

THE WHEEL OF SALVATION

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For my children who love the Word of God

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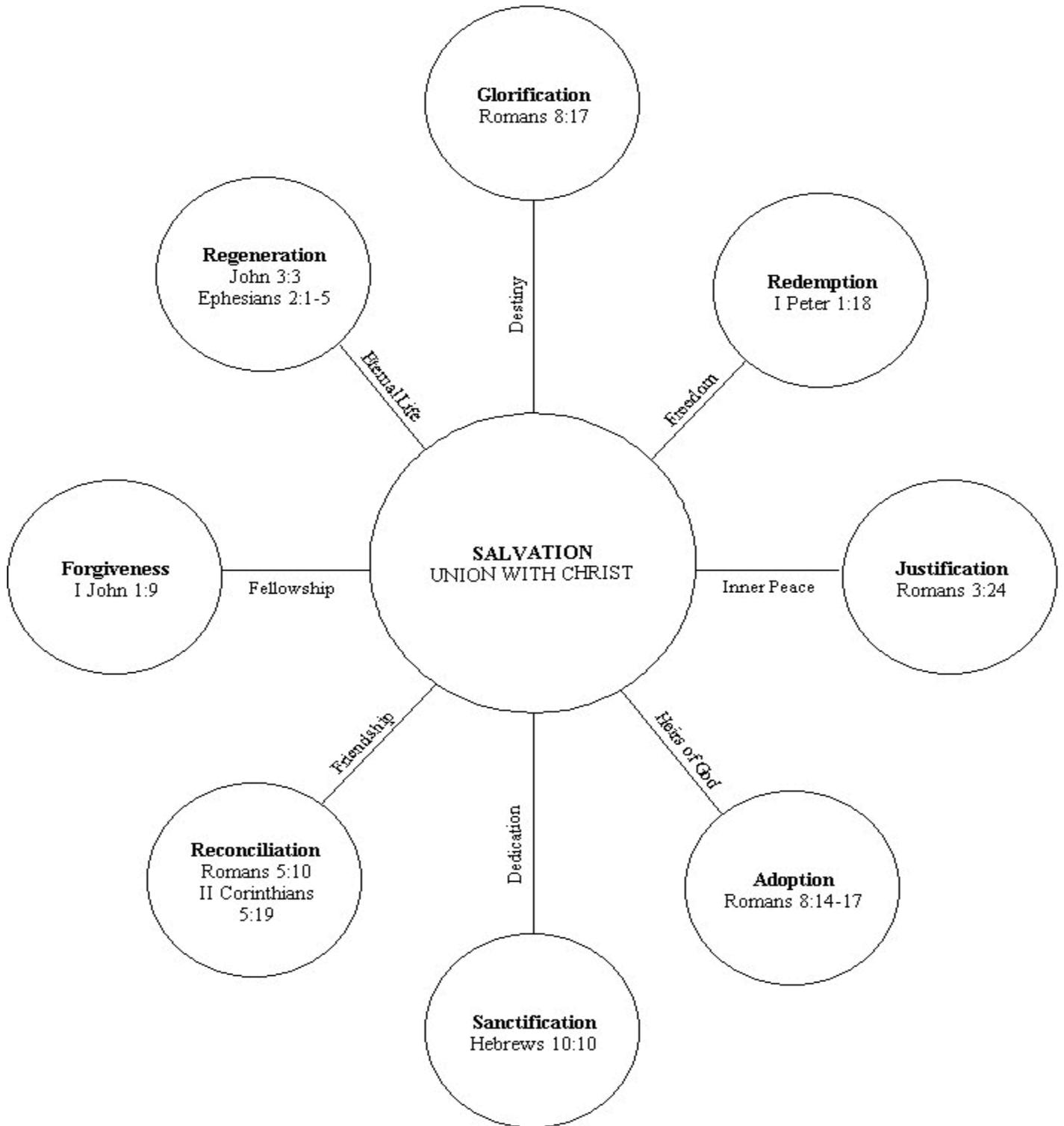
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PREFACE - The Need for This Kind of Study

Every believer already knows by experience the saving work of God. Yet when it comes to understanding the fullness of salvation or being able to explain it to others, many are woefully deficient. As a result many Christians are living with very shallow resources for their faith. This is certainly true if one views salvation solely from the hope of going to heaven (Note that none of the concepts in the Wheel of Salvation, even Glorification in a limited sense, involve the future life). All of it can be, and ought to be experienced in the present life. It is the author's belief that much of this arises as a result, first, of poor teaching by his spiritual leaders and, second, by neglect of the great teachings of Paul (Note how many of the Wheel of Salvation are from his epistles). This biblical study aims to remedy the latter problem.

There are other factors involved in the neglect or one-sided interpretation of the Gospel of Salvation. Harrison F. Rall (Religion as Salvation, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, Nashville, 1953) lays part of the blame at the door of the modern Church in two ways: "The emphasis has been on the ethical in religion: in the individual life the stress on service, in church life on organization and activity. In the past the ethical element in Christianity has often suffered from neglect through one-sided mysticism, a subjective and individualistic pietism, a magical sacramentarianism or a stress on divine absolutism which reduced man to a passive spectator of the divine deed. It was highly necessary that the ethical element should be recovered and that it should receive a new emphasis, especially in the field of social life. But too often the new emphasis meant a loss of the other aspect. Religion tended to become humanistic and moralistic and needed reinterpretation" (p. 88). We might add these other factors: the results of a short-sighted psychology which decried the notion of guilt and downplayed the seriousness of sin; and the wide-spread idea that through science and technology, especially as applied to personal and social ills, and sufficient wealth, all our human problems can be solved so that we have no need for God nor of His Good News; and finally, the romantic idea inherited from Nineteenth Century philosophy that man is inherently good and all he needs is further education and political legislation to define the good life. It fostered the vain trust that man's will is capable of diverting all evil and effecting that which is good and right. Rall further adds: "There was wholly absent the Christian idea of a personal God, forgiving, reconciling, creating a new man, and by his indwelling Spirit of truth and love and righteousness creating a new world" (p. 89).

Wheel of Salvation



Chapter 1 - Explanations of the Wheel of Salvation

1. FORGIVENESS: God's act of removing sin and restoring personal relations.

The condition brought by sin: Estrangement because of disobedience.

The consequences to the Saved: Fellowship with God; His presence made real.

2. JUSTIFICATION: God's act of putting us in the right in the sight of His Law.

The condition brought by Sin: Condemned as wrong; guilty as charged.

The consequences to the Saved: Freedom from the Law's indictment; inner peace.

3. RECONCILIATION: God's act of changing our nature and removing enmity.

The condition brought by Sin: Enemies of God by the perversity of our nature.

The consequences to the Saved: Friends of God, zealous to proclaim His love.

4. REDEMPTION: God's act of delivering us from every moral and spiritual bondage.

The condition brought by Sin: Slavery to sin, self and the kingdom of evil.

The consequences to the Saved: Freedom to realize our true destiny under God.

5. REGENERATION: God's work through His Spirit of bringing a new, divine life.

The condition brought by Sin: Spiritual death in trespasses and sin.

The consequences to the Saved: Life that is fit and capable of eternity with God.

6. ADOPTION: God's act of placing us within His family, the inheritors of His covenant.

The condition brought by Sin: Orphaned from God's family, the People of His covenant.

The consequences to the saved: Dignity as "Sons of God with all the privileges and responsibilities of sharing in His world program of redemption. We now "inherit" all the promises God has made to man.¹

7. SANCTIFICATION: The Holy Spirit's work in purifying and setting us apart for God's sole use.

The condition brought by Sin: Impure and unfit for divine service.

The consequences to the Saved: Dedication of life and purity of motive.

8. GLORIFICATION: The process wrought by the Holy Spirit by which the believer grows into the likeness of Jesus Christ and so reflects the Glory of God.

The condition brought by Sin: God's image in man is defaced and deformed.

The consequences to the Saved: Full realization of man's true destiny.

The first thing to notice about the chart is that the opposing pairs are complementary to each other. One is usually the legal aspect of God's work, e.g. Justification--whereas the other is moral and dynamic--Forgiveness. For this reason we will conduct our study accordingly: first the moral and dynamic, then the legal.

It is also to be noted that all of these eight are works of the divine Spirit. None of these describe the responsibility of the sinner for repentance, faith and obedience, all of which are necessary for the reception of those works. And they do not spell out the means by which God accomplished each of these works through Jesus Christ. A full discussion of the teachings of the New Testament on these means would involve us in the study of such words as "atonement," "expiation" or "propitiation" and "satisfaction." Some of this will be a part of our treatment of Reconciliation, but the scope and purpose of our study forbids our going into such weighty matters that continue to exercise the best theological brains of every age.

All of these are experiences of the believer in the work of God in saving us through Jesus Christ. We are looking then at the human side of the experience rather than at the divine side. These experiences may be once-for-all: Justification, Redemption, Regeneration, Adoption; others may be repeated throughout life, even daily: Reconciliation and Forgiveness; and the last two, Sanctification and Glorification, are the continuing work of the Holy Spirit throughout life.

We also note that most of these are from the epistles of Paul. As any teacher who would communicate with his constituency, he uses analogies that would be derived from the culture of his age. In so doing Paul found most of them in his Hebrew heritage in the sacrificial and prophetic traditions. However, he drew also from the Greco-Roman culture: Adoption. And the author of Hebrews drew from that culture also the Platonic idea of the real--the heavenly--versus the typical--the earthly. Since New Testament times, every Christian theologian has done the same, using those metaphors and analogies that would best explain and communicate such a rich, manifold reality as salvation. It should come as no surprise, then, that successive generations should emphasize one or two concepts over the rest. We will hope to restore some measure of balance in our understandings.

While all the references are from the New Testament, we will also note any background of the concept from the Old Testament. There are two major distinctives of the Old Testament theology. First, the salvation is conceived as primarily one for corporate Israel, the People of God. And salvation is usually understood as national deliverance. As Stevens puts it: "Salvation is deliverance from perils, victory over enemies, the achievement of security and prosperity" and he cites Deut. 20.4; I Sam. 10.19; Psa. 106. 4-5 (George Baker Stevens, The Christian Doctrine of Salvation. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917, p. 19). It is only through the teaching of Jeremiah 31.29-30 and Ezekiel 18.4, 20 that responsibility for sin and righteousness was transferred to the individual, while at the same time not ignoring the larger corporate relationship to God.

Second, in the main there is no hope of reward or punishment in the life to come. That hope of life after death was at most a dim one (See Psa. 16.10; 17.15; 49.15; 73.24; Job 19.25-27; Hos. 6.1-3. the latter probably does not refer to life after physical death; Dan. 12.2-3; perhaps Isa. 25.8; 26.19; but like Eze. 37.1-10 with reference to the Return of the Exiles rather than from life after death). The theology of God and the accompanying ethic for man required that both reward and punishment must occur in this life, or else the reputation of God as righteous and gracious would be in jeopardy.

THE MEANING OF SAVED, SAVING, SALVATION

Let us look first at the teachings of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. Jesus states that he has come to

seek and to save that which is lost (Lk. 19.10). There is no better way of understanding what he meant by "lost" than to study the three parables in Luke 15. The sheep is lost because it is its nature to wander away. The coin is lost because someone was careless. The younger son was lost because of selfishness and willfulness. Though it is not often recognized, Jesus was pointing in the last parable to the attitude of the older brother, who was also lost because of his pride and stubbornness. MacDonald observes, "The story of the prodigal son in Luke 15 makes the point that forgiveness is free and full. There is, certainly, no mention in the parable of the grounds on which the penitent is forgiven; its purpose is manifestly to declare that there is remission for wrong-doing for all who will return to the Father's home. There is no cross in the story, except in the aching heart of the father; nor indeed is Jesus himself in the tale. . . Jesus was emphasizing here one aspect of the truth which the religion of his time had woefully obscured; namely, that God is indeed good and ready to forgive" (H. D. MacDonald, Salvation. Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois. 1982. And Taylor says that verses 22-24 describe "The restoration of the lost son to the joy of fellowship...Here is a picture of reconciliation. The son is restored to the fellowship of the home; the broken relationship is reestablished" (Vincent Taylor, Forgiveness and Reconciliation. London, MacMillan and Co., 1960; hereinafter designated by F. & R., p. 17).

MacDonald then points out that the story of the Pharisee and the publican "unfolds the condition" of forgiveness (Lk. 18.9-14). The Pharisee pleaded his merit and the publican his misery, and the latter went his way with a lightened heart and a livened spirit. Trustful humility is thus shown to be the one condition of forgiveness; and without that, the moral Pharisee remained wrapped up in his own goodness, unforgiven and unaccepted. Christ's own cry from the cross, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' was Jesus' own public acknowledgment of his faith in the Father who was willing to forgive...Not only did Jesus teach that God was willing to forgive, but he declared his own right to forgive...The story of the paralytic man shows that Jesus was not declaring forgiveness; he embodied it (Matt.9.1-18). ...It was, indeed, the claim that Christ made of having the power on earth to forgive sin which so disturbed the Pharisees.

"Akin in significance to the story of the paralytic man is that of the sinful woman (Luke 7.36-50). Jesus assured her that her faith had saved her. When Simon, in whose house Jesus was guest, protested at the presence of a woman who was 'a sinner,' and at the acceptance by Jesus of the lavish outpouring of her love, Jesus replied that 'her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.' Yet he was not declaring that her love was the condition of her forgiveness. This rather is the force of the 'for' or 'because' (*oti*)--because you see this lavish outpouring of her love, you may know she has been forgiven much. Her repentance and her acceptance had taken place before her grateful love was manifested" (pp.133-34).

Above all else Jesus fulfilled the prophecy to Joseph that he came to "save his people from their sins" (Mt. 1.21). However, Jesus did not accept the current and popular classification of "sinners", i.e., those who were unlettered in the Law. Stevens says, "For Jesus the term 'sinner' did not classify a man in public estimation or social standing; it described his moral state in the sight of God. Sin is a corrupt state of the heart, a perversion of the will and the affections, a radical disharmony with God. Most concretely, it is lovelessness, that is selfishness, with the evils which it engenders.

Jesus did not give definitions or theoretic descriptions of sin, but his treatment of individual cases leaves us in no doubt as to what sin is. It is seen in the unfilial life of that lost son who repudiates all his natural obligations to his father and friends, abandons all restraint and gives himself over to a life of selfish gratification.. It is seen in the Pharisee with his counterfeit piety, trying for social advantage to seem what he inwardly knows he is not. It is seen in the hardness, the cruelty, the intolerance of the rich and ruling classes of the age; in the pitilessness of a priest and a Levite who put social distinctions above humanity, and in a people who carefully observes their inherited traditions and tithe mint and anise and cumin to the neglect of

judgment, mercy, and the love of God. These are examples of sin as Jesus views it. They are the 'lost' who are forfeiting their lives in selfishness in its various forms: pride, hypocrisy, sensuality, cruelty, hatred" (Stevens, p.36). Sin, then, is of such magnitude that it calls for a supreme effort on the part of a Savior, who lays down his life "for the many."

It is to be noted that in parallel to this teaching with regard to the need to be saved from sin that Jesus constantly is challenging his generation to recognize and accept the Kingdom of God which is in their midst and open to those who are humble and believing to enter therein. This, together with repentance, is the human stipulation for receiving the saving work of Christ.

The word "to save" in the Greek New Testament is *sozo*, for which Arndt and Gingrich in their lexicon give "save, keep from harm, preserve, rescue." The object of this saving work of Jesus in the Gospels is rescue from physical harm (Peter, Mt. 14.30), healing of disease (the woman with the issue of blood, Mt. 9.20-22), raising the dead (Jairus' daughter, Mk. 5.23), driving out the demons (Lk. 8.36), restoring of sight to the blind (Lk. 18.42). All of this Jesus did because it was his nature to bring healing to those afflicted. These acts also show his authority and power over those evil forces that had so enchained the multitudes that they had no hope apart from such a miracle-worker. The end of such human beneficence was the moral and spiritual cleansing from sin that was his primary mission as Messiah (Jn. 3.17; 12.47; Lk. 19.10). Paul's use of the word and the noun *soteria*, salvation, is always with reference to the work of the Holy Spirit, based on the cross and resurrection of Christ, that accomplishes all of the benefits that are included in the Wheel.

Stevens summarizes the understanding of salvation: [It is] "recovery from sin to holiness; it is the life of obedience, love, and service to God; it is son-ship to God and fellowship with him; in the last analysis, it is God-likeness" (p. 111).

Franklin Rall sees the keyword of salvation as "life: Just as sin means death, so salvation means life. Christianity is the religion of life. It believes in the living God, not in an inscrutable power, not in a mere cosmic order, whether hard or beneficent, but in a God of purpose and action who brings his good will to pass. And life is the word which characterizes rightly the Christian way. It is life that God asks of man, no mere gift on the altar, or ritual of worship, or keeping of rules, but the whole life: life at its fullest and highest, life of body and spirit, life individual and inner, life in its social aspects, the corporate life of man developing in history, life consummated in another world. . Men want deliverance from evil, but that of itself is not salvation. Men look for an eternal abode safe from change and decay and death, but salvation is more than a place." The task of religion is to show what life is, where its true needs lie, and how they may be satisfied" (p. 75).

Chapter 2 - The Meaning of Forgiveness

Let us take up Forgiveness first, for such is not only true to the initial emotion when one commits the soul to Christ in confident faith, it is the primary teaching of the Psalmists and the Prophets. In recounting the "benefits" of the Lord the Psalmist knows the Lord as he "who forgiveth all thine iniquities" before he names other great blessings (Psa. 103.3). And he has witnessed that "thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in loving-kindness unto all them that call upon thee" (86.5). He begins his paean of praise for trusting in God with "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered" (32.1). Paul echoes this passage and quotes it to substantiate his argument for justification by faith" (Rom. 4.7). The Psalmist goes on to anticipate the other side of the pair--Justification--with "Blessed is the man unto whom Yahweh imputeth not iniquity" (vs. 2). He has himself experienced this: "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, And mine iniquity did I not hide: I said I will confess my transgressions unto Yahweh; And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (vs. 5). The passage in Psalms, quoted in Romans, shows the linkage between Forgiveness and Justification. Stevens says: "For Paul 'justification' and 'forgiveness' are synonymous terms" (p. 347). The one is God's act that opens the way for the other, which is the resulting condition as experienced by the justified sinner.

Jeremiah based God's work of establishing the New Covenant on "I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more" (31.34). This is the basis of "knowing the Lord," which is in turn the basis of His putting "my law in their inward parts, and in their heart I will write it" (vs. 33).

Isaiah bases forgiveness on the purpose of God in glorifying Himself (44.23), which he has demonstrated in 23.25: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgression for Mine own sake, And I will not remember thy sins."

Second Isaiah urges repentance and promises God's pardon: "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, Call ye upon Him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord [all of these are involved in true repentance], and He will have mercy upon him; And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55.6-7).

The cost to God of providing this forgiveness which becomes full healing is described of the Suffering Servant in 53.4, 5, 12: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all ... yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Surely the older interpreters and theologians were on the beam in using this passage as the mine out of which the New Testament doctrine of atonement and forgiveness is digged.

Micah asks: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in loving-kindness. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (7.18-19). These are unique and arresting figures of speech to describe the work of God in taking away sin for sure and forever.

Even the Law of Moses acknowledges that Yahweh is a forgiving God, claiming Him as "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness and truth; keeping loving-kindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Ex. 34.6-7 = Num. 14.18). And Nehemiah

affirms in his prayer, "But thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness" (9.17), quoting God as he revealed Himself to Moses. And God goes on to say, "keeping loving-kindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Ex. 35.6-7). These three are the full expression of sin in the Old Testament.

All of these passages provide not only the character of God in providing forgiveness but also much of the vocabulary and figures of speech for the New Testament writers to express the greater concepts of forgiveness made possible through Christ in his inaugurating the New Covenant and the work of his Spirit for us.

