

WHAT IS SALVATION

(Your questions and comments are welcome)

(**Bold type** and underlining in scripture text have been added for emphasis)

A central theme in scripture is salvation. Salvation is the foundational benefit to man of God's provision in Christ. The meaning of the Greek words generally translated "save", "saved", and "salvation" is *to make safe, to deliver or protect*. The Greek word Sozo is so translated in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. The words soter, soteria and soterion derive from sozo and have as primary meanings *deliverer; rescue or safety; and defender, or by implication defence*, respectively.

While, in scripture, the primary focus of these English translations relates to the spiritual dimension of man, there are other contexts in which the words "save", "saved" and "salvation" are used.

Some examples are:

Acts 2

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, **Save yourselves from this untoward generation**.

Acts 27

31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be **saved**.

James 5

15 And the prayer of faith shall **save the sick**, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Thus, we learn that these words, standing alone, have wide application. However, our consideration will relate to the scripture's spiritual application of these words. According to this application, the words "save", "saved", and "salvation" are in reference to sin.

In a prior consideration, **What Happened To Man In The Garden Of Eden**, it was shown that sin is rooted in man's nature inherited from Adam. ***Because man's inward state is dominated by desires and interests unrelated to God's will, his attention is focused primarily on things in the earthly environment.***

One of the more common Greek words translated "sin", according to Strong's Concordance, means to *miss*. The simplicity of this word could obscure its profound meaning. Let us pursue what is intended by this meaning for the word "sin".

This consideration of sin, using the word *miss*, has its application with reference to doing God's will. Further, ***doing the will of God is the divinely established governing principle for living each day of our sojourn on this earth.***

Jesus said:

John 4

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do **the will** of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 5

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek **not mine own will**, but **the will of the Father** which hath sent me.

John 6

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but **the will of him** that sent me.

John 8

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that **I do nothing of myself**; but **as my Father hath taught me**, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for **I do always those things that please him**.

And, we read at:

Hebrews 10

7 Then said I, Lo, **I come** (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) **to do thy will**, O God.

Concerning God's children we read:

Matthew 12

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

50 For whosoever shall **do the will of my Father** which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Matthew 7

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven.

Luke 8

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

The apostle Paul writes:

Colossians 1

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might **be filled** with the knowledge **of his will** in **all wisdom** and **spiritual understanding**;

10 That ye might **walk worthy** of the Lord unto all pleasing, being **fruitful** in every **good work**, and **increasing** in the knowledge of God;

Ephesians 5

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

The clear testimony of scripture is that we can know and do God's will:

James 4

15 For that ye ought to say, **If the Lord will**, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

17 Therefore to him that **knoweth to do good**, and **doeth it not**, to him **it is sin**.

There are several observations from the above referenced scriptures. Jesus says that His Father's will determines both, what He says and what He does ("I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things...for I do always those things that please him"). Even though doing and speaking those things that please the Father presupposes knowledge of His will, Jesus declares that the things that He speaks to the world, "I have heard of him" (John 8:26).

While it is readily comprehensible that the Father's will, and Jesus' awareness thereof and obedience thereto, governed both His words and His actions here on earth, *we are inclined to dismiss or ignore such as the Father's expectation and requirement for us His children.* However, the above referenced scriptures evidence this expectation. **And these scriptures, when considered with others, evidence that such a mode for living is a requirement, and not an option without consequences.**

Let us refer back to Jesus' response to the person who told Him that His mother and brethren stood outside desiring to speak to Him. Jesus answered, "...whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother". **And again,** "My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, **and do it**". **Further, Jesus said,** "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (I am aware of the view that treats Matthew's gospel, or a part of it, as applying only to Israel; however, the only support provided for such a view is reasoning and other theologians who propound the same view).

The apostle Paul in his letter to the brethren at Colosse made it quite clear that *they could be filled or complete in the knowledge of God's will, and that God's will is comprehended in terms of wisdom and understanding ministered to His children by the Holy Spirit.* In this wisdom and understanding they can walk worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him in all things. And further, that they might increase in the knowledge of God.

