

Salvation – Part 2

Last time, we entered the Kingdom of God. We're going through the doorway of salvation; so the first part of salvation, of course, is to ask ourselves, what is it? So today will be session 2, if you will, looking at that very question, what is salvation?

We began by introducing the words body, soul, spirit to try to lay a foundation as to how I will commonly use those words, taking the linguistic model of breakfast, lunch, dinner as opposed to breakfast, dinner, supper to where we need to know what someone means when they use a certain word, else we will not understand what's being communicated. Then taking that model and applying it to the model of body/soul, body/spirit with soul equals spirit; the so called bipartite or dichotomy if you will, of the human being as being only two parts: one mortal/material and the other immortal/immaterial. But there are some Scriptures where it seems to be split such as I Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12 to where there seems to be splitting the soul from the spirit as if man is a tripartite or trichotomy being. And I'm explaining that most of the time, I use the words that I am spirit, I have a soul, and I live in a body; in other words, using soul to mean mind, emotion, and will. Now we know that God is spirit and we know that God has mind, emotion, and will. So it's never (to my knowledge) stated that God has a soul; but when Scripture speaks of splitting soul from spirit, there must be some intent that it's stated that way in two separate places in the Bible. So we looked at this last time (the anatomy of a Christian on Earth), and looking at the bottom line, the destiny of the spirit is oneness, already fulfilled—that is to say, I am one with my God in spirit, the Spirit is indwelling my spirit, so my spirit cannot be improved. But the soul using soul to mean mind, emotion, and will, still is to be improved and that's the one that addresses: be transformed by the renewing of your mind. And then, of course, the body—it's appointed unto men once to die; so a Christian on Earth is going to die, unless he's still living at the time of the Rapture.

Now I'm going to make a few more summary comments about the usage of those words. It should be obvious to all of you that models, including my models, hopefully can be helpful to congeal our understanding and our processing of our information. But models can never capture the fullness of truth; they can't capture it here any more than a scientific model is actually truth. So light isn't a particle and light isn't just wave length; light is light, but sometimes treating it as a particle, sometimes treating it as having only wave length allows you to talk about and predict the behavior of light under different circumstances. The point being, we worship God; we don't worship any model of God. We worship God; we don't worship our understanding of God. We worship God; we don't worship the symbolism called language. So whatever model we use about such things, we are united at a more foundational level as Christians. So we worship the God of the Bible; the God Who wrote the Bible. So whatever the Bible means, it is ultimately true. The understanding of each Christian is always going to be smaller than the fullness of the omniscience of God. So all models are a tool, not a finality. So my present models, as I use them, are simply a graphic representation to represent truth as I presently understand it. But just like a scientific model, when evidence comes down the pike, that suggests that the model can't explain the evidence, then the model has to be modified. It

has to be either completely discarded or modified to accommodate the new truth. So, I will be delighted to change my models and have done so many times in the course of teaching when I receive a revelation from the Word of God that gives me a better model with which to represent that truth. I'm wedded to Jesus Christ, not wedded to any certain model.

Now my attitude toward my models is this. They represent to me a form of spiritual discipline. It's not that they have to function that way for you, but that's what they are for me. If I cannot put my understanding of Biblical truth into a model, then it can mean one of two things. First, there is no model that can accurately point toward Biblical truth; or there is such a model and I've just not received the revelation of which model to use yet. The second one is the one that concerns me. The second possibility is, because of laziness and fuzzy thinking, I have refused to congeal Biblical truth into a fashion that can be modeled and communicated by that model. So trying to construct a model forces me to overcome laziness and fuzzy thinking about Biblical truth. I Corinthians 14:33 – God is not a God of confusion. So I never want to present Him as a God of confusion, if in fact, the confusion exists only because of my laziness and fuzzy thinking. So, when I sit down to draw something up like a poster, what I'm doing is exerting spiritual discipline to force me to come to grips with various Biblical truths to see if they can be molded into a model that is consistent to communicate those various truths without overstepping into speculation.