Canon Redlich summarizes the Old Testament concept of forgiveness: "Divine forgiveness is complete restoration to communion for the sin is remembered no more and is removed 'as far as the east is from the west.' The tension between offender and offended has ceased. Jehovah, as the source of forgiveness and as the only Forgiver, destroys this sense of restraint when He forgives. This is not to be confounded with the memory and consciousness of the guilt of sin which man may retain.

"Thus at the close of the Old Testament a truer view of the character of God has brought about a clearer view of forgiveness than was held when the covenant was made on Mount Sinai" (E. Basil Redlich, The Forgiveness of Sins. Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1937, pp. 69-70).

MacDonald quotes Mackintosh (The Christian Experience of Forgiveness, p. 77) concerning the limitation of the Old Testament concept: "While, however, the 'Old Testament sense of forgiveness was indubitably real and profound, yet even it may be called precarious in this respect, that it was liable to be undermined or wholly destroyed by the onset of personal calamity'" and he goes on to say, "The nature of salvation in the Old Testament is external rather than specifically personally conditioned, in its measure, its understanding of forgiveness. Such happenings as physical disease or loss of goods the devout believer was inclined to interpret as evidence that God was no longer at peace with him. Adversity was frequently regarded as a divine judgment...so that many of the psalms reveal how personal misfortune shook confidence in the reality of God's pardon...In the realization of pardon even in the midst of the condemning judgment of misfortune, the Old Testament saints taught that God's salvation is expressed and made real in the forgiveness of sins. And such pardon is not the least of God's way with men; it is the blessing which leads every other by the hand" (pp. 129-30).

Taylor states that "the reason for [the OT writers] preoccupation with the idea of forgiveness is the canceling of sins, transgressions, and iniquities. The Old Testament references to 'blotting out', 'purging away', 'covering', and 'remembering no more' determined this element in their thinking. They were also deeply influenced by the thought of the readiness to forgive of a God who 'delighteth in mercy.' He attributes to the "cultus" the "deepening of the sense of sin, and the establishing of the idea that forgiveness is the canceling or covering of transgression...All sacrifices, write Oesterley and Robinson, 'whether bloodless or bloody, effect reconciliation (cf. Eze. 45.15, 17); i.e. they are means of obtaining divine forgiveness.

G. F. Moore [Judaism, I, p. 117) says that the primitive expiations and purifications are perpetuated in the Mosaic laws, 'but they no longer possess in themselves a mysterious, or if we choose, a magical, efficacy; they are rites which God has appointed for men to seek pardon through, and are thus conditions of forgiveness'. Repentance, however, came increasingly to be emphasized in association with the rites. Moore points out that Judaism 'made repentance the condition *sine qua non* of them all, and eventually the substitute for them all'" (pp. 21-22).

This points up the necessity for the fuller revelation that came with Christ and its interpretation by

the apostles. MacDonald concludes, "What had been peripheral to the Old Testament doctrine of salvation became crucial to the New" (p. 131).

Forgiveness is at the heart of the experience of salvation. H. D. MacDonald quotes H. R. Mackintosh (Ibid, p. 6): "Everything in Christianity is then apt to group itself around this truth. The certainty of forgiveness in Christ is, if not the sum, at least the secret of the Christian religion.' The truth is, of course, that the concept of the divine forgiveness is the distinctive of the biblical revelation. Other faiths may have their high ethical concepts of a God, but they know little of a God who redeems and forgives. It is this very element in Christianity which accounts for its early success in the world of competing religions" (p. 127).

The word "forgiveness" implies a person-to-person relationship which has been broken and is now being restored. Note that every one of the experiences of the Wheel of Salvation is a personal relation between the sinner and God, who is known in one of the three persons of the Trinity. There is no other human situation that can call forth forgiveness. It is not possible for a judge in a law-court to pronounce the guilty person "forgiven." By his very role he cannot enter into a personal relation with the accused. Furthermore, he must rule on the basis of legalities laid down for him and not by his own desires or inclinations.

We are talking, then, about the relation of father and son, of brother to brother, of neighbor to neighbor and finally of man to his God. In such relations some breach of trust has occurred and must be resolved. There must be a willingness on the part of the one who is wronged to forgive and on the part of the wrongdoer to accept his offer in grateful trust. There can be no forgiveness unless both parties enter into the experience in complete trust. If the one who is wronged does not repent and show a willingness to requite the wrong in a practical manner, repentance cannot occur. Yet this does not relieve the wronged party from showing a spirit of forgiveness and readiness to respond to the necessary overture on the part of the wrongdoer.

Stevens observes "It appears, then, alike from the descriptions of human forgiveness and from the allusions to its divine model, that forgiveness is a restoration of personal relations, a reconstitution of impaired or sundered ties. Among men it is a becoming reconciled to one's brother man--or, at least, a prominent factor in effecting such a reconciliation. Similarly, in God, it is the reception of sinful man into his favor and fellowship. It is the Father's welcome of a disobedient, but now repentant son; the admission of him to his normal place in the home, an admission as complete as if he had never wandered away. Some teachers have tried to explain to children that the parallel, justification, means: "*just as if I'd never sinned.*"

In such personal ways did Jesus describe God's forgiveness. It is viewed as a paternal act, taking its character and significance from the fatherly relation of God to man. Jesus made no use of legal analogies to illustrate its nature; the conception of debt and its remission which he employed, alternates with such terms as trespasses and sins, and is obviously figurative. Of the official and almost impersonal relations of the law court and of the abstraction called the divine law or government, he made no use. .

But the greatest deficiency which theology has found in the teaching of Jesus about forgiveness is that he does not recognize the existence of any obstacle to forgiveness in God which requires to be removed by a propitiation before he can exercise forgiving grace ... Our Lord is very explicit, however, in stating that there are conditions of forgiveness on man's side. The offender must sincerely repent, that is, he must realize and acknowledge his fault, must condemn and repudiate it.

This he obviously could not do unless he saw and preferred the right, the good, and the true with which his evil acts and choices stand in contrast. He must in some real way break with the evil of which he

would be forgiven, and in aspiration and preference identify himself with the good. If he would have God receive him, he must come to God; if he would live his true life as a son of God, he must forsake the far country of sin and return to his home and his Father" (pp. 345-46).

So it is that sin, usually of disobedience, but even of rebellion or defamation that is the cause of the breach. It is no light matter, but one that has to be faced openly and honestly in order to be resolved. With respect to sinning against God, when the sinner does not take such seriously, he feels no need for forgiveness and ignores the consequent absence of the presence of God. It often requires quite a jolt to his conscience to awaken the sinner to his need for forgiveness.

This sinful condition has created an estrangement between God and the person whom He has made in His image and capable of fellowship through spirit with Him. But that relationship has been broken by sin and must be resolved by a radical overture on the part of God. Paul calls those who have this sin condition "alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works," which calls for the reconciling work of Christ (Col. 1.21). So we can see here a close tie between forgiveness and the work of reconciliation, which we will study later. This alienation extends to the Gentiles who are "alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart" (Eph. 4.18).

It is important that we realize the seriousness of sin in order to appreciate the value of forgiveness. After having denied the responsibility of the sinner for Adam's "original sin" and denied also that sin consists primarily in "sensuousness or animalism," Stevens says positively

(1) "that the Christian view of sin rests on the assumption that it is a voluntary affair. Not only does it have its seat in the will; it is a state of the will. It is not merely a series of voluntary acts; it consists rather in the fixed moral preferences; it is a character. Hence sin is not merely error, or weakness, or natural imperfection; it is moral perversity, a false direction. It follows that sin cannot be merely negative--a mere absence of good. Sin is as positive as goodness. It is an act, a choice, a moral condition. It is a self affirmation, albeit a false affirmation..."

(2) We may add that sin is discord with God, disharmony with his will and nature, and so an offence against man's own wellbeing. Sin may be defined as transgression of Gods' law, but his 'law' is not a statutory system. God's law is a name for those demands upon mankind which arise out of his nature and out of the nature of man's relation to him.

(3) "It follows, of course, that sin is blameworthy. Guilt, in various degrees, attaches to all sin. Moreover, since sin is a character, every man's sin is his own..."

(4) "Sin is the negation, the opposite, of love. It is the repudiation of the requirements of love; it is selfishness. It is the life of self banishment from the Father's love and fellowship... To live the life of sin is, according to the Johannine definition, to walk in the darkness, instead of in God's light, and his light is his love...If love is the sum and substance of all laws and commandments [according to Jesus], then lovelessness is the essence of sin."

"If sin is a moral state, a character, what can save from it but a change of life, and what means and measures are adapted to that end except those which help us into a new character... Salvation is not primarily a legal *status*, but a moral relation to God. Salvation from sin is therefore recovery to right relations to God, to the life of love, obedience, and son-ship. This is the work for which Christ came, lived, labored, suffered, and died" (pp. 318-21).

Taylor quotes R. C. Moberly (*Atonement and Personality*, Chapter on Forgiveness, pp. 48-73) that

"forgiveness is a process, at first inchoate and provisional, which requires to be consummated, and may be forfeited and reversed. 'Earthly forgiveness--real in the present, but real as inchoate and provisional--only reaches its final and perfect consummation then, when the forgiven penitent--largely through the softening and enabling grace of progressively realized forgiveness has become at last personally and completely righteous. It is not consummated perfectly till the culprit *is* righteous...' (p. 61).

Our forgiveness is found in our clear view and unswerving aim, of thought and heart, towards the end. 'And the end is the effectual realization at last of such absolute antithesis between the sinner and his sin, as only is perfectly realized when he, the real he, is no longer a sinner but righteous' (p.70). It will be observed that, in this account of the matter, the term forgiveness covers, not only justification in the Pauline sense, but sanctification as well. It embraces the entire process of Christian growth and development, and is at once a possession and a hope, an earnest and a fulfillment" (pp. 23-24). We see in this the interlocking of several elements of the Wheel of Salvation.

The primary meaning of the Greek word, *aphesis*, is release (from captivity). Jesus took as his text for his first sermon in the synagogue in Nazareth the passage from Isaiah 61.1, which reads in Luke 4.18-19:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord"

This idea then carries over into that of "pardon, cancellation of an obligation, a punishment, or guilt" (Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, hereafter designated by "A & G."). As "remission of sins" or "forgiveness" it appears first in the New Testament in Mark 1.4 = Lk. 3.3: "John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins." It appears in the hymn of praise of Zacharias in Lk. 1.77 as he prophesied concerning Jesus that "thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people In the remission of their sins." In response to the charge of the scribes that Jesus was casting out demons by the "prince of demons" Jesus warned that such blasphemy against the Holy Spirit "hath never forgiveness" (Mk. 3.29).

We note the command in the Lord's Prayer, "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors... For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" Matt. 6.12, 14-15. This is also affirmed in Mk. 11.25: "And whensoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one; that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

This is further strengthened by Jesus in the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matt. 18.23-35). The "king" had a servant who was forgiven his debt, but who, in turn, refused to forgive his fellow-servant what was owed him: "And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due. So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."

This need for forgiving one's fellowman is the primary use of the concept by Jesus. Now this presents a problem, for it appears that we must be capable and willing to forgive our fellowman before we can ask for forgiveness. So then, such is not of pure grace or the initiative of God, but a preliminary requirement of our even asking forgiveness of God.

Even so, it is obvious from the overall teaching and from the situation in the heart of the one needing

to forgive that an unforgiving spirit toward one's fellow precludes any heartfelt request of God for oneself. While it is true that the grace of God operating in the heart makes forgiving another possible, yet from these words of Jesus it is true that grace is always available for that move on our part. Jesus knows the situation of human hearts far better than our logic or feelings may try to assert (Jn. 2.25).

Jesus also demands unlimited forgiveness on our part: "Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Lk. 17.3). When Peter accepted the "seven times" the Lord answered, "I say not unto thee until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18.21-22). And he followed this with the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. This is the measure of forgiveness of one's brother "from your hearts" (vs. 35).

Canon Redlich says, "Fellowship, in the New Testament, is based on personal attachment to Jesus and strengthened by forgiveness. Manifested not only in the breaking of the bread and in joint meetings for prayer and in relief of distress, it is fully expressed in love for the brethren. To live in fellowship one with another is to live in fellowship with God. If this fellowship is broken by a member, every effort must be made to win the recalcitrant member back to fellowship. The Church, founded by Jesus, was to show this fellowship at its highest. The fellowship with God and with one another was a single fellowship, and it was to be maintained at all costs and at a high standard which safeguarded the holiness, righteousness, and love of God as Father" (Redlich, *op. cit.*, p. 105).

In the Parable of the Lost Son, Jesus demonstrates the close connection of forgiveness and reconciliation. Taylor (F. & R.) says: "Unlike the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, this parable is not intended primarily as an illustration of forgiveness; what it describes is a lost son and the grace of a loving father. In such a story it is inevitable that both forgiveness and reconciliation should be represented, but it is important to determine at what points they appear and whether they are identified."

He then calls the command of the father to prepare the feast as "the restoration of the lost son to the joy of fellowship...Here is a picture of reconciliation. The son is restored to the fellowship of the home; the broken relationship is reestablished. It may even be that there is a representation which includes the heart of the Pauline idea of justification, since the father accepts the son as righteous: 'This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found'" [vs. 24] (p. 17).

Rather than equating the two he places the forgiveness of the father in his action of vs. 20, where the father "was moved with compassion and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." He says, "Even here we have a warmer conception of forgiveness than anywhere else in the New Testament, and one which merges into a picture of reconciliation, but the essential characteristics of forgiveness are plainly present. The wrong done by the son is cancelled by the father; it no longer stands between them; the son is forgiven.

Moved with compassion at the evident sign of repentance, the father runs to meet his son, and in the kiss of love the wrongdoing of the past is covered." So Taylor concludes, "Nothing in this parable, nor indeed in any parable, can shake the conclusion that in the New Testament forgiveness is the canceling or removal of barriers to reconciliation" (pp. 18-19).

Jesus himself claims the power to forgive sins, when he healed the palsied man borne by four friends. Such caused the scribes to be shocked for they believed that only God could forgive sins (Mk. 2.7). In the story of the woman who was a sinner, Jesus defended her generous action by saying to Simon, his host, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little...And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven... And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved

thee; go in peace" (Lk. 7.47-50; the preposition here is *eis*, into, and so states the command as more than the manner of her state as that into which she must enter by faith as she leaves). As can be seen Jesus does not ascribe her love as the ground of her forgiveness, but the evidence of a soul at peace by reason of forgiveness.

The last reference to *aphesis* in the Gospels comes in the charge which Jesus gave to his disciples after his resurrection "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Lk. 24.47). He further gave them the power to forgive sins as He bestowed the Holy Spirit upon them: "whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (Jn. 20.22-23). This was given to all the disciples and not just to the apostles, as the Catholic faith claims. They exercised this power in their preaching of the Gospel that spelled out the requirements for forgiveness in repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ.

The Apostles obediently carried out this charge as evidenced in the preaching of Peter on the Day of Pentecost: "Repent ye, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins" (Ac. 2.38). In Peter's testimony before the council he witnessed that though they had crucified Jesus, God exalted him "with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. Peter further witnessed to the household of Cornelius concerning Jesus "To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name everyone that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins" (Ac. 10.43).

Paul took up the charge in his early sermon in the synagogue of Antioch of Pisidia where he preached the resurrection of Christ, on the basis of which he urged his hearers "Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins" (Ac. 13.38). It is significant that Paul immediately links with this "everyone that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (vs. 39). This is ample reason for our linking these two great realities as complements in the Wheel of Salvation.

Finally in Acts Paul uses our word in his testimony to king Agrippa about the "heavenly vision" he received of the Lord that he had been sent to the Gentiles "to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me" (Ac. 26.18).

The editors of A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Based on Semantic Domains (United Bible Societies, 1988) define the family of Greek words around the idea of forgiveness as "to remove the guilt resulting from wrongdoing--'to pardon, to forgive, forgiveness.'" They further observe "It is extremely important to note that the focus in the meanings of *aphiemi*, *aphesis*, and *apoluo* is upon the guilt of the wrong-doer and not upon the wrongdoing itself.

The event of wrongdoing is not undone, but the guilt resulting from such an event is pardoned. To forgive, therefore, means essentially to remove the guilt resulting from wrongdoing...Since terms for 'forgiveness' are often literally 'to wipe out,' or 'to do away with,' it is obviously not possible to blot out or to wipe out an event, but it is possible to remove or obliterate the guilt." (Vol. I, p. 503).

Vincent Taylor in Forgiveness and Reconciliation (London, MacMillan and Co., 1960; hereafter identified as "F. and R.") says:

It is noteworthy that in none of these passages is forgiveness represented as the remission of *penalties*; what is remitted is *sin* (Italics, mine). It is also significant that forgiveness is not presented as the equivalent of reconciliation, or as the restoration of

fellowship between persons. At the most it can only be described as action directed to the removal or annulment of some obstacle or barrier to reconciliation. This obstacle, or to speak more precisely, the object of the forgiveness, is variously described as 'sins', trespasses', and 'the thought of the heart' (Acts 8.22). Everywhere it is implied that, if this object is removed, covered, or in some way adequately dealt with, the forgiveness is accomplished. Forgiveness, therefore, in these passages cannot be identified with reconciliation; it is a stage antecedent to reconciliation; it is that which makes reconciliation possible. Another marked feature is that forgiveness is not directly connected with the death of Christ; it is nowhere said that He died that men might be forgiven. The association is indirect. Instead of being connected immediately with the death, forgiveness is associated rather with Christ Himself as the Risen Lord and Saviour of men (pp. 3-4).

He further says, "Forgiveness is the removal or annulment of the obstacles in the way of reconciliation. It is not represented as the main purpose of the death of Christ, but is included among its results, probably as one of the signs of the expected Messianic salvation" (p. 8).

After this hurried recounting of the uses of *aphesis* in the Gospels and Acts, let us now turn to the Epistles of Paul.

We have already noted the way Paul ties Forgiveness and Justification together from the experience of David in Rom. 4. Here he further uses the Old Testament analogy of "the covering over of sins" In Eph. 1.7 and Col. 1.14 he equates Forgiveness with Redemption "through His blood." These are all of Paul's uses of *aphesis* and *aphiemi*. But he uses other descriptive terms: *charidzomai*, "to forgive, on the basis of one's gracious attitude toward an individual" (Louw and Nida, I, p. 503).

In Col. 2.13 this forgiveness is concomitant with God's act of "making us alive together with Him." It is on the basis of this reality that we are able to "freely forgive each other" (Eph. 4.32; Col. 3.13; II Cor. 2.7). Vincent Taylor, however, prefers the meaning of *charidzomai* in most Pauline passages to be "to deal graciously with" (p. 5).

He uses the latter even with Luke 7.42, 43, where Jesus uses the word in the Parable of the Two Debtors. Most translations have "forgive," but the NEB has "let them both off" and Eugene Peterson (The Message) has "cancelled both debts." Good News has both: the first of the moneylender who "canceled the debts of both" and the second of Simon, who replied "the one who was forgiven more." Taylor is supported by A. & G., who lists Lk. 7.42, 43 under "give freely or graciously as a favor" and translates this passage as "is dispensed with, cancelled." Taylor prefers "dealing graciously with" in Eph. 4.32, but admits "forgive" in Col. 2.13 because its object is definitely "all your trespasses."

Even here, though, he would use "having dealt graciously with us in respect of all our trespasses," "but if we prefer: 'having forgiven our trespasses', we must recognize that the use of *charidzomai* suggests only a more gracious expression of the idea which otherwise would have been indicated by *aphiemi*. The thought is that of setting aside, through love, of barriers in the way of fellowship. What is suggested by *charidzomai* in the passages under consideration is the forgiving spirit which is ready to remove obstacles. To the meaning conveyed by *aphiemi* there is added the suggestion that, in setting aside wrong, *charis* or grace must be in the mind and heart of those who are wronged.

There is no case in which *charidzomai* is used to suggest the full restoration of broken relationships; action leading to this end, and necessary to it, is the meaning implied" (p. 6). Taylor refers only to the relation of forgiveness and reconciliation in the Scriptures. He further says concerning these two words for

forgiveness in the later practice of Paul, "who deserts *aphiemi* for *charidzomai* when he desires to speak of richer and more humane relationships.

