

# *Salvation by Grace through Faith*

*A Paper for Publication by Sherry Cumby*

Salvation is God's gift of eternal life offered to the world by grace through faith. This study of soteriology will look at the Savior, the divine election of God, the death of Christ, the completed work of the Triune God, the eternal security of the believer, the freedom from the bondage of sin, and the plan of salvation.<sup>1</sup> God's great gift of grace flowing from His heart of love for individuals who are lost, confused, and ruined by sin is at work to draw all mankind to Himself. Man cannot earn salvation through works; but, when salvation comes to the human heart by grace through faith, the works preordained for him to accomplish will be the fruit of his labor of love (Ephesians 2:8-10). It is not God's desire that man would perish - left to himself; rather, that eternal life might be his through faith in Jesus, the Christ, His only begotten Son (John 3:16). God's infinite plan of grace is to bring glory to Himself through the righteousness of Jesus Christ by drawing all men to Himself through the Holy Spirit at work in human hearts and lives equipping all who believe. (Ephesians 2:7 and Romans 12:3-3).

God's infinite plan was in place before the foundation of the earth was laid; before time began. The grace of God has been explained as "**God's Riches at Christ's Expense**"; yet Jesus explains that He willingly gave up His life of His own free will (John 3:16). It was the plan of the Godhead known in its entirety from the beginning to the end; the alpha and omega before He said, "In the beginning..." (Genesis 1:1). Faith is the willingness of mankind to believe God's word without having literal sight. Those who seek the face of God and long for their faith to become sight concerning salvation by grace through faith will need to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world whom the prophets of old foretold would come in precise succession of events unfolding from the pre-determined plan of God. The first Adam rebelled against God and fell from his perfect state of being united in fellowship with his Creator (Genesis 3:6-8). God's first

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 3 *Soteriology* (Grand Rapids, Kregel Publications, 1976), pg. 10.

promise to Adam was that he would surely die if he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). In that day that Adam and his wife Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, they died spiritually and began dying physically. The entire human race has inherited Adam's sin nature (imputed sin) (Romans 5:12). Jesus of Nazareth, the only begotten Son of God *through whom all will be made alive*, inherited His Father's nature of being just, perfect, loving, kind, gentle, holy, truthful, sinless, and righteous. He did not inherit the sin nature of Adam of being unjust, imperfect, unloving, unkind, harsh, unholy, and untruthful. Jesus was born of a virgin (Luke 1:26-36), for *nothing is impossible with God* (Luke 1:37). Joseph never had sexual relations with his wife Mary until after Jesus was born (John 3:16; Matthew 1:1-17; I Corinthians 15:22; Matthew 1:24).

The theanthropic Person of Jesus Christ is fully the Son of God and fully the Son of Man.<sup>2</sup> Jesus of Nazareth was prophesied by Isaiah as the *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace* (Isaiah 9:6-7). He came from His Father and returned to His Father (John 16:28). God the Father is Spirit and those who worship Him *must worship Him in spirit and in truth* (John 4:23-24). Jesus claimed Himself to be *the way, the truth, and the life and that no man can come unto the Father except through Him* (John 14:6). When Philip asked to see the Father, Jesus responded by saying, "*Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father*" (John 14:8-9). The hovering Holy Spirit of Creation (Genesis 1:1) and the Father have now *come into union with that which is human*.<sup>3</sup>

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are co-equal, co-existent, and co-substantial.<sup>4</sup> God who is Spirit cannot die nor lie; therefore, He manifested Himself by begetting His only Son in human flesh who could pay the ultimate price (John 4:24; Hebrews 6:18). God the Son in a hematic human state on earth now lives eternally in the glorified body that bears the wounds of the crucifixion by mankind when His death and the spilled blood purchased the human race through His redemptive sacrifice upon the cross (John 20:24-28; Revelation 5:6; Leviticus 17:11). The moment Jesus decreed, "It is finished," bowed His head, and died, the next drop of blood purified all mankind of all sins: past, present and future (John 19:30; John 1:29; II

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pg.15.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Class notes, Dr. Dave Olander, Systematic Theology III.

