the life God has planned for us to live. We live by the ongoing work of the Spirit, using a new nature energized by God's kind of life while using Christ's kind of mind.

### **The Baptism from the Spirit.**

The baptism of the Spirit is not water baptism. What we will learn about this baptism of the Spirit should affect our understanding of water baptism. First, we need to define baptism be-

cause in 2,000 years of Church history many ideas have been taught about baptism and most of these are incorrect. Many of these ideas are cleared away if we have some biblical definitions. Baptism is frequently misunderstood because it is interpreted in light of experience and or tradition. Our English Bibles didn't even translate the word but used an English pronunciation which developed from Latin and Greek. Baptize means to "put into" and comes from the Greek verb baptizo βαπτίζω "to dip, immerse, ..." [T.S. Green *Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament*, p. 29]. Baptize does not mean "put in and take out" it doesn't mean "pour" or "sprinkle." It means to put into something.

The work of this baptism is done by the Holy Spirit. We read about this baptism in 1 Corinthians 1:13. The Spirit does not place the believer into water. This is not water baptism. Did you see any water? No. Rather, the Spirit places the believer into one body, the body of Christ. The Spirit places the believer into Christ (Romans 6:3). This doesn't mean that the believer is placed into Christ's physical body. These passages mean that God the Father mentally counts or credits the believer to be in Christ. He looks at Jesus Christ, who is sitting at His right hand, and counts you and I to be in Him. When He does this, He counts to us, some things which Jesus Christ did. The Spirit places the believer into Christ's death (v. 3). He places the believer into Christ's burial (v. 4). In Colossians 2:12 we find that the believer was also raised [resurrected] with Christ by that Spirit baptism.

This work of baptism involves imputation. Imputation is a big word we don't use very often in every day language. It is the act of logically counting something to be, that is not or not yet. According to Romans 4:17 God calls things that do not exist as though they do exist. That's imputation. Imputation is how God

counts the believer to be placed into Christ. The believer is made God's kind of righteousness in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). We then find in Romans 4:23 that the believer is counted [imputed] righteous on the basis of faith. Do you see how it works? God logically, in His mind, counts you to be in Christ. You might wonder, "Why would God do this? Why does God logically count [impute] me to be in Christ?" The answer is that Jesus Christ has done everything necessary for your salvation. Jesus died on the cross, was buried and rose again. He really experienced all that. We can do nothing but believe. So God counts us to have participated in Christ's death, burial and resurrection even though we didn't really experience it. That's what God calls **grace** and **grace** is how God saves us.

The believer receives many benefits from God counting him to be in Christ. Some of those benefits are found in the following verses. As you read these think about how gracious God is to logically count each of these to you in Christ.

Ephesians 1:6 - God has graced us in the Beloved, that's Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:4 - God has made us holy and blameless in His sight in Christ.

Ephesians 1:7 - God has provided us redemption through the blood of Christ in Christ [in Whom].

Ephesians 1:7 - God has provided us the forgiveness of sins [part of redemption] in Christ.

Ephesians 2:6 - God has raised us up together [resurrection] in Christ.

Ephesians 2:6 - God has seated us together in Christ.

Ephesians 2:13 - God has made us near to Him in Christ.

## **Am I saved? Study #5**

We're not perfect yet. We're still here on this earth and we still sin. We are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to return for us and take us to heaven. Many believers have questions regarding their salvation because they do not understand that salvation is applied in three tenses or at three different times. We can say that, I was saved. That was when I believed; I am being saved. Sometimes we call this growing. Finally, we can also say, I will be saved. This will be when Jesus Christ comes for us and takes us to be with Him. All three of these are true.

### **Past Tense Salvation - If you believed the gospel.**

The believer can look back at the moment which he believed and say, "I was saved!" This is looking to the past and therefore, we refer to it as "past tense." It is completed. The believer was saved in the past through believing the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:2). We were saved by hope which we believed (Romans 8:24). We were saved according to God's mercy (Titus 3:5). Each of these look at our past. This is secure. It can not be changed.