We shall see later that it is in harmony with St. Paul's preference for justification as a term of richer content than forgiveness as he understood the word" (p. 19). His discussion of these three experiences of the grace of God at work through the Holy Spirit in bringing us to salvation emphasizes their interrelatedness. In fact, the three are all in one experience. The forgiven, reconciled and justified believer hardly knows how to separate them in his consciousness.

Beyond that it is understandable from the viewpoint of the psychology of human experience that one must receive by faith the gospel of forgiveness and have the inner witness before there is the willingness to be reconciled to God. It is true that Paul exhorts the Corinthian believers "be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5.20). So it is assumed that they have already been accepted into the family of God and are among the "saints by reason of calling" (1 Cor. 1.2).

The necessity of their pursuing this reconciliation with God may have something to do with their "carnal" or immature condition (1 Cor. 3.1), which can only be cured by their seeking full acceptance through the reconciling action of God. It is tricky, however, to attempt to arrange these experiences of salvation in any logical or experiential order. Most believers in the beginning are hardly aware of any sequence of divine actions. They need only to hold fast to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ whereby they can know that they are forgiven.

2 Cor. 2.6-11 illustrates the way in which forgiveness was to be practiced by the church in order to restore an erring brother to fellowship. Paul instructs the Corinthian church, "Sufficient unto such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many. Wherefore I beseech you to confirm your love toward him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye are obedient in all things. But to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes have I forgiven it in the presence of Christ; that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

This shows the necessity of even a group of believers showing a spirit of forgiveness to another and their obedience to Christ if they are to "prove" their love. Also Paul demonstrates the context and dynamic of his own forgiveness by being "in the presence of Christ." There is no human forgiveness possible without the Presence of Christ, which is its motivation, and the power of His Spirit, which provides the ability to perform that which humanly speaking is often seemingly impossible or impracticable. It also indicates the sense of solidarity which Paul shows often with those to whom he had proclaimed the gospel and led in establishing churches.

Another periphrasis used by Paul for forgiveness is the way "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, *me' logidzo'menos autois ta' parapto'mata auton'* (not reckoning unto them their trespasses. 2 Cor. 5.19. This is the only use of the verb in this sense in the NT). Whether the reconciling and the forgiveness are synonymous or simultaneous, they are at least closely related.

The last words that belong to the family of forgiveness are (*h*)*ilamos* and (*h*)*ilasterion*, which have been translated in some of the older works as "propitiation," "the means by which sins are forgiven" (Louv and Nida, I, p. 504). The latter word indicates the place of propitiation and is used in the Old Testament in Ex. 25.14ff of the "mercy seat" or lid of the Ark of the Covenant, which was sprinkled with the blood of the sin offering on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16.14). This is referred to in Heb. 9.7; 10.3-4.

The older theology consistently thought of this as propitiating an angry God. The newer theology

insists that this cannot be true, for God is the one taking the initiative in the act of Christ's atonement. This is substantiated especially in John 3.16 where God's love is the motivating force that sends Jesus to resolve our sin problem. So contemporary theologians and biblical scholars prefer the translation, "expiation," which is the removal of the guilt of sin. Louw and Nida explain, "Propitiation is essentially a process by which one does a favor to a person in order to make him or her favorably disposed, but in the NT God is never the object of propitiation since he is already on the side of people. (*hilasmos* and *hilasterion* denote the means of forgiveness and not propitiation" (I, p. 504).

Stevens quotes Augustine ("On the Trinity," Bk. XIII, ch. xi.) when he asks, "Would the Father have delivered up his Son for us *if he had not been already appeased?* I see that the Father loved us before the Son died for us" (Italics, his; p. 254). Stevens goes on to say, "The conception that God ever was or could be unwilling to forgive is a contradiction to the biblical idea of God.

There not only is, but ever has been, and ever must be, forgiveness with him. He evinces his righteousness, his equity, his perfection, in forgiving upon conditions of penitence. He would be less just than men are required to be if it were otherwise. . God's righteousness includes his grace; for his name's sake, that is, because of what he is, he is merciful and gracious; he is 'a righteous God and a Saviour'" (p. 349).

Vincent Taylor, in speaking of "Christ made sin on our behalf," says "...it is highly probable that St. Paul is thinking of that submission to the consequences of sin which he has in mind when he says that Christ was made sin on our behalf. If this view is warranted, we are justified in rendering (*hilasterion* 'means of expiation', since by the obedience of Christ sin is thought of as covered. An ethical means of atonement is provided, and in consequence God is righteous.

The righteousness of God, it should be noted, is conceived both as a quality of God and as His redeeming activity. The claim is that He is the Holy One and the Saviour because He deals adequately with the fact of sin" (Vincent Taylor, The Atonement in New Testament Teaching, London, the Epworth Press, 1958; hereafter designated "Atonement." p. 91).

Now, since we are dealing with the subjective experience of Salvation we will not go into the problem of how the sacrifice of Christ provides this expiation.

Forgiveness, even by the Father, is not sufficient in itself to "undo or neutralize our sin and its effects...Forgiveness cannot undo the fact that the sin has been committed. It cannot efface the memory of the fact. It does not obliterate regret and remorse on account of the fact. Nor can forgiveness wipe out at once all the moral consequences of sinful action... The natural flow of evils, physical and social, which follow certain forms of sin, is not arrested, completely and all at once, even by God's forgiveness... It should be added, however, that, in fact, forgiveness never stands thus wholly isolated. Forgiveness is but one factor in salvation...

The pardon of sin is never conceived in Scripture as separation from the cleansing, life-bestowing action of the divine Spirit...Forgiveness, then, as a name for the beginning or restoration of right personal relations, denotes the first step, on the divine side, in the development of the saved life. As such it signifies the cessation of God's disfavor and condemnation on account of past sin and his gracious recognition of the sinner into his friendship...

Forgiveness is the revelation and the first realization of grace, and in that grace--that undeserved favor of God--that eagerness of God to recover and bless men--lie all the powers and possibilities of salvation... It is the transition from a guilty past to a holy future" (p. 355-56). Taylor summarizes the

teachings of Jesus that "forgiveness is the removal of the barriers which stand in the way of fellowship" (F. and R. p. 15).

Franklin Rall reminds us that forgiveness is not only incomplete in itself, it must be daily experienced through repentance: "This gracious forgiveness, however, is but the beginning. Forgiving and giving go together and both are needed throughout the Christian life. Day by day we need forgiveness for our imperfect and sinful lives; day by day by God's mercy we have fellowship with him and receive life from him. This is the grace of God. The merciful God is continually giving himself in love, and the needy man is constantly receiving forgiveness and help. This saving relationship is the 'state of grace,' and the continued help is spoken of as 'enabling grace'" (p. 109).

Redlich ties forgiveness and justification together in one consequence, while at the same time seeing especially a difference in the concept of God: "Justification is a forensic term based on the thought of God as Judge. Forgiveness is a non-legal term based on the thought of God as Father. Both justification and forgiveness imply that the offender is forgiven not for what he is, namely, a sinner and transgressor, but only for what he is capable of being. In the former case the wrong-doer is acquitted and declared to be not guilty, in the latter he is welcomed and received into fellowship.

In both cases he is forgiven In both cases what matters to God is the change of heart. No reference is made to the past which is blotted out. It is therefore no straining of language if justification and forgiveness are treated as interchangeable terms. Justification, it will be admitted, lacks that personal intimate note involved in forgiveness, but it brings out more clearly that the guilt of sin is removed and abolished" (Redlich, *op. cit.*, p. 111).

This author recalls an experience while pastor of a church in Illinois which had a brotherhood well trained by the preceding pastor in the art of winning men to Christ. I found that one man especially, a train engineer, was gifted in persuading a "lost" man to accept the offer of his brothers to a meeting in his home to help him understand "the plan of salvation." In one man's particular case, when it came time for him to make his decision, he openly confessed that he had had a feud with his blood brother for many years. We tried to help him see the urgency Jesus taught for him to be willing to forgive his brother.

He made his commitment and was soon baptized. At first, he seemed to take part wholeheartedly in the church, but in a few weeks he dropped out. Two of us went to try to reclaim him. Soon, however, in the conversation he admitted that he had never forgiven his brother. This had so chilled his heart that he had no desire to continue as a believer.

Unfortunately, I have to admit our efforts at restoration were a failure. So stubborn, then, is the old nature that it refuses to die without a struggle. And as in this case, an unrepenting spirit stifles the renewed spirit and leads to further disobedience. We will leave the analyzing of this experience to the theologians to determine whether it can justly be called "falling from" or "out of grace." What we do know is that Jesus was on top of human nature and our relation to God when he required that we forgive our fellowman.

Chapter 3 - The Meaning of Justification

As we have already indicated the complement of Forgiveness is Justification. Paul equates the two in Rom. 4.8, using the phrase "will not reckon sin." The Greek word, *logidzomai*, means "to take into account, count something against someone" (A. & G., p. 477). It is translated by the King James as "impute," which is defined as "to ascribe (goodness or guilt) to a person as coming from another" (Webster's New World Dictionary, David B. Guralnik, Editor in Chief, William Collings Publishers, Inc., 1979).

Paul is quoting Psa. 32.1-2. He focuses on the fact that this "blessing" came to "father Abraham" because of his faith, "which he had in uncircumcision" (4.12). Because of this Paul sees the Gentiles being justified "by faith" so that these are "also of the faith of Abraham, who is father of us all" (Rom. 4.16). He further applies this truth "for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification" (vss. 24-25). Notice here the connection between the ground of our redemption in Christ being "delivered up for our trespasses" and the resurrection which effects our justification. He also refers to the faith Abraham had in his old age when God promised a son (4.22).

The word is used also in I Cor. 13.5 as one of the descriptions of love. Paul also uses it in II Cor. 5.19, where he links it with "reconciling the world unto himself." It is used in Gal. 3.6, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." This is the translation used by ASV. The Revised English Bible has "that faith was counted to him as righteousness." The Good News Bible has "because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." Peterson (The Message) has "He believed God, and that act of belief was turned into a life that was right with God."

Paul's main words for justification are *dikaiousu'ne*, "righteousness," whether the character of God (Rom. 3.25) or that which he bestows freely of his grace upon the unrighteous sinner (Rom. 5.21; 9.30; II Cor. 3.9); and *dikaio'o*, "to justify, vindicate, treat as just, to be acquitted, be pronounced and treated as righteous and thereby become *di'kaios* ["just, upright, righteous"], receive the divine gift of *dikaiousu'ne*" (A. & G., p. 196).

Taylor (F. & R) calls the associations of the secular use of *logidz'omai* "unfountate...The verb means 'to reckon, calculate, deem, consider', 'to reckon a person to be this or that', 'to account a thing as having a certain value'. As the evidence of the Papyri shows, its atmosphere is commercial. Too easily it suggests the thought of *quid pro quo*, or even a fictitious estimate. Most of the objections to the doctrine of justification by faith are probably strongly influenced by the passages in which it appears.

Righteousness, it is held, is something imputed rather than real." He identifies another objection "because he believes something! When we study Pauline teaching as a whole we see that this idea is a monstrous perversion of the truth, but there can be little doubt that it has found shelter under the wings of St. Paul's argument" (pp. 46-47). Taylor prefers that we stick with the passages that use the family of words based on *di'kaios* ("just, righteous").

Taylor classifies Paul's usage as follows:

(1) "*The activity is initiated by God; it is a manifestation of Divine Grace.*" He quotes Rom. 3.24; 8.30, 33; Gal 3.8. "From first to last justification is the act of God; men cannot secure or merit it (Rom 4.5). He, and He alone, brings it to pass.

(2) *The activity is a present experience, or, to speak more exactly, it is an eschatological act brought into the present, which has meaning for man here and now.*" The eschatological aspect is seen in

Rom. 2.23; 5.19). "But this hope, so characteristic of Jewish thought, without being obliterated, falls into the background in comparison with the confident affirmation that men are justified now. The tenses are frequently present. The immediate state of men who have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God is that of 'being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3.24).

Christ Jesus is publicly set forth as 'a means of atonement' to show God's righteousness 'at this present season,' 'that he might himself be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus (Rom. 3.25f). The same Pauline emphasis on the present is evident in Rom. 3.28, Gal. 2.16, 3.8, 11, 24, and is reflected in Acts 13.39...Indeed, in his view, it is the fact of present justification which gives the assurance to men of final deliverance from the divine judgment. 'With all the more reason, therefore, shall we, now that we have been justified by His blood, be saved by Him from wrath' (Rom. 5.9, Baylan's translation).

(3) "*As a divine activity justification is conditioned by faith on the part of men.*" Faith is mentioned ten times in passages where the verb is used...Faith, indeed, is 'reckoned for righteousness' 'to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly' (Rom. 4.5; Cf. 5.1)...By this [faith-relationship to Christ is to be understood more than an attitude, and more even than a relationship, of self-surrender and self-committal to Him.

St. Paul does not separate the Person and work of Christ, and accordingly faith in Him must mean dependence upon Him, both as Lord and as Redeemer. It is important to observe that faith is not described as the final cause, or ground, of justification... Faith, therefore is at most a conditioning cause of an activity which is grounded in God's grace, expressed and embodied in the life and death of Jesus Christ.

In his discussion of "Justification by Faith" Taylor says, "The ground of the justifying act is God's redemptive work, and the conditioning cause is faith, but it is the interaction of both which brings a man into right relation with God. Unless this is perceived, it is misleading to say that we are justified by faith; for the faith in question is not faith in general, and not simply faith in God, but faith in God active in the redemptive ministry of Christ.

It is equally misleading to say that we are justified by reason of the death of Christ; for whatever that death has achieved stands outside ourselves until there is a believing response which makes the achievement a vital element in our approach to God. We are so justified when the soul breathes its deep Amen to all that God has accomplished on its behalf" (p. 48).

(4) "*The ground of justification is the atoning work of Christ.* This thought is clearly expressed in Rom. 3.24, 25f., and 5.9 (cf. 4.25, 5.16, 18). In 3.24 St. Paul speaks of 'being justified freely' by the grace of God 'through the redemption (*tes apolutroseos*) that is in Christ'. In this passage, in view of the definite article and the words which immediately follow (3.25f.), it is impossible to interpret *apolutrosis* generally of spiritual deliverance gained in Christ. St. Paul is thinking of a particular deliverance accomplished by Christ by His death, in consequence of which God receives men as righteous.

In 3.25 he describes Christ as Him 'whom God openly set forth as a means of atonement (*hilasterion*), though faith, by his blood', and he explains that the purpose in view was to show the righteousness of God, 'that he might him be *just* and the *justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus*.' "[Whatever translation of *hilasterion* one uses] the point in any case is that the activity of God, 'the justifier', rests upon the atoning ministry of Christ... {the case} is at its strongest if *hilasterion* and *en to autou aimati* point to a sacrificial meaning in the death of Christ...[in Rom. 5.9] the phrase by his blood', cannot adequately be explained by the violent circumstances of Christ's death; it bears a definitely sacrificial meaning, and refers to the life of Christ freely offered for men upon the Cross" (pp. 36-39). And I would add "and made

available through the Holy Spirit to the believer to 'cover his sins' and bring him justification."

In the passage in Rom. 3.25-26 there seem to be two ways in which God justifies the sinner. Vincent Taylor comments on this problem: "In this passage St. Paul seems to suggest that before the Cross God's action was on one kind but afterwards of another kind; that then He was indulgent, but now He is righteous. God, so to speak, has redeemed His name. It is surely highly improbable that he means to suggest this, and it is important to ask rather why his words are open to such an interpretation. The answer cannot be in doubt. St. Paul is speaking, as he must speak, of the Cross as an event in time, and so long as it is apprehended as such the suggestion of a change of method is inescapable.

It is only an accommodation of language to say that God's action before the Cross was prospective, contingent upon a work of atonement still to be consummated. The better view is that to the mind of God the meaning of the Cross is eternal, and that what happened on Calvary was the emergence upon the plane of history of His timeless activity... his main purpose in the passage is to describe the work of God *as men see it*, and to claim that it was in perfect conformity with the divine holiness" (Taylor, Atonement, p.92).

Rall defines justification as "the term that Paul uses to denote the act of forgiving mercy by which God receives the sinner. But while it means the same for him as forgiveness, it is not so good a term. Its background is that of the judge, the court, and the law. That, indeed, is why Paul chose it. It helped him to bring out the sharp contrast of grace with the way of the law. The law dealt with man in factual fashion: this man is innocent, let him go free, this man is guilty, let him be punished. With Christ there had come a new way, says Paul. The sinner's lot is decided not by what he is, but by what God is. He is justified, not by what he had done, not by works and merit, but by God's free grace. Forgiven, he is accepted with God" (p. 115).

However, Taylor (in F. & R.) denies that Paul thought of forgiveness and justification as equals. Though Paul was well versed in both the Old Testament and rabbinic writings, he bypassed many scripture references to forgiveness and spoke of it less frequently than Jesus. He accounts for this thus: "Just because he was so familiar with Old Testament teaching, he perceived the limitations of a term which suggested little more than an open door, blessed as this boon is when it is contrasted with the religious condition of men separated from fellowship with God by the barriers of unrepented sins.

But if this is so, we must be bold enough to draw the conclusion that for St. Paul the idea of 'being justified' was a much richer conception than that of 'being forgiven', more adequate to express the ideas of God's gracious action in restoring sinners to Himself and of man's standing with God as a redeemed personality." He goes on to account for the contempt of some modern theology because it is dismissed as "a term of the law court, a forensic notion which belongs to a sub-Christian stage of religion.

Few reversals of terminology are more surprising. To modern theological usage St. Paul is a stranger. If he could return to our world, he would feel like a visitor to a city of Babel smitten with the confusion of tongues. It is true, of course, that *dikaioo* and its cognates are terms of legal content, although, even so, deepened and enriched by that more humane conception of righteousness which distinguished the Hebrew idea from the Greek" (pp. 29-30).

Stevens accounts for Paul's use of the terms from his Jewish education: "It is frequently employed in the Old Testament and was one of the great topics of the rabbinical schools. Formally considered, 'justify' is a legal term and means to declare righteous, to acquit. It is a term derived from the analogies of the law court. It implies that God acts as a judge or sovereign and, upon certain conditions, pronounces men exempt from blame or penalty, proclaiming their acceptance into his favor" (p. 451).

The legal aspect used to describe justification is appropriate because the condition of sin is that in the

sight of the "judge or sovereign" the sinner stands condemned as wrong, guilty as charged. And no amount of spurious use of liberal psychology can deny to human experience the feeling of guilt. Much of the efforts of the sinner to cover over the feeling of guilt is vain and only aggravates the problem until he acknowledges his guilt before God and pleads his mercy.

Stevens continues "In the Pharisaic schools the appropriate condition of such a decree of acceptance was the complete performance of all the religious acts and duties prescribed in the Mosaic law. . . [With Paul] It was the theory according to which his own early efforts and struggles after peace with God were conducted. But he had learned its futility.

He had found that a deep and sincere moral nature which feels the exceeding sinfulness of sin and clearly sees the lofty character of the divine requirements could never rest secure in the sense of its own achievements, especially when the chief stress was laid upon ceremonial acts as the primary demand of religion. The time came when this Pharisaic scheme seemed to Paul to be a theory of salvation *by merit*, whereas he saw that sinful men could be saved only *by pure grace*. Hence this former advocate of salvation by legal works became now its uncompromising opponent" (pp. 451-52).

Now according to the Law [the judges] "shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked" (Deut. 25.1). But that is just the reverse of what Jesus claimed was his mission: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mt. 9.13). His "good news" was for the latter who alone responded positively to him. The former were too proud to acknowledge their need of him. They were offended by his associating with sinners.

