

*These feet are made
for walking*

With God

Salvation is about walking with God

1. Salvation is about our relationship with God restored on earth

'He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?' Rom 8:32

All things will mean nothing to us without being close to our God who works all things for our good through the sacrifice of the Son. He does this so that we can have a vital relationship in eternal fellowship with God, Father, Son and Spirit. *'Indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.'* 1 John 1:3

Wanting the benefits of this relationship with God without a life committed to walking with God is impossible.

Relationships require people being in close contact with each other. Valued relationships require an effort to please the other. This valued relationship involves a cherishing that requires us to be talking with each other. It means valuing each other above all things. All our relationships are enhanced when we hide nothing from each other. Having faithful relationships means we are enlarged when we trust each other.

Since the Father has given us all things, why then do we live as if we have been forgotten? Have we sought our meaning in the world? It cannot be what God has not done for us, but what we have not done for God? Since God has done all things to keep us in His love, any sense of aloneness is because we have not looked to God but looked to the world and ourselves. When we feel like we lack life we are disposed to pleasing ourselves and not God.

Maybe we may need a new perspective. *'We should always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.'* 2 Thess 2:13

Salvation is not just about getting saved to avoid hell; and it's not just about our legal justification before a righteous God. Salvation is not only about going to heaven when we die. Although all these things are important, Salvation is about being chosen by God to be powerfully

united in Christ so we can walk in fellowship with Father, Son and Spirit. *'You are A CHOSEN PEOPLE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR GOD'S OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.'*

1 Pet 2:9

Being chosen as God's personal possession means living with God who has placed immense value on our lives by the death of His Son. And this life with God begins at the moment of conversion and comes to completion when Christ comes again at the end of the world. *'For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.'*

2 Tim 2:10

To be chosen of God means to be born again into a life of unity and fellowship with God by the work of His Son. *"He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."*

Rev 17:14

Walking with God is the practical reality of our loving God calling His chosen children to live with Him personally. We aren't just numbers or ideas; we are His people, chosen in Christ who is the most special person. Jesus makes this relationship clear: *"I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and You loved them, just as You loved Me."* John 17:23

The Father who chooses us is a person, and the Spirit who gives us life is a person. The salvation of God is about being placed into fellowship with God, in the persons of the Father, Son and Spirit. Salvation is into the kingdom of the rule of God. And His kingdom is a powerful reality that doesn't wait to begin to have its impact on us in heaven when we die.

God's purpose is for all believers to walk with Him

'The one who says that he remains in Him ought, himself also, walk just as He walked.'

1 John 2:6

Christians are recreated holy in Christ to overcome the weakness of the old life we inherited from Adam in order to be able to walk with God. By God's grace we have received the image and likeness of God so we

can live holy and blameless lives before God. God wants us to live as His children who desire His holy presence more than anything else, so that we can be like Him in character, and in all our actions. *'He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.'*

2 Pet 1:4

Salvation is about God's utmost endeavour for our highest good as His offspring's. This is living with Immanuel with us today. We are a new creation of God by faith in Christ. *'Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.'*

2 Cor 5:17

Salvation means walk with God because we are justified in relation to Christ. *'Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.'*

Rom 5:1

Salvation means we are sanctified to walk with Christ. *'Those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus.'*

1 Cor 1:2

Salvation means we are raised up to live with Christ. *'Raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.'*

Eph 2:5-6

Salvation means we are God's children who walk with Him. *'See how great a love the Father has given us, that we would be called children of God.'*

1 John 3:1

Salvation means we talk to our Father who walks with us. *"Pray to your Father, who is unseen."*

Matt 6:6

Salvation means we walk with Christ our Lord. *"KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."*

Rev 19:16

Salvation means the Spirit teaches us how to walk. *"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit... will teach you all things, and remind you of all that I said to you."*

John 14:26

Salvation means we are abiding in Christ when we walk with Him. *"Remain in Me, and I in you."*

John 15:4

Salvation means we walk with Christ living in us. *'Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.'* Gal 2:20

Salvation means Christ is our life. *'When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.'* Col 3:4

Salvation means we live for Christ as we walk with Him. *'Those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose on their behalf.'* 2 Cor 5:15

In order to walk with God we are sealed by the Spirit. *'In Him, you also....you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of the promise.'* Eph 1:13

Salvation means we walk with and by the Spirit. *'You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.'* Rom 8:9

Salvation means our walk is inseparable from Christ. *'I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'* Rom 8:38-39

Salvation means we are equipped to walk in service to Christ. *'But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.'* 1 Cor 12:7

Salvation means we walk with every blessing in Christ. *'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.'* Eph 1:3

Salvation means we will be glorified in Christ. *'And if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.'* Rom 8:17

Salvation means we walk knowing our home is in heaven with Christ. *'For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.'* Phil 3:20

We cannot be more incorporated into living in the kingdom of God through Jesus Christ so that we walk in His presence daily.