So my present model about body, soul, spirit (there was a question from the class). So my present model simply allows me to reconcile certain Scriptures that I have trouble reconciling by other models. Now I already referred to two of them. Hebrews 4:12 – The Word of God is living and active and sharper than a two-edge sword, able to split soul from spirit. So if soul equals spirit, if it's synonymous with spirit and man is only two compartments: body and soul or body and spirit (using soul and spirit as synonyms), then why on Earth would that Scripture say the Word of God can split soul from spirit? The second is I Thessalonians 5:23 where Paul prays that we be sanctified body, soul, and spirit, again using the two terms. So as a corollary to this, when I treat them as separate entities under the model of soul meaning mind, emotion, and will, it allows me then to reconcile other Scriptures with the model and those other Scriptures give me problems if I don't use the present model, at least given my understanding at present. Other Scriptures like that include I John 3:9 in the King James Version – Whoever is born of God does not commit sin. Why does he not commit sin? For His seed (meaning God's seed) for His seed remaineth in him (meaning the Christian) and he (the Christian) cannot sin because he is born of God. Well that has to be reconciled with I John 1:8; if we say we have no sin, we're deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. So I think it may come down like one of those things like the Trinity. For instance, remember the Trinity? There's a horizontal axis that the Father and I are one and a vertical axis, the Father is greater than I. So, two Scriptures that appear in conflict have to be reconciled because they're both true; because they're in the Word of God. Another Scripture along that line is the following. I John 4:17 speaking of Jesus – As He (Jesus) is, so are we in this world (in this world, not in the world to come), as He is, so are we in this world. Well, He was sinless; I'm not sinless. So, how can it say as He is, so am I in this world?

But if we use the model, for instance, of body, soul, spirit, then we're able to accept the terminology used in the two occasions: I Thessalonians and Hebrews 4 where it talks about body, soul, and spirit. So when we use that model with these three Scriptures, it would say whoever is born of God cannot sin because he's born of God. That would be the spirit. In other words, the spirit is not going to get any holier, it's not going to get any purer, it's not going to sin, it's full of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit cannot sin.

I John 1:8 where it says if we have no sin, we're deceiving ourselves; that would be addressing the soul: the mind, emotion, and will because clearly, we still have sin as I'll address more in just a moment. And as He is, so are we in this world, would be addressing the spirit. We are sinless in our spirits, perfectly pure, perfectly righteous; not just imputed righteousness, but perfectly righteous because our spirits are full of the Spirit of God Himself. We are born of God and the spirit, therefore, cannot sin.

So, that leads us to another controversy that I'll introduce again, but not necessarily resolve. And that relates to the terminology of the sin nature. All Christians agree that there is a propulsive force toward sin that remains active in the Christian. If that were not true, then of course, no Christian would ever sin. This tendency or force or drive or appetite or penchant or propensity or energy is known by two different terminologies among various Christians. The first, of course, is the sin nature. This group of Christians considers the sin nature to be alive and well in the Christian. The sin nature is unchanged according to that model. Thus, the Christian walk involves combat against the unchanged sin nature. The sin nature then would be the propulsive force that drives the Christian towards sin. Most Christians to whom I've been around in my eleven years since salvation, accept this model. So they view the Christian walk as a battle between the truth of Jesus Christ opposed to the sin nature of man with the will stuck in between. The second group (in my experience) is a distinct minority. And that involves the propulsion to sin as flowing from the unrenewed mind.

This second group of Christians considers the sin nature dead and would take the terminology from like Romans 7 that the old man is dead. And the old man would be the sin nature. Thus, we now have only one nature, that being the perfectly pure righteous spirit full of the Holy Spirit. Our Christian walk is now to draw from the divine nature; and that's what Scripture tells us to do. We are partakers of the divine nature that indwells us. Under this model we are not schizophrenic with two competing natures, the divine nature and the sin nature, but we're only one nature; the divine nature and simply new creations that have some housecleaning to do. When saved, we're in the same place as we were the moment before we were saved in regard to our old thoughts and old behaviors. But it's as if we made a U-turn on the highway of life. We're still in the same place, but now we're going a totally different direction in our lives. But our memories, our emotions, our hot buttons, our thought patterns, and all those things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God in our thinking have not been changed. They're exactly the way they were before salvation. Yet we now have a new nature that we live out of and living out of that new nature is a process, not one moment in time. Under this model, the battle is not against our old unchanged sin nature which is dead; but the battle is against our unrenewed mind. That's why Scripture counsels us in II