A good introduction into Paul's thought and a summary of classic Protestant theology is Romans 1.17: Unfortunately some of the early translations obscure Paul's contrast with the Old Testament view of the place of faith by translating "The just shall live by faith" (KJ; similarly, ASV, Goodspeed). He is quoting Habakkuk 2.4, but he omits the pronoun *mou* ("my"), which the LXX used instead of the third person pronoun, "his," of the Massoretic Text.

This implies that it is God's faithfulness that brings life, which is true Gospel!. Furthermore, the word in the Hebrew is *emunah*, which primarily means "faithfulness," and is best described in Ezek. 18.5ff: "But if a man be just, and does that which is lawful and right... that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true justice between man and man, hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept mine ordinances, to deal truly: he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord Yahweh."

The Hebrew has no other word for "faith;" rather that concept is best expressed by the word "trust." So the Old Testament doctrine is purely based upon the idea that "he that is righteous by *his faithfulness* shall live." But that is just at the point where Paul finds his will and his own righteousness to fall completely short. What he is saying is best understood by changing the phrase, "by his faith," to modify "the just" instead of "shall live."

This is good grammar, both in the Hebrew and the Greek (although, admittedly, so is the other modification). The RSV (similarly the NEB and REB) has "He who through faith is righteous shall live." And Eugene H. Peterson in his translation, The Message, (Colorado Springs, NavPress, 1995) has "The person in right standing before God by trusting him really lives." This is the Gospel whereas the other is the Law.

Stevens accounts for the age-long controversy between Catholics and Protestants: "Now our Protestant theology has shown a strong preference for this Pauline maxim of justification by faith as against the Roman Catholic emphasis upon participation in rites and ceremonies considered as conditions of

salvation. To the Catholic mind the Protestant view has seemed one-sided because, it is said, it eventuates in the error condemned by James, a faith without works, which is dead.

To the Protestant, on the other hand, the Catholic theory of salvation has seemed to be only a Christianized Pharisaism--a doctrine of salvation by ceremonial acts which is in principle the very error against which Paul so energetically contended" (pp. 452-53). He concludes that "there has been a good deal of misunderstanding, confusion, and irrelevancy. It is a misfortune that the single category of justification which, from being a legal term, so easily gives rise to unwarranted inferences, has been so predominantly employed in discussions of the nature and conditions of salvation. It can only be rightly estimated when it is remembered,

- (1) that it is not one of the terms of Jesus' teaching,
- (2) that it is not a prevailing term in the New Testament generally, and
- (3) that, even in Paul, the occasion for its employment lies in his polemic against Pharisaism" (Ibid).

One way of describing these differing views of justification has been to say that the Protestant view is that God "declares" the sinner "righteous" or "imputes" righteousness to him on the basis of his faith in Christ; the Catholic view is that God "grants" righteousness to the sinner on the basis of his "faithfulness" (to the beliefs and practices, (especially, the Sacraments) of the "faith" as taught by the Church). Rall describes the Catholic view as "a factual recognition of what man is.

We are justified by God because we 'are just, receiving justice within us,' because we are 'renewed in the spirit of [our] minds' (Eph. 4.23). Justification here is not forgiveness. God makes man just and then simply recognizes what he is" and he quotes from the Council of Trent, "'The instrumental cause of this justness is the sacrament of baptism.'" (p. 116). And this is just the point at which the Protestants differ!

Taylor (in F. & R.) discusses the meaning of the verb, *dikaioo*: "Sanday and Headlam (ICC, Romans, pp 28-31) claim that the verb means properly 'to pronounce righteous', and that it cannot mean 'to make righteous'. 'There may be other influences,' they say, 'which go to make a person righteous, but they are not contained, or even hinted at, in the word *dikaion*. That word means 'to declare righteous'; 'to treat as righteous'; it may even mean 'to prove righteous'; but whether the person so declared, treated as, or proved to be righteous, is really so, the word itself neither affirms nor denies' (Taylor, p. 31).

What Stevens is arguing is that when justification is interpreted solely in forensic terms it loses its moral value ("Morally minded men can hardly be made to believe that the issues of eternity are staked on an opinion" (p. 459): [The legal term is] "liable to carry associations and to give rise to inferences which ill accord with the Christian conception of salvation.

Illustrations of this liability are seen in the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer and in the widespread notion of salvation as dependent upon a passive acquiescence or an intellectual assent... All figures and analogies are liable to perversion and abuse, and Paul is not to be held responsible for those aberrations. But such one-sided applications of his language will best be avoided by seeing that he is wedded to no single term or thought form, but has a varied and rich vocabulary for describing Christian experience" (pp. 453-54). [This also our Wheel of Salvation is seeking to expound.]

So Stevens remedies this error by "If this legal figure were translated into its equivalent, forgiveness, many unwarranted inferences drawn from it and many disputes concerning it would be rendered less plausible, if not quite impossible. Further one must remember what faith is for Paul. The apostle's conception of the nature of faith should have saved his idea of justification from ever seeming to wear the appearance of a mere formality or court process.

Faith is a vital union with Christ, a living in Christ, which makes the believer's life a Christ-filled life. Now it is such a fellowship with Christ which is the condition of justification. How, then, can justification, so conditioned, be a mere formal affair? It is to be noted, too, that the form of the Pauline doctrine is not, as the traditional theology has commonly held, the imputation of another's righteousness to the believer, but the imputation of the believer's own faith to him for righteousness. Paul never speaks of God's imputing Christ's righteousness to the believer; he states his doctrine of imputation in three forms of words, all of which are used interchangeably and mean the same:

- (1) the believer's faith is reckoned to him for righteousness;
- (2) righteousness is reckoned to him on condition of faith, and
- (3) his sins, when he accepts Christ, are no longer reckoned to him.

The first is by far the most frequent form of statement" (p. 456). Some have objected to the idea of the imputation of faith, as though it were a kind of meritorious work. Stevens counters, "But the apostle's favorite formula is open to no such construction, since for him faith is the correlative of grace, and so far from being by any possibility a work of merit, is the renunciation of all claims and merits and the humble acceptance of a gift of grace.

[But] If God saves graciously, he must save us, not after we have first become perfect, but while we are yet sinful; but if he saves righteously, he must save only on conditions which involve our entrance upon the way to righteousness and which guarantee the increasing attainment of righteousness (our Sanctification).

Both these conditions are met in the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ. Faith means, not our perfection, but our dependence upon grace; but it also means our union with Christ, and that union with the perfect Life means aspiration after goodness, a fixed preference for holiness, and assures its progressive attainment. In principle, Paul's doctrine of justification is an amplification of the beatitude of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness" (pp. 457-58).

There are several uses of the four nouns in this family of words. We have already discussed *dikaios*, "righteous," in Rom. 1.16, where I translate "The righteous by faith shall live." Taylor (F. & R.) says, "Rom. 5.19: 'even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be constituted righteous (*di'kaioi katastathesontai*)', preserves the eschatological note in St. Paul's teaching about justification and ground it in the work of Christ.

[Of the five uses of *dikai'oma*] "only two (Rom. 5.16 and 18) are of importance for our purpose, since in the remaining three instances the meaning of the word is 'ordinance' (Rom. 1.32, 2.26, 8.4). In Rom. 5.16 'the judgment which came through Adam is contrasted with the 'free gift' which came through Christ; the former, it is said, was 'unto condemnation' (*eis kata'krima*), the latter 'unto justification (*eis dikai'oma*). The contrast shows that *dikai'oma* is used of 'sentence of acquittal', or 'acquittal'; it is used not of the act of justifying, but objectively or its result.

It describes, that is to say, a state or standing into which men are brought by the obedience of Jesus Christ. In the second passage, Rom. 5.18, Sanday and Headlam (op. cit., p. 141) find the same meaning, again interpreting *dikai'oma* as 'sentence of acquittal', or as they paraphrase the passage, 'a single absolving act'. . . In any case, however the word is translated, the redemptive work of Christ is in St. Paul's mind, as also in v. 16. It is in virtue of Christ's death that men receive the justification which issues in life (*eis dikai'osin zoes*).

At the end of the passage we have been discussing the word *dikai'osis* appears, and to this word we

now turn. The free gift, says St. Paul, 'came unto all men *to justification of life*' (Rom. 5.18), As distinct from *dikai'oma*, *dikai'osis* describes the *act* of justifying. The word *zoes* introduces a new idea, and raises the important question of the relation of justification to life... Justification is not identified with life, but is described as an act which leads to the enjoyment of life and has life for its goal. [He quotes in a footnote from Sanday and Headlam: "'Life' is both the immediate and ultimate result of that state of things into which the Christian enters when he is declared 'righteous' or receives his sentence of absolution" (Sanday and Headlam, *op. cit.*, p. 142)].

The only other passage in which *dikai'osis* appears is Rom. 4.25: '(Jesus our Lord) who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised *for our justification: (dia' te'n dikai'osin hemon)*'. The form of the sentence is probably affected by the fact that in the words, 'who was delivered up for our trespasses', there is an allusion to Isa. 53.12 in the LXX version (*dia' ta's anomi'as auto'n paredo'the*).

This semi-quotation causes an apparent separation between the references to the death and to the resurrection, with the result that the latter seems to be specially related to justification... see p. 39) [and he quotes from Johannes Weiss (The History of Primitive Christianity, p.104)]. 'The parallelism of members', he observes, 'according to which the death is connected with sin, the resurrection with justification, has no serious theological bearing--though much has been made of it in the past.

It is merely the rhetorical expansion of a *single* thought: dead and risen (the two cannot be thought of in separation) on account of sins (or the forgiveness of sins) and of justification (these two also go together: forgiveness and justification' (p. 104). If this view is accepted there is no reason to give to the preposition *dia' w. acc.* the extremely rare prospective sense ("with a view to"); it is used in the ordinary causal mean ("on account of"), and the thought is that, because of sin and of justification, Christ both died and rose again." (pp. 42-43).

Now while I can agree with this conclusion, I would like to point out that Rom. 6.3-8 states that "we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death," so that "having been planted together in the likeness of his death (he that hath died is justified from sin) we shall also live with him." This latter seems to be a clear reference to our being united with Christ who "was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6.4). By participating in our "old man's death to sin" we also enjoy "(being raised) to "walk in newness of life."

There are two passages which deny that righteousness (*dikaïosu'ne*) is "through" or "of the law": (Gal. 2.21; 3.21. Others speak of "the righteousness of faith (Abraham, Rom. 4.13; cf. 4.9, 11; 9.30; 10.6). Rom. 10.4, "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth" is especially important. It is part of Paul's polemic against justification by works, especially those required by law. The law-way is brought to an end and is no more.

Also "end" (*te'los*) may imply the full realization Christ has made of its fulfillment and so its availability to us in His work of justifying us. Anders Nygren (Commentary on Romans, Philadelphia, Muhlenberg Press, 1949) says, "Thus in Christ the dominion of the law is brought to an end. Yet that does not mean that the way is thereby opened for lawlessness and unrighteousness; it means that he who believes in Christ has passed from one kind of righteousness to another, from a worthless righteousness to one that is true, from righteousness by law to the righteousness of God, which is the same as righteousness through faith.

With full confidence Paul can tell how through Christ there is really an end to the law, because the inner intention of the law--which it is not able to effect--is realized through faith. In 3.31 Paul asks, 'Do we

then overthrow the law by this faith?' And his answer says, 'By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law'" (pp. 379-380).

MacDonald recognizes the way Paul integrates the objective and subjective sides of justification: "[Paul] appears to oscillate between, or better perhaps to integrate, the objective and the subjective (see Rom. 4.5ff). Thus, for the apostle justification is presented neither as exclusively objective in the cross, nor yet as exclusively subjective within experience. It is more precisely for Paul the objectivity of a relationship. Nevertheless, the two aspects are clearly stated. Justification 'by the blood of Christ' (Rom. 5.9) points to its objective reality; 'therefore, since we are justified by faith' (Rom. 5.1) points to its subjective realization" (p. 94).

MacDonald points up the same connection of the two: "Paul does... make clear that justification is an accomplished fact and a present reality. He consequently refers to it in the past tense (Rom. 5.1, 9). It is something already completed at the cross and yet in the present tense (Rom. 3.24,28); it is a position into which the believer is brought by faith" (pp. 96-7).

Stevens points to the way of sanctification as realizing this hunger after righteousness when he says, "Faith is the clear sight of Christ in his true meaning for our human life; it is to see life and destiny as he saw them, to measure values as he measured them. To see Christ is to see the world and life with something of his clear discernment and just judgment. In such a vision of Christ all possibilities of growth in his likeness are hidden. We can become like him if we can thus see him as he is; never otherwise" (p. 459). Compare II Cor. 3.18 and Rom. 8.29 for this effect: "beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord [we] are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."

And Rall indicates the way this moral dilemma of the concept of justification is solved "when we recall again on the one side God's demand of repentance and faith, on the other the regenerative and creative power of love and of the life of fellowship with God which has granted through forgiveness." He prefers Reconciliation as "the more inclusive term. It refers to the whole work of God in Christ" (pp. 116-170). And to this great facet of the experience of Salvation we will soon turn.

Taylor urges modern theology to return to "a renewed emphasis on the truths for which justification stands. A generation of superficial theology has left many people with a sentimental belief in a good-natured and almost complacent God, a Buddha endowed with supplementary Christian attributes. Fellowship with God is conceived as a very simple and natural relationship which can be enterprised and taken in hand whenever we please and without onerous conditions.

God has revealed His love in His Son; it is for us to respond to His gesture and to enjoy his friendship. So anxious have we been to exclude legal ideas from our thoughts of God that we have compromised the ethical foundations of our theology. We have created God in our own image and likeness" [and this, indeed, is the worst form of idolatry and the easiest for today's generation, e.g. the hippy cry of the Seventies "love is God" rather than "God is love." Then they proceed to define "Love", mainly sexual and totally permissive!].

Taylor, seeming to anticipate my comment, says, "Reflection reveals the futility of this situation. God is Love indeed, but just because of this fact His supreme care is for holiness, righteousness, and truth. He is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. He is 'the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy' (Isa. 47.15). Man, on the other hand, is a creature of time and space, frail in his purpose, divided in his loyalties, inclined to evil, and prone to sin. What fellowship can there be between light and darkness? How is communion with God conceivable?

It is the merit of many outworn theological systems that, at least, they envisaged this problem; many Christian thinkers of today barely perceive it, or, if they perceive it, give it too little attention. But, however it is regarded, and even if it is ignored, it remains as the perennial problem of religion, threatening neglect and insistent upon solution. Far from being an easy assumption, fellowship with God is a desperate challenge to thought and belief.

"It is, or should be, obvious that, so long as man loves evil, surrenders to its power, and manifests its fruits, fellowship with God is impossible. This impossibility is not merely an expression of the Divine Will, but is a necessity grounded in the nature of God, as the God of love, holiness, and truth. Before sinners can know God and experience His peace, they must cease to be sinners. Only the righteous, or those whom, in the ethical perfection of His Being, He can regard as such, can have fellowship with Him.

And God can regard as righteous only those who are righteous, either because of attained ethical perfection, or by reason of a standing with Himself, in relation to sin, righteousness, and truth which He alone can make possible. Such are the inalienable condition of reconciliation with God. ...In that focal moment when this relationship obtains, the sinner is no longer a sinner in the sight of God; righteous in mind, although not yet in achievement, he is given that standing with God which makes fellowship with Him ethically possible. Not merited by works, not created by faith alone, this relationship is established by faith dependent upon, and vitalized by, that in which it rests, the astounding grace of God in Christ" (pp. 67-69).

Chapter 4 - The Meaning of Reconciliation

THE DOCTRINE OF RECONCILIATION

We have seen that reconciliation is God's act of changing our nature and removing the enmity caused by the sinner's perverse nature. The verb in the Greek, to reconcile, is *katallaso*, and the noun, reconciliation, *katallage*. McDonald says, "The basic idea of the word *katallassein* ('to reconcile') is 'to exchange,' or more specifically 'to exchange one condition for another.' Hitherto, one had been estranged from another, but is now restored to fellowship because of some new element brought into the situation which becomes the reconciling factor" (p. 104). Franklin Rall prefers reconcile to atonement "because the latter word has been so much a center of controversy and misunderstanding" (p. 128)

The compound verb, *apokatalasso*, "to reconcile" is used in Col. 1.20-22, where God is the subject, who is working through Christ "to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens. And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unproveable before him." Here the purpose of God finally is the full sanctification of His people.

J. B. Lightfoot (Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. London, MacMillan and Co., 1927) says about *ta 'pan 'La*, "The whole universe of things, material as well as spiritual, shall be restored to harmony with God. How far this restoration of universal nature may be subjective, as involved in the changed perceptions of man thus brought into harmony with God, and how far it may have an objective and independent existence it were vain to speculate" (p. 158). If it is the former, involving our coming into a new understanding and relation with nature, it argues strongly for a Christian ecological emphasis on our lives and ministries.

Notice that the condition that called for the redemption of Christ for the Gentiles is called by Paul, "being alienated and enemies" (Col. 1.21 The verb here is *apallotrio'o*, "to estrange, alienate." It is used here with *echthros*, "enemies." Some take the active sense of this adjective, "hostile to God." In Eph. 4.18 they are "alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart." These "Uncircumcised" ones were "at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2.12).

He goes on to say that this reconciling action of God in Christ has brought about peace between Jew and Gentile by "breaking down the middle wall of partition, creating "in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both [note that the Jew needs reconciling as well as the Gentile] in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh; for through him we both have one access in one Spirit unto the Father.

So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph. 2.11-19). Here the fruit of the redeeming work of Christ has not only opened access to the one Father but also has effected a reconciliation between the two peoples, who by long standing enmity had proved to be the most intractable of all history. Further this brings about a "new humanity," characterized by "peace." Taylor observes, "In the new Covenant which was made 'in the blood of Christ' not only were the two sections of humanity brought nigh to one another, but both of them in the same moment were brought nigh to God" (p. 77)

Taylor decides that reconciliation is more than a single act. It is a process. “Do peace, freedom, sonship and fellowship belong to the essential content of reconciliation, or are they vital aspects of the life of the reconciled? So far as fellowship with God is concerned, it is clearly impossible to exclude it from the idea of reconciliation. How can we speak of reconciliation at all, if it does not include some experience of communion with God? ...

What reconciliation can there be which does not end in the most perfect ethical life of the individual and of society and in the blessedness of the vision of God?” (pp. 70-71). Though he definitely commits himself to reconciliation being also a process, he later says that the participle in vs. 18, *katalla'ksantos*, is Aorist, it “must indicate a process only in the sense that the divine act in the Cross becomes effectual successively, not gradually, in the experience of individual men” (p. 76)

Romans 5:10-11 is the classic passage in the Pauline epistles, using both the noun and the verb: “For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.” Note carefully the sequence of experiences: first, the reconciling work of God; then, the way in which Christ’s life in the present (infilling by the Holy Spirit?) brings salvation to us.

Now it has already been implied in the discussion on Forgiveness (supra, pp. 19—20) that the scriptures never speak of God being reconciled to man. However, the preceding verse in Romans does indicate that God’s wrath is removed: “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him.”

Stevens says, “It is true that Paul never writes: Christ has reconciled God to us, but that is not because he does not conceive of the death of Christ as founding a new relation of God toward men. It may well have been because Paul is always eager to bring out the fact that it is God that we deny the need for God to be propitiated, preferring instead the word expiation, which is the taking away of guilt in justification. Stevens says of the word, (*h*)*ilastefiori*, “a means of expiation” (A. & G.), which is used in Heb. 9.5 for the “mercy seat” or lid of the Ark of the Covenant: “Christ is set forth as an (*h*)*ilasterion*) in the shedding of his blood in order to exhibit the divine righteousness, which demonstration was necessary to show that God was not lax in his treatment of sin, as might seem to be the case from the passing over sins committed in earlier times...

