
*The Saviour
of All Mankind*

“THE MANY SHALL BE CONSTITUTED JUST”

“CONSEQUENTLY, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life’s justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just” (Rom.5:18,19).

Two persons, two acts, and two results affecting the entire human race are brought before us in this passage of Scripture. Adam’s disobedience and its race-wide, life-destroying result presents a dark and distressing situation. The obedience of Jesus Christ and the race-wide, life-giving result is bright and glorious.

Is it not strange that the distressing part of this passage is usually believed without hesitation, but the bright and glorious part is disbelieved? Conditions and limitations are forced into the part dealing with the life and righteousness that comes to all through Jesus Christ, until its plain statements are flatly contradicted. Lack of faith in what the Scriptures clearly state, rather than lack of intelligence to grasp the meaning, has always been one of the greatest hindrances to the correct understanding of God’s Word.

In order to understand the effectiveness and success of the saving work of Jesus Christ set forth in this passage, it is only necessary to believe implicitly what is clearly stated.

In the following arrangement the contrasting sections of Romans 5:18,19 are placed in parallel columns as an aid in comparing them. Notice the close correspondence of the clauses.

Consequently, then,

<i>as it was</i>	<i>thus also it is</i>
through one offense	through one just award
for all mankind	for all mankind
for condemnation,	for life's justifying.

For

<i>even as</i>	<i>thus also,</i>
through the disobedience	through the obedience
of the one man,	of the One,
the many were	the many shall be
constituted sinners,	constituted just.

Adam's one offense brought the condemnation of death upon all mankind (Rom.5:12). None escape this condemnation—"all are dying" (1 Cor.15:22). *Thus also*, the obedience of Jesus Christ will bring justifying of life into all mankind—"All shall be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

The matter of faith or acceptance is not introduced on either side in this passage. The subject is not eonian life; neither is it the salvation of the elect. When these are being discussed, faith and acceptance have their place.

Neither is the time of the justifying indicated. All are not brought into this part of salvation at the same time. The point being emphasized is the fact that all mankind shall be constituted righteous through the obedience of Jesus Christ, just as surely as they were constituted sinners through the disobedience of Adam. This fact is stated in verse 18, and the inspired explanation follows in verse 19. Notice how the "for" links the two verses together.

But someone will ask, Why does it say "the many" in verse 19 instead of "all"? It is because the one disobe-

dient man and the one obedient Man is each in a class by himself. Each one is in contrast with "the many." We may put it as follows: The one disobedient man plus "the many" equals all mankind constituted sinners. The one obedient Man plus "the many" equals all mankind constituted just.

That "the one" plus "the many" constituted sinners, equals all mankind, few, if any, will deny. *Even so*, "the One" plus "the many" constituted just is equally all-inclusive and assures justification of life for all mankind.

A literal translation of Romans 5:12 explains how all mankind were constituted sinners. Notice exactly what is stated: "Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus *death* passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned."

The Scriptures make one man responsible for the entrance of sin into the world. Adam's sin brought death—first the dying process, then the death state itself. Adam's offspring inherited death or mortality from him, and because of this (or on account of this) all sinned.

Four different states or conditions possible to man are indicated in the Scriptures: (1) that of Adam before he sinned, a neutral condition, not mortal, not immortal, but a "living soul" (Gen.2:7); (2) the mortal or dying condition which began the very day Adam and Eve disobeyed God (*cf* Gen.2:16,17); (3) the state or condition of the dead (*cf* Psa.146:4; Ecc.9:5,6; Isa.38:18; 1 Thess.4:13-18); (4) the state of incorruptibility and immortality when death is impossible (*cf* 1 Cor.15:50-57).

The experience of Adam and Eve was unique, it was unlike that of the rest of mankind. As long as they did

not sin, they did not experience mortality. Yet the very day they disobeyed God they became mortal and the dying process began to work in them.