Corinthians 5:21).<sup>5</sup> He freely yielded His life to be released from the earthly body; no man took His life from Him (John 10:18). Christ's resurrection defeated death, burial, and the grave. His ascension to the right hand of God, released the gift of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all mankind bringing glory to Himself and to the Father ((Acts 2:33; Philippians 2:11).

Jesus as Savior and Lord of all mankind is the reigning Prophet, Great High Priest, and King of kings. He is the *Messiah* of the Old Testament and the *Christ* of the New Testament who carries this three-fold responsibility, according to Chafer.<sup>6</sup> As prophet, Jesus came as the Son of Man to speak 'man to man' the eternal thought and word of God, or *Logos*, from an infinite heart of love as being one with the Father and the Spirit. He manifested the Father to man and fulfilled every prophecy written about Him that had to be fulfilled before His death, after His resurrection, and His ascension. Before the end of time, the eschatological prophecies of Genesis 3:15, Daniel, Ezekiel, and John's Revelation will indeed be fulfilled in His perfect timing, according to His predetermined plan.

As man's Great High Priest and at work with the Triune God, Jesus entered the Holy of Holies and offered His holy life's blood on the mercy seat by the Cross of Calvary *once for all...obtaining* humanity's *eternal redemption* (Hebrews 9:11-12). He has become the mediator before God the Father of the new covenant putting in motion the reality that man may serve the living God. The Old Testament law says *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins* (Hebrews 9:22). By looking to the cross by grace through faith of the perfect work Jesus accomplished by His unblemished sacrificial offering of Himself, man's sins are stamped, "PAID IN FULL". Jesus represented Himself as fully man to God on behalf of mankind.<sup>7</sup>

Isaiah prophesied that as King, the Messiah would have *the government upon His shoulders ...and of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end ...upon David's throne and over his kingdom...forever* (Isaiah 9:7). The *King of the Jews* (Matt. 2:2) lineage of Joseph and Mary ties Jesus of Nazareth to the Davidic throne (Matt. 1:6 and Luke 3:31). Mary was promised that her first born Son was to be named Jesus; that He was to be called the Son of the Highest; that the throne of His father David would be given to Him; that He would reign over the house of Jacob forever; and, that His kingdom

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Chafer, pg. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pg. 17.

would have no end (Luke 1:32-33). One day, Jesus will return with His saints to earth to set up His millennial, earthly reign as King of kings, and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16). His ultimate kingdom will have no end (Revelation 22:5).

God's attributes of omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, and immutability have no limitation in infinity. The divine election of God is that all would come to Christ for He is not willing that any should perish but for all to come to repentance (II Peter 3:9). God knows all things and as a result; He knew before the foundation of the earth who of His creation would accept His plan of salvation which He set in motion and carries out *by the zeal of the Lord Almighty* (Isaiah 9:7). He knew the alpha and He knows the omega: the beginning from the end of all things. His power has always been at work and will never cease to maintain and sustain heaven and earth. God changes not: He is *the same yesterday, today, and forevermore* (Hebrews 13:8). Psalm 135: 6 says, "*Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.*"

The Sovereign God's plan to bring glory to Himself through the righteousness of God to redeem fallen man back to Himself was *Logos* (His thoughts). The Triune God's Divine plan was/is being carried out by His Spirit through the *Logos*, or written Word, of the Old Testament prophets. Jesus, the Christ of the New Testament, worked with the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit (John 1:1).<sup>8</sup> The conception by the Holy Spirit and a young virgin, the details of Christ's birth, His righteousness, and the miracles were all a part of the Divine Plan. His ministry, death on a cross, and spilled innocent blood which serves as a covering for all sin were rendered by the Plan. The third day resurrection, the 43<sup>rd</sup> day of ascension, and the reward of the outpouring of His Holy Spirit upon all mankind on the 50<sup>th</sup> day were known by God before time began in Genesis 1 (Romans 1:16-17). The actions and thoughts of man were all known by God. The acceptance or rejection of the free gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ was known by the Sovereign God before the creation of the earth.