All this fellowship in Christ is so that we can actually live with God now as we walk on earth in the presence of God as the servants of Christ. Our salvation is so we can begin to walk with God in Christ today. We are commanded to grow in the knowledge of God so that we can appreciate even more what He has done for us in Christ so that we can serve Him more completely in our daily walk. Is this devoted love for Christ our present disposition?

Since God has blessed us with His utmost love, isn't it going to be the natural desire of those He has chosen to give their utmost for His highest as they walk with Him in love? We can only do that when we walk according to the spirit, (Rom 8:12) and put an end to the earthly ways that remain embedded in our thinking and disposing us to please ourselves.

Rom 8:13, 12:1-2

We are saved to live with God

The work of Christ has made it possible for our relationship with God to begin down here as we live with Christ who is the King of His kingdom. Salvation is about being reconciled with God while we still live on the earth which is still under the judgment of God.

Before Jesus Christ claimed us by the sacrifice of His blood, we were physically alive but dead in our spirit towards God. Our hearts were still beating but as hard as a rock when it came to any sense of loving God wholeheartedly. When we were reconciled to God at the time of our repentance we were incorporated into the life of Christ as we were reborn by the Spirit in His image and likeness. We were joined to the heart of Christ which is one life with the Father and the Spirit in order to live with Him. *'For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons and daughters of God.'*

Rom 8:14

We are saved to walk hand in hand with God by being led daily by the Spirit of God. In humble submission we walk Hand in hand with the Spirit as we grow daily in the knowledge of God. In humble submission we walk Hand in hand with the Spirit as we live holy obedient lives. In humble submission we walk Hand in hand with the Spirit as we live fruitful and productive lives for the kingdom of God. In humble submission we walk Hand in hand with the Spirit as we live confidently witnessing to God with our whole lives.

In humble submission we walk Hand in hand with the Spirit as we live fearless persevering lives in the face of cruel adversity.

We don't live in the clouds; those who are saved into fellowship with God are real people walking about in the world doing the normal things that are necessary for physical life. In our physical life, body and spirit, we are incorporated into our relationship with our Holy God and His chosen people.

We are made alive in and by the Spirit of God to be holy as He is holy in a world that denies His authority. In union with Christ we have received eternal life so that we can know the Father and the Son as we live intimately with them by the power of the Spirit working in us. The Spirit indwells us so that we are able to live according to the law of God as a holy people who are disposed to live to glorify Him.

We can walk with God because God is Sovereign over all things

God is sovereign over all things, including the fallen world which is under His judgement. So we must live the life He has chosen for us in His image.

As His servants we drink the cup of suffering He has prepared for us, and we do all things according to the values of the kingdom of God. By faith, love, grace, humility, and obedience, and in all servitude and perseverance we are always drawing near to God as we live the life of Christ.

Our Father gives us a cup of tribulation for our spiritual development. That cup isn't meant to be easy, and it isn't meant to break us either. Our cup is to be consumed by faith overflowing with love so that we grow up in the image of Christ. The faithful perseverance of God's children builds a holy character which is the backbone of our light shining in the world of darkness, because our devotion in service to God in the midst of tribulation is our acceptable testimony of the treasure of salvation found in Christ alone.

In a real way we should remember that while we hold the cup of suffering with one hand, Christ also holds it in His hand to give us support. When we are inclined to let go we can remember our cup is nothing compared to His cup which He drank on our behalf according

to the will of God. Whatever we experience in our walk with God we are not alone and He strengthens us as we trust in Him. Worship is the glue that keeps our hand on the cup.

We cannot worship God with our lips and keep our hearts for ourselves. God prepares our paths so we follow the example of Christ. The Holy Spirit will not share our hearts with the world. If we are not surrendered to the will of God, the Spirit will give us over to the desires of our flesh. The power of perseverance is the knowledge of His Presence.

Self denial is the way of Christ to walk with God

Jesus denied Himself to walk with God. *‘Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in the same way.”*

John 5:19

“My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.”