James says that, rather than saying what we are going to do, we should say, "if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that." James further points out that *to know what is good (the Lord's will), and then not do it, is sin.* Or, in keeping with the definition of sin as above mentioned, *we have willingly missed that which the Lord would have us do or not do. We have willfully missed the Lord's will.*

A common understanding is that sin is the commission of certain forbidden behavior. For example: it is a sin to lie, steal, etc. However, God's will touches us in a comprehensive way: how one lives each day; where we go; what we do, say, and think; how we relate to others; and how we relate, in general, to the affairs of this life. *This requires an awareness of God's will.*

On this point, we have read where the apostle Paul writes to **the saints** at: **Ephesians 5**

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15 See then that ye **walk** circumspectly, not as fools, but **as wise**,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye **not unwise**, but **understanding** what the will of the Lord is.

Other expressions in scripture relating to living according to the Lord's will, as opposed to one's own will are:

Romans 8

4 That the righteousness of the law might **be fulfilled in us**, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Galatians 5

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall **not fulfil** the lust of the **flesh**.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: **so that ye cannot do the things that ye would**.

The sum of what has been considered is that one can live according to the nature inherited from Adam, but equally true, God's provision in Christ enables one to receive understanding and wisdom *whereby God's will is intimately known*. Such provision also includes *strengthening by the Spirit to perform* that which we know to be **God's will**. God's will is not related to only a list of "do's" and "don'ts", but it touches all of one's daily affairs, involving people, things, and circumstances.

Any instance wherein one's conduct (inwardly or outwardly) proceeds from the dictates of the "old" nature, there is sin because we have missed God's expectation and requirement that we conduct ourselves according to the divinely provided wisdom and understanding wherein **we know** His will. *Understanding that sin is any behavior that is contrary to what we know to be God's will is essential to the realization of salvation (deliverance) from the sins of the flesh*.

In returning to the matter of salvation, we will consider two aspects of it: deliverance from **sin's penalty** and deliverance from **sin's power**. While we will consider each aspect separately, contrary to a broadly held view, **there is correlation between them**.

Beginning with salvation from sin's penalty, first we will determine the nature of the penalty.

It was observed in a previous consideration, What Happened To Man In The Garden Of Eden, that the penalty for disobedience was **death**. This penalty was shown to be separation from the wisdom and knowledge that is of God. *Which separation locked man into a mental and emotional state motivated by desires or longings that focus upon the creation instead of the Creator*. Thus, we see in man an egocentricity, wherein is rationalized a reality influenced by what is commonly referred to as "human nature". **This natural state of man tends toward an egoism, wherein morality is determined by man's self-interest,**

rather than the will of God. This state of human nature manifests itself in what the apostle Paul describes as the “works of the flesh” at: Galatians 5

¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery,^[1] fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,²¹ envy, murders,^[2] drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (NKJV)

(Compare the “works of the flesh”, which is sin, with the “fruit of the Spirit”, which is righteousness).

For God’s children, sin’s penalty in this world is chastening by the Lord for the purpose of correction, as we read at: **Hebrews 12**

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

In verse 21 of the Galatian’s passage, the apostle Paul writes, “they which practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God”. This statement brings us to the matter of sin’s penalty in the world to come. Jesus said at: Matthew 25

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, **into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:**

46 And these shall go away into **everlasting punishment:** but the righteous into **life eternal**.

Jesus provides more detail concerning the penalty for sin at: Mark 9

43 ...to go **into hell**, into **the fire** that never shall be quenched:

44 Where **their worm dieth not**, and the fire is not quenched.

In Luke’s gospel, Jesus gives us further information concerning the nature of sin’s penalty with the account of Lazarus and the rich man, after both had died. We read at: Luke 16

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And **in hell** he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, **Father** Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, **Son**, remember that thou **in thy lifetime** receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but **now** he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, **between us and you** there is a **great gulf fixed**: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Jesus tells us that the punishment is outside of the kingdom of heaven:

Matthew 8

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, **in the kingdom** of heaven.

