

Foreword

As a young farmer, the author had a longing for salvation, security, and assurance. The nearest he got to it was, "Save us at last." When the joy of salvation by grace broke upon him, he had an eager desire to lead others into that blessed assurance.

The booklet deals briefly with ten great theological words, including foreordination, predestination, and sanctification. But it is not a theological treatise, and the writer does not attempt to deal with the mysteries that have puzzled the greatest scholars. Rather, his is the practical purpose of helping plain people out of doubt into a real experience of God's sure salvation—begun, continued, and completed by grace through faith.

One of the striking features of Mr. Humberd's books is the abundance of homely, effective illustrations. This short booklet contains thirty or more, many of them from farm life and other common fields of human interest.

Very great and beyond our understanding is God's provision for salvation, but very simple is our responsibility. This great fact our brother's booklet makes clear and many have already been helped by it.

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Preface

“At last save me.” Such was my heart's desire, and such were the closing words of my every prayer. I had gone to church from my early childhood; I had joined the church in early youth, but had never grasped the truth of salvation by the grace of God.

Years passed. I married and moved on a farm. The Lord prospered my efforts, but still was that unanswered cry of my heart, “What else must I DO to be saved?” The year of the flu drew on. Churches were closed. A mission in Lost Creek, Kentucky, could not continue without workers, but none ventured forth. One day my telephone rang, and the conversation centered around the Kentucky workers.

“I wish we could go,” said my wife as I turned from the telephone. Instantly I was struck with the same idea, but such was impossible. Did I not have thousands of dollars in stock and farm equipment? Dare I take my wife and child into the flu-infested mountains where a doctor was scarcely seen? But two weeks later we were there, hoping to add to my merit for salvation by this service.

One evening we gathered for a workers meeting in the home of Reverend G. E. Drushal, the godly superintendent of the mission. “At last save us,” was the closing words of my prayer. Across the room sat my wife and a young woman from Moody Bible Institute. Hearing my closing words, she immediately answered with Scripture, and after a few moments of conversation the glorious light of God's salvation burst in upon my troubled soul. There was no worker's meeting that night. My joy and excitement furnished the remaining conversation of the evening.

My whole life turned about. People were not getting

these truths in the churches. I must go and tell them! Other great and precious joys were to come into my heart as I was led into deeper truths while I attended Moody Bible Institute.

It is with a sincere desire that I write this booklet, setting forth the elements of our salvation in such a simple manner that, had such a booklet fallen into my hands while still a farmer, I could have read and rejoiced in a full and free salvation.

The Author

Salvation, Security, and Assurance

Salvation

“Where to?”

“Cincinnati.”

“This car, sir.”

I boarded the Pullman and was soon asleep in my berth. When I awoke the next morning we were nearing Cincinnati. How easy it was to make that long trip. But just because I slept through the long journey does not mean that it was an easy matter to take me over those hundreds of miles.

For years men had worked, building bridges, cutting through hills, filling up valleys, placing ties, and laying rails. That night men were awake all along the way, giving orders, flashing signals, toiling, watching, and working. It took an enormous amount of work to get me from Detroit to Cincinnati, but I never worried a moment. I merely accepted the invitation of the railroad company and rode through in safety.

“Do you want to go to heaven? I am the way. No man can come to the Father, except through me,” says our Lord.

“But,” cries the carnal mind, “that is too easy! I must do something to earn my salvation and merit the approval of my God.”

But just because we can go to heaven by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is no proof that there is nothing to our salvation. Salvation is the most complicated thing there is. It takes regeneration, justification, sanctification, foreordination, predestination, imputation, propitiation, reconciliation, adoption, election, glorification, and many others to make a perfect salvation. No one can work out even one of these points and no one can go to heaven without every one. Thus, it was necessary for Christ to unwind all the complications and offer it to us as a free gift.

When we accept Christ, “We are complete in Him.” (Col. 2:10), and no one can add to completeness.

Peace

Some twenty years ago I began driving an automobile. I was constantly on edge, fearing

something would go wrong. But now I drive a Buick, and the more I know of its marvelous mechanism, the more faith I have in it, and I now often drive from state to state with no thought of a breakdown.

It is thus with our salvation. The more we know of its marvelous complications, the more we will thank God for it.