Matt 26:39

If we want eternal life with Christ we must first deny ourselves by following His example. *“If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.”*

Matt 16:24

Repentance begins with self denial, which means we can then live in Him who gives life. *“Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself but must remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me.”*

John 15:4

The world is what it is and can't be anything else, so our understanding of living with Christ should give us greater motivation to show the love of God in Christ by word and deed as we live confidently in Him.

‘And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.’

Rom 8:28-29

Every moment of doubt, every anxiety, every manner of confusion and every feeling of discontent and of being devalued, is directly related to

looking to the world and people for meaning instead of walking faithfully with God.

Problems come from an inadequate understanding of God's word

When we make decisions based on what we feel is right we limit our spiritual development to the level of our own theological understanding, as a result our spiritual inability has become our default method of interpretation, which is called "hermeneutics."

If our hermeneutics does not encompass all the correct aspects that consider the complexity of divine revelation, according to the manner of that revelation at the time of writing, then our interpretation will be inadequate. What seems plausible to the untrained eye might be attractive and interesting from a worldly point of view, but it may well be only a figment of human imagination that misses the point of the author entirely.

Our hermeneutics needs to consider many things if we will know what God desires. We need to know what the author of the book of the Bible wanted the original readers to understand in their language and culture. As a result we need to have some understanding of the language being used. Lexicons are available to assist in this work. We need also need to consider the culture of the day. History is important.

We need to recognise the type of literature being used at the time. The Bible cannot be understood as everything being written in the form of narrative or storytelling. For example, the use of apocalyptic genre in prophetic writings with its vivid imagery cannot be interpreted literally if our conclusions are to be credible and helpful. So we need to recognise the use of symbols in the Bible and how the scriptures interpret them.

We need to confirm that Scripture interprets Scripture. Prophetic symbolism used in Revelation is not given to frighten us but to give us assurance of God's presence in the process of us drinking the cup of our salvation in a fallen world. The enemies of God are shown in vivid terms, but what we are destined to suffer in our experience of tribulation under the hand of God is nothing to be compared to the

glory that awaits us in heaven. God determined Christ would suffer and He has not changed His mind that we should take the same path.

We need to understand the use of metaphor and figurative speech that paint a picture for the clarity for those who have ears to hear, but hide the meaning from others who are hardened; and we need to recognise the use of hyperbolic inferences that give an added impact or effect. When the Bible talks about 'all' it doesn't always mean absolutely everyone.

We need to understand the significance of the symbolic use of numbers and numerology in the Old Testament that explain important aspects of Jewish religion and history, and therefore this will help us know the symbolic meaning of numbers in many prophecies concerning prediction of what will happen in the future. The meaning given to symbols in an earlier passage will be our guide to later revelations.

Scripture is also a progressive revelation of God. *"For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."*

Matt 13:17

The whole of Scripture is important, but the Old Testament needs to be read through the lens of the New Testament revealed in Christ.

And we must always interpret scripture in the context of the passage and book in which it is written; and then make sure we are consistent according to the truth contained in the remainder of the Bible. God gives teachers to the Church to make clear what most don't see by themselves.

If the training of the teacher is inadequate, context will often be overlooked, symbolism may well be interpreted literally, and meaning will suffer as promises are made that God never said would happen.

Therefore we must always use the many resources God has made available to us as individuals so we can check up on what we are told has come from the sacred word of God. No one has the luxury of not checking the word of God to make sure we are on the right path.

Therefore in truth we walk a new life of Christ

The flesh that remains in our thinking anchors us to the world and limits our ability to understand His word and how we walk with God, so we must show all diligence in living as spiritual children of God according to His word.

A new creation requires a new lifestyle according to the image of Christ. *'Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.'* *'put on the new self, which is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created it.'*

Col 3:1-4, 10

A new lifestyle requires a new way of thinking according to the mind of Christ. *'Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God. We also speak these things, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. But the one who is spiritual discerns all things, yet he himself is discerned by no one. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.'*

1 Cor 2:12-16

If we are going to be successful in living this new life we must know what God tells us about life in Christ. *"teaching them to follow all that I commanded you."*

Matt 28:20

The abundance of eternal life is life in all its fullness is real fellowship with God. It is a relationship that lacks nothing concerning the kingdom of God. *"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* (John 17:3) This knowing God in us is to grow into the same intimate knowing as the Father knows the Son.

Jesus came to save us from sin so that we can live in the presence of God today. The future has a beginning in the present. The revelation of the Son has already been granted to the people of God, but there is more to come. Our future has a beginning in the resurrection of Christ. The kingdom of God is a present reality on earth while we look forward to its consummation in Christ's return. We live in the presence of God now in Christ by the Spirit, with a divine future reality in the fullness of the glory of God to come.