Men are justified and saved from wrath by the shedding of Christ’s blood (Rom. 5.9); his giving of his life is regarded as the payment of the price by which men’s release from sin is purchased (I Cor. 6.20; 7.23)” (p. 62). He further cites Gal. 3.13 and 4.5 which indicate that the “release” was from the bondage to the law. This certainly deflects the arguments that the ransom was paid to Satan or even to God. He is surprised that Paul makes so little use of the sacrificial system of the Old Covenant in order to illustrate his meaning, but he is convinced that “for Paul the shedding of Christ’s blood relates his death directly to the sacrificial circle of ideas” (p. 63)

There is, however, in the teachings of Paul a realistic idea of vicarious, or substitutionary, sacrifice for us. Stevens refers to II Cor. 5.21, “where Christ is said to have been ‘made to be sin on our behalf in order that we might become the righteousness of God in him.’” The meaning is that he was put in the place of sinners; that in his death he so endured the penalty of sin, or the equivalent of that penalty, that its infliction may be withheld from those who will accept the benefits of this substitutionary experience.

The wages of sin is death; Christ on man’s behalf had vicariously endured death,—and in that ignominious form of it which in the law involved a curse,—and now that the penalty has been paid, the demands of the law are satisfied and the way to forgiveness opened” (p. 64). We can see, then, how reconciliation is related to both justification and to redemption.

This certainly satisfies the moral dimension of reconciliation. Stevens says, “God must secure the satisfaction of his law before he can forgive. The operation of grace is conditioned upon the assertion of justice. And yet these contrasts are really transcended in Paul’s own thought, since it is God himself who, in his love, finds a way to be both just and gracious. It is he, and not another [as some mediator(s) who were proposed by the Gnostics, who provides the satisfaction. In the last analysis God removes his own obstacles and appeases his own wrath.

The very death by which his righteousness is exhibited is provided for by his love. Christ’s death could never have been a propitiation for men’s sins except by the prior determination of God’s love. ‘God commendeth his love to us in that Christ died for us’” (pp. 65—66). II Cor. 5.19 spells out the initiative taken by God and not man: “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” Note that the participle, *kataiasson*, is the present of continuous action.

This verse also links it with justification. In the light of vss. 18-21 Taylor says, “In such a context it is beyond question that the reconciling work of God is conceived as accomplished as the death and resurrection of Christ” (p. 73). Yet the sinner is urged to participate in this work of God. Taylor says, “As we have already seen, although the verb, ‘be ye reconciled’, is passive, it denotes an active process of cooperation on man’s part. Man cannot accomplish his reconciliation with God, but he can refuse it; he can also participate therein, and his highest wisdom, which is at the same time his supreme blessedness, is his willing response to ‘the word of reconciliation’ in that he permits himself to be reconciled to God” (Ibid)

The consummation of God’s work through Christ Paul spells out in Col. 1.19—20: “For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fullness dwell; and through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace-shalom!¹ through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.” So the work of reconciliation is all-encompassing and cosmic in scope.

Indeed, this is the basis for naming Him *Christus victor*. The next verses indicate the moral and spiritual purpose for the reconciled sinner: “And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before him.”

After considerable discussion of whether the adjective *echthros* is active (“hating God”) or passive (“hateful to God”) Taylor concludes “that in Rom. 5.10 *echthroi*’ describes, not only the hostile attitude of men, but also their character in the eyes of God. He sees them as enemies; and yet He reconciles them to Himself” (p. 75)

In II Cor. 5.20 Paul recognizes that he (and other believers/apostles?) has been given the ministry of reconciliation: “we are ambassadors therefore in behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us; we beseech you, on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.” So there is definitely a response required of the sinner to the overture of love in reconciliation on the part of God. We modern believers are charged also with that ministry.

The old-time evangelists, especially in revival meetings, sought to motivate sinners by preaching at first on the dire judgments of God upon their lives. Then, when they felt sinners were sufficiently aroused they would proclaim the good news of God’s work in Christ and urge “be ye reconciled to God.” But, unfortunately, their generation made so much of the Jonathan Edwards’ type of “dangling sinners over the fiery abyss” that moderns have eschewed that strategy. There is need now to recover a whole-some “fear of the Lord” in contemporary preaching.

Taylor summarizes this doctrine:

(1) Reconciliation is not only restoration to fellowship with God, but is also, and at the same time, the gift of His peace.

(2) As such, it is a change in the disposition and experience of men from frustration and defeat to a condition of harmonious adjustment to the will of God.

(3) Reconciliation is a state of blessedness as well as an act of redeeming love. The words, 'Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ', irresistibly suggest a condition of integrated life into which the believer is introduced by the grace of God.

(4) The view that reconciliation is the work of God is confirmed and strengthened, since inner peace cannot be obtained otherwise than as His free gift.

(5) Lastly, the thought of salvation, as wrought by Christ in the power of His death, receives an added emphasis.

He 'came and preached peace'; He made peace 'by the blood of His cross': these truths enlarge our apprehension of the reconciling work of God. In every respect, therefore, the teaching about peace includes the same notes as the doctrine of reconciliation, with the further advantage of a new emphasis upon a resultant condition of inner blessedness capable of endless development and enrichment" (pp. 90-91)

Taylor sees a connection between reconciliation and freedom: "Unlike peace, freedom is not brought into direct association with reconciliation in Pauline theology, and in the narrower sense it may be said to be the consequence or fruit of reconciliation. Because we have been reconciled we are free, and enjoy the liberty of the sons of God... It is equally possible, however, to think of freedom and of sonship as belonging to the inner content of reconciliation, and, as in the case of peace with God, this possibility must influence our conception of what reconciliation means.

Freedom is variously described as freedom "from sin" (Rom. 6.18, 22) and from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8.2) (p. 91).

Taylor also links reconciliation with sonship: "Like freedom and peace with God, sonship is a further description of what reconciliation means. To be reconciled with God is to enter the Father's home, to become actually what potentially we have always been, His sons. Once more the idea of reconciliation as a state, but not a process, receives emphasis... The term sonship has also the great advantage of suggesting strongly the thought of a continuous process of growth and development to which reconciliation with God is the door" (p. 98)

He links it also with fellowship with God: "it is part of the content of reconciliation, for if peace with God, freedom, and sonship belong to the ideas, the same must be true of fellowship with God. We know Him, see Him, and experience His love" (p. 98). The Pack of the sense of the Presence and the enjoyment of His fellowship may then be due to the continuing need of reconciliation for the believer's recurring sins.

Finally, Taylor links reconciliation with sanctification: "If justification itself is accompanied by the consecrating touch of God, the same must also be true of reconciliation; and if fellowship is the process in which reconciliation issues, sanctification and the beatific vision are still more the goal of the entire Christian experience including the forgiveness of sins, justification and reconciliation" (pp. 98—99)

We now turn to the complement of Reconciliation in Redemption, which will involve further the work of Christ on our behalf.

Chapter 5 - The Doctrine of Redemption

We have already noted the close connection of redemption with that of reconciliation (p. 32) The words redeem, redeemer, redemption are found numerous times in the Old Testament. It begins with the Levirate law (Lev. 15.15ff), by which property which originally belonged to a brother must be redeemed by his next of kin at his death. Also if an Israelite makes himself a slave to a stranger or sojourner he may purchase his redemption during the Jubilee year (Lev. 25.47ff)

We have referred to the idea of redemption or ransom in the discussion of *(h)iiasterion* (p. 32) The family of words describing redemption stems from the root, *lutr-*. *lutron* is “the price of release, ransom” (A. & G.). The key text is from Jesus when he says, “the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Matt. 20.26), Mk 10.45; this is the only use of the word in the NT).

The word in the Hebrew Old Testament is *kopher*, “a covering.” It is first used in Ex. 30.12.15 for the ransom required of every male over twenty years of age at the time of a census of Israel. It consisted of “half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary... for an offering to Yahweh that there be no plague among them... to make atonement for your souls.” Eliha claims that God has provided a “ransom” to save him from “going down into the pit” (Job 33.24) and concludes, “He hath redeemed (*padah*) my soul from going into the pit And my life shall behold the light” (vs. 28).

Elihu further warns Job not “to let the greatness of the ransom [for his wicked life turn thee aside” (36.18). The Psalmist warns the rich “None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him; (For the redemption of their life is costly, And it faileth forever” (Psa.49.7—8)

Another Hebrew word for “redeem” is *gaal*. The participle, *goei*, “redeemer,” is one of Isaiah’s favorite names for Yahweh. See especially 41.14; 44.6, 24 (where He is not only creator but the controller of all history); 47.4; 48.17; 49.7, 26 where He is called also “Savior”); 54.5 where He is likened to Israel’s husband); 54.8 (where He is described as “with everlasting loving-kindness will I have mercy upon thee”); in 59.20 He promises to send a Redeemer to Zion, which Paul quotes in Rom. 11.26 and uses the LXX term, *(h) ruornenos*, “Deliverer,” who establishes His covenant with Israel; 60.16; 63.16, where He is also called “Father.” (The last clause of Rom. 11.27 Paul takes from Isa. 27.9). Most of these designations of Redeemer include “the Holy One of Israel.” Notice how rich and suggestive are these terms to describe Yahweh.

The primary meaning (according to BDB) of *gaal* is “to act as kinsman, do the part of the next of kin.” As we have noted this is the Levirate law which figures prominently in the story of Ruth (Oh. 4) and in Jeremiah’s purchase of the field near Anathoth during the siege (Ch. 32). It figures in the law of vows when someone seeks to redeem a sacrificial animal that has been dedicated to Yahweh (Lev. 27.13ff). It is the work of God for the Psalmist in danger of destruction (103.4). Both the word for redeem (*gaai*) and the word for ransom (*padah*) are found together of God delivering his people from Shed and death (Hos. 13.14; also both are in Psa. 69.18).

His redeeming work is specially directed toward the “poor and needy” (Psa. 72.14) and “the fatherless” (Prey. 23.11). It describes also God’s historic deliverance of His people from Egyptian bondage (Ex. 6.6) and so in general in their behalf (Psa. 77.16; 78.35). Isaiah uses redeem to describe the deliverance from Exile (43.1; 48.20; 52.9 (where that of Jerusalem is witnessed by “all the nations.... all the ends of the earth” as “the salvation of our God”); Jer. 31.11; Mic. 4.10). Such was motivated by love and pity and resulted in his providential care (Isa. 63.9). His people are called “the redeemed” (Isa. 35.9; 51.10, 11 [also

the “ransomed] “the redeemed of the Lord” (Isa. 62.12)

The word for “ransom” is *padah*. It is used in the Law to describe the ransom required for every firstborn in Israel, whether of animals (Ex. 13.13, 15) or of humans (Ex. 34.20). The money amount is stipulated in Num. 3.46ff, which was given to the Levites. Jonathan was redeemed or “rescued” by the people from the wrath of Saul (I Sam. 14.45). Job answered the initial charges of Eliphaz that he had not asked his friends to redeem him “from the hand of i.e. oppressors” (Job 6.23). Yahweh is described as ransoming His people from bondage in Egypt: Deut. 7.8; 9.26 13.5; 15.15; 21.8; 24.18; Neh. 1.10; Mic. 6.4; Psa. 76.42; II Sam. 7.23.

This shows how indelible was the impression the redemption from Egypt made upon subsequent generations of Israel. But God is also the one who has “ransomed” His people from exile: Jer. 31.11 (“to save thee” ASV); Zech. 10.8; Isa. 35.10; 51.11 (restored Israel is “the redeemed of the Lord”). The Psalmist prays for God to ransom/redeem him (26.11; 31.5; 44.26; 69.18; 119.134), or from Shed (Psa. 49.15; Hos. 13.14) or gives thanks for His ransoming him (Psa. 34.22: 71.23). Job is reassured of God ransoming him “out of the hand of the terrible (15.21). The word *peduth*, ransom, is translated redemption, in Psa. 111.9 and 130.7 (where it is called “plenteous redemption”)

We can appreciate now how this wealth of understanding of primarily God’s work for His people is the background out of which the New Testament derived its doctrine of redemption.

Let us return to the key text in the New Testament in Matt. 20.28 = Mk. 10.45. The context is the event when Jesus and his disciples were on the road to Jerusalem and James and John made their unwise request for privileged positions of power in the Kingdom. Jesus replied that it was not power, which the world rulers exercise, but service which is the distinguishing mark of the Kingdom.

He is the living embodiment of that by ministering, even to the extreme of giving his life as a for many.” The preposition, *anti*, can also be translated “instead of-- or “in place of.” Stevens notes the consequences of choosing between these two: “In either of these cases the meaning of the term would be a purchase price, a payment to obtain freedom, or, dropping the figure, a means of freeing or saving.

If *iutron* meant a sacrifice, then *anti* might naturally mean ‘instead of’; if, however, it denotes a purchase price, the force of *anti* would probably be, ‘for’ in the sense of ‘in exchange, or compensation, for,’ as Heb. 12.2: ‘who for (*anti*) the joy that was set before him, that is, in order to obtain the joy, ‘endured the cross, etc. The passage in question would then mean: He gave himself as a ransom price for (the sake of purchasing or obtaining) the freedom of many through giving his life he procured the deliverance of many. On general grounds this seems to me to be the more reasonable view.

It is much more natural that, in the connection in which he is speaking, Jesus should introduce a figurative expression like that of giving his life to procure men’s freedom, than that he should define his work in terms drawn from the Levitical ritual. {In his contrast with the world rulers they “find their greatness in ‘lording it’ over others, that is, in subjecting them; he, on the contrary, [achieves??] his greatness through ministering and setting men free. They enslave; he liberates” (pp. 4 6-47)

Now the questions remain: from what does Christ set us free and how does his death accomplish its purpose? In answer to the first Stevens says that many responses have been given by theologians over the ages: “From the wrath of God; from the guilt of sin; from sin itself; from the fear of suffering and death; from bondage to such worldly and selfish thoughts as James and John had just been expressing” (p. 47).

It is tempting to answer “from all of the above,” but Stevens keys his answer to the purpose already stated, “a means of delivering men. We have seen that he regarded his death as part and parcel of his saving

mission, the culmination of his life of service and self-giving. It is obvious, then, that we cannot ascribe to his death some meaning which isolates it from his life and work in general... Now the purpose of his life was to save men from sin, or, in other words, to make them members of the Kingdom of God.

What is clear to me is that the saving power of his death is to be understood in the light of the aim and import of his life of which it is the consummation. In this view we shall seek for the meaning of such language as we are considering neither in the popular Jewish notions associated with the sacrificial ritual, nor in the dogmatic reflections of later times, but in Jesus' own explanations of his coming and his work.

He came to found the Kingdom of God in the world. He died in the achievement of that result, and his death was a potent means to its achievement. He came to die, if his death was necessary to that result, as it proved to be. But the direct aim of his coming is uniformly represented as the recovery of men in sonship to God. How his death, in point of fact, has served this end, and still serves it, is a pertinent inquiry which we shall keep in mind.

The result to which we are brought is, negatively stated, that the whole circle of later dogmatic ideas--atonement, penalty, substitution, satisfaction--has no place in the teaching of Jesus, as far as we have followed its development. But shall we, perhaps, find these conceptions in his language at the Supper or in his exclamation on the cross?" (pp. 47-48). Before we study these passages let us turn to the other Greek words in the family as used in the New Testament.

The verb, *lutroo*, means "to free by paying a ransom, redeem" (A. & G.). It is found in I Pet. 1.18-19, "knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish, even the blood of Christ." Peter strongly commits himself to the idea of redemption through vicarious, sacrificial offering. Its only other use is in Tit. 2.14: "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, did as "a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation, (*h*)*ilaskerrnai*, for the sins of the people" (vs. 17). Once again, we prefer the word "expiation," the removal of guilt, rather than "propitiation."

Paul uses the idea of redemption in I Cor. 6.20 to apply it practically to our attitude toward our bodies. Because we have been redeemed, *exagoradzo*, "for a price" we cannot claim to have exclusive rights over our bodies since we are also "temple(s) of the Holy Spirit which is in you." He does not at this place identify the price, but it is obviously the blood of Christ (Eph. 1.7)

We now turn to the descriptions of the Lord's Supper in the Gospels and in I Cor. 11.23-26. The Synoptics agree that Jesus said his blood was "poured out" "concerning" (*pen*, Matt. 26.28) or "in behalf of/for their benefit" (*h*)*uper*, Mk. 14.24; Lk. 22.20). Matthew adds "unto remission of sins). Each of them also indicates that the cup was the installation of the Covenant, which Luke and Paul describe as "new."

Stevens does not find in the association of the Supper with the Passover any use of the latter to explain the Supper's symbolism. He does find the connection with the ratification of the covenant at Sinai: "It is rather to the sacrifice offered in connection with the ratification of the covenant at Sinai (~x. 24) that the words of institution clearly relate. It is generally agreed that this was a sacrifice betokening fellowship with Yahweh. As the blood of that offering was conceived as the symbolic bond of connection between Yahweh and his people, so Jesus pictures his death as the act whereby the New Covenant is inaugurated and his blood as that whereby it was sealed.

The Supper is, then, the symbolic ratification of the New Covenant, analogous to the solemn rite by which the ancient covenant was confirmed by an offering denoting the establishment of communion with

God and participation in the blessings of his grace. [As a result, then] it must be admitted, I think, that it is adapted to carry our thoughts not in the direction of the current Jewish ideas of propitiation by sacrifice, but rather toward the conception of a new relation of fellowship with God and obedience to him constituted by Jesus' death... the words of Jesus at the Supper are not to be explained by thought which relates to the forgiveness of sin, but by those which relate to the impartation of life" (pp. 50-51).

Now it seems to me that we can readily grant the conclusion of "the impartation of life," but without the necessity of denying "the forgiveness of sins-- (which Matthew includes and Paul teaches in many places). Certainly I agree that there was no necessity for a sacrifice that would satisfy the divine anger and procure the forgiveness of sins.

Now, what about the cry from the cross, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Does this not express the feeling of Christ that he was deserted by God because "Him, who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf" (II Cor. 5.21)

Stevens has his doubts: "To me it seems more accordant with the import of this Old Testament exclamation (for such it is; Ps. 22.1), as well as more congruous with Jesus' view of the reciprocal relation between the Father and himself, to suppose that abandonment to suffering, rather than abandonment to God's displeasure or to desertion, is meant... That anyone, on the basis of Jesus' teaching alone, should have been led to associate with those words the idea that Christ was conscious of God's displeasure or believed that God had withdrawn his presence from him, is to be quite inconceivable" (p. 52).

Now we should all be humble enough to admit that we have never experienced such a crucifixion as Jesus did, nor felt the keenness of agony which he had already expressed in the Garden. To add to the burden of the sin of the world resting upon Him there was added the feeling of despair over the betrayal and denial and desertion of his disciples. Was God also among those who were deserting Him? How, then can we be so sure of how Jesus felt at that moment?

We humans have often experienced times when we may feel deserted by God and subsequently have discovered that though we felt that way, it was not so. The Lord had been still "in the shadows, keening watch over his own." And it is to be noted that in just a few moments after the Cry Jesus felt able to commit his Spirit into the hands of his loving heavenly Father. The loud accompanying cry was his way of exclaiming his final victory over all the powers of darkness and sin (001. 2.15)

Chapter 6 - The Doctrine of Regeneration

Because of the strong emphasis on the "new birth" in evangelical preaching and teaching this doctrine is well known, even to the point of becoming a cliché used by those who are not religious in orientation. For example, an over-the-hill fighter who suddenly becomes a contender again may be said to have experienced a "new birth." But this overuse and misapplication should not deflect our deep and abiding interest in the New Testament teachings concerning regeneration. Let us look first at the Old Testament background.

Jesus gives us the clue when he is reproving Nicodemus for not understanding the teaching of Ezekiel about the new birth: "Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things" (Jn. 3.10). Jesus had proclaimed that "Except one be born of water [the symbol of cleansing] and the Spirit [the realization of the Ezekiel prophecy], he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (3.5). The prophet had foretold that after Yahweh had gathered them from exile He would "sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Eze. 36.25-28). The vision of the Valley of Dry Bones (Ch. 37) also contributes to the figure of a new birth for Israel.