The rest of mankind are born mortal or dying. Note the clear statement of Scripture again: "Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus *death* passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned" (Rom.5:12). Adam passed death or mortality on to his offspring, "on which all sinned." The Greek is *eph hō*, "on which" all sinned, not "for that" all sinned.

It is the devitalizing power of the dying process working in all mankind from the moment of conception which constitutes them sinners. Notice what is said concerning death in Romans 5:12-21. Verse 14 declares: "Death reigns from Adam unto Moses, over those also who do not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam." Verse 17 says: "Death reigns through the one." Then comes the striking statement in verse 21: "Sin reigns *in death*." The Greek is *en tō thanatō* ("in the death"). Sin reigns "*in the death*," not "*unto death*" (as in the AV).

All of Adam's descendants are born dying, doomed to die the first death whether they sin or not. A baby born one minute can die the next minute without having committed a single act, good or evil. It is the devitalizing power of death working in all mankind which demoralizes them and causes them to sin whenever they begin to think, speak and do things.

A literal and accurate translation of God's warning to Adam brings out the difference between the dying process and the death state. "From every tree of the garden, you are to eat, yea, eat. Yet from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you are not to be eating from it, for in the day you eat from it, *to die shall you be*

dying" (Gen.2:16,17). YOUNG'S LITERAL TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY BIBLE puts it: "dying thou dost die." THE COMPANION BIBLE calls attention to the fact that the Hebrew is: "dying thou shalt die."

Man is as helpless to cure himself of his sinfulness as he is to cure himself of the dying process which is working in him. God's provision for man's need is Jesus Christ. He is "the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25). He is the One Who died for our sins, was entombed and has been raised and now lives as man's Saviour. He is the One Who "abolishes death, yet illuminates life and incorruption through the evangel" (2 Tim.1:10).

Man's relationship to Adam and the death transmitted to him from Adam constitutes him a sinner. Man's future relationship to Jesus Christ and the gift of life He will impart eventuates in all mankind being constituted just.

Jesus Christ came into the world to *save* the world. He will not fail in the slightest degree. His death, and resurrection life, will prove effective for all in due time.

Does this deny what the Scriptures actually teach concerning the future judgment and condemnation of the wicked? Absolutely not! There will be judgment and a day of indignation when God will be paying each of the wicked in accord with his deeds (Rom.2:5,6; Rev.20:12-14). Yet this will be *chastening* judgment, with a view to amendment. "The Lord is . . . keeping the unjust for *chastening* in the day of judging" (2 Peter 2:9). Even so, in the end, there will be justification of life and righteousness for all mankind through Jesus Christ our Lord (*cf* 1 Cor.15:20-28).

Joseph Kirk

GOD'S PURPOSE IN CREATION

DID God bring the creation into being to fulfill a predetermined purpose and plan, or was the creation brought into being without aim or plan? The fact that God had a definite purpose in creating is clearly revealed in His Word. It is an all-inclusive and glorious purpose worthy of a loving, wise, righteous and all-powerful God. Exactly what is God's purpose for all His creatures?

Notice what is revealed about this in the following passage of Scripture. The Son of God's love "is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him" (Col.1:15-17).

Four outstanding facts are revealed in this passage concerning the entire creation: (1) all was created in the Son; (2) all was created through the Son; (3) all was created for the Son; (4) all creation has its cohesion in the Son. Three different Greek words are used to distinguish the facts set forth about the creation in these verses: all was created (1) "in" (*en*), (2) "through" (*dia*), and (3) "for" (*eis*) the Son. *Eis*, as used in this passage indicates "purpose, the final cause." (*cf GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON* by J. H. Thayer, D.D.).

The fact that all was created for the Son raises the question: In what sense is all to be for the Son, and how will this be brought about? The answer is: (1) in the

sense that God's Son is to be "enjoyer of the allotment of all" and so will possess all; (2) in the sense that all will be subjected to the Son; (3) in the sense that all will be conformed to the Son.