Condemnation

“There is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). The great sinner and the small stand alike before God. It is almost the same distance to the sun from either a mole hill or a mountain. It is the same distance to God from the up-and-outer as it is from the down-and-outer. Both have come short of the will of their God, and both alike are under condemnation.

Strange as it may seem, men actually love darkness rather than light (John 3:19). Lift up a board and see the bugs run for cover. They are creatures of darkness and hate the light. It is thus with the natural man. He will gladly embrace any excuse to keep from serving God.

God has provided redemption for “whosoever will” and His work is final. However, many children of God are uneasy and fear to meet the Lord. This fear is because they do not understand their salvation. If we have a large stack of bills on our desk, they need cause us no anxiety if they are stamped “Paid.” When we realize we have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, we can rest assured that we are safe.

As a little lad, I wanted to be saved at any cost. Somehow, I never grasped the truth of salvation by the grace of God. I noted people being baptized, and supposing that was the means of salvation, I planned to be baptized when I became older. But another difficulty presented itself—suppose I should sin after I had been baptized and thus be lost again. I then decided to be baptized and commit suicide before I had time to sin again.

God has promised to reveal the truth to anyone who really wills to do His will (John 7:17). If anyone hungers and thirsts after righteousness, God has pledged Himself to fulfill that heart's desire (Matt. 5:6). What a joy came into my heart when I found that salvation was by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8).

Accepted in Christ

In former years, I was a farmer. At one time I ordered a car load of feed and more was sent than I had ordered. Well do I remember where I stood in the bank talking to my father and fearing to ask the banker for over three thousand dollars. But my father stepped to the window, and how my burden lifted when I saw the banker reach for the note book. My father endorsed the note and I was accepted in him—it was his name that the banker looked at, and not mine.

And so we can “praise the glory of His grace” when we realize that “He hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:6). God looks at His Son, and not at us.

Foreknowledge

“For who He did foreknow, He also did predestinate. . .whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and who He justified, them He also glorified” (Rom. 8:29,30).

We have past knowledge. God also has

foreknowledge. Foreknowledge is memory reversed. God has full knowledge of the past and the future. If He did not know the end from the beginning, His offer of eternal salvation would be worthless, for Satan might sometime succeed in overthrowing His plans, and in bringing His purpose to naught.

“He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). I was one time a member of a building committee for a new church. The architect measured off space in the old building that would be the size of a Sunday school room in the new building. In fact, he brought a picture of the new building with every brick and window in place. He knew every detail of the new edifice before the foundation was even laid. If an architect, being a mere man, knew these things, does it seem unreasonable for God to “know all His works from the beginning of the world”? (Acts 15:18)

If there is difficulty, let us remember that salvation is not presented to our intellect but rather to our faith.

Predestination

“Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate.” Let us note that God does not predestinate some to be saved and others to be lost. We are *“elect according to the foreknowledge of God”* (I Peter 1:2).

This is not fatalism. It leaves no excuse for driving onto a railroad track without looking for a train. Let us remember that the writer of this booklet is not trying to set forth some new and strange doctrine, but rather to make plain a doctrine, most surely set forth in God's Holy Word. If there are mysteries, let us believe what we cannot understand.

Suppose I wish to drive from Pennsylvania to California. We will say that there are three routes. Number ten going through New Orleans; number twenty going through St. Louis, and number thirty going through Chicago. I would consult my maps and deciding to take route thirty, I would predestinate myself to take every turn and go through every city and village on that route.

Let us suppose that God considered four plans. One in which Adam would sin and Eve would not;

one in which Eve would sin and Adam would not; one in which neither would sin; and one in which both would enter into the transgression. As he looked down through the ages, He could see every detail of each plan. When He chose the latter, He predestinated every detail that would follow, knowing that in the ages to come it would better show forth the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:7).

Predestination does not do away with human responsibility. Paul was terribly persecuted, but he endured all things for the elects' sake *“that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory”* (II Timothy 2:10).

“Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him” (Matt. 11:27). Salvation is here presented as absolutely in the hands of Christ and He can reveal the Father to anyone He pleases. But the very next verse puts it all up to man. *“Come unto me all ye that labor.”* Scripture presents both sides and it is up to us to believe both and not run too much to one side of the truth.

