LESSON 7: SALVATION

I. INTRODUCTION

When the Philippian jailer asked, ***"What must I do to be saved?"*** Paul and Silas responded with the straightforward sentence that would change the jailer forever: ***"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household"*** (Acts 16:31). In this simple phrase are words pregnant with meaning: *believe, Lord, Jesus*, and *saved*. Each of these terms conveys a profound truth about God, Jesus, man, and sin. Accepting salvation takes only a moment, but understanding the grandeur of this miraculous event will take more than a lifetime. In this study, we will introduce the glorious truths of our salvation so that we can spend the rest of our days marveling at the wonders of what God has done.

II. WHY WE ACCEPT SALVATION

A. Grace:

1. Definition: God's free and unmerited favor to guilty sinners who deserve only judgment. Grace is the love of God shown to the unlovely. It is reaching downward to people who are in rebellion against God.[1]

2. Forms of Grace:

   a. Common Grace: The unmerited favor of God toward all men, as displayed in His general care of them. This includes sunshine, rain, food, clothing, oxygen, etc.

      Psalm 145:8-9 ***The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.***

      Matthew 5:45 ***"he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."***

   b. Efficacious Grace: The work of the Spirit which effectively moves people to believe in Christ as Savior. None whom God calls can reject His summons; thus, this is also known as *irresistible grace*.

[1] Jerry Bridges, Transforming Grace (Colorado Springs: NavPress: 1991), pp. 21-22.

John 6:37 ***"All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out."***

John 6:44 ***"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day."***

3. Relevance to Salvation:

For all eternity, God has existed in absolute and glorious perfection. While He did not *have* to create the human race, He *chose* to do so to bring Himself pleasure and delight. He created image-bearers of Himself in order to place His glory on display, so that all of His creation will fall before Him and admire His greatness.

God's decision to send a Savior to mankind was not rooted in our value; from His perspective we are ungrateful rebels whose hearts are filled with malice and envy. We aspire to rule our own universe, control our own destiny, and redirect God's glory to ourselves. Clearly, God does not need us, nor would He desire us based on our own merits alone. So why did He save us? Titus 3:5 gives us the answer:

He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit

a. According to this verse, what is it that compels God to save us?

Our salvation is rooted in God's own will and character. We are saved because He is worthy, not because we are. The nature of our salvation is such that God alone receives all glory and all credit from first to last, as stated in Ephesians 2:8-9.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. A this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

b. How do good works lead to boasting?

c. Why is it important to God that our salvation be completely by grace?

d. Given our nature, is it even possible to be saved apart from total grace?

B. Election:

1. Definition: Election is an act of God before creation in which He chooses some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of His sovereign good pleasure.[2]

2. Scriptural Support:

   a. Acts 13:48 ***And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and <u>as many as were appointed to eternal life</u> believed.***

   b. Romans 8:28-30 ***And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. [29] For those whom he foreknew <u>he also predestined</u> to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. [30] And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.***

   c. Romans 9:11-13 ***though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad – in order that <u>God's purpose of election might continue</u>, not because of works but <u>because of him who calls</u> – [12] she was told, "The older will serve the younger." [13] As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."***

   d. Ephesians 1:3-6 ***Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, [4] even as <u>he chose us</u> in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love [5] <u>he predestined us</u> for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, [6] to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.***

3. Important Clarifications:

   a. *Election is not Fatalistic or Mechanistic:* We are not robots, machines, or puppets. God uses the real choices of individuals to accomplish His will – including salvation. Yet, it should be noted, all humans have hardened hearts and ***"you refuse to come to me [Jesus] that you may have life"*** (John 5:40).

   b. *Election is Not Based on God's Foreknowledge of Our Faith*: Some would like to believe that in eternity past, God prescreened the movie of human history, took note of all who would come to Him for salvation, and then "chose" them. But the

[2] Wayne Grudem, p. 670.

foreknowledge in Romans 8:29 speaks of God's relational knowledge of His children. In 1 Corinthians 8:3 we read: "***But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.***" And again in Galatians 4:9 we read: " ***But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God…***" Thus, "foreknew" in Romans 8:29 speaks of "those whom He thought of beforehand in a saving relationship to Himself." In addition, it should be noted that if foreknowledge was based upon something *we* did (i.e. faith), that would seem to indicate that our election was based upon our decision and not, as Ephesians 1:5 clearly teaches, ***"according to the purpose of his will"***.

4. Answers to Objections:

   a. Objection: Election means we have no choice in whether or not we accept Christ.