I. GOD HAS APPOINTED HIS SON HEIR OF ALL

The fact that God's Son is to be the enjoyer of the allotment of all is set forth as follows: "... of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets, in the last of these days speaks to us in a Son, Whom He appoints enjoyer of the allotment of all" (Heb.1:1,2).

Since all was created for the Son, He was appointed enjoyer of the allotment of all. It is not God's plan and purpose that part of the creation shall ultimately be for the Adversary and part of it for God's Son. Neither is it God's plan that part of the creation shall finally be left to Sin and Death and only a part be given to His Son. God's purpose is that the *whole* creation shall ultimately be for His Son.

II. ALL WILL BE SUBJECTED TO GOD'S SON

The subjection of all to God's Son is repeatedly referred to in the Scriptures (*cf* 1 Cor.15:25-28; Eph. 1:9,10,20-23; Phil.3:21). Those who read a forced subjection of unwilling creatures into this theme, ascribe characteristics to God which dishonor Him. Philippians 2:10,11 makes it clear that a loving and joyful subjection of a redeemed creation is in view. Not one will be missing! "In the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father." What a glorious day it will be when all are joyously subjected to God's Son. He is indeed a triumphant Saviour and Lord.

III. ALL WILL BE CONFORMED TO GOD'S SON

The plan and purpose of God for His creatures goes even beyond the subjection of all to the Son. God's plan and purpose is that all shall ultimately be conformed to His risen, glorified Son.

In this connection, one must first understand what God is doing for the chosen (2 Tim.2:10), those who are being saved through faith in Jesus Christ during this present life (Eph.2:8-10). Such ones are chosen "to be holy and flawless in [God's] sight" (Eph.1:4). They are to be "completed for the entire complement of God" (Eph.3:19). Jesus Christ will present all of these "holy and flawless and unimpeachable in [God's] sight" (Col.1:22). These are referred to as the ones who love God and are "called according to the purpose that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand, also, *to be conformed to the image of His Son*, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren" (cf Rom.8:28-30).

But those who believe now are not the only ones who will be conformed to God's Son. In due time the whole creation will experience this completion of God's salvation. "For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that *the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God*" (Rom.8:19-21).

Think of it, the whole creation is to be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God! Some of the things that this includes are as follows: through the obedience of Jesus Christ all mankind will receive life's justifying and be constituted just (Rom.5:18,19); through the blood of His cross the entire creation will be reconciled to God (Col.1:20); all who die in Adam will be made alive and

experience the newness of the resurrection life of Christ (1 Cor.15:20-28); all will then be a part of the new humanity of which Christ Jesus is Head (*cf* Eph.2:5; 4:24); all then will have been brought into the new creation and will be completely conformed to God's Son (*cf* 2 Cor.5:17; Eph.1:9,10; 3:14-21; Rev.21:3,5).

The Son will then deliver up the kingdom to the Father and will Himself be subjected, "that God may be All in all." When God is All in all, there is no further need for the Son to reign. Think carefully about what is revealed in the words, "God All in all." This is perhaps the most profound and comprehensive statement in the entire Word of God. Its breadth, its length, its depth, and its height go beyond the ability of the heart and mind to comprehend. It is not "God much in many," neither is it "God All in some." It is definitely "God All in all" or "God Everything in everyone."

Even as the believers will one day "be completed for the entire complement of God" (Eph.3:19), thus also, ultimately, all creation will delight to dwell in Him (*cf* Col.1:17,19). Can the words, "God All in all" mean anything less? No other expression can more surely and clearly reveal God's purpose in creation than the glorious words "God All in all."

To teach that any part of the creation will fail of the purpose for which God created it, is to deny every attribute of God. The true and living God is in supreme control of His creation. Nothing is too hard for Him. He is the "God of gods" (Psa.136:2). He is "the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11). Even the Adversary himself, who is "the god of this eon" (*cf* 2 Cor.4:4), has no power except that which God grants to him. When the time comes to stop Satan's activities, God will send a single messenger (or "angel") with a chain in his hand to bind the

Adversary and lock him up in the abyss (Rev.20:1-4).