Remedy Foreordained

A train, made up in Richmond, Indiana, ran daily to northern Michigan carrying its passengers from the hot sultry air of the South to the wonderful cool breezes of the North. One night it missed orders at a station north of Grand Rapids and plunged on at sixty miles an hour. Frantically the dispatcher worked at the telephone to prevent a collision with the returning train, which was several miles away.

Calling the president of that division, they labored together to get word beyond the speeding train, there being no signal systems as there are now. A great engine with full steam stood in the Grand Rapids yard. Finding their efforts in vain, the president called every available doctor and nurse; he gathered bandages and stretchers, and soon a hospital train was speeding after the fleeing train.

But why did the president do such a peculiar thing? Were not the occupants of those cars enjoying the cooling breezes? Were they not happy in the thoughts of the morrow? Were they not content with their present position?

“They will probably come together in a certain pass,” said the president. And they did, at a combined speed of one hundred twenty miles an hour.

In eternity past, God, through His unerring foreknowledge, looked down through the ages and, seeing the fall of man, He set the gospel train of our salvation in motion before Adam and Eve were formed—Christ the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8).

Unerring Foreknowledge

God, through His foreknowledge, can see the future and work out His plan, “*According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:*” (Eph. 3:11). He can best be glorified though certain events in the affairs of mankind which He permits to come to pass.

Jeroboam's son died because in him there was found some good thing toward the Lord God (I Kings 14:11). God let him die because at that time He could better work out His purpose in a wicked man.

When Pharaoh was born, God, looking

through the future years of his life, saw his every movement and raised him up and let him live in order to show forth His own power in Pharaoh and thus have His name declared through the earth (Rom. 9:17).

Invitation

“Whom he did predestinate, them He also called.” This does not say He does not also give an opportunity to those who do not respond. The first two links of the chain that binds us to the throne of God are in the past. When we are born the third link comes into view and God then invites us to accept His grace. *“Whereunto He called you by our gospel”* (II Thes. 2:14).

When we accept His invitation, He immediately seals us with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13), and that seal is unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). Let us note that this sealing is final and there is no provision for a person to break it. We are not saved one day and lost the next.

Everyone who God foreknows, He predestinates; everyone He predestinates, He calls; everyone He calls (who respond), He justifies; and everyone He justifies, He also glorifies.

Past Tense

In this verse, *“Whom He justified, them He also glorified”* the word *glorified* is in the past tense. God is so sure that He will glorify every one He justifies that He speaks of it as already past. Moses and Elijah stood on the Mount of Transfiguration in glorious garments. Being sinners, they could stand there only in virtue of the shed blood of Christ and Christ had not yet died. But His death was so certain in the mind of God, that they could stand there ahead of time. In the sight of God, the justified person is as sure of glory as if he were already there. This is God's side of our salvation and there is no provision for falling away. There is not a man who God justifies who He cannot glorify.

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Phil. 1:6).

Hezekiah's Security

When God told Hezekiah He would add to his days fifteen years, He made no provision for Hezekiah to die before that time. In fact, he could not have died in ten or twelve years. Some may ask, “What if he were to drink poison?” It was life

that Hezekiah desired and he would not have desired to drink poison.

Our salvation would not be safe if left in our hands, but when we trust Christ, we can rest assured *“that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day”* (II Tim. 1:12).

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life;” (John 10:27,28a). If God gives us eternal life we cannot perish in a year or in one hundred or in one million years. Someone may ask, “Could not a person lose himself?” Where is there a person with eternal life who really wants to be lost? It is the desire for life that has led them to the Lord.

There are often people who were very faithful in church work and later fall away. This does not mean that they were saved at first and then lost their salvation. Many who have prophesied (preachers) and done many wonderful works (deacons, church members) will hear those fearful words, “Depart from me.” (Matt. 7:22). Thus, those who fall away, although unconscious of the fact, were no doubt never saved. How it should drive us to give diligence to make our calling and

election sure (II Peter 1:10). We are not saved by our good works, neither are we kept saved by them.

Let no one, however, presume upon the goodness of God. The word of God sets forth the most awful warnings it is possible for the human tongue to utter. Let us rather thank God and enjoy our security, and fear lest we offend our Lord with our unbelief.

Justification

“Whom he called, them He also justified.” In this passage we see only God's side of our salvation. Between these links are other great and mighty truths. We are to believe and become holy.

The Bible tells us that he who justifies the wicked is an abomination to the Lord (Prov. 17:15), yet God does that very thing. God, however, does it on the basis of sins forgiven through faith in His Son.