      Response: All of us have a real ability to make choices, but Scripture speaks of our choices and being anchored in our heart desires. Those who desire evil will never choose God–and they will be just fine with that! In fact, they will often mock those who *do* choose God. Scripture also teaches that God will never turn away anyone who truly desires to come to Him.

   b. Objection: Election means that unbelievers never had a chance to believe.

      Response: Scripture teaches that all who reject God or Christ are responsible for their own decision. When rejected, Christ always pinned the blame on each one's willful choice to reject Him, and not on a decree of God. In John 8:43-44 He said,

      43 "Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. 44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

      Though they are given the chance, unbelievers do not take it, as Romans 1:20 makes clear:

      For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

All humans have wilfully rejected God and stand condemned. There is no excuse, and the blame for their rejection is never pinned on God.

c. Objection**:** Election is unfair.

- If God had never sent His Son to die on the cross, would He be justified in sending everyone to hell? Why or why not?

Response**:** It is never unfair for God to judge those who deserve divine wrath. The fact that God chooses to extend saving grace some, does not obligate Him to do the same for all. He is not bound by any such human notions of fairness.

d. Objection**:** Doesn't the Bible teach that God wants everyone to be saved? This is rooted in passages like:

1 Timothy 2:4 ***who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.***

2 Peter 3:9 ***The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.***

Response: Theologian Millard Erickson offers a helpful clarification:

We must distinguish between two different senses of God's will, which we will refer to as God's "wish" and God's "will". The former is God's general intention, the values with which He is pleased. The latter is God's specified intention in a given situation, what He decides will actually occur. There are times, many of them, when God wills to permit, and thus to have occur, what He really does not wish. This is the case with sin. God does not desire sin to occur. There are occasions, however, when he simply says, in effect, "So be it." Allowing a human to choose freely a sinful course of action. . . God does not enjoy the destruction of the ungodly. It brings Him sorrow. Yet He chooses to permit them, by their own volition, to reject and disbelieve."[3]

[3] Millard Erickson, Christian Theology (Grand Rapids, Baker: 1998) pp. 385-6.

5. Ultimately, even as we are puzzling through how this all works together, we must bear in mind that the Bible presents election as a positive doctrine that is invoked to bring comfort to God's people.

    a. How does the doctrine of election help us to have assurance of our salvation?

    b. How does the doctrine of election (along with God's loving character) help us to trust Him with the people we love most?

    c. What does the doctrine of election do to our illusion of control, whether over our own lives or the lives of others?

C. Calling:

1. Effective Calling is an act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the gospel, in which He summons people to Himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith.[4]

    John 6:44 ***"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day."***

    Acts 16:14 ***One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.***

2. The Gospel Call is the external proclamation of the saving message of the gospel.

    Romans 10:14 ***How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?***

    - According to the above verse, is it possible for the effectual call to come to fruition without the gospel call? Why or why not?

    - How should this motivate us to proclaim the gospel?

[4] Grudem, p. 693.

3. Relevance to Salvation: Although the invisible hand of God is ultimately responsible for drawing us to the Savior, He chooses to use an external gospel call to impact our emotions, intellect, and will so that we can respond with faith and repentance.

III. HOW WE ACCEPT SALVATION (Conversion)

A. Faith:

1. Definition: Saving faith is trust in Jesus Christ as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God.[5]

2. Scriptural Support:

   a. John 1:12 ***But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,***

   b. John 3:16 ***For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.***

   c. Romans 10:9 ***if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.***

3. In order to understand what saving faith *is*, it is also important to discern what Scripture says it's *not*.

   a. <u>It is not mere knowledge.</u> Though it is necessary to have knowledge of the gospel (i.e. the death, burial, resurrection of Christ, and our need for a Savior), that knowledge is not sufficient. As James 2:19 says,

      You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe–and shudder!

   b. <u>Approval is not enough</u>. Some people may hear the gospel and agree that it is true, but that doesn't make them believers, as Paul says in Acts 26:27-28,

      "King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe." [28] And Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?"

[5] Grudem. p. 710.

c. True saving faith also requires personal trust. Believing the fact that Topeka is the capital of Kansas requires no trust. In the same way, believing facts about Jesus, even believing that He is the Lord, does not in itself save. What does save is a personal trust in Christ that leads a person to bow to Him as their King.

4. How will true saving faith/belief manifest itself in a person's everyday life?

B. Repentance:

1. Definition: Repentance is a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ. [6]

2. Scriptural Support:

a. <u>The Emotional Element</u>:

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 ***As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. [10] For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.***

b. <u>The Volitional Element</u>:

Isaiah 55:7 ***Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.***

c. <u>The Vertical Element</u>:

Revelation 16:9 ***They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.***

3. Relevance:

[6] Grudem. p. 713.

