

Accomplished Plan of Salvation (9)

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果たされた救いの計画 9
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1 Thessalonians

4:1 Now then, brothers, you learned from us how you ought to live and to please God, as in fact you are doing. We ask and encourage you in the Lord to do so even more.

4:2 You know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

4:3 For it is God's will that you be sanctified: You must abstain from sexual immorality.
[International Standard Version]

We have been discussing together on the subject, "the salvation that is in our hands." Actually, we set three questions and have been trying to find the answers.

First of all, what is it that we need to obtain? The answer is the eternal life that is in Jesus.

The second question was how we can obtain it and the answer to this question was by regeneration, through the encounter with Jesus.

Thirdly, how much do we have to obtain? Last week we began to think about four steps we have to go through, namely; regeneration, growth, maturity and perfection.

We all need to experience these four steps. Not only do we have to be saved, but we have to grow too. Parents will be so delighted when a new child is born. However, if this child does not seem to grow at all, it will cause nothing but distress to them. Now, what is the will of our Lord God?

His will is that everyone who sees the Son, that is to say, Jesus and believes in him should have the eternal life. Furthermore, God also desires you to be purified. If we refuse to grow, we will just cause him distress.

Paul wrote to brothers and sisters in Philippi;

Philippians

3:20 Our citizenship, is in heaven, and it is from there that we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus, the Messiah.

They will be in trouble if they do not want to wait.

Philippians

3:21 He will change our unassuming bodies and make them like his glorious body through the power that enables him to bring everything under his authority.

Although this is beyond our imagination, it is clearly promised and thus it will definitely be accomplished. On the day to come, when we look up to Jesus, our bodies will be transformed so that they will be like his body according to this verse.

1 John

3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given us: We are called God's children—and that is what we are! For this reason the world does not recognize us, because it did not recognize him, either.

3:2 Dear friends, we are now God's children, but what we will be like has not been revealed yet. We know that....

In the original Bible, a stronger expression is used, which is "we are certainly convinced that";

1 John

3:2when the Messiah is revealed, we will be like him, because we will see him as he is.

Paul too never ceased to pray for the growth of the saved people.

Galatians

4:19 My children, I am suffering birth pains for you again until the Messiah is formed in you.

Although Paul was not married and had no child, when he wrote this letter, he was thinking of all who encountered Jesus and were saved through him as his children.

Paul confessed in this verse that he was suffering horrible pain, which agonized him. It is written that we are becoming more like the Son with ever-increasing glory by the Holy Spirit, who is the Lord's Spirit. It is extremely important for us to be convinced of this fact. What is the purification that is demanded from us in the Bible?

Many people misinterpret the purification in a wrong and dangerous way. They believe that during the purification, they need to have some specific experience or need to be preoccupied with it, which is absolutely wrong.

Many people expect to see some outward changes as an outcome of purification. However, this is not biblical. It is a misinterpretation of the purification. We do not need to have a specific new disposition or external signs to appear. The important thing is to have faith that Jesus himself dwells inside us and we will eventually be transformed to the image of the

Lord.

The process of purification is called by many different names; for example, blessing of being purified, baptism with the Holy Spirit, blessing of pure hearts, perfect love, anointing of oil, Pentecost and so on. However these are names given by humans, which do not have any significance.

What is significant for us is to undermine our ego or self-esteem. Nothing should be more important for us than to surrender the control of our lives to the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. It is to be led step by step so that we can experience the cross and the power of resurrection. The Holy Spirit is trying to govern the strength of our souls and flesh. When we think of this, we will realize how immature it is for Christians to ask for emotional changes or some outward signs.

I would like to raise one question and discuss it. When we surrender our control to the Holy Spirit, what will actually happen as the consequence?

First of all, Jesus will finally become a reality of our life. Jesus once said;

John

16:14 He (the Spirit) will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

This way, Jesus explained the way the Holy Spirit works and the mission the Spirit gives you. If we surrender the control of ourselves to the Spirit, the Spirit will project the image of Jesus larger than ever in front of our eyes. The Holy Spirit does not talk about himself.

The Holy Spirit always glorifies Jesus alone. All believers have been crucified alongside Jesus, who was crucified, died, buried and then resurrected, was raised and was glorified.

However, this has to be the reality of all believers. In early churches, it became the true reality of the believers. All other miracles, signs and gifts are merely outcomes of unification with Jesus of believers in early churches. Jesus has to be a reality in our daily lives.

Secondly, the word of the Lord God will have more and more vital significance in our lives.

John

16:15 All that the Father has is mine. That is why I said, 'He will take what is mine and declare it to you.'

When we put our control into the hands of the Holy Spirit, suddenly the Bible begins to look a little different and eventually will be completely different to

you. If we totally surrender ourselves to the Holy Spirit, we will begin to hear the voice of the Lord through the Bible. It will be as if our faces are unveiled all of a sudden.

Thirdly, the victory over the devil will also be added to our real experience. Paul wrote to brothers and sisters in Rome;

Romans

6:10 For when he died, he died once and for all as far as sin is concerned. But now that he is alive, he lives for God.

6:11 In the same way, you too must continually consider yourselves dead as far as sin is concerned, but living for God through the Messiah Jesus.

These verses tell us that when Jesus died, he died unto sins. For we all died with Jesus, it means that we also died unto sins. Jesus was resurrected into the world without sin.