12 But the **children of the kingdom** shall be cast **out** into outer darkness: there shall be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**

The apostle Paul writes: 2 Thessalonians 1

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that **know not** God, and that **obey not** the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction **from the presence of the Lord**, and from the glory of his power;

These scriptures speak plainly of the intensity and grievousness of man's judgment for sin. There is little more that need be said on this point.

Now we will continue with the matter of salvation. Salvation comes by hearing and believing the gospel message concerning the Person and the work of Christ. The apostle Paul writes:

Romans 1

16 For I am not ashamed **of the gospel of Christ**: for it is **the power of God unto salvation** to every one **that believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Romans 10

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom **they have not heard**? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then **faith cometh by hearing**, and **hearing by the word of God**.

Ephesians 2

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were **dead in sins**, hath **quickened** us together with Christ, (by **grace** ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye **saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

These scriptures, as well as many others, make clear that salvation is a divine gift wherein God brings his power to bear upon the spirit and soul of man. The effect of such grace is to transform man from a condition referred to as dead (a cognitive state that cannot comprehend divine things) to an inward condition referred to as alive.

While salvation is by grace, it is of equal note that grace is bestowed on a person solely through faith:

Romans 4

16 Therefore it is of faith, **that** it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to **all** the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

Romans 5

1 Therefore being **justified** by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have **access** by faith into this grace **wherein we stand**, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Of Christ, God said, “this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 17:5) Man’s only access to God rests upon his devotion and commitment to His Son. The only acceptable relationship to Christ exists when a person embraces the meaning of his death. For this meaning we will turn to a few of the scriptures that address the matter of Jesus’ death.

Romans 8

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 **That** the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

As was mentioned before, **inherent in man’s nature are desires and interests that focus on the world wherein he lives**, and the apostle Paul refers to the behavior that proceeds forth from this nature as the **“works of the flesh”**.

The above passage in the epistle to the Romans is explaining that because man, living according to the dictates of the flesh, is not capable of walking uprightly simply by knowing the law, God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to declare that all conduct that comes forth from the dictates of the flesh is sin, and that it is, therefore, under condemnation. This is the meaning of the death of Christ. And embracing this condemnation of every thought, word, or deed that proceeds from the flesh, by walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, is an outward expression of “faith in his blood”. (Romans 3:25) Thus, we are committed to the Lord for deliverance from the power of sin in the flesh, which commitment is faith.

In moving more particularly to salvation from the penalty of sin, imputation is a central theme. The Greek word that we will be concerned with is “logizomai”. In the texts that are pertinent to this consideration, the Greek word “logizomai” is translated *impute, imputed, account and count*. **These words are used in the sense of**

something being attributed to someone. *Thus, salvation from the penalty of sin rests upon the determination by God that he will not impute sin to a person who believes.*

A scripture that explains this magnificent truth is, Romans 4

1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham **believed** God, and **it was counted** unto him for righteousness.

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted** for righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God **imputeth** righteousness without works,

7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not **impute** sin.

The familiar terms, *forgive* and *justify*, simply mean that God does not attribute sin to a person. While much can be said concerning forgiveness or justification, it comes down to the fact that God does not hold a person's sin against him, or that He declares that the person is right in His sight. To have such a standing before God involves a great act of grace by a merciful God.

However, in light of all this, let us take special notice of what moves God to such mercy and grace. Of Abraham, it is said that, "his faith is counted to him for righteousness".

For those who have read the paper entitled, **What Is Faith**, let us recall the explanation of faith. It is not merely an intellectual acquiescence to divine testimony. Nor is it a nebulous concept that is difficult to understand. **Rather, faith is one's attitude or inward posture of commitment and devotion to God and His Son.** This attitude is **expressed** by: steadfastness that will not ignore or renounce the relationship even under testing; careful observance of His will; and a dependence on Him even when other options are available. ***When God sees this attitude, He will be merciful and bestow grace on the person.***

As we live through the course of a day, we can know if we are living by faith. For "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, but the folly of fools is deceit" (Proverbs 14:8). Imprudent persons are deceived concerning their way, while prudent persons understand what the Lord would have them do or not do in life's situations: *that is, they know God's will and whether or not they are doing it.* ***And, equally significant, they know how to do or not do something: this is wisdom.***

In considering that aspect of salvation, which is from the power of sin, first we will look at scripture concerning sin's power. John 8

30 As he spake these words, many **believed** on him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which **believed** on him, **If ye continue** in my word, **then** are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall **know** the truth, and the truth shall make you **free**.