Corinthians 10:5 to capture every thought to the obedience of Christ; because all of our thoughts established in thought patterns are what make up the strongholds that we're told to cast down. The stronghold being a house of thoughts, if you will, that existed before salvation. And those are vain imaginations that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. So we tear those vain imaginations, those houses of thought down brick by brick by capturing every thought. And that leads, to then Romans 12:2 – Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. In other words, it doesn't tell us to suppress the alive and vibrant and unchanged sin nature; it tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds by capturing every thought to the obedience of Christ, flowing out of the truth and now fills our spirit via the Holy Spirit.

Now the underlying truth beneath these two models is this. In the Christian, there is a battle; the battle is against our residual tendency to sin. We cannot win this battle based only on our own power. The battle is won by accessing the power of God via the indwelling Holy Spirit. That's the underlying truth of Scripture whichever model we use to represent it. So whichever model you use, the sin nature being alive or dead, the battle being against the sin nature or the unrenewed mind, it should never be divisive among Christians; because we all agree on a more foundational level, there is a battle and we do have a drive to sin and that drive to sin cannot be overcome by your flesh. If it could be overcome by your flesh, you wouldn't have needed a Savior; you would have purified yourself into holiness. So, why do I explain all this? It's not to try to get you to agree with me; it's so that I don't confuse you with the usage of any words that I use. So my model doesn't pretend to answer every question. It's always to be regarded as a work in progress to be modified as further revelations come down the pike. And I'm not asking for feedback, but it wouldn't stun me if some of you have struggled with some of these same Scriptures.

Next poster. (*Buddy: These are questions from Ed that I couldn't hear very well, thus they are not included in the transcript*)

Do you agree, Ed, with my foundational premise? “I agree with that; I want you to bring it out. This is a big issue going on today and you're representing a view here today that I think we need to hear.” Well, in Romans 7, as I understand it, those who believe the sin nature is alive and vibrant would say that the body of sin (as Paul calls it) is the old sin nature. The people, who would subscribe to the model that I'm presenting, would say the old man is dead. We're told to consider him dead...that he's dead; and the body of sin is the household of thoughts with the vain imaginations that's exalting itself against God that's been left over from my 50 years of being in a non-Christian life. So there's housecleaning to do. So on the one hand, you know, we want truth. Well, this is truth insofar as I understand it at present and this is the open hand to receive the greater truth which is sure to come. Many of these posters, I've modified through the past eleven years because of changing understanding about it. So, God's truth doesn't change, but it's for sure my understanding changes; and if my understanding doesn't change, then it means I'm stagnant, lazy, and lukewarm. So, hopefully, my posters will continue to change. But I know, for me, it's helpful. Now being helpful doesn't make it true; but it's helpful when it talks about the assurance of the believer—when I'm thinking in terms of

my spirit being perfectly pure, perfectly righteous, not just imputed righteousness, but full of the Holy Spirit, as He is, so am I in this world. It changes the bounce in my step; it changes the whole dynamic of how I approach my life. It's not two competing natures locked in some schizophrenic battle; it's one nature that I'm to partake of and then do the housecleaning left over from before I got saved. So, I like my model; but just because I like it doesn't make it true. So we're all after truth. If I use the old nature still being alive and vibrant and so on, then I'm left not understanding how the man of God cannot sin. I'm left with Scriptures that seem contradictory. And I'm left with, as He is so am I in this world, while I sin and He didn't. So I'm left without understanding of that verse. So, I'm not claiming perfect understanding; what I'm saying is my present presentation of this model allows me to reconcile or know how to hold certain Scriptures, that without this model, I'm left struggling with.