We have become one with this new life of the Lord Jesus. If we believe in this fact and act based on this fact, the victory by the Holy Spirit over the devil will be a reality in our daily lives.

Fourthly, as we devote our daily lives to help other people, the love of the Lord God will be shown in there;

2 Corinthians

4:5 For we do not preach ourselves, but rather Jesus the Messiah as Lord, and ourselves as merely your servants for Jesus' sake.

Paul and his co-workers became servants of other people. If we surrender ourselves to the Holy Spirit, as the ones who love the Lord, we will no longer serve the Lord out of obligation. We will never say again, "I have to do this and I am supposed to do that,"; instead, we will come to feel so grateful for being privileged to do the service for the Lord.

Fifthly, you will then begin to understand better the plan that the Lord God has for you.

John

16:13 Yet when the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own accord, but will speak whatever he hears and will declare to you the things that are to come.

Above all things, we will come to eagerly wait for the Advent of Jesus. It is written that, "This is necessary because you know the times—it's already time for you to wake up from sleep." (Romans 13:11). Nothing is more important for us than to wait for the second coming of Jesus. He might come today.

Sixthly, we will come to realize the power of resurrection.

Romans

8:11 And if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then the one who raised the Messiah from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive by his Spirit who lives in you.

This power of resurrection will instantly alter our bodies at the time of his Advent. We need to understand that the Holy Spirit is the power of resurrection given to our daily lives.

Seventhly, we will attain the power of prayer and testimony.

Acts

1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

This was the very mission given to the disciples of Jesus and what they actually went through.

Matthew

28:18 Then Jesus came up and told them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

28:19 Therefore, as you go, disciple people in all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

28:20 teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. And remember, I am with you each and every day until the end of the age."

Jesus is the almighty. As we are now one with Jesus, we have the power of testimony and prayer. These seven things I just explained mark the beginning of purification and transformation. As believers of Jesus, we have the Holy Spirit.

However, that is not enough. We need to be transformed to the image of Jesus. The path to reach that point is the purification and the transformation. Only by surrendering ourselves to the Holy Spirit will we be transformed to the image of Jesus.

"Keep on being filled with the Spirit." We are not just encouraged to do so, but rather, are demanded. This is not a matter of emotion, but a matter of intention. Whether you surrender your entire life to the Holy Spirit is the decision you have to make.

It will be a wonderful blessing if we can surrender everything newly to the Holy Spirit today. We have to believe that the Holy Spirit has taken over the authority to control us. These are both matters of

your own decision. We do not need to wait until tomorrow morning. The Lord always desires to give us everything.

Romans

13:11 This is necessary because you know the times—it's already time for you to wake up from sleep, because our salvation is nearer now than when we became believers.

13:12 The night is almost over, and the day is near. Let's therefore put aside the actions of darkness and put on the armor of light.

13:13 Let's behave decently, as people who live in the light of day. No wild parties, drunkenness, sexual immorality, promiscuity, quarreling, or jealousy!

13:14 Instead, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, and do not obey your flesh and its desires.

These verses are telling you that what the God wants from you is to be purified. Paul prayed for brothers and sisters in Ephesus those days;

Ephesians

1:17 I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, the most glorious Father, would give you a wise spirit, along with revelation that comes through knowing the Messiah fully.

In here the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of revelation. The mission of the Holy Spirit is written in John, chapter 16, verse 14; "the Spirit will glorify me." The word 'revelation' is used very often in the Bible. Paul also used this word a number of times.

Galatians

1:12 For I did not receive it from a man, nor was I taught it, but it was revealed to me by Jesus the Messiah.

What is the difference between revelation and education? People can neither be saved nor transformed by so-called education, by information or by learning something. However, by revelation, by the light from above, people begin to see through the eyes of their hearts, which give them the conviction and they will be totally transformed.

They may not be able to explain it logically or comprehend how they could be saved. Still, they can declare that "I am the child of God and I am convinced that all my arrogance is now forgiven."

When Jesus was a 12-year-old, he was in the Temple in Jerusalem and explained the plan of the Lord, which amazed the Bible Scholars of those days.

Luke

2:46 Three days later, they found him in the

Temple sitting among the teachers, listening to them, and posing questions to them.
47 All who heard him were amazed at his intelligence and his answers.

The teachers were amazed at the intelligence of the 12-year-old Jesus and discussed what he spoke of. However, they were not interested in who Jesus truly was and did not have the chance to find it out. It was because they did not have a light from above. Contrarily, one of the thieves crucified next to Jesus said a remarkable thing, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom!"

"You don't have to help me now, but please remember me when you come into your kingdom in a later time," thus he prayed. Jesus answered him, "I tell you with certainty, today you will be with me in Paradise." For this man, the time of the Lord was this day. This phrase often appears in the Bible; "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."

This thief was convinced by the revelation from above that Jesus could save even a man like him. When he begged to remember him, he actually pleaded for salvation and forgiveness of all his offenses, sins, faults and arrogance. Those who take an attitude like this shall all be saved without exception. When this criminal said, "remember me," he meant not to remember his sins anymore but forget them. The Lord already had replied with this promise;

Isaiah
43:25 I, I am the one who blots out your transgression for my own sake, and I'll remember your sins no more.

The desire of the Lord God is, not only for us to become the children of god, but to be transformed to the image of Jesus.

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