Justification is a judicial act and has to do with our position and not our condition; with our standing and not our state. God declares a man to be righteous and treats him so. The difficult

feature of this great doctrine is that a sinner, while still a sinner, is declared righteous. This fact is not presented to our reason, but rather to our faith, and must be received upon the testimony of Scripture.

When God Justifies

A man was on trial for a very serious crime. If convicted, the penalty would be very heavy, yet through it all he seemed unconcerned nonchalant about the proceedings. The judge passed a heavy sentence and waited for the condemned man to reply. Reaching into his pocket, the man brought forth a pardon from the king.

Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect after God pronounced him justified? (Rom. 8:33)

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law” (Gal. 3:13). The difficulty of justification is removed when we see that Christ endured the penalty and the believer is so vitally united to Him that His life is the dominating force in the life of the believer and will eventually bring forth a holy life.

God makes no mistakes when He justifies a sinner. He sees the heart and knows when faith is real. And when he once sets His seal upon a man's faith and begins a good work in a man's heart, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6).

True repentance stirs us to do God's will. That Paul had been a blasphemer was always driving him on to do well. Robinson Crusoe was shipwrecked on a lonely island. Years later, when a company of cannibals visited his shores and proceeded to feast on their captives, Crusoe saw one miserable wretch brake free and run for his life. Crusoe rescued the man by killing the cannibal that was following him. The man (later called Friday), seeing his captor dead, fell at Robinson Crusoe's feet and rendered a life of devoted service. Let the truth of justification sink into the heart of the convicted sinner and never again will he ask if this or that is service is necessary, for no service will be irksome to his thankful soul.

When Lincoln was running for President, Stanton terribly opposed and abused him. When Lincoln was elected, he sent Harding to Stanton with an invitation to be secretary of war. Stanton

read the note and, overcome with emotion, he cried,

“Do you tell me, Harding, that Lincoln sent this message to me? Tell him that such grateful-heartedness will make me work with him as man was never served before!”

No sacrifice is too great to the soul that has grasped the truth of justification.

Justification is a judicial act and has nothing to do with feeling. I once entered a church building and left again in an hour or two. I felt no different; I looked no different; but something had happened. The government now recognized my right to perform wedding ceremonies; the railroad permitted me to ride half fare. I had been ordained to the gospel ministry. Although I felt no different, as time passed, I began more and more to realize my new position and act accordingly. Justification gives us our position. It writes our names in the Book of Life. It is sanctification that changes our life.

Saving Faith

Faith does not save us. There are many faiths. Some have faith in many false religions. It is the object of our faith that saves. It is Christ who saves;

faith merely unites to Him.

A lovely girl working in a department store earns barely enough to keep her mother and younger sisters alive. How hard the work is! How tired she gets! Her head often aches; her feet burn; her whole body sometimes seems in pain, but she dared not give up.

A young millionaire, passing through the store, falls in love with the girl. Time passes and their wedding is announced. A fine limousine drives up to the church door and stops. The happy couple alight, but just as his feet touch the pavement, the man falls dead. What will the young woman do? Next week, in the depths of sorrow, she will walk the streets of that big city in quest of a position where she can eke out a living for her loved ones.

But suppose they had entered the church, and ten minutes later as they stepped out into the sunlight the young man would have fallen dead? Would that young woman seek employment in the department stores? Far from it. She could buy out the largest store in that city. That frail hand of hers could write checks for tens of thousands. Why? Simply because when she said, "Yes," she was united to that young man. So it is when we say "yes" to God, we are united to His Son and become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ

(Rom. 8:17).

Joint heirs. What a thought! A father does not say, “Now wife, I will take this eye of our child and you that one; I will take the right hand and you the left.” No, the whole child belongs to both parents. They are joint owners. If we are joint heirs with Christ, all that is His is ours.

Regeneration

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. 2:8,9).

Let us note that salvation is not a matter of good works. A man might as well trust in his sins as his good works. But let us also note that a Christian is “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (vs. 10). That is, a person cannot be saved by his good works, but once saved that person will do the works.

The sick do not wait until they are well before seeing a physician. Neither should people expect to reform themselves before they yield to Christ. That is what He is for. He is a sin specialist. Depend on Him; count on Him; trust Him fully; commit

yourself to Him.