I use this only to remind us (we looked at it last time) about the work of salvation; you know each member of the Trinity takes the lead in different functions. So in creation, Jesus Christ took the lead. In regard to imparting life, it says the Spirit gives life. But in regard to our salvation, then, the Father draws, the Holy Spirit bear witness of Jesus, the Holy Spirit gives life and Jesus in no wise casts us out. So although Jesus is our Savior, as in all things, the Trinity is at work in a balanced harmonious view to accomplish the plan and purposes of God. We talked about that last time.

Next poster. Then we looked at this poster about salvation. Globally, meaning saved or rescued. And then in a focal sense, we dealt last time with justification and glorification. And now today, I'm about to pick up with the in between position called sanctification. You remember, we're using the frame of reference of time, looking at salvation in its various components. The past component is justification. We are declared righteous legally before a Holy God. The future component is glorification; that's when we get our glorified bodies at the Rapture. But there is a component that is present and ongoing. It's continuous in the life of the Christian; it follows through with what I've been talking about—the battle in the life of the Christian, and that's called sanctification. To sanctify means to be set aside for one purpose such as the purposes of God. And that's done by saving faith in the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross for our sins. Now to split sanctification, it's actually used in two ways and we can usually judge which way it's being used from the context of Scripture. The first is positional sanctification; and you see the little arrow drawn up to connect back up to justification. That terminology relates to what happened at our rescue from Hell at the moment of our saving faith in Jesus Christ. So we were saved from our future in Hell as sinners. At that moment we are justified, declared righteous because of Jesus Christ's payment on the cross. But we also need to know at that same moment, we are set aside for the purposes of God. So we're saved from the penalty of sin, saved from the future in Hell; but saved to the purposes of God. So we have positional sanctification. So justification and positional sanctification can be distinguished, but not separated. Because at the moment you are justified by saving faith in Jesus, you are positionally sanctified set aside for the purposes of God from that moment on. However, at that moment of salvation, justification, positional sanctification, we still have our unclean, sinful, rebellious propensity to sin (whatever you call it) sin nature or unrenewed mind. That has yet to be dealt with. We're at that

moment free forever from the penalty of sin; but we're not free from the presence of sin within us.

That brings us down to the second usage of the term sanctification and this is specifically progressive sanctification. Now this refers to the progressive, continuous, ongoing process of the setting aside of more and more of ourselves to the purposes of God by the renewing of the mind. It doesn't relate to whether or not we are going to Heaven, it does relate to walking out the purposes of God on planet Earth until death. Progressive sanctification means growth in Christlikeness while here on Earth. Progressive sanctification occurs in the Heaven-bound, justified, saved, born again, positionally sanctified Christian. The synonym would be purification. It is to be transformed from glory to glory into the image of Jesus Christ by the renewing of our minds as we're told in Romans 12:2. So as you can see, the broader usage of the word salvation to relate to all these components can be looked at using time as a frame of reference. In the past, justification and positional sanctification; in the future, glorification at the Rapture when we receive our glorified bodies; present, continuous and ongoing throughout the life of the Christian on Earth, sanctification or being absolutely precise, progressive sanctification.

Now these same three components can be looked at related to the structure of man as my model that is presented—that is body, soul, and spirit. Justification relates to the spirit realm. God is spirit, we are in His image, we are spirits. At the moment of saving faith, our spirit is indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. God is in us. From that moment on, we are Heaven-bound, our destiny is secure, we are positionally sanctified, set aside for the purposes of God. This is as Jesus is, so are we in this world. We are born of God and the man born of God cannot sin. That's the spirit realm. Glorification, of course, relates to the body realm. Our bodies are not "us;" our bodies are what the "us" lives in. We are spirits who live in bodies. Glorification relates to the future event that's yet to be expressed in our bodies. At that moment (at the Rapture), we will supernaturally receive new bodies that are not subject to physical law, not limited to physical law, and are incorruptible meaning they will never undergo any degradation in any way for eternity future. They can live in the presence of God without dying.