- Why does salvation require our repentance? How does God's greater purpose for salvation – His own glorification – explain this?

4. Summary: God's offer of salvation is free for all, but to receive it, one must repent, turn away from her wicked ways, and commit herself fully to God and to His glory.

C. The Relationship Between Faith and Works:

Faith and repentance are two sides of the same coin. When one truly believes that Jesus is Lord of the universe, the glorious Savior, and the rightful Ruler of our lives, he will surrender control of his life to follow Him. In Matthew 6:24 Jesus declared,

> ***"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."***

In a similar way, no one can serve God and herself, or seek both God's glory and her own glory. It is one or the other. Believing that Jesus deserves all glory will cause us to repent of seeking our own glory and glorify Christ with our lives instead.

IV. WHAT WE GET IN SALVATION

A. Union with Christ:

1. Definition: Union with Christ is a phrase used to summarize several different relationships between believers and Christ, through which Christians receive every benefit of salvation. These relationships include the fact that we are *in* Christ, Christ is *in* us, we are *like* Christ, and we are *with* Christ.

2. Scriptural Support:

   a. <u>We have died and been raised with Christ</u>. We now have a new identity.

      Colossians 2:12 ***having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.***

   b. <u>We have new life in Christ</u>. We are presently in Christ, imbued with all the necessary resources to live an obedient, God-glorifying life.

1 Corinthians 1:30 ***And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,***

c. <u>All our actions can be done in Christ</u>. To some degree, Christ impacts every aspect of our lives.

Colossians 2:6-7 ***Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.***

d. <u>All Christians together are one body in Christ</u>. Our union with Christ unites us with each other as one body.

Romans 12:5 ***so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.***

3. Relevance: In John 15:5 we read,

"I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

At their conversion, all believers are placed into the vine, and have an inseparable union with Christ. With this union comes a vital intimacy with our Lord. When the Father sees us, He sees Christ. We not only have a right standing before God, but we have all the resources necessary to live the Christian life.

- How does the reality of being in Christ shape a believer's mission and ethics?

B. Justification:

1. Definition: From a Greek concept meaning "to declare righteous," it is a legal act wherein God pronounces that the believing sinner has been credited with all the virtues of Jesus Christ. Whereas forgiveness is the negative aspect of salvation, meaning the subtraction of human sin, justification is the positive aspect, meaning the addition of divine righteousness.[7]

2. Scriptural Support:

[7] Enns, Paul P.: The Moody Handbook of Theology. Chicago, Ill. : Moody Press, 1997, c1989, S. 623

a. Romans 4:2-5 ***For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. [3] For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." [4] Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. [5] And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,***

- What role does man play in his justification, and why would God have designed it this way?

b. Romans 5:1 ***Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.***

- What is the result of being justified?

c. Titus 3:5-7 ***He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, [6] whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, [7] so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.***

- According to this passage, why did God save us?

- What role did our righteous works play in our salvation?

3. Relevance: The doctrine of justification helps us to offer genuine hope to unbelievers who think they could never make themselves righteous before God. Salvation is truly a free gift from God, and He gets all credit for it. It also gives us great assurance that God will never make us pay the penalty for our sin. He has truly declared us innocent, and there is no double jeopardy with God.

C. Regeneration:

1. Definition: The work of the Holy Spirit in giving life to the believing sinner, affecting the new birth.[8] The results of regeneration last throughout our Christian lives as God grants us a new heart with the propensity to obey.

2. Scriptural Support:

   a. John 3:5-8 ***Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. [6] That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. [7] Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' [8] The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."***

   b. Titus 3:5 ***He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,***

3. Relevance: Regeneration is the instantaneous event in which God gives us a new heart with a fresh desire to serve and honor Him. According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, ***"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."*** After our salvation, regeneration begins to bear fruit, and our lives are characterized by increasing obedience to Christ. Whereas before salvation, we hated Jesus and His commands because He sought to separate us from our first love (sin), now we hate sin because it put our First Love on the cross.

   - How does the doctrine of regeneration help us to understand the role our works play in the assurance of our salvation?