What more terrible slander against God can be perpetrated than the teaching that He will endlessly torment billions of His creatures in fire and brimstone?

The teaching of annihilation denies every attribute of God just as surely as the teaching of endless torment. To teach that God will condemn many of His creatures to endless extermination, is to represent God as frustrated and incompetent. It is to represent Him as lacking in wisdom, resourcefulness and ability. The principle difference is that annihilation represents God as less cruel than endless torment. To exterminate when salvation is needed and possible is not glorifying to God. The only way annihilation can be made to look respectable is to stand it alongside of endless torment.

To teach that many of God's creatures will be endlessly lost, is to teach either that such an end is according to His plan, or that God has been frustrated or defeated in His plan and that His purpose in creation has failed. Thank God that neither of these concepts is true, and that, through Jesus Christ, there is victory over death for all.

When the truth is understood about the purpose of God to become All in all through the sacrifice of His Christ, it becomes clear that all of God's dealings with His creatures contribute something to the realization of His loving, wise, and glorious purpose.

To know the true and living God "out of Whom all is" (1 Cor.8:6), is to recognize that His purpose for His creatures can only be loving, wise, righteous and good. To know Jesus Christ, "through Whom all is" (1 Cor. 8:6), is to know that God's purpose cannot fail.

Joseph Kirk

The Saviour of All Mankind

“GOD, WHO WILLS THAT ALL MANKIND BE SAVED”

“FAITHFUL is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching” (1 Tim.4:9-11).

Think of it—the living God *is the Saviour of all mankind!* Not merely the “preserver” of all, as some would have us believe. The Greek word used here is *sōtēr*. It occurs twenty-four times in the New Testament and is correctly translated “Saviour” every time (*cf* Luke 1:47; 2:11; John 4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Eph.5:23; Phil.3:20; 1 Tim.1:1; 2:3; 4:10; 2 Tim.1:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10,13; 3:4,6; 2 Pet.1:1,11; 2:20; 3:2,18; 1 John 4:14; Jude 25).

Nor does the text say, God is the “provider” of salvation for all. This would not make Him the Saviour of all. He is only the Saviour of those whom He actually saves. In order to be the Saviour of all, He will save all. *The living God is the Saviour of all mankind.* Such a fact should fill the hardest heart with joy and cause continual thanksgiving to God for His power, wisdom, love, grace and righteousness.

Knowing how difficult it would be for man to believe this plain statement, God offers man encouragement by assuring him that it is a *faithful saying and worthy of all welcome*. It is faithful to God, faithful to His Son, faithful to His Word, and faithful to the desire of all

who have had the love of God poured into their hearts through the holy spirit. It is hard to understand why so many should condemn it as unfaithful and worthy of all rejection, when God has so plainly declared it to be a faithful saying and worthy of all welcome.

Man's need for salvation is desperate. He is sinful, dying, and helpless to save himself. To save man and make out of him a creature unto His own praise will indeed glorify God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

HOW WILL GOD SAVE ALL MANKIND?

Both the means and the manner whereby this salvation is accomplished are clearly revealed in the Scriptures. "For this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, Who wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, *Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all* (the testimony in its own eras)" (1 Tim. 2:3-6). "And there is no salvation in any other one, for neither is there any other name, given under heaven among men, in which we *must* be saved" (Acts 4:12).

There is no salvation for anyone at any time except through Jesus Christ and His saving work. It is only through His death, burial, and resurrection life that all will be saved. There will be no failure here. He was manifested to repudiate sin and to nullify the works of the Adversary (*cf* Heb.9:26; 1 John 3:8). He will not stop until He has accomplished these ends.

In the light of these facts set forth in the Scriptures, how foolish the statement of some that If *all* will be saved, Jesus Christ need never have died. To the contrary, if He had not died for the sins of the world, no one could be saved! But since He has died, and now lives again, *all will be saved!*

WHEN WILL GOD SAVE ALL?