Now it is true that Jesus seems to parallel "born of water" with the first, or physical birth and "born of the Spirit" with being "born anew" or "born from above" (*anowthen*) (3.3-5). But the allusion to Ezekiel's prophecy would deny the teaching or, at least lessen the appropriateness of the Pedobaptist's call for infant baptism. Why would he preface the "born anew" with the obvious fact that, of necessity, one must be born the first time before he can be "born again"?

The Psalmist also shows this need:
 "Create in me a clean heart, O God;
 And renew a right spirit within me.
 Cast me not away from thy presence;
 And take not thy holy Spirit from me.
 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;
 And uphold me with a willing spirit."
 (Psa. 51.10-12).

Stevens comments: "This whole Psalm illustrates a close approximation, in Old Testament piety, to the Christian doctrine of regeneration. The sense of sin is here so deepened that the suppliant feels keenly his own impotence. God must cleanse him if he is to be cleansed.

Hence the prayer, 'Blot out my transgression; wash me from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin' (vv. 1, 2)" (p. 31). The prophecies of the New Covenant also stress the work of God in meeting the need for a "new heart." McDonald says, "Ezekiel is emphatic that amendment of life is only possible where God gives a new heart and a new spirit (Eze. 11.19; cf. 36.26, 27; 37.1-14).

And for Isaiah, God himself must cleanse the heart and purge away the dross if a man is to be accepted by him (cf. 1.25; 6.7). Jeremiah declares that Jehovah will make a new covenant with Israel, that is, forgive their sins and write his law on their hearts--the one in his free grace, the other by his creative act' (quoting A. B. Davidson, "Salvation,' Christian Dictionary of the Bible, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, n.d.,

1:514). See Jeremiah 31.33. Thus says Warfield, 'the expectation of a new heart was made a substantial part of the messianic promise, in which was embodied the hope of Israel' (B. B. Warfield, op. cit., p. 441)." (p. 118).

The Old Testament calls the People of God His "son": when Moses is sent to Pharaoh in behalf of the "children of Israel" he is told to say, "Thus saith Yahweh, Israel is my son, my first-born" (Ex. 4.22). Isaiah says, "bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth" (43.6). It is used as a corporate body: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt" (Hos. 11.1).

By the inter-biblical time the Apocryphal writers were individualizing this son-ship (Wisdom 2.13-16; Sir. 23.1-4; 3 Macc. 5.7; 6.8; 7.6). Edward Schillebeeckx (CHRIST, The Experience of Jesus as Lord, John Bowden, Trans., New York, The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1980) says, "...but this was not based on natural origin or birth from God, which was the way in which neighboring peoples often portrayed God's creation.

The basis was election in grace (Deut. 14.1ff; Isa. 1.2-9; Mal 1.2ff); this happens through the covenant, which in and of itself is more of a juristic concept, however deep and real life in covenant with God may be. Israelites are made sons of God by the Father (Deut. 32.6-43; Isa. 43.6f; 63.16f; Mal 2.10). It is not a matter of being born from God, though we often find an echo of this conception from neighboring peoples in the Old Testament; even Deut. 32.6 says, 'Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you?'

In the early Jewish period, being a child of God, like the Spirit, is an eschatological benefit of messianic times (Mal. 3.17f; see also Wisdom 2.18; 5.5; and in the inter-testamental period literature). When Matt 5.9 combines the eschatological beatitude with being a child of God, it is referring to this form of childhood" (p. 469).

McDonald summarizes the teaching of the Old Testament by:

- (1) Salvation is not primarily a national or collective, but an individual, affair.
- (2) It is, above all, an ethical process--the recovery of the life from sin to harmony with God through moral likeness to him.
- (3) The conditions on which this salvation must be realized are, accordingly, moral.

Man cannot be set right before God by any ceremony or transaction performed on his behalf. He must personally repent of his sin and forsake it. But in so doing man can never anticipate the grace of God, nor does he achieve his salvation without the divine aid" (p. 34).

Rall finds the idea of regeneration to have had "a wide use in religion. In the mystery religions we find the phrase *in aeternum renatus*. The classical passage in the N. T. is John 3.1-15, which speaks of man being 'born anew,' or 'born of the Spirit.' The figure of birth, or rebirth, carries various meanings.

(1) Man has a dual nature, body and spirit; he belongs to two worlds. As he is born of the flesh and enters the physical world, so he must be spiritually born and enter the world of the spirit. This second birth is a being 'born of the Spirit.' We do not simply become aware of this other world; there is a new life given to us, a life from God given by his Spirit, a life of faith in God and fellowship with him, of love and righteousness, of trust and power and peace.

(2) This new birth, or new life, means a transformation; it is a recreation, not merely a creation. This is what regeneration means in common speech. In Paul's words the Christian is a *new* creation; the old has

passed away, behold, the new has come' (2 Cor. 5.17; cf. Gal. 6.15). The Greek word for regeneration, or rebirth (*palingenesis*), occurs but twice in the New Testament. In Tit.3.5 it is applied to the individual.

In Matt. 19.28 Jesus speaks of 'the regeneration' in reference to the renewed, or reborn world whose coming he proclaimed...The faith is in him who says, 'Behold, I make all things new' (Rev. 21.1,5)" (p. 136). II Cor. 5.17 and Gal. 6.15 are as near as Paul comes to describing the "new birth," but it is a vital one from the experiential standpoint.

Schillebeeckx observes with reference to this last figure of speech: [this "third model" is] "one that deepens the significance of the model of 'adoption' which is meant in realistic terms, even if it derives from the law courts. This is the model of creation: grace as the new creation of man. It is absent from the Johannine model because the model of birth is itself already quite realistic. Paul also uses this model of creation alongside that of adoption. 'If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation (*kaine ktisis*) (II Cor. 5.17; Gal. 6.15).

This model is also used in the Deutero-Pauline epistles: 'created in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2.10), 'created for a new man who is in the image of God (Eph. 4.24), 'the new man who renews himself in accordance with the image of his Creator' (Col. 3.10). The fact that this model of creation is peculiar to Pauline theology indicates that it is meant to make the model of adoption more specific. It also indicates that redemption is a creative work of God, linked with Christ, so that 'creation' and 'salvation' in Christ are combined (Eph. 2.14; 3.9; 4.24; Col. 1.15f; 3.10).

All this makes up a basic concept which will provide the structure for the later theology of grace: *creation, new creation, consummation* and all in God's special plan with man. Grace as man's redemption is taken up in an all-embracing ordinance of peace.

"Precisely because they are of grace and are not human by nature, adoption and a new creation in grace (Pauline theology) are accomplished in baptism and through the Spirit (John 3.5 with 3.6; I Pet 1.3; 1.23; Tit. 3.5; see Rom. 6)--by virtue of faith (John 1.12), and in Paul justification by faith. Although in the New Testament Christian baptism was originally connected with the forgiveness of sins (see e.g Acts 2.36; 22.16; I Cor. 6.11; also Heb. 10.22), because at an equally early stage in Christianity baptism was understood as baptism in the Spirit (Mark 1.8 par.; Acts 1.5; 2.38; 11.16; 19.2f.) there was also stress on the conception of baptism as birth: 'the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit' (Titus 3.5)...in both interpretations (thought patterns [of John and Paul]) divine son-ship is the work of the Spirit of God and implies the possession of the Spirit" (pp. 470-71).

Now we can heartily agree with this very evangelical interpretation by this renowned Catholic professor of theology if we can hold him to "baptism in the Spirit" and not as a sacramental rite. The teachings of Paul in Rom. 6 (see above) about our "being baptized into Christ" and entering by identification with Him in his burial and resurrection, the "old man having been crucified together" (with Him)--all of this emphasizes the necessity of baptism being a moral and spiritual work of God's Spirit without the use of any rite or ceremony, or "blessing" by one empowered by ordination to perform such acts.

McDonald comments on the interview of Nicodemus: "This new birth, it is made clear, is a miracle of God's Spirit, whose actions are sovereign (vs. 8). A change so vast, a renewal so radical, only a supernatural agency can bring about. And Nicodemus learns from him whom he recognized as 'a teacher come from God' that this was what is required, and yet what is possible" (p. 119).

Jesus' statement that "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" suggests the reason why the new birth is needed by sinners. "Flesh" in the Old Testament is the description of the weakness and frailty of the body

(e.g. Psa. 78.39; Isa. 40.6). This is true even as early as the description of the wickedness of the generation of the Flood. In Paul's epistles "flesh" becomes the seat of the "sinful passions" (Rom. 7.5; 8.3), because "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: and they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8.7-8). So Jesus indicates that the physical birth produces a being afflicted with weakness and inability to respond adequately to God's demands.

Paul says that it has an ingrained tendency to all the various evils of which "flesh" is capable (Gal. 5.19-21). As a result of this dominance by "the flesh" we "were dead through your trespasses and sins," yet even so, he "made us alive together with Christ (by grace have you been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2.1-6). Once again we are challenged to be united with Christ in his victory over sin through the resurrection, ascension and subsequent glorification. This is the full expression of the eschatological end of the new birth.

This union with Christ begins with baptism: "all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; for he that died is justified from sin. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him..."

Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6.3-11; Col. 2.11-13, where this is further described as being "circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with him in baptism wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses." This is plainly a moral and spiritual work on the part of Christ and an experience to which we give witness in the rite of baptism.

It is hard to see how any religious rite or ceremony can convey such a moral and spiritual work apart from the inner reality to which the rite gives witness publicly. McDonald expresses a view held by many that baptism is "God's seal upon us (2 Cor. 1.22). Only in this sense can we speak of baptism as the sacrament of justification; only, that is, in the sense that it is the outward and visible sign of the inward and invisible grace by which a believer is incorporated into Christ and initiated into his body.

In no sense is it the effectual or the congruent cause of justification." He quotes J. S. Whale (Christian Doctrine, Oxford U. Press, n.d.) about the Lord's Supper and applies it also to baptism: "The grace of the gospel is not a 'thing,' a sort of spiritual 'blood-plasma' for distribution to men through the channels of the sacramental system: a divine 'stuff,' so to speak, fused indissolubly with the sacramental elements, and working in magical fashion on the soul of the communicant, without conscious response on his part, as aspirin might work on the body."

McDonald goes on to comment: "In baptism, as in the communion, faith must be there. In baptism, what the believer is affirming is that he is consciously responding to God's justifying act in Christ...In the baptismal event, the believer so justified is initiated into the body of Christ to be one with the *diakoi* in the community of the redeemed" (p. 102). He further refers to the two passages (Jn. 3.5 and Tit. 3.5) which make a conjunction of "water" with the action of the Spirit. While some hold that "baptism is itself said to procure the regeneration; for others, the baptism is linked with the giving of the Spirit in his creative action in regeneration.

One thing must, however, be certainly clear from a study of both passages; namely, that in neither place is there reference to a mere external act performed by man of his own will or by that of others as the agent of regeneration. Both statements, indeed, deny such physical and material media as channels of the Spirit's regenerative work. What is being accentuated in both John 3.5 and Tit 3.5 is that while regeneration is a supernatural work, it is in no sense a magical one.

Regeneration is not such a result as can be procured *ipso facto* by rites and words, however ceremonially performed or religiously pronounced. To be sure, baptism is associated with regeneration--not, however, as its procuring cause, but rather as its outward symbol (Rom. 6.3, 4)" (pp. 119-120).

However, this does not leave Baptists and other non-sacramentarians off the hook unless we have so preached and taught that the sinner truly experiences union with Christ through the commitment of repentance and faith. Ever since the practice of the Mosaic rituals it has always been easy for these to be superficial and even disgusting in the eyes of God if the heart is not in it and the life changed in the experience. Against such the prophets warned (Isa. 1.11-15; Jer. 6.20; 14.12; Mal 1.10).

McDonald criticizes the way in which Reformation theology has pushed justification to the foreground and "[so] append rebirth to it, and in so doing detracted from 'the significance of Johannine theology, which speaks deliberately and insistently of God's begetting' (quoted from Otto Michael, "Regeneration," *Basic Christian Doctrines*, p. 189). He goes on to say, "Regeneration in the language of theology denotes that decisive spiritual change in the soul of man effected by the Holy Spirit whereby the human individual, naturally estranged from God and ruled by sinful principles, becomes renewed in the depths of his being and enters upon a new and progressive state of holiness without which no man can see God..."

In briefest terms, we may say that regeneration is the communication to man of the divine nature by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the word (2 Pet. 1.4). As Christ partook of human nature by the incarnation that he might have fellowship with us, so we by the Spirit's regenerative action are made partakers of the divine nature that we may have fellowship with God (1 John 1.3)" (p. 116).

He calls attention to Tit. 3.4-7, where God "saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Christ Jesus our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life." The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to effect this work. "The Old Testament equally with the New extols the saving, quickening, renewing, and sanctifying power of God's Word (cf. Ps. 19.7ff.; 119)..."

Regeneration is connected directly with the Word (Acts 11.19-21; Eph. 1.14; 1 Thess. 2.13; 2 Thess. 2.13; Jas. 1.18; 1 Pet. 12.23-25). From this it follows that at the root of the regenerative process is the immediate action of the Spirit upon the soul, by virtue of which the renewed man is brought into the fellowship of son-ship with God. By the influence of the Holy Spirit, the sinner is awakened, convicted, and enlightened, so as to be ready to surrender absolutely to the Lordship of Christ, being 'drawn' to him by the Father (John 6.44). The whole process is consequently of the nature of a new birth and a new creation, which results in new activities newly directed.

"As his direct work on the soul, the Spirit operates in the area of the subconscious. But when addressed by the Word, the conscious life of man is involved. On the man's side there is a total response to the Word as by the Spirit the believing man is renewed to repentance. Thus does the new birth push itself into man's consciousness by his response to the call of the Word under the persuasive action of the Holy

Spirit.

By being born of the Spirit, a person becomes consciously God's child. In this way, regeneration is linked with what the older theologians spoke of as an 'effectual calling.' By effectual call is meant, according of Thomas Watson, 'the gracious work of the Spirit, whereby he causes us to embrace Christ freely, as he is offered to us in the gospel' (A Body of Divinity, London, Banner of Truth, 1958, p. 153). The outward calling is the word of truth, the gospel of salvation; and the inner calling is the subjective operation of the divine Spirit. When the two coalesce, the result is, through the apprehension of faith in the responding soul, a new birth unto God" (pp. 120-121).

McDonald summarizes the teachings of Paul on regeneration: "Whereas the idea of a 'new birth' relates more particularly to the initial stage of the Christian life, that of a 'new creature' specifies its actual state. The Christian is 'created in Christ Jesus' (Eph. 2.10), and the product of this divine act is a 'new creation' (2 Cor. 5.17; Gal. 6.15). He lives now as a 'new man' (Eph. 4.24 KJV) having been 'quickened' and 'made alive together with Christ (Eph. 2.5; cf. Col. 2.13."

He quotes B. F. Warfield (Christian Doctrines, New York, Oxford Press, 1929, p. 439): "This conception is that salvation in Christ involves a radical and complete transformation wrought in the soul (Rom. 12.2; Eph. 4.23) by God the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3.5; Eph. 4.24), by virtue of which we become 'new man' (Eph. 4.24; Col. 3.10), no longer conformed to the world (Rom. 12.2; Eph. 4.22; Col. 3.9), but in the knowledge and holiness of the truth created after the image of God (Eph. 4.24; Col. 3.10; Rom. 12.2).

The conception, it will be seen, is a wide one, inclusive of all that is comprehended in what we now technically speak of as regeneration, renovation and sanctification. It embraces, in fact, the entire subjective side of salvation, which it represents as a work of God issuing in a wholly new creation (2 Cor. 5.17; Gal. 6.15; Eph. 2.10). What is indicated is, therefore, the need of such a subjective salvation by sinful men, and the provision of this need made in Christ (Col. 3.11; Tit. 3.6)" (p. 117).

The complement of Regeneration is that of Adoption. Let us now see how Paul alone teaches this unique doctrine.

Chapter 7 - The Doctrine of Adoption

The first thing that strikes us when we undertake the study of Adoption is the comparative neglect or oversight of the experience by contemporary theologians. Many have been influenced by teachings which assert that every person by nature is a child of God, who is Father of us all. Now in the sense that we are made in the image and likeness of God and He is Creator and Sustainer of all life, to whom all of us must give account as Sovereign Ruler of the universe, such can be affirmed.

But Paul himself makes a discrimination: "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his...For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Rom. 8.9, 14). And this we have seen is the work of God in regeneration. If this is not so, we still have "the spirit of bondage again unto fear" (vs. 15), that is, because of our dread of the consequences of our natural life in sin in the judgments of God. Instead of this fear we have "received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

The Greek word, *(h)uiothesia*, "setting or placing as a son," is used only in the New Testament by Paul five times (Rom. 8.15, 23; 9.4, Gal. 4.5; Eph. 1.5. In Rom. 9.4 it is used of the choice of Israel by God as his chosen People. Although the word is not used in the Old Testament, the idea of sonship is there in Ex. 4.22; Isa. 1.2; Jer. 3.19, 22; Hos. 11.1. McDonald quotes Karl Barth, "If it is a matter of being Israelites, of possessing the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the fathers, the giving of the Law, the service of God, the promises, and the Christ according to the flesh, does not the Church also possess precisely all this? Is anything that we can possess more than the whole fullness of the Old Testament?" (Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans, Edwyn C. Hoskins, trans. Oxford U. Press, 1938, pp. 338-89).

McDonald comments about the other Pauline passages, "...the word characterizes specifically the position of privilege accorded believers in contrast with unbelievers. The idea of adoption was not as familiar among the Hebrews as it was among Greeks and Romans. Paul's use of the term seems to be based more particularly on Roman law. At the time of the apostle, it was a well established legal process by which a man who by nature and nurture was neither son nor kindred could be brought into a family and take the family name, and so be credited with the status and privileges of legitimate son-ship. Although Christ called his disciples his 'friends' (Jn. 15.14), the description of believers as sons implies a deeper intimacy and a greater privilege...For Paul, adoption as a son is emphatically a matter of grace.

It indicates both a new relationship and a new status. It belongs to the eternal purpose of God for the believer to be brought 'unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Eph. 1.5). This destining of us 'in love to be his sons' (Eph. 1.5) is that we might be 'to the praise of God's glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved (Eph. 1.6). Made free by the Spirit (Rom. 8.2), walking according to the Spirit (vs. 4), having the mind of the Spirit (vv. 5,6), living by the Spirit (vs. 13), and led by the Spirit (vs. 14), believers know themselves to possess the 'spirit of adoption' and so cry 'Abba, Father.' By the Spirit's witness within their spirit, they know they are 'children of God (vv. 15, 16)' (pp. 122-23).

This inner realization by the believers is not without the use of means. It often requires the specific use of the biblical teachings in preaching and teaching before they can appreciate this great privilege and status before God.

William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam (The Epistle to the Romans, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896) define "spirit" here as "a particular state, habit, or temper of the human spirit, sometimes in itself (Isa. 61.3, "the spirit of heaviness," Hos. 4.12, "the spirit of whoredom"), but more often as due to

supernatural influence, good or evil (Isa. 11.2, "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jahweh")...So here *pneuma douleias* = such a spirit as accompanies a state of slavery, such a servile habit as the human *pneuma* assumes among slaves. This was not the temper which was imparted to you at your baptism (*elabete*). The slavery is that of the Law: cf. Gal. 4.6, 7" (pp. 202-203).

Now this state requires God's action, and this is provided in Gal. 4. 1-7: Paul considers that even though we have been "born again" by the power of the Holy Spirit, he evidently considers that we are still immature "sons": "But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father. So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world: but when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God." Ernest De Witt Burton (The Epistle to the Galatians (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1921) comments on the "crying:" "The use of *kradzon*, usually employed of a loud or earnest cry (Mt. 9.27; Ac. 14.14; Rom. 9.27) or of a public announcement (Jn. 7.28, 37) is in the LXX often of prayer addressed to God (Psa. 3.6; 107.13), emphasizes the earnestness and intensity of the utterance of the Spirit within us. Though the word *kradzon* itself conveys no suggestion of joy, it can hardly be doubted that the intensity which the word reflects is in this case to be conceived of as the intensity of joy" (p. 223).