A Matter of Life

Regeneration is a matter of life. It is better to purify the springs of action than to provide “right” environment; it is better to implant a love for the right than to seek to enforce a reform. Regeneration is instantaneous and is known by its results. It is like crossing a state line. You may be unconscious of the exact moment that you crossed into another state, but soon you will see the changes.

When I was a child, my grandmother raised turkeys. How I, as a lad, feared the big gobbler as he strutted about the lot uttering a peculiar puffing noise, dragging his wing feathers, drawing his tail up into a fan; ruffling up his feathers; getting blue in the face, and looking quite mean.

Some time ago I was at a farm home when over six hundred baby turkeys arrived. They were shipped in pasteboard boxes, had been hatched in an incubator, raised in artificial heat, and had never seen a grown turkey. Yet some months later I again visited that farm, and there they were, scores of them strutting around, dragging their

wings and uttering the peculiar puff. How could this be? Only one answer. They had turkey life coursing through their veins.

Life will tell; life will always tell. For months that farmer had fed and cared for those birds in every way to develop the turkey life that was in them. At regeneration a new life is implanted in the heart. Let the believer be as much concerned with the development of that life as the farmer was over the development of the turkey life, and the results are certain.

The new life should be fed upon the word of God. He should LET the Word of God rule in his heart (Col. 3:16). He should LET the new life develop in its natural course. A pig is as likely to show forth turkey life as to expect the old nature to bring forth the fruits of a new man in Christ Jesus. It is a matter of life. Ye must be born again.

Certain qualities adhere in every birth. With no efforts on its own part, a baby is born in the slums or in a mansion. When Moses was born of Hebrew parents, one might expect that it meant a life of slavery; that he would eat coarse food and be neglected. It would be expected that, as his father came home with great welts on his face and

stripes on his back, so his own tender flesh would quiver beneath the slave driver's lash. It would be expected that he would live a life of sorrow and toil and someday sleep in an unknown grave.

But one day it was as though Moses was born again, for he became the son of Pharaoh's daughter. With no effort on his part, the elements of the new birth were his. Nurses and maids cared for him; he may have sat on Pharaoh's lap and pulled Pharaoh's beard; he may have played with the scepter of Egypt and romped with the children of nobility. He lived a life of wealth and power.

When we are born of the flesh, we are born into a life of sin and condemnation, but when we are born again we become a new creature in Christ Jesus; old things have passed away; all things have become new (II Cor. 5:17). With no effort on our part the elements of the new life are ours.

“Ye must be born again” (John 3).

Nicodemus was puzzled. “How can a man be born when he is old?” he stammered.

“Now, Nicodemus, it is just like this. That which

is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. That is, the only way you could get into this life was to be born of fleshly parents and get a fleshly body; the only way you can get into the next world is to be born of the Spirit and get a body that is capable of expression in a realm of spirits.”

Nicodemus was silent.

“It is this way, Nicodemus. Do you hear the wind in yonder trees? The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.

“You remember, Nicodemus, how God sent serpents among our fathers and then directed Moses to set up a serpent of brass? Just like Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness and anyone with sufficient faith could look and be healed, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Let us imagine a scene in the wilderness:

“Help! Help! I have been bitten by a serpent!
Carry me home quickly!”

Well did this man know the result of his deadly wound, for one bite from the fangs of those serpents meant certain death. The company of Israelites numbered about six hundred thousand families. They had repeatedly disobeyed God. Now God had sent the serpents among them as a judgment upon their sins. The serpents were crawling in and out among the people, leaving a path of pain, suffering, and death in their wake.

We can imagine this man as he is bitten. Friends carry him to his tent. His wife applies every known remedy, but to no avail for there is no earthly cure for this terrible venom. His leg soon begins to swell and pain shoots up the limb. In one hour, the suffering is almost unbearable. The leg is twice its normal size; the pain has increased to a dull throbbing torture; fever is burning through his entire body. Is there no help?

Yes, God has directed Moses to make a serpent of brass and place it on a pole where everyone can see it. Listen! A messenger is now running through the camp proclaiming the welcome message.

“Look! Everybody look! Look at the serpent and be healed!”

A gleam of hope shines in the face of the suffering man. He believes the message. They pull back the tent door and, with the help of his wife, he lifts his head and looks. Far away on a hill he sees the brazen serpent.