33 They answered him, **We be Abraham's seed**, and were never in bondage to any man: **how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?**

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin**.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.**

Here Jesus is explaining that while there is a way to be free from sin's power, **those who commit sin are its servants. The people who believed on Jesus understood that He was telling them that they were under bondage. However, they did not realize, even though they believed on Him: That they were captive to their desires and interests within the old nature inherited from Adam; That, in believing, they can partake of the "divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2Peter 1:4); And, that they must continue in Jesus' word to be made free from this sin principle that is operative in their old nature.**

The apostle Peter is explaining this same concept of "continuing": 2 Peter 1

5 And beside this, giving all diligence, **add** to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

8 For if these things **be in you**, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things **is blind**, and **cannot see** afar off, and **hath forgotten** that he was purged from his old sins

In his letter to the Romans, Paul also refers to the sin problem by explaining how the divine transaction at the cross is the basis for our deliverance from sins power. Romans 6

1 What shall we say then? Shall we **continue** in sin, that grace may abound?

2 **God forbid**. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized **into Jesus Christ** were baptized into **his death?**

Paul is saying, How can we continue in sin? Do you not know the meaning of Christ's death, and also His being raised from the dead? In dying, Christ condemned **the manner of life** that is according to the old nature. So, how can we continue to live on that basis?

Paul continues at:

Romans 6

4 Therefore **we are buried with him** by baptism into death: **that like as Christ** was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, **even so we also** should walk **in newness of life**.

5 For if we have been planted together **in the likeness of his death**, we shall be also **in the likeness of his resurrection:**

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, **that the body of sin might be destroyed**, that **henceforth** we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is **freed from sin**.

8 Now **if we be dead with Christ**, we believe that **we shall also live with him**:

Not only does God expect that we reject the desires of sin, He also expects that we embrace his way for us that is in Christ. We must make choice between these two ways:

Romans 6

16 **Know ye not**, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants **to obey**, his servants **ye** are to whom **ye obey**; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

Yielding is a volitional matter. When we are determined to **live** by faith: (that is, to carefully observe God's will as we learn the truth; be steadfast in the relationship when tempted to ignore it; and to depend on the Lord according to his word, even when contrary options exist), we inevitably confront our **inability to perform**.

The apostle Paul explains this dilemma in his letter to the Romans.

Romans 7

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, **deceived me**, and by it **slew me**.

This scripture is explaining that the law is the vehicle through which God brings us to recognize the sin within us. Prior to knowing the law we are free from conflict, **but the commandment**, instead of producing life, confronts us with our exceeding sinfulness, resulting in a sense of condemnation because we are not doing God's will.

Romans 7

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for **to will** is present with me; but **how to perform** that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, **but sin** that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then **a law**, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in **the law of God** after the inward man:

23 But I see **another law** in my members, **warring against** the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law **of sin** which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! **who shall deliver me** from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with **the mind** I myself serve the law of God; but with **the flesh** the law of sin.

Here we learn that we are unable to perform in accordance with what we know to be the will of the Lord. Even though we take pleasure in truth, we are quite aware that there is an operational principle in us that prevails in opposing that

which we choose to do. Trying is not the means by which we do only those things that please the Lord.

Finally the Lord brings us to realize something new: It is **not** by our might, but rather, it is by his power that we have freedom from the carnal desires within. ***This is salvation by grace from the power of sin.***

Romans 8

1 There is therefore **now no condemnation** to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of **the Spirit of life** in Christ Jesus **hath made me free** from the law **of sin and death**

The condemnation that we have experienced, because of our inability to perform, is now gone. Having recognized that our strength against sin is by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, we have confidence toward God as we depend on Him for strength against sin.