D. Adoption:

1. Definition: The believer's "placing as a son," emphasizing the believer's rights and privileges in his new position in Christ.[9]

2. Scriptural Support:

   Romans 8:14-17 ***For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. [15] For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of <u>adoption as sons</u>, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" [16] The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [17] and if***

[8] Enns, Paul P.: *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. Chicago, Ill. : Moody Press, 1997, c1989, S. 623
[9] Enns, Paul P.: The Moody Handbook of Theology. Chicago, Ill. : Moody Press, 1997, c1989, S. 623

children, then heirs – heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Galatians 4:4-7 ***But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, [5] to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive <u>adoption as sons</u>. [6] And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" [7] So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.***

3. Relevance: Adoption is distinct from justification: while justification has to do with our *standing* before the Father, adoption has to do with our *relationship* to the Father. God now views us not only as righteous people, but also as His sons and daughters. 1 John 3:1 says, ***See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.*** With adoption we receive certain privileges: We can pray to Him as Father. We have the internal testimony of the Spirit assuring us that we are His children (Rom. 8:14-17). He understands us and has shown an extra measure of compassion and provision for us (Matt. 6:32). We have an inheritance in heaven (Gal. 4:7). We have complete forgiveness (Matt. 6:9-12). And, as His children, we are subject to God's training, or discipline (Heb. 12:4-11).

    - How should our adoption lead us to view other Christians?

E. Sanctification:

1. Definition: Comes from a Greek verb meaning "to set apart." It is used in two ways: (1) the believer is positionally sanctified; he stands sanctified before God; (2) the believer grows in progressive sanctification in daily spiritual experience.[10]

Justification	**Sanctification**
Legal standing	Internal condition
Once for all time	Continuous throughout one's life
Entirely God's work	We cooperate in the work
Perfect in this life	Not perfect in this life
The same in all Christians	Greater in some than in others

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2. Scriptural Support:

[10] Enns, Paul P.: The Moody Handbook of Theology. Chicago, Ill. : Moody Press, 1997, c1989, S. 623
[11] Grudem p. 746

a. Positional:

> 1 Corinthians 6:11 ***And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.***

b. Progressive:

> 2 Peter 3:18 ***But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.***

c. God's Initiative But Man's Responsibility:

> Philippians 2:12-13 ***Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, [13] for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.***

3. Relevance:

God commands, ***"walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh"*** (Gal. 5:16). The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to increasingly live out the realities which we inherited at salvation. Through sanctification God allows those freed from the condemnation of sin to have real and personal victory over it. As God's adopted children we become more and more like our first Brother. And as heirs to the kingdom of God, we increasingly live like citizens of heaven.

- Why do so many Christians believe that they are justified by grace, glorified by grace, but sanctified by works?

- Why is it important to remember that we are sanctified by grace?

F. Preservation (Perseverance of the Saints):

1. Definition: All those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and only those who persevere to the end have been truly born again.

2. Scriptural Support:

a. Christians can never lose their salvation:

John 6:39 ***"And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day."***

Romans 8:38-39 ***For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

b. God will protect and preserve all Christians:

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 ***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. [24] He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.***

Jude 24-25 ***Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, [25] to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.***

c. Those who fall away were never true Christians:

1 John 2:19 ***They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.***

3. Relevance:

Preservation assures us that we can never "lose our salvation" because saving faith leads to a life of faith, all the way to the end. As Christians, we can have confidence that the God who delivered us from the domain of darkness and placed us into the kingdom of His beloved Son, will also keep us in that kingdom.

- If God promises to preserve us, why does He include warning passages like Hebrews 10:26?

For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins

G. Glorification:

1. Definition: Glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises the bodies of all deceased believers from all time and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who are still alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like His own.[12]

2. Scriptural Support:

   1 Corinthians 15:51-52 ***Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, [52] 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.***

   Philippians 3:20-21 ***But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.***

   1 John 3:2 ***Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.***

3. Relevance: This is the final step in our salvation, and a joyful one at that. We will at last be freed from the dread curse of sin. All the positional truths of our justification, adoption, and sanctification will be fully realized. We will be outfitted with a body and a heart that will worship God in perfect holiness. Whereas now we go through periods of frustration with our spiritual lives, lose focus when we pray or sing to God, and feel ongoing guilt over sin, our glorification will allow us to finally offer pure and holy worship to our King.

V. CONCLUSION

Having covered the major aspects of our salvation, one overarching question remains: Why? Why would such a glorious God send His own precious Son to earth to die for us, His enemies? The plan that He formed in eternity past demonstrates a kindness, goodness,

[12] Grudem, p. 828.

love, and mercy that we can scarcely comprehend. In response, we can only thank God and give Him all glory and admiration. In the words of Charles Wesley's great hymn,

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be
That Thou, my God shouldst die for me?[13]

[13] Logos Hymnal. 1st edition. Oak Harbor, WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995