Jesus Christ manifested the Godhead on the earth. He came into history with a predetermined purpose at the exact moment timed by God. Concerning the cross, He said, "*For this cause came I into the world*" (John 18:37); for mankind, "*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost*"

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<sup>8</sup> Chafer, pg. 31.

(Luke 19:10). Through the unimaginable suffering of innocent Deity, Jesus Christ paid the sin debt owed by the human race by becoming our substitute on the Cross of Calvary and dying in our stead (Isaiah 53:1-12; Romans 8:32; Galatians 3:13). Paul says in II Corinthians 5:14 that “*For the love of Christ constrains us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.*” We know that Christ died for the ungodly ...*while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:6-8).

The nation of Israel was created by God for Himself (Isaiah 43:1 and 15). The God-given covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/Israel are forever (Genesis 12:1-3, 15:3-21, 45:5; Deuteronomy 30; and Joshua 24), regardless of what the nations of the world try to redefine. True Judaism handed down by God through Moses to Israel required the blood of goats, bulls, and the sprinkling of the ashes of a red heifer without spot nor blemish as a sacrifice for cleansing because of the nation’s defilement. The blood of the unblemished Son of God, spilled for the sins of the world, cleanses the believer so that through the cleansed vessel, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, service to the living God is made possible (Hebrews 9:14).

The Abrahamic Covenant and the Davidic Covenant (II Samuel 7:8-17; I Chronicles 17; Jeremiah 33; and Isaiah 60-66) were given to an eternal group of people through whom Jesus, King of the Jews came; His Kingdom will have no end. The conflict of the nations rebelling against the divine plan of God to keep His covenants and promises has been at the heart of world wars throughout time.

Jeremiah 31:27-40 gives the promise of The New Covenant dealing with the sin issue that separates fallen man from a holy God and restores through the plan of reconciliation. The promise was made essentially with Israel and not the church of the New Testament.<sup>9</sup> This covenant deals with the individual’s personal relationship with God, reflected in a holy lifestyle; yet, *universally effectual on all of Israel.*<sup>10</sup> Forgiveness of sin would be provided by the substitutionary Sacrifice of sin spoken of in Isaiah 53 and ratified by Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:26-29).<sup>11</sup> The Jewish people will have the land promised for all eternity. The New Covenant’s national provisions for Israel will

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<sup>9</sup> Christopher Cone, *The Promises of God; A Bible Survey* (Arlington: Exegetica Publishing & Biblical Resources, 2005), pg. 137.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 138.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

be manifested after Jacob's Trouble when Jesus Christ the King of kings sets up His millennial reign upon the earth. 9

Salvation for the Gentiles is promised in The Abrahamic promise when Scripture says, "...in you all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." The gift of forgiveness found in The New Covenant was revealed by the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles in the Book of Acts to the Gentiles for forgiveness of sin and the baptism of the Spirit (Ephesians 3:1-5).

The death of Jesus Christ not only provided the sinners' substitutionary Sacrifice for sin; but the propitiation of His life and work at the cross were the means by which man can be reconciled to God. Our Father placed ultimate value upon His only begotten Son: our Redeemer.<sup>12</sup> Jesus became *the propitiation for our sins* (I John 2:2; 4:10)." The Cross of Jesus Christ stood on the designated spot (*hilasterion*) on the earth in order for the blood to fall upon the mercy seat (Greek: *hilasterion*; Hebrew: *kapporeth*) of the ark of the covenant of the Old Testament tabernacle (Hebrews 9:5). The promise of God was that "*between the wings of the cherubim (over the mercy seat) I will meet with you*" Exodus 25:22). From the mercy seat Moses heard a voice speaking to him (Numbers 7:89). Dr. C.I. Scofield in his Bible Correspondence Course says that Christ is the propitiation or *hilasterion*, mercy seat, "throne of grace" because He is the mediator between fallen man and the holy God (Hebrews 4:16).<sup>13</sup> Man deserves the judgment seat; yet God in His loving kindness, provides a mercy seat.