I am aware that the “condemnation” at Romans 8:1 is, according to some teachers, applied to final judgment. And to be consistent with their system of thought, they delete the words “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” as not appearing in the “best manuscripts”. However, the context of chapter seven shows that the problem that one encounters upon coming to Christ is **inability to perform**. This **inability to perform** produces a sense of condemnation or guilt, also explained in chapter seven. Chapter eight explains that the Spirit is the one who enables us to perform, and when this is realized, we no longer experience such condemnation.

Also, we find this same application of the word condemnation at:

1 John 3

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

20 For if **our heart condemn** us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 Beloved, if **our heart condemn** us not, then have we confidence toward God.

22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

These passages in Romans clearly show us that we can do God’s will only by His delivering us from the power of sin that resides in our carnal nature. In ourselves we can do nothing. “I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me...and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members”-Ro. 7:21.

Jeremiah 13

23 Can ...the leopard [change] its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.

As discouraging as this experience may be, the apostle Paul said at:

1 Timothy 1

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world **to save** sinners; of whom I am chief

Romans 8

2 For the law of **the Spirit of life** in Christ Jesus **hath made me free** from the law of **sin** and **death**.

The apostle Paul writes to the “saints” and to the “faithful in Christ Jesus” who are at Ephesus:

Ephesians 4

14 That we **henceforth** be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking **the truth** in love, **may grow up** into him **in all things**, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye **henceforth** walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so **learned Christ**;

21 If so be that ye have **heard him**, and have been **taught by him**, **as the truth is in Jesus**:

22 That ye **put off** concerning the former conversation **the old man**, which is **corrupt according to the deceitful lusts**;

23 And **be renewed** in the spirit of **your mind**;

24 And that ye **put on** the **new man**, which **after God** is created in righteousness and true holiness.

As the passage continues in chapter five, there is a list of behavioral forms that proceed from the old constitution, but with words of encouragement.

Ephesians 5

1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be **once** named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye **were** sometimes darkness, but **now are ye** light in the Lord: **walk as children of light**:

9 **(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)**

10 Proving what is **acceptable** unto the Lord.

11 And **have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness**, but rather reprove them.

The foregoing discussion, and particularly the referenced scriptures, provide perspective for understanding both the meaning of, and the need for, the apostle Paul's admonition at:

Philippians 2

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

13 **For it is God** which **worketh in you** both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Thus, when we come to Christ, we have only begun in the matter of salvation, as so clearly explained by the apostle Peter at:

1 Peter 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto **obedience** and **sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:** Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept **by the power of God** through **faith** **unto salvation** ready to be revealed in the **last time.**

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 **That the trial of your faith,** being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory **at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, **yet believing,** ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving **the end of your faith,** even **the salvation of your souls.**

We have been engaged by the Lord in a saving relationship that is based on continuing in faith-Col. 1:21-23.

Scripture tells us that God "...is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him". (**Heb. 11:6**)

Let us close this consideration with, and remember the wise instruction of Solomon at:

Proverbs 4 14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

18 But **the path of the just is as the shining light,** that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

19 **The way of the wicked is as darkness:** they know not at what they stumble.

20 My son, **attend** to my words; **incline** thine ear unto my sayings.

21 **Let them not depart** from thine eyes; **keep** them in the midst of thine heart.

22 For they are life **unto those that find them,** and health to all their flesh.

23 **Keep** thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

- 24 **Put away** from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.
25 **Let** thine eyes look right on, and **let** thine eyelids look straight before thee.
26 **Ponder** the path of thy feet, and **let** all thy ways be established.
27 **Turn not** to the right hand nor to the left: **remove** thy foot from evil.

Proverbs 5

- 1 My son, **attend** unto my wisdom, and **bow** thine ear to my understanding:
2 **That** thou mayest regard discretion, **and that** thy lips may keep knowledge.

We can do God's will only in those things in which **we have recognition** of the inward working of the desires and interests of sin in the flesh, and **when salvation** (deliverance) from its power is a reality. Thus, we need to grow in grace and in the knowledge of His will.