Instantly the pure warm blood surges through his veins and with a bound he is out of bed, completely healed. Why is he thus completely healed? Because he believed God's message.

Imputation

“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Romans 4:8).

All have sinned, but God will not charge sin or place it to the account of those who believe in His Son.

“Abraham believed God, and it was counted (or imputed) unto him for righteousness” (Romans 4:3).

If God does not impute sin, or if He does not count man a sinner, it is as though he had never sinned. When God made Christ to be sin for us (II Cor. 5:21), when He counted our sins on Him, it was real and meant death for Christ. Also, when God reckons Christ's righteousness to us, it is real and we are counted as righteous as He.

“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” (Romans 5:19).

Adam disobeyed and the whole race is imputed as sinners because there is a vital union between Adam and humanity. Christ obeyed and all who are in Him have righteousness imputed to them because there is a vital union between them and Christ.

“O Jonathan, Jonathan!” cries David as he rises from his couch, “How I long to see your face again!”

David's position commands a view of the palace court, but David's eyes do not see that court. Passing across the pages of his memory is a scene of long ago when two young men met in an open field; two young men whose hearts were

knit by cords of mutual love; two young men whose souls were bound by a covenant of peace. But things are different now. Jonathan has fallen upon Mount Gilboa and will never return again, and David's heart yearns for his old friend. If Jonathan were only here, he would lavish the wealth of the kingdom upon him.

A new thought is born in David's mind! There may be one of Jonathan's household living! Ziba, the old servant, will know. Ziba must be called (I Samuel 9).

“Ziba, is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?”

“Yes,” answers the old servant, “Jonathan hath yet a son.”

“Jonathan a son?” cried king David, “Jonathan a son? Oh, I did not know that Jonathan had a son! Call him in at once!”

“Ah!” answers the old servant, with finality, “he is of no worth to the king. He lives far out in the desert—in Lodebar (place of no pasture), and he is lame in both his feet.”

The scene changes to Lodebar. A gaunt little man is dragging himself about on the floor of his

desert shack. But, hark! A sound strange to desert ears! A chariot is racing in its direction; a chariot is coming from the king. The face of Mephibosheth turns ashy pale, for is he not of the household of Saul? And was not Saul an avowed enemy of David? Has the king found his hiding place? And is he set on revenge?

“The king requires your presence at the court,” cries Ziba, as the royal chariot rumbles up to the hut. Then, seeing the look of terror upon the lame man's face, he quickly adds,

“Fear not. The king intends no harm.”

Quickly, the lame man's feet are bathed and wrapped in clean, new cloths. Servants array Mephibosheth in garments fit to appear before the king, and soon the cortege is on its journey to the palace of the king.

All through that long tiresome trip Mephibosheth tries in vain to find a solution for the strange turn of affairs in his drab life. He does not know that years before he was born, two young men had bound their souls in a covenant of love and peace, and that covenant will affect his own existence until the day of his death.

The long journey finally comes to an end, and Mephibosheth is carried in and placed before the throne. One brief glance about him and his eyes rest upon the face of the king. Surely there is no anger there; only love, pity, and compassion.

“Oh,” cries Mephibosheth as he throws himself upon his face before the king, “what is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?”

Dead dog? Dead dog? And true it was that Mephibosheth was worth no more to King David than a dead dog—he was lame in both his feet and as poor as could be.

But David does not see those lame feet, neither is he looking at that half-starved face. But far back in the depths of those pleading eyes he sees the soul of his old friend Jonathan, and all the pent-up feeling of lonely years surges through his heart as he cries in deep emotion,

“Mephibosheth, arise! As long as you live you will eat at the king's table. You shall never lack any good thing.”

Why did David thus exalt Mephibosheth? There is only one answer. He imputed the love he

had for Jonathan to Mephibosheth, and treated him as he would have treated his beloved friend. Mephibosheth entered into the joys of covenant that was formed before he was born. He only had to accept it.

His Merit, My Demerit

Centuries have come and gone. The participants in that scene have long since passed away, but multiplied thousands have found peace in imputed love.

Once I feared to face the King. I knew I was poor and lame and worthless. And like Mephibosheth, I knew no other merit than my own. I knew not that, countless ages before I was born, there had been a consultation among the God-head. I did not know that the Son had been made sin for me and that I could be made the righteousness of God in Him (II Cor. 5:21). I did not know that His righteousness could be imputed to me or laid to my account.