Ephesians 2:5, 8 combines the past and present. "For by grace you are having been saved through faith." When the apostle Paul wrote this letter he used a grammatical device which specially emphasizes a completed act in the past that has continuing results. He combined a form of "is" (this may not be represented in all English Bibles) in this case "are" in the Present Tense with a participle in the Perfect Tense, "having been saved." "Are" emphasizes duration and "having been saved" emphasizes the accomplished act with results that continue. Let's paraphrase Paul's emphasis, "You are in a state, where having been saved by grace through faith in the past you are still saved by grace through faith."

### **Present Tense Salvation - This is growth.**

God intends for you to grow. He wants you to go on enjoying what He has provided for you. He wants you to get to know Him better. Salvation is about a relationship with God. So the Philippians were to work out their own salvation (Philippians 2:12). They were not to work for salvation. They should have been doing their part in growing. Now, put yourself in their place. Salvation is God's work. He does everything you need. God is the One who works in you to work (v. 13). God is the One who works in you to desire or want to do His will (v. 13). Our responsibility, then, is to cooperate, to let god's work take place, to allow Him to work. We should do all things without grumbling and arguing (v. 14). We can become blameless and harmless children (v. 15). We saw in our last study that we are holy and blameless in Christ, therefore, this verse is not talking about how God looks at us but about how we are living.

The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy telling him to give attention to salvation (1 Timothy 4:16). He was to give attention to himself (vv. 15-16). He was to give attention to teaching. If Timothy did this, he would save himself and those who hear him. This is not past tense salvation. This is progress in present tense salvation. This is about growing.

We find in James 2:14 that only active faith saves in the present. James wrote to some early Christians about using faith. They were beloved brothers (1:19; 2:14). They were believers who talked about their faith but didn't act or work [serve] from faith (2:15-16). They needed to know that workless faith can not save and is dead when measured only by itself (vv. 14, 17). "Dead by itself" in many of our English Bibles does not represent the Greek preposition *kata* which means to measure by a standard. If faith is not producing any works then it is measured by the standard of itself and no other man is able to see that faith and therefore it is dead. James is not talking about God

looking at the faith but believers looking at each other's faith. These believers needed to use faith for present tense salvation [growth] not past tense salvation. James didn't question their past. He was concerned for their growth. James knew they were saved. James was concerned about their going on and growing in their salvation.

### **Future Tense Salvation - This is when Christ comes for His believers**

We will be saved from the wrath (Romans 5:9, 10). In the future, God will pour His wrath upon this world for their obstinate unbelief and rebellion against Him. God will not pour out this wrath on believers. He will remove the believers from that wrath. The word "deliver" or "saved" means "to rescue." We are saved by Christ's life because He is our advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). We are saved by Christ's life because He will catch or snatch us out of this world and up to Himself (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).

Paul wrote that our salvation is closer now than when we first believed (Romans 13:11). This is our future salvation. He also tells us that we have not been appointed to wrath but to obtain salvation (1 Thessalonians 5:9). We have a salvation that is being guarded for a future time when it will be revealed. (1 Peter 1:5). From this we learn that we don't guard our future. God guards our future salvation. Our future salvation is the salvation of our soul when we see Christ (v. 9). Our future salvation is grace that will be brought to us when Christ comes for us (v. 13).

### **The Tenses of Salvation and the Security of our Savior.**

When you understand that God saved you in the past when you believed, that He is saving you now as you grow and that He will finish your salvation when Jesus Christ comes for you, you realize that your salvation is secure. We sometimes call this security.

Eternal Security is not about how good we can or should be. Eternal Security is about the faithfulness of our God to finish what has been started. We read in Philippians 1:6 that He who began a good work in us will continue to do that work until the day of Jesus Christ. 2 Timothy 1:12 explains that Christ is able to guard the thing which we have committed to Him unto that day. Ephesians 5:25-27 states that Christ gave Himself for the Church so that He will present the church to Himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle. In each of these, our security is God's work, not ours.

Since it is true that salvation is ultimately God's work and God is faithful to finish what He started we can know that our salvation is secure. You shouldn't live in fear of the future but with an eager anticipation of being forever with God. Note what the apostle Paul said about God's faithfulness to secure our salvation in Romans 8. He wrote that, if God is for us, who can be against us (Romans 8:31); who can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:35); nothing is able to separate us from the love of God for us in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:39).