Lewis Sperry Chafer teaches that the publican's prayer, recorded in Luke 18:13, must be considered from the Greek translation as *propitious* rather than *merciful*. God cannot go against His nature and become lenient or generous toward a sinner and the publican did not ask Him to do such a thing. Rather, he asked the Merciful God to be propitious. Being a Jew who had to submit to the Law before the death of Jesus Christ, he brought his offering to the temple and offered a sincere prayer asking for forgiveness. The publican was justified because he asked for the God of his fathers to be propitious to him the sinner. After the death of Jesus Christ, who was the propitiation or appeasement for the sins of man, sinners do not pray to God asking for something to be done that has already been accomplished – once for all!<sup>14</sup> Salvation comes to an unbeliever by the grace of God through his or her own faith that God has

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<sup>12</sup> Chafer, pg. 93.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. pg. 94.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. pg. 95.

already shown His loving mercy by providing His only Son to be the Savior of mankind and that He **is** propitious.<sup>15</sup> I John 2:2 promises that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins and the sins of the whole world.

Because of the precious death of His Son, God is loving toward His enemies even before sins are confessed - demonstrated by the prodigal son who returned to his father and was embraced before confession could be made. The Bible teaches that an unsaved person is free to come to God by faith and be readily received and saved forever (John 3:16). The saved person who sins has also been granted forgiveness and cleansing when confession of sin is made to God (I John 1:9) on the belief of what Jesus Christ has done for one and all.

God in His loving mercy gave Moses the Law to protect His created nation of Israel. The blood atonement of sin in Leviticus 17 is summed up in verse 11 which says, "*For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.*" The atonement of the Blood of Jesus Christ by His righteousness made it possible for man to be "at one" with God.<sup>16</sup> In Romans 5:10 and 11, Paul says that "*even while 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...through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*" The imputed sin of Adam has affected the entire race of mankind. Sin can only be atoned for by the perfect work of the Savior.

The redemption purchased by Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, is greater than can be imagined. The work of redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation began by the explanation of Jesus in the Upper Room Discourse of His High Priestly Prayer of John 17. Jesus spoke to His disciples of the cross, His resurrection, the ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit with the certainty that it was already accomplished in the mind and plan of God.

Chafer points out that Christ died for the elect who make up the Church: the Body of Christ, and that there are at least five entities that are somewhat related to the first. Christ died for the nation of Israel whose twelve tribes are the natural branches of the tree representing life. The root system of covenants and promises were made by God Himself and cannot be denied. (Romans 9-11).<sup>17</sup> Christ death was on display before the fallen angels bringing

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Classnotes for Systematic Theology III, Dr. Dave Olander.

<sup>17</sup> Chafer, pg. 88.

judgment upon them.<sup>18</sup> Christ died for the purification of heaven and for the whole cosmos world.<sup>19</sup>

The redemptive act of God by which He provided Himself to be the price paid for the sins of mankind was required because of His own holiness. Redemption is concerned with the solution of the sin problem; reconciliation deals with the problem of the sinner; and, propitiation focuses on the problem that God is offended.<sup>20</sup> All of the themes are incredibly important yet separate and individually interwoven into the divine perfect work of Christ.

God has redeemed mankind from sin. He brings believers into a relationship with Himself as a bondservant. The price of the slave has been paid by Christ's redemptive blood and by the power of the Triune God that raised Him from the dead. The Holy Spirit will quicken the sinner to move him from bondage into freedom. Redemption was revealed by the nation of Israel being forgiven of their sins by the sacrificial lamb and by being taken out of bondage by supernatural power being exercised by God. First, sinners are redeemed by the Blood of Christ; the Holy Spirit separates believers from sin by bringing the sense of conviction to mind so that correction might come. The order remains fixed: first, redemption; then, the God-given power to overcome sin must be exercised. Thus, the finished work of Christ is threefold in value for the sinner: redemption toward sin, reconciliation toward man, and a propitiation toward God.<sup>21</sup>

The only part that includes man is that he simply believes that God has provided a Savior for him.<sup>22</sup> As believers stand forever forgiven, accepted, and secure in peace with God according to Romans 5:1, the glory of God that will remain throughout the ages is revealed as He brings all who will believe in Jesus unto Himself (Hebrews 2:10) thereby justifying the ungodly.