For the time we have left on earth, Christ's life in us is to be a foretaste of the glory of our future life united with Him when He comes again. *"The glory which You have given Me I also have given to them, so that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and You loved them, just as You loved Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world."*

John 17:22-24

When Adam and Eve sinned they died to that intimate relationship with God that Jesus Christ has made possible for us by His death on the cross as our condemned substitute. He did this so that we can be reconciled with the Father to enjoy the same quality of relationship that Jesus has with our Almighty God.

Living with Christ changes everything

The walk Adam had with God before he sinned is only a shadow of the reality awaiting the believer when Christ returns. But even now, the Spirit of God has been given to us so that even before Christ returns we can experience greater possibilities in the presence of God than Adam ever had.

If we walk as if Christ has abandoned us, then we will appear to be no different from those who have no knowledge of Him. We will not appreciate the fact that God works everything in our lives for our greatest good. *"The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him."*

Rom 8:16-17

Without a life lived with Christ we will have no motivation to go into the world to seek the lost because we have nothing in the way of good news to proclaim in favour of Christ the Lamb of God. We will not be able to testify that Christ has been raised from the dead so we can have life in His presence, even as we suffer in the world because of sin and the judgement of God.

If we are not living with Christ daily we will not be able to honestly say that His presence in the heart of the repentant believer makes up for everything that is lacking in the world. If we don't know the reality of the presence of Christ in devoted relationship with Him now, we will not be able to share that Christ is the only one who can give us eternal life in fellowship with God. *"All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son determines to reveal Him. Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*

Matt 11:27-28

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me."

John 14:6

Those who believe and obey Christ follow His commands and go and make disciples. *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Matt 28:19-20

We enjoy security with God now because we are joined by the Spirit to God Almighty. *'Having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of the promise, who is a first instalment of our inheritance, in regard to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.'*

Eph 1:13-14

In harmony with Jesus Christ and by the power of the Spirit of God we must walk by faith as we groan in response to the consequence of sin in a world of darkness that remains under the judgement of God. The groaning of the believer is normal as we wait for the redemption of the whole of creation on the return of Jesus Christ. *'For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only that, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of*

the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons and daughters, the redemption of our body.'

Rom 8:22-23

If there was no darkness there would be no need for faith and no groaning, and there would be no need for light. But our groaning will continue even as we walk in His light until the Lord comes again to purify all things and bless us with a new heaven and earth. For now we groan in the light of the knowledge of God with hope eternal, unlike the unbelievers who groan in the darkness without any hope whatsoever.

2. What about those who die in Christ?

When Christians die before Christ returns the relationship with God doesn't cease, it is intensified in quality and fullness. The Bible clearly teaches us that the believer in their spirit will enjoy a conscious and unbroken communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. Our bodies may be in the soil, but we live as recognisable spirits in fellowship with God. In the transfiguration of Christ, Moses and Elijah were clearly seen by the disciples. In the story of the rich man and Lazarus there was no doubt that Lazarus, Abraham and the rich man were identifiable.

Jesus said to her, *"I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"* John 11:25-26

Those who believe and obey Jesus Christ will experience a state of continual blessedness in the presence of God. *And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."* Luke 23:43

With these words Jesus was affirming the repentant sinner will remain in fellowship with Him in paradise.

In Revelation 7:9-17 we are told of the saints who have died who are living in conscious communion and worship in the presence of God even though they have not received their resurrection bodies. This is supported by the previous chapter.

'When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You

refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who live on the earth?"

Rev 6:9-10

The early Christians were prepared to die knowing they would live with God. *'For we know that if our earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made by hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed, in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, since in fact after putting it on, we will not be found naked. For indeed, we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the Spirit as a pledge.'*

2 Cor 5:1-5

The Apostle Paul says that after death we will live with God even as we wait for our resurrection bodies at the last day. Being absent from the body doesn't separate us from the presence of God. *'Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight—but we are of good courage and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.'*

2 Cor 5:6-8

Death means the believer will most assuredly be at home with God. Death will bring not dread but a new and more intimate fellowship with Christ because we are released from the limitations of the flesh. *'For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better.'* Phil 1:21-23

Therefore we can understand that life in the flesh for the believer is even now to walk with God knowing our home is in heaven; but this life in the flesh doesn't allow for a more intensified relationship in fellowship with Christ that only death can bring.