The Scriptures make it very plain that all are not saved at the same time. Christ Jesus "is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (*the testimony in its own eras*)" (1 Tim.2:6). "Even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. *Yet each in his own class*" (1 Cor.15:22,23).

At the present time God is only saving those whom He has chosen and called into the special salvation of the coming ages (*cf* 1 Cor.1:26-30; Eph.2:7). He will use these chosen ones in various ways to bring about the salvation of the rest (*cf* Eph.2:6,7,10; 3:8-12). The text says, "God . . . is the Saviour of all mankind, *especially* [not, *exclusively*] of believers" (1 Tim.4:10). Because of this the apostle Paul wrote, "therefore I am enduring all because of those who are *chosen*, that they also may be happening upon the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with glory eonian" (2 Tim.2:10). Again he wrote, "Yet we are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet to the nations stupidity, yet to those who are *called*, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor.1:23,24).

Election and predestination become most precious portions of God's truth once it is seen that the reason some are chosen to a special salvation is that through them the rest may be blessed as well. There is a special salvation for some and a general salvation for the rest later on. Those who believe now will be made like Christ when He returns and will enjoy glorious life throughout the oncoming eons.

The non-elect (with reference to eonian salvation) will be saved at the end of the eons solely as the result of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ on their behalf. Does this mean a second chance? By no

means! Salvation is not a matter of chance, first or second. Had it been left to chance no one would have been saved, now or later (*cf* Rom. 1:28-32; 3:10-12). Salvation is of God! He assures us that He will save all.

Let no one think for a moment that there will be no judgment or condemnation. In the day of the just judgment of God, "indignation and fury, affliction and distress" will come upon "every human soul which is effecting evil" (Rom.2:9). All that the Scriptures truly teach about the indignation of God will surely come to pass. The wrath of God is an awful thing and it is not our purpose to minimize it in the least. Too much condemnation and punishment, however, is just as unrighteous as too little.

WHAT DOES THE SALVATION OF ALL INCLUDE?

(1). The Justification and Making Righteous of All

"Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

(2). The Reconciliation of All to God

"For in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:19,20).

"Reconciliation," means the removal of all alienation, estrangement, and enmity, thus making peace.

(3). The Vivification of All

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own *class*:

the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation . . . The last enemy is being abolished: death" (1 Cor.15:22, 23,26).

"Vivification," in this passage, is more than resurrection alone. It is a making alive beyond the power and reach of death, as will be seen from the example of Christ, the *Firstfruit*, as well as that of those who will be vivified in His presence. In itself, "resurrection" may be only to mortality, as in the case of Lazarus. Vivification, however, includes incorruption and immortality (cf 1 Cor.15:50-57; 1 Tim.6:13-16).

(4). The Subjection of All to God, the Father

"For He subjects all under His feet. Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him. Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then *the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him* Who subjects all to Him, *that God may be All in all*" (1 Cor.15:27,28; cf Eph. 1:9-11,19-23; Phil.2:9-11).

Yet some will protest, Will not believing that God is the Saviour of all do away with evangelistic fervor and zeal? We reply, May it not be coming to that! Indeed, faith in this great truth did not affect the apostle Paul in this manner. On the contrary, it increased his fervor and zeal: "For for this are we toiling and being reproached, that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind" (1 Tim.4:10; cf 2 Cor.5:13-21). We must always distinguish between the *fact* of the salvation of all and the *manner* in which God will bring it to pass. It is invigorating to know that complete success is ultimately assured.

Again someone may say, Yes, this teaching does seem to be scriptural, but even so, it is a dangerous doctrine and it should not be taught. God, however,

declares, "*These things be charging and teaching.*" Shall we obey God or man? Shall we seek God's pleasure or man's? Those who seek to please man are not slaves of Jesus Christ (*cf Gal.1:10*). Shall we who know Him and have had our eyes opened to the glorious triumph of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ sit idly by and let reproach be heaped upon His name without protesting? Think how the teaching of endless punishment slanders God and Jesus Christ! We know Christ died for all (*1 Tim.2:6*). Does God lack the goodness, the power, the love, the grace to save all? God declares that judgment is eonian; man says it is everlasting. Let us believe God and not man.