The completed work of the Triune God saves to the uttermost. God is the Author, Executor, and Consummator of the salvation of mankind according to Jonah 2:9 and Psalm 3:8.<sup>23</sup> "Salvation is from the LORD/Jehovah/Yahweh and belongs to the LORD/Jehovah/Yahweh." This completed work of divine election before the foundation of the earth (Ephesians 1:4) avails for whosoever

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. pg, 208.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. pg. 207.



will believe (John 3:16) by God's gift of grace to mankind and through his faith in Jesus Christ. Man plays no part in the gift of salvation by his own merit, offense of sin, or good works. However, the gift has to be accepted (choice by the recipient).

The Three Persons of the Godhead, all actively engaged in the work of salvation which is from Jehovah, provides the eternal gift of life to mankind. The Second Person of the Trinity, God the Son, became a human being while maintaining His deity in a hypostatic union. His crucifixion involved God the Father reconciling the world unto Himself by offering His "Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world" (John 1:29) by the work of the eternal Holy Spirit (Hebrews 9:14). The completed work of God's grace toward man is found in Christ Jesus (Colossians 1:15-19) whom He has made to be head of the Church. By putting faith in Christ, "whosoever will may come" and be a part of His living Body by believing in the finished work of salvation.

Jesus told Nicodemus, "You must be born again (John 3:7)". Unbelievers cannot see the kingdom of God (vs. 3) apart from the work of the crucified, buried, and resurrected Son of God. By being born in the natural, all may be born of the Spirit by grace through faith provided by the incarnate Christ.

Unregenerate man left to himself will never turn his favor toward God. Therefore, the work of God through the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential in drawing individuals to salvation provided through Jesus Christ. Only those individuals whom the Spirit of God *calls, draws, and enlightens* are included in the divine election of grace. The omniscient God extends His invitation to all yet many will not respond. The work of Christians to carry out the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20, filled with the Holy Spirit and led by Him, will carry the Gospel; however, it is up to individuals to respond to His call. Chafer explains Romans 8:30 by claiming: "*It is clearly indicated that one hundred percent of those predestinated are called, and one hundred percent of those called are justified, and one hundred percent of those justified are glorified.*"<sup>24</sup>

The eternal security of the believer lies in God's promise to the saint that he shall be "*kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (I Peter 1:5).*" *The Westminster Confession of Faith* says, "*They whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor*

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid. pg. 211.

*finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved* (17:1). “Of the believer” is the key to the eternal security part of the Scripture. If you do not believe...you will not inherit the kingdom of God. If you believe, you will inherit the kingdom of God. Simple...yet most important! Believers receive heaven...Unbelievers won't and will forever be condemned.

The Arminian view of salvation originated with Jacob Arminius who was a Dutch scholar of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. He was schooled in theology and held philosophical premises concerning God's sovereign decree and man's freedom to choose. He and his followers taught that God doesn't elect all sinners to be saved; however, He wills for all men to be saved and provides the prevenient grace for one and all to come to Christ. God initiates the process yet men must throw their hat in the ring in order to be elected.<sup>25</sup> The security of the believer is questioned when Christians fall into sin and appear to cease from being a part of the Body of Christ. The keeping power is based upon the individual yielding to the Holy Spirit and following through by human merit and conduct.<sup>26</sup> His followers drew up the Remonstrance in 1610 maintaining that election to salvation is based on foreseen faith; Christ died for the sins of all men; grace can be resisted; and perseverance as a Christian is based upon the individuals work apart from the help of God.<sup>27</sup>

John Calvin (1509-64) believed and taught that all knowledge of God is found only in the Word of God.<sup>28</sup> Followers believe that God reveals Himself only to those whom He chooses to make Himself known. Pardon from sin and grace to believe in Christ Jesus are by the work of the Holy Spirit. His idea of predestination claimed that before the foundation of the earth, God chose some to be partakers in salvation and others were destined for destruction.<sup>29</sup> The pan-reformed Synod of Dort (1618) derived the five points of Calvinism in opposition to the Arminian view of Christianity which can be remembered easily by the acrostic of TULIP: Total depravity of man; Unconditional election; Limited atonement (limited to the elect); Irresistible grace; and Preservation of the saints.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Class notes by Paul Hennebury, Systematic Theology.