3. Life in the Resurrection

We will walk with God in our Resurrection bodies. While we find great comfort in knowing those who "*die in the Lord*" experience an increase in devoted communion and fellowship in the presence of God, we still

long for the day of the believers bodily resurrection when we will be clothed in glory in the likeness of our resurrected Lord.

Christ's second coming in glory would see the transformation of our fleshly bodies into the miracle of Christ's resurrection body on that glorious day.

'Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be firm, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'

1 Cor 15:49, 53, 58

'Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope set on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.'

1 John 3:2-3

Christ now Reigns over heaven and earth even as He lives in us. *'And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give water to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life, without cost. The one who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.'*

Rev 21:5-7

The believer's disposition is ruled by the Spirit and therefore has been changed by God so we overcome the world and sin.

Our greatest joy will be found in our future glorification in Christ. The day will come with Christ when our creatureliness will be transformed, body and spirit, into the likeness of our Creator. The fullness of the redemptive work of Christ will be made complete when the healing of God is complete and death is cast away forever.

Resurrection bodies await both those who have died and those who remain alive until He comes.

'But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest of

mankind do , who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. For we say this to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who remain, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words.’ 1 Thess 4:13-18

‘Behold, I am telling you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.’ 1 Cor 15:51-53

‘For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our lowly condition into conformity with His glorious body, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.’

Phil 3:20-21

Those who have fallen asleep in Christ will have first place in receiving their heavenly bodies which are in the likeness of Christ’s glorious body. The same body that was crucified is now raised by the power of God and glorified in the image of the Father. The earthly body is the seed of the eternal.

Our bodies will be consistent with our fleshly bodies but with heavenly quality, just as the Lord’s body was easily identifiable as the blessed Master and Lord of the disciples. It is *“the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our lowly condition into conformity with His glorious body.”*

We will be changed forever. *‘So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.’*

1 Cor 15:42-44

We will be recognised by those who love us. We will still appear in human form but transformed as suitable for the New Heaven and Earth.

‘But when this perishable puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written: “Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Death, is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1 Cor 15:54-57

The Resurrection life

The blessings to come will be a consummation of the blessings already enjoyed in Christ. In heaven these blessings will flow unceasingly in a beautiful manner. What we know in part will come to us in all its fullness. Our cup will indeed overflow. We will drink unendingly from the inexhaustible riches of Christ.

We will know our perfection in holiness. Rev 3:4-5; 7:14; 19:8. 21:27

We will have complete joy in our adoption. Rom 8:23

We will know the fullness of separation from sin. Rom 13:11; 1 Thess 5:9

We will enjoy unbroken fellowship with God in Christ, together with the saints. John 17:24; 2 Cor 5:8

We will know our conformity to the life of Christ. Rom 8:29; 1 John 3:2

We will understand the meaning of eternal life. Matt 19:16, 29

We will rejoice in the fullness of redemption. Luke 24:26; Rom 8:18

We will have entered into the perfect walk of these blessings in the life to come.

Our future hope requires change today

Our relationship with God as His children means we begin walking with Him now on earth, in heaven when we die, and in our resurrection bodies when Christ returns. Our walk is to be unbroken and continuous because God's salvation is forever. This level of love and acceptance is to be evident in the church as we greet each other with a holy kiss.

'And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also celebrate in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.' Rom 5:5, 8, 10-11

Considering all that God has done for us, how can we not be moved to give Him all the glory? Our sole purpose is to glorify God and enjoy our relationship with Him forever. *'For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died.'*

2 Cor 5:14

The resurrection life will be completely devoted to the worship and service of God. The life of God's people will be fulfilled in endless thankful worship and adoration. Those who see Him will be like Him. *'Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.'*

1 John 3:2

Today we continue to live with God when we remain attached to Christ (John 15:4) because we are denying ourselves daily. (Luke 9:23-24) And this is shown as we remain committed in obedience to His word proving to be His apprentice's who are becoming like the Master. (John 8:31) It is then we will remain in the His love. (John 15:10) Knowing Christ is seen in our devotion to His people the church, devotion to His word and His salvation work. No fruit of Christ's love means no attachment to Christ's life.

In that day the Lord's face will be in our face forever

"The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:22-26

Living Water Resources

Come to the River

'Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among the people, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

Revelation 21:1-4

The sea as a symbol of fallen humanity will not have a part of the new Jerusalem which is the bride of Christ, who Himself is the tabernacle of God where He lives amongst His people where pain and suffering and death are no more as they walk with Him.

Contents compiled by

Robert C May

Copyright © 2020

cometotheriver@optusnet.com.au

www.cometothestream.com