So then, adoption is the consequence of our redemption. But in our immaturity there is a tendency to go back to the Law as our guiding force, even though we are actually "sons." Paul calls that force "the weak and beggarly rudiments" [or "elements"] and cites particularly the observance "of days, and months and seasons, and years" (Gal. 4.9-10). Something is needed to help us to realize our true standing with God and the privileges it brings. That is provided in His giving us "the spirit of adoption" (Rom. 8.15).

It is well recognized that the Aramaic word, "Abba," which Jesus used in his cry to the Father in the Garden (Mk. 14.36), was a term of childhood endearment, like our "Daddy." It reflects his close and intimate feeling of oneness with his Father. Jesus felt this relationship as unique. He was able to call God "my Father" in distinction from "your father" (Cf. Jn. 2.16; 5.17-18, where the Jews were scandalized by this exclusive claim; 5.26, where, like the Father the Son also has "life in himself;" 5.36-37: He is conscious of a special mission from "the Father" to be carried out in "my Father's name" (5.43); and especially 10.30: "I and the Father are one." In His "high priestly prayer" (Jn. 14-17) Jesus refers to his Father 48 times.

It is no wonder, then, that the Johannine prelude can speak of Jesus, the Word, who reflects the glory of God, "the only begotten of the Father." Yet Jesus taught us to pray "Our Father" and frequently urged us to call God "your (heavenly) Father" (Mt. 5.45, 48; *et al*). In his word of instruction to Mary Magdalene after the resurrection Jesus said, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to the Father: but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God" (Jn. 20.17). Here is a clear discerning of the likeness and difference in this understanding of our relationship to the same God.

McDonald says, "Ours is a son-ship of adoption. It is a gift of grace. Christ is God's Son without qualification, without question. Ours is a son-ship open to faith, an adoption 'we might receive. The 'we' here indicates the universality of this installation as sons. This does not mean, however, that every person is naturally or automatically a son of God. All without distinction may become sons; but all without exception

are not. For the adoption is 'received' by faith and all men have not faith. The phrase 'adopted as sons' is all-inclusive indeed; it has its experiential beginning in the inner witness of the Spirit (Gal. 4.6; Rom. 8.14-16), and its experiential consummation when as 'heirs' we enter into full and final fellowship with God (Gal. 4.7)" (p. 124).

The unique fatherhood of God which Jesus claimed can be shared because fatherhood is a human analogy that relates us to God, even as He was related in love to His Father (Jn. 10.17). And because we are united in Jesus as the Son we can be assured of the love of His Father: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him" (Jn. 10.21).

But this union in Christ does not void the distinction between our Lord and us. Schillebeeckx points out that "Johannine theology, by contrast [with Pauline], goes in quite a different direction [than adoption]; it never speaks of *'huiioi tou Theou'* (sons of God), but of *tekna tou Theou* (Jn. 1.12f; see also 'little children', Jn. 13.33; and often in I John). *Tekna* are those who are born. So the Johannine literature knows nothing of adoption, but only of birth from God (Jn. 3.3-8; above all I John 2.29 with 3.1; 3.9 with 3.10; 5.1 with 5.2; also 4.7; 5.4, 18, also I Pet 1.3; 1.23; Tit. 3.5). As the terminology *sperma tou Theou*, seed of God (I John 3.9), suggests, the author is not thinking of an adoption, but clearly of being born from God.

Human begetting serves as a model here (I John 5.1). However, this is no human birth, but a *spiritual* birth (Jn. 1.12f); in other words, they have a spiritual birth. They are conceived by the Holy Spirit. Being born is a better symbol than adoption for what is involved here, i.e., for what it is to be a Christian. For 'what is born of the flesh is flesh and what is born of the spirit is spirit (John 3.6; cf. Rom. 8.5, 9; without the concept of birth). Thus 'to be born of God' means to be of God' (I Jn. 3.9 with 3.10; see also 4.4 with 5.4). In the expression 'be born of the Spirit' (Jn. 3.6), *pneuma* primarily has the meaning of the effective power of God...By being born of the Spirit, Christians also *receive* a 'heavenly' spiritual nature. The Spirit is therefore like a chrism, an anointing of our humanity so that it takes on a spiritual mode of existence (I Jn. 2.20, 27). In content, the *sperma tou Theou* (I Jn. 3.9) is identical with our new, spiritual mode of being; in effect it means the same thing as John 1.12f..

As Christians we are all 'virgin born', i.e., from the Spirit" [this from a Catholic archbishop!]. "Perhaps this *terminology* already comes from the Graeco-Jewish syncretistic environment of Johannine theology, but the Johannine *sperma pneumatikon* is in radical contradiction with the Stoic significance of this term and the other meanings to be found in late antiquity. Man does not have a spiritual nucleus to his being by nature, on the basis of his spirit; only through rebirth is he of spiritual, 'heavenly' divine nature, on the basis of his spirit; only through rebirth is he of spiritual, 'heavenly' divine nature, by virtue of grace. Only this new mode of being brings eternal life for that very reason: for Johannine theology it does so already. This is God's own life (Jn. 3.16-18, 36; 5.24; I Jn. 3.14; 5.11-13). The Spirit is a 'life-giving Spirit' (John 6.63; II Cor. 3.6; I Pet 3.18), since real life is life in the Spirit, 'from above' (here Paul will stress the 'not yet' rather than the 'now already', c.f. e.g. Rom. 8.2 with 8.11)" (p. 470).

In Peter's speech on the Day of Pentecost he witnesses to Jesus as the realization of the Davidic covenant through the resurrection and ascension to the "right hand" of the Lord (Ac. 2.33-36). That covenant was pronounced by the prophet Nathan to David at the beginning of his long reign over the two houses of Israel as described in 2 Sam. 7.12-14: "I will establish his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son...And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever."

And the wonder of it all is that by realizing our true standing with God as full-grown sons with all

the rights and privileges thereof we can have the same feeling of closeness and intimacy with our heavenly Father. This is attested by the in-dwelling "spirit of his Son" (Gal.4.6), who is the same in the apostles' understanding as the Holy Spirit. It is "The Spirit himself [that] beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him" (Rom. 8.16-17). Here again is the Pauline emphasis on our experiential union with Christ, both in His redemptive suffering and ultimate glorification.

Yet there is more. We not only enjoy the "first fruits ("earnest", 2 Cor. 1.22; 5.5; Eph. 1.14) of the Spirit," that is, the privileges and resources that the Father has provided through the indwelling Holy Spirit for our present journey, but we also are "waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. Now Paul does not here say what he means by the "redemption of the body," but I Cor. 15 may provide some clues that stir our faith and hope until we experience the full reality in the resurrection.

One of these resources of the Spirit is his "intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God [so that] we know that to them that love God all things work together [or God works through all things] for [our] good, even to them that are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8.26-28). In this way the Spirit "helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us" (vs. 26). The word translated "helpeth" is altogether too weak.

The Greek word, *sunantilambano* is a compound word, whose two prepositional prefixes should be recognized: "take hold together with, over against." I experienced this as a young boy on my grandfather's farm when we carried the full and heavy milk bucket home from the barn. He would take a stick, put it through the bail of the bucket and take the short end of the stick and give me the long end. This was his thoughtful way of helping me "carry my load." So also the Spirit takes "the short end of the stick" in all of the burdens of life we carry. Mrs. Montgomery in The Centenary Translation the New Testament in Modern English captures this nuance by "the Spirit also takes hold with us in our weakness." This wonderful resource is only available to those who have received the "spirit of adoption."

Chapter 8 - The Doctrine of Sanctification

This doctrine has also been bypassed by some theologians for various reasons. Rall accounts for some of it: "Protestant theology in the main has not given much attention to the doctrine of sanctification. It reacted against the form which this doctrine had taken in the Roman Catholic Church, with its ideas of saints and sainthood. Equally it feared the teaching of those Protestant groups which stressed a special experience of sanctification, commonly with a strong emphasis on the subjective and emotional.

The Methodist movement in its beginning paid special attention to this theme. Wesley was strongly influenced by Luther, especially by his commentary on Romans, yet he noted at the same time Luther's neglect of this Christian teaching. He found himself indebted to the smaller groups, but he was saved from their excesses by his insistence upon the ethical test as applied to any experience of sanctification. The Methodism of today in the main shares with other Protestant bodies in the neglect of this doctrine.

"There are, however, marks of an increased attention to this matter. It is seen in the persistence within the churches of groups and special movements concerned with the question of a deeper and richer Christian experience. Even more important is the realization that if the Church is to be a real power in the pagan world, there must be more than correct teaching, growth in numbers, or social zeal. It must have more moral-spiritual power in its membership, a greater spiritual dynamic, and reveal a more obvious difference between the avowed followers of Christ and those who make no such claim" (p. 137).

We could also point to those charismatic movements that began in the Catholic Church in the 70's and soon moved to Protestant churches. Unfortunately for many of the latter such movements proved to be a divisive force and many churches were disfellowshipped within their own denomination. Since then, however, the movements have lost much of their extreme practices and so have moved back toward the mainstream. But their influence is continuing with a much more biblical basis for their doctrines and practices.

The Old Testament background of sanctification is rich in traditional usage. The basic meaning of the Hebrew verb, *qadash*, is "to separate, set apart, consecrate, to be hallowed" and the noun, *qodesh* "apartness, sacredness, holiness" (of God), and the adjective, *qadosh*, "sacred, holy." The first use of this family is in Gen. 2.3, where God "blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it." The verb is in the Piel or intensive form, which emphasizes the strength of the divine action.

In the sense of "set apart as sacred, consecrate or dedicate" for God's use only and therefore make "holy," the family of words is used with reference to God as "holy, set apart, separate from human infirmity and impurity and sin," (BDB) Josh. 24.19 *et multa*, especially in Isa. (e.g. 1.4, the "trisagion," ["thrice-holy"], 7.5); places (Sinai, Ex. 19.23; the Temple, 1 Kgs. 9.3-7 *et al*; a city of refuge, Josh. 20.7; Jerusalem {"the holy city", Isa. 48.2; 52.1; and its "holy mountain", Psa. 48.1-2}; of the priests and Levites, Ex. 19.22, and their garments, Ex. 28.2, 4; 39.1, all the furnishings, Ex. 30.10,29 and utensils, Ex. 40.9 and "shewbread," Ex. 24.9 of the Temple used in the sacrifices and holy days.

Especially holy is the Name, which was to be guarded against any profaning by licentious practices, Lev. 18.21; by swearing falsely in His name, Ex. 19.12. or by desecrating the bodies of the priests, Ex. 21.6; rather should the worshipper "give thanks to his holy, memorial name," Psa. 30.4; 97.12. It is obvious from the study of these passages that "holiness" is not something that is innate or intrinsic to these people, places or things. They acquire holiness by either divine action or by association with "the Holy One of Israel."

One of the most instructive passages for our purposes is Hos. 9.10, where the prophet is recalling a

crisis in the history of the children of Israel. Their first encounter with the abominable Baal worship was at Baal-Peor (Num. 25.1-3). The people "began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab: for they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed themselves down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel."

Note the way the people exercised the initiative of their own will in this idolatrous worship. So Hosea says that, although God had found the people "like grapes in the wilderness" and the fathers "as the first-ripe in the fig tree at its first season" [the delight God found in their pristine relationship up to that point], yet they "consecrated themselves unto the shameful thing, and became abominable like that which they loved" (9.10). Now there are two important actions here that carry over into the Christian experience of sanctification.

First, it is possible for humans in their own will to "consecrate themselves" to that which is unholy and sinful. People can set themselves apart in ritual holiness under the command of Yahweh to obey his commands (Ex. 19.22 *et al*). They can also dedicate their fields (Lev. 27.16ff. But with reference to servants of God, whether the people as a covenant body, or priest or prophet, it is God who does the sanctifying (Lev. 21.8, 15, 23). This is very evident in the divine calling and sanctifying of the prophet Jeremiah (1.5).

The lesson of this observation is that the New Testament never speaks of any person "consecrating" or "dedicating" oneself to the Lord. The nature is too perverse and the will too weak for even the believer to do this. It always is on the initiative of the Holy Spirit who does the sanctifying and on the wholehearted response of the one with whom the Holy Spirit is working.

The second observation is in the statement of Hosea that in the self-consecration of the people they "became abominable like that which they loved" (9.10). Now it is a well-attested law of human nature that one becomes like that which is loved. The classic illustration of this in literature is Hawthorne's story of "The Great Stone Face." In the town's search for a citizen who looked most like that Stone Face on a mountain in Vermont they found him in the young man who daily set his gaze upon the face until he grew into its image. This is the big snare in all kinds of images, or even ideal worship. One becomes like that which one loves. Yet we are not to despair, but only to refocus our gaze upon Jesus, whose glory is "as of the only begotten from the Father" (Jn. 1.14).

McDonald calls sanctification a "complementary truth" to justification and redemption. "For sanctification marks more specifically the subjective aspect of salvation, of which justification is the objective" (p. 151). He quotes G. C. Findlay ("Sanctification," Dictionary of the Bible, p. 826), "Sanctification completes justification; together these constitute the present work of salvation, the reinstatement of the sinful man before his Maker, his installation into the Christian standing and condition.

McDonald goes on to observe, "It is not enough for the sinner to be pronounced righteous; there is need for him to be made righteous in heart and life. If, then, 'in sanctification something is actually *imparted* to us, in justification it is only *imputed*. Justification is based entirely upon the work of Christ *for* us, sanctification is principally a work wrought *in* us' (A. W. Pink, The Doctrine of Sanctification, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1935, p. 89). Justification has to do with a legal change of status, whereas sanctification has to do with an experiential change of character. To stress justification without reference to its complementary truth of sanctification leads to antinomianism [opposition to law]; to equate justification with sanctification, as is done in the Roman Catholic canons of the Council of Trent, leads to a works religion" (p. 151).

He quotes G. C. Berkouwer, (Faith and Sanctification, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1952, p. 78) "Genuine sanctification--let it be repeated--stands or falls with its continued orientation toward justification

and the remission of sins. The fact that antinomianism was beaten down again and again with an appeal to the reality of sanctification resulted in listening attentively to the Word of God. But too often the bond between sanctification and *sola fides* was neglected and the impression created that sanctification was the humanly operated successor of the divinely worked justification. The victim of this view can arrive only at a sanctification that is a causal process, and he is bound, in the end, to speak as Rome of an infused grace and of a qualitative sanctification."

Vincent Taylor (F. & R.) speaks of sanctification "in which reconciliation and fellowship find their goal and consummation." He decides that this word is "not necessarily the best word to describe the Christian ideal...Among other expressions used to describe this ideal are perfection, Christian perfection, sinless perfection, beatitude, *unio mystica*, *via unitiva*, the vision of God and perfect love; and each of these is important as describing a particular aspect of the goal [see below for his exposition of these aspects]. Perhaps the least satisfactory terms are those which include the word 'perfection', since they imply the idea of a standard which it is difficult to dissociate from the suggestion of something fixed and static; whereas the Christian ideal, if it is to find a worthy expression, must be conceived as capable of endless enrichment.

The term 'beatitude' concentrates attention unduly upon the felicity or blessedness of the believer, without suggesting adequately the essential character of the work of God in the process of attainment. The Latin phrases are too exclusively mystical and all that is valuable in their meaning is included in the phrase 'the vision of God. Of the various expressions open to us the best are 'the vision of God', 'sanctification', and 'perfect love'...it will be argued that 'perfect love' is the most satisfactory of all, inasmuch as it suggests the highest quality of life, akin to the life of God Himself, sustained and perfected by Him alone" (p. 144).

It is well to remember that the adjective, *teleios*, and its family are seldom used properly as "perfect." The basic meaning which keeps to the root meaning, "end," is "to bring to its designed end," "to finish or complete" something. If it means "perfection" as "mature" or "capable of accomplishing the divine ideal for man," then we may accept it as capable of fulfillment in this life, or at least of progress along the journey of holiness. Taylor says: "To the Colossian he declares that the object of his apostolic labours is that he may present 'every man *perfect* (*te'leion*) in Christ (1.28; cf. 1.22), and in Ephesians he explains the purpose of the ministry as *the perfecting* (*katarisimos*) of the saints', "the building up of the body of Christ, 'till we all attain (*katanta'o*) unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *unto a full-grown man* (*te'leion*), unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (4.12f).

However, if it signifies moral and spiritual perfection then we can only realize it as fulfilled in the eschaton. Paul accepts this and relates it to the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5.23). He prays for the Thessalonian believers, "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly *{(h)oloteleis~}*; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it" (I Thess. 5.23-24). He links this with the progress in the ethical life: "and the Lord make you to increase and abound in love toward another, and toward all men, even as we also do toward you; to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints" (I Thess. 3.12-13).

Taylor discusses the passages in Romans 6 (vss. 2, 6, 11, 14, 22) that seem to imply that sinless perfection is possible in this life. "These haunting passages sound the death knell of sin; but there is no reason to suppose that St. Paul is describing a state of Christian perfection in which sin is completely destroyed. The reference to 'having died to sin' is ambiguous...Otherwise the prevailing thought is that, as an emancipated man, the believer has no need to fall under the power of sin. Sin is no longer lord.

How far St. Paul is from thinking of sinless perfection is seen in the fact that, in the very midst of

these passages, he inserts the exhortation: 'Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof' (6.12). The implication is that the believer must not, and need not give place to sin, but that he is still exposed to its assaults and to the peril of defeat... Moreover, one cannot forget his confession in Phil. 3.12f., which proves clearly that, for himself, the attainment of the Christian ideal still lay ahead... These considerations make it impossible to suppose that in Rom. 6 he is describing a condition of sinless perfection.

"The issue, it will be seen, is not sinless perfection, but whether it is open to the believer to continue to sin in order that the grace of God may more fully be displayed. St. Paul indignantly rejects this inference, and reminds his readers of what their baptism meant to them. It was a mystical experience in which, as they plunged into the waters, they shared in their Lord's conquest over sin and all its powers...St. Paul's plea was that his readers should live in the power of this experience" (p. 161-62).

The passages in I John (3.6, 9; 5.18) "while apparently more rigorous in expression, represent the same point of view...In themselves, these passages seem to describe, and to require, a standard of sinless perfection, but when we read them in the light of the Epistle as a whole, we see that this is a hasty conclusion. Immediately before the last passage... is a statement which, in spite of its obscurity, recognizes the possibility of sin in believers: 'If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death' (vs. 16b).

This inference is confirmed by 2.1f: '[My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' It is rendered certain by the solemn words of 1.8f.: 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' In the light of these words we must conclude that, in the strongly worded passages...St. John is thinking of deliberate and voluntary transgressions, not of sin in its finer and more subtle forms. And he is justified in speaking so decisively, because, so long as we 'abide in Christ', and truly experience the miracle of the New Birth, temptation recedes from the soul like waves which fall back battered and defeated from the protecting rocks.

"The true Christian is not a man tortured by painful anxiety whether he has reached a sinless state; he is rather a pilgrim whose heart is filled with divine love, and whose eyes await the fuller coming of the glory of God" (Taylor, pp. 163-65).

A good illustration of the contrast of one who sanctifies himself as over against those who are sanctified by the work of the Holy Spirit is seen when Jesus says in His high-priestly prayer, "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth" (17.17-19). Only Jesus has both the will and the power to sanctify, or consecrate himself; we can only respond to the Spirit's work in us.

Taylor goes on to link sanctification with the ethical life: "The reconciling work of God, we have seen, is itself a sanctifying activity, in the sense that the believer is set apart and consecrated to holy ends and purposes; but in the Christian experience, both in its individual and communal aspects, this divine hallowing needs to be worked out in a life of ethical and spiritual progress. In this development the ethical and the spiritual cannot be separated; in Christianity there are no ethical aims which are not at the same time spiritual, and there are no spiritual ideals which are not also ethical" (pp. 144-45).