When my demerit was laid to His account it meant His death, but God "*through the blood of the everlasting covenant*" brought Him from the dead and thus assures my own resurrection (Heb.

13:20). Then, marvelously, His merit was laid to my account and I was made the righteousness of God in Him.

If my demerit imputed to the sinless Son was so real it meant His death, then His merit imputed to me must be just as real. Now in boundless joy, I have a right to the table of the Kind, and through the endless ages of eternity I shall never lack any good thing!

A Runaway Slave

“Charge me with his demerit and reckon all my merit to him.”

This is what Paul asked of his old friend at Colosse. He had led Philemon to the Lord; he was one of his best friends, but now he was a prisoner at Rome and could no longer do as he wished.

The occasion of the letter was the return of Onesimus, a run-away slave who had escaped from Philemon's household. In Rome Onesimus had met Paul, who had led him to the Lord.

We do not know the details of the story, but during the conversation Onesimus must have

mentioned the fact that he was a run-away and Paul must have spoken of restitution.

“Oh,” cried Onesimus, turning pale with fear, “I would not dare to go back to my master; he would send me to the whipping post.”

“Where did you live?” asked Paul.

“At Colosse.”

“Oh,” Paul answered, “I have friends at Colosse. Who was your master?”

“Philemon.”

“Philemon?” cried Paul in great excitement. “Why, I know him! I led him to the Lord. He's a great friend of mine. You come back tomorrow.”

The next day when Onesimus entered the prison cell, Paul handed him a letter for Philemon. The letter went something like this:

“Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, unto Philemon, my dearly beloved. You will, of course, recognize the bearer of this letter as your old slave, Onesimus. I would have gladly kept him with me, but fearing you might need him, I am sending him back to you, not now as a slave, but as a brother beloved.

“I know you must be very angry with him, but reserve all the punishment you may have for him

and inflict it upon me. And take all the love you have for me and lavish it upon him—treat him as if it were me. If he has wronged you or owes you anything, put that on my account.”

Onesimus took the letter and started on his long journey back home. Ordinarily, he would have crept up to the slave quarters at midnight; tapped at a door and whispered to a friend, “What does master say about me?”

But not so with Onesimus, for he held in his hand a message of imputation. He walked right up to the door and knocked. As Philemon opened the door, a wave of anger swept across his face when he caught sight of his old slave.

Onesimus handed him the letter and waited. As Philemon read the message, his face reflected the conflicting emotions that surged across his soul. For a moment he faltered. Then, looking straight into the face of the trembling slave, he cried,

“Onesimus!—You runaway!—You deserve the dungeon!—You deserve the whipping post—but I accept the terms of the letter. Onesimus, you are a free man! The best bed in this house is yours.

You may prepare now for a sumptuous feast at noon, for I receive you as the beloved apostle himself.”

Suddenly the scene shifts. I have heard the invitation, “*Let the wicked forsake his way. . . and let him return unto the Lord.*” (Isaiah 55:7). And there I stand, fearing the blinding flash of justice and the thunderous tones of judgment; I know I deserve no mercy; I know that I am a runaway slave, when—

“Father, reckon his sins to Me and My righteousness to him.”

“But Son! The wages of sin is death, and he is a sinner!”

“True, Father, but I will bear his sins in my own body on the tree (I Peter 2:24), that he may be made the righteousness of God in Me” (II Cor. 5:21).

God does not look at us with all our imperfections and shortcomings. He merely looks at Christ, and has made us accepted in the beloved, (Eph. 1:6) for Christ's righteousness is reckoned unto us. Thank God for imputation!

Sanctification

Sanctification in Scriptural usage, means to set apart for God. There is a sense in which a believer is sanctified or set apart for God the moment he believes, but in the present study we will deal with progressive sanctification.

Justification gives us a perfect standing, while sanctification has to do with bringing our state or conduct up to our standing.

Christ “loved the church and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word” (Eph. 5:25, 26).

The means of our sanctification is through the washing by the Word, and as we read it, we grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Regeneration is instantaneous like the flash on an old photo plate and is invisible. Sanctification is the development of the image.

“By the rude bridge that arched the flood
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the
world.”