Sanctification, or more specifically, progressive sanctification relates to the in between realm of the soul. Recall I'm using soul to mean mind, emotion, and will. This still has the lusts of the flesh. The sanctification, thus, relates to the ongoing process of having our wills be more and more willing to choose the things of the spirit, to live out of the divine nature that is within us, rather than the things of the flesh bound up in our old habits and thought lives before salvation. That will continue until we draw our last physical breath on planet Earth when the spirit departs the body. So being saved in the sense of justification is an event at a moment in time. Being sanctified, that is progressively sanctified, is a lifelong process that takes place in our soul. So positional sanctification is the initiation and beginning of lifelong progressive sanctification.

Well, now let's look at some of these concepts by schematic representation. Remember, of course, models have their limits. This is just an attempt to take some of the steps that

we talked about and present it with a visual aid. This has body, soul, spirit, the natural man (unsaved), the saved man (born of the spirit, yet immature), and the saved (meaning filled with the spirit as he's grown into progressive maturity). Notice that before we are saved, we are spirit. That's what we are in the eyes of God, created in His image. Our spirit in the unsaved condition is represented as a small and dark circle; dark because it's separated from God and light represents the truth of God. It's dark also because dark represents death—that is to say the spirit, apart from God, is said to be spiritually dead. So darkness represents deception and death. The unsaved spirit is dead, separated from God and if separated from God, then it is separated from life and truth. Truth, remember, is how God views reality. The spirit separated from God cannot know how God views reality. But God is also the source of life. Scripture tells us – Jesus says I have life in myself; the Father has life in Himself; and the Spirit gives life. So, the spirit separated from God is separated from spirit life and separated from truth which is how God views reality. It's appropriate in my mind that we graphically represent that spirit (the unsaved spirit) as dark.

Furthermore, it's appropriate to represent it as small. That's done because the spirit being dead leaves the soul as the predominant influence. The dead spirit cannot control the soul of man. Thus, the will constantly chooses fulfillment of the lusts of the flesh as the source of its pleasures. We are truly dead in sin. We are children of wrath, in slavery to the father of lies, and cannot bring our dead spirits alive. But recall that even in that unsaved condition, the Bible says that all men were created in the image of God—eternal spirit creatures. Now that would include the potential to seek God, to know God, to commune with God, to love God, to become one with God and spend eternity with God. But in our deadness, all of that capacity is totally unutilized. An inadequate, but suggestive model, would be like a person with a great capacity to learn who remains very ignorant by choosing not to pursue knowledge. And we all know people who seem to have a huge capacity to learn and yet function in ignorance throughout their lives. Recall that even in our deadness, God has insured that every man is accountable before Him. Even in our deadness, we know some things of God. Romans 1:18-21 basically says His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen because God made it evident to them. But they suppress this truth in unrighteousness.

Well, why do men suppress this truth in unrighteousness? Because of pride. Suppressing this truth leaves man in charge. Acknowledging this truth puts God in charge and leaves man accountable to the creator God. So pride, therefore, in every way is anti-God. It's the same behavior, remember, that began with Eve. She yielded to the temptation which was, if you eat of this, you will be like God. But you will become like God, apart from God, by disobeying God. Man wants to be god, to be his own god functioning in self determination. Thus, we fulfill Romans 1:25. We exchange the truth of God for a lie and that's what all men do in their unsaved condition. Remember, earlier, we quoted II Corinthians speaking of what I call the divine exchange where Jesus takes our sin and gives us His righteousness. Well, here we have what I call the dark exchange where we suppress the truth in unrighteousness. So we give up the truth of God so as to take the lie; because the lie presents to us the temptation that if we believe the lie, we can be our own gods, unaccountable to no god, functioning in self determination. Back to our

simplest model of the origin of choice, remember, we were given choice that it may be of love. We pervert the choice that we may be our own god, you see. So you begin to see how the circle comes complete. We started back in the beginning and now as we try to walk out the Christian life, our understanding hopefully is enhanced by what we talked about to lay the foundation in the beginning; because that doesn't change. The unsaved man in New Testament times is exactly the same, making the same choice as Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden choosing ungod rather than God so they could be their own god, you see.

Well, my time is clearly up today. I allowed myself a few minutes of grace because Ed consumed my time at the outset. So thank you for listening.