<sup>26</sup> Chafer, pg. 268.

<sup>27</sup> Tim Dowley, *Introduction to The History of Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), pg. 375.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 381.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

The Calvinistic system is held by Chafer to be based upon the inspired word of God through the writings of Paul. Salvation comes because man is the object of divine grace even in his depravity. The efficacious grace of God that is at work saving man is a free gift of God to man. The sovereign and eternal election means that before the foundation of the earth (Ephesians 1:4; Romans 8:30) Jehovah God knew who would accept the free gift of grace and live eternally blessed in the kingdom of God. The eternal security for all who are chosen by God and believe by grace through faith in Jesus Christ are preserved in this life in preparation for the kingdom of God, of necessity.<sup>31</sup> The claim of comfort is that *“sovereign election purposes this and sovereign grace accomplishes it, the Scriptures ...declare the Christian’s security without reservation or complication.”*<sup>32</sup>

Kenneth Copeland published a biography of *John G. Lake His Life, His Sermons, His Boldness of Faith* in 1994. A point is made that the work of God in the yielded human heart will change the nature of the born-again believer through the regeneration process until the likeness of Christ appears in the life-long process. Many theologians would agree that this is the ideal. The power of God the Holy Spirit is at work within the saint; however, the saint does not become a god, as Lake states.<sup>33</sup> His claim that I John 3:2 should be interpreted that believers are gods as *“sons of God”* has led people into error. A child of God is a created being who has been given the free gift of salvation by the efficacious grace of the Triune God through faith in Jesus Christ. Once a male or female, always a male or female: regardless of an operation and drug enhancement to alter the state. Once a child of God – always a child of God; nothing can separate us from the love of the Triune God (Romans 8: 38-39). God foreknew us and predestined us to become conformed to the image of His Son so that we would grow up to be just like Him (Romans 8:29) in character, virtue, and holiness.

The freedom from the bondage of sin is based upon the indwelling Holy Spirit and the love of God. The work of the Triune God has secured a perfect union, a perfect standing, and a perfect acceptance between the believer and Himself so that God remains just even as He justifies the ungodly (Romans 8:30).<sup>34</sup> Communion, fellowship, and a walk which is well pleasing to God is a

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid. pg. 268.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Kenneth Copeland, *John G. Lake, His Life, His Sermons, His Boldness of Faith* (Fort Worth: Kenneth Copeland Publications, 1994) pg.13.

<sup>34</sup> Chafer, pg.356.

work in progress between the believer and the Holy Spirit who has come to help, teach, convict, guide, comfort, and move upon hearts to do good works (John 16:7-15; I Timothy 6:12, 18).

The Calvinists hold to the completed saving work of Christ for their own peace and eternal security. Their daily walk, though imperfect, does not shake their belief in their everlasting right standing before a holy God. The Armenians understanding of Soteriology is based upon the weakness of man with his bent toward sinning and his daily battle of trying to overcome the evil of this world by begging God to do what has already been accomplished through the perfect work of Christ. Building faith on the sufficiency and immutable merit of Christ Jesus and His absolute finished work draws the Christian to a higher level of desiring to love the One who first loved us and gave Himself for us. Not only are Christians **saved** by Christ, all are eternally **safe** in Christ.<sup>35</sup>

Christians face three grave opposing forces which prove to be sources of evil: the cosmos world, the flesh, and the devil.<sup>36</sup> The worldview is diametrically opposed to the biblical worldview to which believers should adhere because the former is ruled over by Satan, the prince of darkness, and his fallen angels (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The educational system of California recently adopting the homosexual curriculum for public schools is a product of the work of Satan. The worldwide pornographic industry was birthed from the mind of Satan to turn mankind into idolatry and away from any desire to worship God. The problems within governments; jealousies between nations, religions, races, radicals; the much needed armaments of militaries, and their warfare are all ploys of Satan.