One moment those farmers of the colonial times were subjects of England, the next moment they were American citizens. It, however, took many months to make it real in their lives. One moment a man may be a subject of Satan, and the next moment justification has made him a citizen of heaven. It, however, takes time for sanctification to make his life conform to his position.

Sanctification is not a matter of self-effort. It works, rather, as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to one's heart. This is true with the up-and-outer as well as the down-and-outer. No sinner is too vile for God's grace; in fact, where sin abounds, grace abounds much more (Rom. 5:20).

Boundless Grace

When I was a boy, I was taken with my father to the woods to see the new little pigs that had been born. After going through the weeds and berry bushes for some time, we found them rooting in the leaves. When the mother hog uttered a "boo," all the piglets instantly ran for cover. I tried to catch one of the cute little fellows who was crouched beneath a weed. As we were

walking back a little later, my hands began to burn with pain. When I told my father about the pain, he told me that the weeds I had dived into were nettles. The ground about us was covered with watery, rather transparent weed. My father stooped, broke off one of these, and crushed it. Oh, the marvelous relief as he applied the cooling juice to my tortured hands! Where nettles abounded, that other weed did much more abound. So where sin abounds, grace MUCH more abounds—no sin is too deep for His grace.

The ultimate goal of salvation is glorification. At the return of the Lord, the child of God will receive a spiritual body; a body capable of expression in a realm of spirits; a body that will never get sick nor weary; that will never shed a tear nor feel a pain—a glorious body pulsating with the very life of God and subject to God in its every member. Since absolute submission of our whole being is the goal of our salvation, we should begin now to set our affections on things above and yield our body now as the most reasonable thing we can do.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is

your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1). We thus should set apart or yield our members day by day to a closer walk with the Lord (Rom. 6:13). That is, we yield our ears, being careful what we hear; our feet, being careful where we go; our eyes, being careful what we look at; our hands, being careful what we do.

What we read or watch very often determines the thoughts of our day. Thus, we should read much of the Word and only good, clean literature, for blessed is the man whose delights in the Law of the Lord and who meditates therein day and night (Ps.1). If we control what comes in through our eyes, we can better bring into captivity every thought (II Cor. 10:7) and thus exercise ourselves unto godliness.

Sanctification is forming new habits according to the new springs of life. Some people do not grow in the Christian life because they are like the little girl who fell out of bed—they go to sleep too close to the place where they got in.

As Christians grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord; they are changed into the same image from glory to glory

until the Lord appears and they become like Him (II Cor. 3:18, I John 3:2).

A city family, unacquainted with farm life, purchased an automobile and drove far out into the country. Stopping at a farm house for a drink, they hear the incubator be mentioned. Alive with interest, they follow the farmer to the apparatus. Many are the exclamations of surprise and delight as they gaze through the glass door.

“Aren't they cute!”

“Just like little balls of cotton!”

“What pretty yellow legs and sparkly black eyes!”

“What will they be like when they are full grown?” ask the visitors.

“Follow me,” says the farmer as he leads toward the barn lot. He utters a call and a great Rhode Island Red rooster struts into view, with his head held high, his beautiful red comb, his glossy red feathers, his massive yellow legs, his long

sharp spurs.

“What a beautiful bird!” cry the visitors.

“Yes,” says the farmer, “it does not yet appear what those little chicks will be like, but they have the life of that father bird coursing through their veins, and when they are full-grown they will be like him.”

A few weeks later the city family again visits the farm house, eager to see the little chicks again. They follow the farmer to the chicken lot, but what a disappointment! Many are the exclamations of surprise and disgust as they gaze upon the unpleasant sight.

There they are—long awkward legs; ugly, bare necks; bare sunburned backs; a voice like an old rusty hinge.

“Can it be?” they exclaim, as the big father bird struts into view.

“Yes,” says the farmer confidently, “they will be like him.”

A few months later the car is again parked at

the country home. As they follow the farmer to the chicken lot, he utters a call.

“There comes the father bird!” exclaims a visitor.

“No—there he comes!” cries another, excitedly.

“Over there—!”

And there they come—two dozen fine Rhode Island Reds; every one the very image of the father bird.

“Beloved, NOW are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM; for we shall see Him as He is.” (I John 3:2).

May the reader of this booklet so serve our Lord Jesus Christ and so bask in the sunshine of His love, that with full assurance of heart he can say, *“I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have*

committed unto Him against that day.” (II Tim. 1:12).