Now it is well to emphasize that Paul calls *all* believers "saints"--"holy ones"--even while still

recognizing remaining sins that need to be confessed and forgiven. In Rom. 1.7 and I Cor. 1.2, many translations obscure the present reality of this "called" by inserting *to be*, which is not in the Greek. This would assert that believers cannot become saints unless some great life work is done, as is used by the Roman Catholic Church. Further the word, "called," (*h)agiois*, is here not a participle, but an adjective. It could better be paraphrased by "saints by reason of being the called of God into His fellowship and service."

McDonald classifies the Pauline usage in two categories: positional: "Even though Paul calls them 'saints,' 'yet from the point of view of moral holiness, they were anything but spiritually sanctified. But positionally, 'in Christ,' they are designated 'holy,' such is their rightful position and status" (p. 154). This is true also of what Jesus said about how the Temple sanctifies the gold and the altar the gift thereon (Matt. 23.17). The other category is "a progressive experience. This is the aspect of sanctification most stressed in the New Testament. Sanctification is to regeneration what growth is to birth; it consists, that is to say, in the process of the divine life in the believing soul 'to [come to the full] measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (Eph. 4.13). In briefest definition, 'Sanctification is the christianizing of the Christian' (W. N. Clarke, An Outline of Christian Doctrine, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1903, p. 409) (McDonald, p. 154).

McDonald gives some practical considerations for the believer who is "on the way": This christianizing of the Christian is a continuous operation by which the justified sinner is delivered from sin's pollution and transformed in his total being into the image of his Creator (Col. 3.10; cf. Eph. 4.24). It is not an event; it is a process. Not at one stroke is sin conquered; not by one step is perfection attained. It is a process that must pass through unnumbered stages. At no stage is there a red stop sign to indicate that one has arrived. Higher and higher still should be the Christian's aim.

It is, besides, a process that includes innumerable events. Events ordinary and exceptional go into the making of a soul. Every day has significance for our sanctification. The upward road to the heights of God must be traveled to the end and, whether slowly or rapidly, the journey must be continued to the last step. 'Sanctification involves the concentration of thought, of interest, of heart, mind, will, and purpose upon the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus and the engagement of our whole being with those means which God has instituted for the attainment of that destination' (John Murray, Redemption Accomplished and Applied, London, Banner of Truth, 1961, p. 34)." Without needing to take literally, but seriously, all the various means and experiences of the traditional "saints" of the Catholic Church, the study of their lives can be very enlightening and supportive.

About this aim, McDonald says, "First, perfection as the goal of sanctification cannot be attained in the present sphere. Yet the ideal of such a perfection is clearly set before the Christian in the New Testament...Because absolute holiness, even perfection, is demanded in the New Testament (Matt. 5.48; 1 Pet. 1.16; Jas. 1.4; 1 Pet. 2.21ff), some have argued that the attainment of such must therefore be possible. But the conclusion does not follow; for the measure of human ability cannot be inferred from the absoluteness of the divine commands. Besides, it is important to observe that such commands are general.

The standard of perfect holiness holds for all men, the unregenerate as well as for the regenerate. 'If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess' (Matt. 19.21) is not laying down a monastic rule for the attainment of perfection and the consequent canonization of a select number of saints. Christ was rather showing up the falsity of the young man's claim to have kept the commandments in the spirit as well as in the letter. Christ's probing words make clear that God was not really first in his living, nor his neighbor equally loved as himself..

In none of these cases [where holiness is ascribed to believers] is it suggested that they were without sin. In fact, the purpose of the writings they received was to urge them on to greater holiness" (p. 155). He

refers to the inner struggles of Paul (Rom. 7.7-25; Gal. 5.16-24; Phil. 3.10-14) showing that the fight against sin and for holiness is continuous, but there is hope. "Throughout the New Testament, there runs a confident note of triumph that in the battle with sin within ourselves, we may be 'more than conquerors' (Rom. 8.37).

There is the triumphant song, "Thanks be unto God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15.57; Rom. 7.25). None knew better than Paul how impossible it was in his own strength to overcome the natural desires of his own inner self. 'But he bethinks himself that the Spirit of the most high God is more powerful than even ingrained sin; and with a great revulsion of heart he turns at once to cry his thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This conflict he sees within him, he sees now to bear in it the promise and potency of victory; because it is the result of the Spirit's working within him, and where the Spirit works, there is emancipation from the law of sin and death. The process may be hard, a labor, a struggle, a fight; but the end is assured. No matter how far from perfect we may yet be, we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit if the Spirit of God dwells in us, and we may take heart by faith from that circumstance to mortify the deeds of the body and to enter upon our heritage as children of God' (B. B. Warfield, Biblical Doctrines, New York, Oxford U. Press, 1929, p. 459-60)" (McDonald, p. 157).

McDonald also shows how sanctification as a continuous work has three tenses: "There is a very true sense in which all God's people are already sanctified (2 Thess. 2.13; Heb. 10.10; Jude 1). There is a true sense, too, in which they are being sanctified (2 Cor. 4.16; 1 7.1; 1 Thess. 5.23). But also is the Christian's full sanctification still in the future (Rom. 8.19ff; Heb. 12.23; I John 3.2). But in whatever tense it is considered, the believer's sanctification is not the result of his own self-effort or the product of his own self-improvement...[It is] a supernatural work of grace" (p. 158).

Taylor warns against what some have called "the second blessing": "One point is of special importance: there is no support in New Testament teaching for the view that sanctification is a sudden and miraculous gift of the Spirit in response to importunate prayer. Pentecost, to which, in this connection, reference is often made (cf. Acts 2.1-13; cf. 4.31), was the endowment of the primitive Church with power; there is no indication that it entailed complete victory over sin and the attainment of ethical and spiritual perfection.

Similarly, in New Testament usage, the phrase, 'filled with the Spirit', does not connote the fulfillment of the Christian ideal, but the bestowal of new energy" [and I would add, 'in confronting a life situation that calls for more moral and spiritual power than ordinary'] "and of charismatic gifts such as prophecy, administrative capacity, teaching, exhorting, and even liberality (cf. Rom. 12.6-8). In Corinth it meant the glossolalia, the gift of ecstatic speech (cf. I Cor. 14). Sanctification of life is undoubtedly growth in holiness, through the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 5.5); but of any short cut to the attainment of the ideal by a special endowment of the Spirit the New Testament knows nothing" (pp. 154-55).

There remains one passage which is sometimes appealed to as calling for our own work, namely Phil. 2.12, where Paul is exhorting the Phillipian believers to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." However, it should be quoted in sequence with the next verse, "for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." So then Paul is urging them to continue obeying so that their salvation is "worked out" (*katērgadzomai*, a very strong verb) in their lives so plainly that others may recognize their "salvation," or as Jesus said, "So shine your light before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5.16, my translation: so as to show that the initial verb is an imperative and not just permissive, and to take account of the correlatives

that strongly denote the manner and purpose of the shining). The "fear and trembling" of Phil. 2.12 is the natural feeling of awe of the holy that is operating within them to bring about this salvation.

Catholic history is replete with biographies of the "saints" who sought after the vision of God as their *summum bonum* of life. With some the journey took the painful route of severe discipline of the body and many of its otherwise normal desires. With others it involved removal from society with all its temptation to sin and corruption. In most every case it was sought through long periods, even years, of meditation and spiritual reading. Often they attracted followers who became ardent disciples seeking to pursue the highest way. Taylor says, "The victory [of sanctification]] can be won partially over a period; it is completed only at a point.

In like manner, the attainment of the *Visio Dei*, although it may be preceded by momentary experiences of illumination, is the last stage in a long and painful process which, in the teaching of the Mediaeval Church, follows the well-marked track of purification, illumination, and union with the divine. As the growing knowledge of God, the vision may be seen at all times, but in the fullness of its perfection it is an instantaneous gift of the divine love...Nor, in love, is a perfection ever reached beyond which a richer manifestation is not possible. God is love; and love has the infinitude of His Being. From this it follows that the ideal of Perfect Love is always attained and always attainable; it belongs both to this life and to that which is to come; it is here and yonder, at this moment and always" (p. 179).

Taylor says this pursuit "has the supreme advantage of resting upon the words of Jesus: 'Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God' (Mt. 5.8). It is implicit also in the Pauline affirmation that God 'shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3.18). It is even more fundamental to Johannine thought, in that St. John declares that in Christ the Church has already seen the glory of the Father (Jn. 1.14: cf. 1.18, 12.45; 14.7, 9), and that to its members the certainty is given: 'We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is' (1 Jn. 3.2; c. Apoc. 22.4).

The hope of attaining this vision is expressed continually in the writings of Christian saints and teachers, in the greatest of Christian poetry, as, for example, in Dante's *Divine Commedia* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in Christian art, worship, praise, and prayer" (pp. 166-67). It is regrettable that with this great goal of the Christian life it has been relegated almost exclusively to the spiritual elite. Its pursuit can take many forms and journeys, while no one way is guaranteed, and even when the goal is not reached its pursuit is most profitable to the pilgrim.

Taylor refers again to Kirk's writings, who "has put forward strong and cogent reasons why the vision of God should be regarded as constituting the essence of the Christian ideal. He denies that the quest for it is selfish on the ground that the vision is corporate, and that out of this direction of heart and mind come greater saintliness and greater zeal for service. 'To look towards God, and from that "look" to acquire insight both into the follies of one's own heart and the needs of one's neighbors, with power to correct the one no less than to serve the other--this is something very remote from any quest for "religious experience" for its own sake. Yet this, and nothing else, is what the vision of God has meant in the fully developed thought of historic Christianity' (Kirk, *op. cit.*, p. 445; Taylor, p. 167).

Kirk recommends worship as the prime means of attaining the goal. He contrasts worship with service. He says, "The danger of 'service,' as an ideal, is that it fosters the spirit of patronage: the glory of worship is to elicit the grace of humility" (Kirk, p. 449. Taylor, p. 168). But Taylor objects that we need not choose the one over the other because they both occupy a "'substantive position' in relation to the other" (Ibid). He opts for combining both as "*communion with God reflected and expressed in perfect love*" (p.

169). And he points out that using worship as a means, even to the end of the vision of God, constitutes "a derogation of the idea of worship to suggest that it is only a means to an end; and for this reason it is better to include it, with the disposition in which it issues, within the orbit of the ideal. If we do this, we must think of worship as including meditation upon the love of God revealed in Christ, contemplation of the divine glory, and an adoration crowned in the life of perfect love" (Ibid). But when was the last time you either preached or heard a sermon extolling Christ in his life and his work of redemption? We need to provide for the hearers more meat of the Word that leads us to behold the glory of God as seen in the face of Christ. Otherwise, they are poorly supplied with the understandings, and even the vocabulary for their public and private meditation and worship.

Taylor recounts all the many descriptions and admonitions about love in the Gospels and Epistles and concludes: "The New Testament teaching...can leave no doubt that love is an essential element in the Christian ideal. The question, whether the ideal is love for God or love for men, presents a false alternative; for there can be no true love for God which does not issue in love for men, and love for men which is not inspired and directed by love for God is sure to be found wanting or inadequate..."

God's love for men, which at first sight might not seem to belong to the ideal, is of first importance because, as Agape, pure self-giving, which wells out of the heart of God, and is made manifest in the Cross of Christ, it sets the standard of our love for God and for men...It goes forth lavishly and is open to everyone who needs it, friend or foe, rich or poor. Because a man is a Christian 'and grasps the Word which in himself is quite pure, the same makes his heart also so pure and full of honest love that he lets his love flow out unimpeded towards everyone, be the person who or what he may' (The last quote is from Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, Part II, *The History of the Christian Idea of Love*, p. 513).

An excellent modern example of this kind of sanctified love is the life of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. It was my privilege to sit next to her and speak briefly with her in a Catholic conference in Philadelphia in the Seventies. She had an aura about her that was unmistakable--selfless love. If it were left up to me, and I think many thousands of others, she would be named officially a "saint" without further examination of her life.

"John Wesley set love at the centre of his doctrine of the Christian ideal. 'By Perfection', he wrote, 'I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions.' (John Wesley, *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, no page No.). 'The heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion: there is, in effect nothing else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way...' 'Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth chapter of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.' (Wesley, Ibid) (Taylor, p. 175). He quotes as further evidence the hymns of the Wesleys. One of the more mystical is:

My God! I know, I feel Thee mine,
And will not quit my claim,
Till all I have is lost in Thine,
And all renewed I am.
Refining Fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter Thy life through every part,
And sanctify me whole.

My steadfast soul, from falling free,
 Shall then no longer move;
 But Christ be all the world to me,
 And all my heart be love.
 (Taylor, p. 176)

The book of Hebrews has much to say about perfection. Taylor lists them: "...the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews constantly uses this vocabulary of perfection, with reference to the person and work of Christ and the intellectual, moral and spiritual growth of his readers. Jesus is 'the author and *perfecter* (*teleiotes*) of our faith' (12.2). Having been '*made perfect*' (*teleiotheis*), 'he became unto all them that obey him *the author* (*aitios*) of eternal salvation' (vs. 9; cf. 2.10, 7.28), and is able 'to save unto the uttermost (*eis to panteles*) those who draw near to God through Him, 'seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them' (7.25).

Sometimes the reference is intellectual, as, for example, when the writer exhorts his readers to seek fuller truth concerning Christ in the words: 'Let us press on *unto perfection* (*teleio'tes*), or when he affirms the complete efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ in the words: 'By one offering he hath *perfected* (*teleio'o*) for ever them that are sanctified (*tous` (h)agiadzome'nous*)' (10.14). Moral and spiritual attainment of the Christian ideal, however, are clearly in mind in 12.23 when he speaks of 'the spirits of just men *made perfect* (*teteleioime'non*), and, above all in the sonorous benediction towards the close of the Epistle:

'Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of the eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus *make you perfect* (*katartidzein*) *in every good thing to do his will*, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory for ever and ever' (13.20).

Let us turn now to the eighth and final experience of the Wheel of Salvation--Glorification.

Chapter 9 - The Doctrine of Glorification

This doctrine is probably the one to which the least attention is given by contemporary theologians. Of the books we have been using up to this point as resources for these doctrines only McDonald has a brief word (the others do not list the word in their indices. He says, "It does not belong to the present volume to discuss eschatology, but the doctrine of salvation would be incomplete if its final perfecting were not noted. The consummation of the believer's salvation is his glorification in heaven. The believer who passes into the heavenly glory will in that moment reach the completion of his redeemed spirit (Heb. 12.22, 23). That union with Christ of which he has experience in the here and now cannot be dissolved by the shock of death.

Yet death itself is not the agent of this perfecting, but the circumstance in which it is effected. It is on the basis of our reconciliation in the body of his flesh by his death that Christ will himself present us holy and unblameable and irreproachable before him (Col. 1.22). So will he gather his bride, the church, sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water with the word 'in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish' (Eph. 5.26, 27). He is able to keep his redeemed from falling and to present them without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing (Jude 24). It is from this perspective that the New Testament discloses its new understanding of death.

In Judaism, there was no certainty that death was not the end of a man's life. Death came as an unwelcome guest, for beyond it lay the uncertain realm of Hades. But now in Christ all this was changed. Christ has 'brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Tim. 1.10). He has taken the sting from the sepulcher and the gloom from the grave (1 Cor. 15.54, 55; cf. Hos 13.14. Seen in the light of Christ's glory, death need no longer be regarded as a terminus, but a tunnel; not as a cul-de-sac, but a channel...The believer is not for death; death is for him--it is a part of his wealth. It is not the end of life, but its true beginning. Death is not a deprivation, not a loss, not a defeat, not a calamity. In the experience of salvation, it appeared as a ceremony of coronation, the establishment of Christ's final triumph in the redeemed life" (p. 171).

Now, while we can applaud and gather hope from this excellent eschatological application of glorification, this writer believes that the value and experience of glorification are available to the believer in the present life. Let us look more closely at the Pauline teachings.

Our church insists on our learning new hymns. Recently they introduced "Shine, Jesus, Shine" words and music by Graham Kendrick, 1950. Its second and third verses are especially appropriate to our view of glorification:

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
From the shadows into Your radiance;
By the blood I may enter Your brightness;
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness;
Shine on me, Shine on me.

Refrain

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light.
As we gaze on Your kingly brightness, so our faces display Your likeness,

Ever changing from glory to glory:
 Mirrored here, may our lives tell Your story;
 Shine on me, Shine on me.

My only addition, theologically, but not poetically, would be: "Mirrored here" and realized perfectly when we see You directly (I John 3.2).

"So I hold that the glorification of the Christian does not necessarily await the *eschaton*, but is presently taking place in the midst of the struggles of life and the challenges of being 'minister of the new covenant.'...This is not to deny the glorious fulfillment of the whole process in the *eschaton*, for Paul also says in the same chapter (vs. 18), 'For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.'

Further he says, 'For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison' (2 Cor. 4.17...Above and beyond all these there is the assurance of hope expressed by the Apostle John, "Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as is pure' (I John 3.3). Glory!" (Hastings, pp. 139-140).

There is also Paul's belief that at the Parousia the glorified Christ "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself" (Phil. 3.21). This inclusion of the transformed body in the glorifying process is part of the culmination for every believer and also that of "the bride of Christ" (Eph. 5.27).

How much of this is accomplished in this life and how much in the change to the future life Paul does not say, but the end result is that we are to be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it [the Church] should be holy and without blemish." Even though from our union with Christ we are "saints" (*hagioi*, "holy ones") the final perfection of holiness awaits the *eschaton* and does not depend upon our "saintly life" whether by miraculous works or by nobility of character (Roman Catholicism).

There is an old Negro spiritual that captures this present reality. Its title is "I've Got a Glory" and, indeed, its author had an insight into what God was doing with him that by instinct surpasses the profundities of the scholars. In spite of tribulations and deprivations he took refuge in the possession which God had given him of a surpassing glory beyond all hopes of justice and release from toil in his world.

In a way I had witnessed this when I was on a sabbatical at the Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Not having a car on Sunday I took a cross-town bus to a Baptist Church. Several black women and I were the sole passengers on the bus. At one stop one of the ladies, who was "dressed to the nines," got up to leave for her church. Her friend called out, "Oh, have a good time at church today, honey." She called back as she stepped off, "Oh, I will, I will!" And I almost got off with her to see where and how her source of "glory" was expressing itself!

There is one final use of glory that we must consider. Paul says in Col. 1.27-28 when he is commenting on his ministry to the Gentiles that he had received a "mystery which hath been hid for ages and generations: but now hath it been made known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect (*teleion*, cf. Matt. 5.48) in Christ."

Now the popular interpretation of "the hope of glory" is our hope of going to heaven. Certainly that is true of our union with Christ, but considering Paul's purpose of bringing these new Gentile Christians to

perfection in Christ, it should be obvious that he is talking about something in this life. Since we have seen in the Old Testament that "glory" is "the Presence and power of God at work in the world so that men may see and glorify God," then this is God's hope, not ours except indirectly, of our revealing by our good works (Matt. 5.15) and Christ-like character ("Let Others See Jesus in You") the glory of God and so praise Him. Whether or not this is a true interpretation, it certainly is true to God's desire for our lives. Let us, indeed, be part of the Spirit's work in bringing "the whole earth to be filled with his glory" (Psa. 72.19).

Conclusion

This concludes our study of the eight experiences that make up the "Wheel of Salvation." What can we say about the use of this study? Certainly it should enrich our own understanding and appreciation of the marvelous and manifold grace of God in bringing us to salvation and continuing throughout life his providential work. It will also provide us with a wealth of vocabulary of praise and thanksgiving in our daily prayer life. Hopefully we will be encouraged also to emphasize more of these great biblical concepts in our preaching and teaching, especially of new converts. It is true that we may be offering the "meat" of the Word which may be difficult for "newborns" to digest, but that should not keep us from trying with all God's wisdom and the Spirit's aid to nourish them in their "growth in grace" (2 Pet. 4.18). If Paul expected his new converts to understand these profound concepts, then surely we can try also to expound them to ours.

"And the peace (*shalom*) of God, which passeth all understanding, guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4.7). Amen!

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