Jesus encourages believers to be of good cheer because He has overcome the world/cosmos (John 16:33). By believing in the One who has overcome the cosmos, victory has been won. I John 5:4-5 declares that those born of God, overcomes; the Spirit within bears witness that the believer is in Christ; and therefore, preserved from the cosmos.

The born-again believer overcomes the flesh by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. The fallen nature of man which cannot be eradicated hangs onto the child of God as long as they remain upon the earth and can only be

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid. pg. 357.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

overcome by the staying power of the indwelling Holy Spirit of the Living God.<sup>37</sup> Replacing wrong thinking with the Word of God wins the battles of the soul nature. Causing the literal flesh body to kneel in the presence of a Holy God (as Daniel, and James with his “camel-knees”, practiced daily) and speaking prayers from the heart through open lips, with upraised arms/hands, and with ears listening for the Spirit speaking the Word of God afresh, hearts are renewed and changed in His presence. Prayer changes things. Faith is strengthened by being exercised twenty-four/seven.

The devil desires to sift Christians as wheat just as Jesus warned Peter in Luke 22:31.

Comfort comes in the same breath, of verse 32: “...*but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.*” The supernatural work of the Triune God is the eternal defense for the Christian against this ‘glory-seeking fallen choir director’. When Jesus died after declaring: “It is finished”, Satan was judged (John 16:11; Colossians 2:14-15) and condemned to Hell. He awaits the moment when saints will witness Jesus kicking him into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20). Believers can only be delivered from the power of darkness by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Paul tells Christians that “*our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places* (Ephesians 6:12).

God has given believers weapons to use against the wiles of our arch enemy in Ephesians 6: 10-18 - since the enemy in all of life’s battles is not of this world. The helmet worn by believers of His gift of salvation rests in knowing the truth of what has been previously discussed. The Word of God has the power to keep the Christian’s heart in perfect peace (Isaiah 26:3). The breastplate of righteousness is the covering Jesus has given us of His own perfect righteousness - unlike the fig leaves Adam and Eve sought. The belt of truth is worn around the waist cinching up the truth felt at gut-level of John 14:6 that our Lord and Savior said, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.*” Our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. The shield of faith in the perfect work of Jesus will protect believers against the fiery darts the enemy flings against us. We carry the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God hidden in our hearts ready to use at a moment’s notice and on guard even as we sleep (Psalm 91; 139).

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<sup>37</sup> Chafer, pg. 359.

The love of God for the world since time began is expressed countless times throughout the Sacred Scriptures. The gift-tag of love presented to His creation reads, “*Salvation is of Jehovah*”. Inside the package the recipient will find Chafer’s summation: “*the sphere of the finished work, the enlightening work, the saving work, the keeping work, and the presenting work.*”<sup>38</sup> Jehovah offers the gift to all who will believe by His efficacious grace: one of His most conspicuous attributes.<sup>39</sup> Sovereign God loves mankind, desires a relationship with each one, and has revealed Himself as a personal Friend. He has made it possible for those who embrace His gift of salvation with the promise of eternal life (John 3:16), by the grace He extends through faith, to be seated with Him in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). He alone transforms lost humanity into the image of Christ by reconciliation (Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 1:13-22). Failure to receive the gift of salvation will result in being lost and doomed to a devil’s Hell meant only for those already condemned by the holiness of Almighty God – El Gabor. Man left to himself in the imputed sin of Adam’s fall is pictured in Romans 3:9-19. Man connects himself to Satan rather than to Jehovah God. “*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Romans 6:23).”

The plan of salvation provided by the Triune God can be explained simply that it is a secured gift by believing on Jesus Christ as Savior. *Sola scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia*: Sacred Scripture alone, faith alone, grace alone have been given as the three witnesses of absolute truth for every man, woman, boy, and girl whereby salvation may be received by grace through faith. The omniscient God knows all who will receive His ultimate gift as well as all who will reject eternal life in heaven with Him. The Holy Spirit offers grace to all who will believe.

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<sup>38</sup> Chafer, pg. 369.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

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