Joseph Kirk

WHAT IS SALVATION?

THE SCRIPTURES distinctly declare that the evangel is “God’s power for salvation” (Rom.1:16). This evangel consists of three facts: (1) that Christ died for our sins; (2) that He was entombed; (3) that He has been raised the third day. Those who *accept* this evangel, and continue to *stand* in it are *being saved* through it (1 Cor.15:1,2). But what is *salvation*? What does it include? At least five basic elements comprise God’s wonderful salvation.

I. RIGHTEOUSNESS OR JUSTIFICATION

Man is irreverent and unrighteous. This subjects him to the indignation and condemnation of God. Man needs to be saved not only from the wrath of God, but from the irreverence and unrighteousness which call it forth. God’s first provision for this need is justification. Three outstanding passages of Scripture dealing with this aspect of salvation are as follows:

- (1) “Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom.3:24).
- (2) “To him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness” (Rom.4:5).
- (3) “Being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him” (Rom.5:9).

If the subject of justification is to be clearly understood and enjoyed, three areas of truth relating to it must be carefully distinguished: (1) the declaration of

righteousness which God confers upon those who are believing at present (Rom.3:21-24); (2) the believers own progress in practical righteousness even today (Rom.6:1-23); (3) the future gratuity for all mankind of being constituted or made righteous through the obedience of Jesus Christ (Rom.5:19).

II. CONCILIATION AND RECONCILIATION

This aspect of salvation deals with man's enmity toward God, and his estrangement from God.

"For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life. Yet not only so, but we are glorying also in God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we now obtained the conciliation" (Rom.5:10,11; cf 2 Cor.5:18-21).

"And you, being once estranged and enemies in comprehension, by wicked acts, yet now He reconciles by His body of flesh, through His death, to present you holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight" (Col.1:21,22).

Justification is glorious, but justification *plus* reconciliation is even more glorious. A judge may acquit the accused, but this does not mean that the justified one is received into friendship and fellowship. Enmity and estrangement may well remain. In salvation, God does not merely justify the sinner: He also reconciles him to Himself, thereby removing all alienation and enmity, thus bringing him into intimate friendship and fellowship with Himself.

III. SANCTIFICATION OR HOLINESS OF LIFE

Those whom God justifies and reconciles to Himself are, positionally speaking, freed from the lordship of Sin, and are enslaved to God and to Righteous-

ness. Righteousness of life, however—practical righteousness—calls for a vital *realization* of the believer's death, entombment and resurrection with Christ. That is, we need to *realize, and intensely and actively believe* that since, in the accounting of God, our old humanity was crucified together with Christ, in God's appointed time, God will rouse us from death and vivify us in glory. The influence which this great truth will have upon us is "God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing" (Rom.1:16). This practical salvation is the fruit of active faith in the evangel. The power of the evangel results in "newness of life" (Rom.6:4), and "obedience [into] righteousness" (Rom.6:16).

"Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves as slaves for *obedience*, his slaves you are, *whom you are obeying*, whether of Sin for death, or of *Obedience for righteousness*? . . . Now, being freed from Sin, you are enslaved to Righteousness . . . For even as you present your members as slaves to Uncleanliness and to Lawlessness for lawlessness, thus now present your members as slaves to Righteousness for *holiness*" (Rom.6:16,18,19).

IV. IMMORTALITY—VICTORY OVER DEATH

The teaching of the Scriptures concerning immortality is specific and clear. In the original Scripture the word for immortality, *athanasia*, is used only three times. In 1 Timothy 6:15,16, Christ Jesus is said to be "King of kings and Lord of lords, *Who alone has immortality*." The other two occurrences of immortality are in 1 Corinthians 15:51-55 which reads: "Lo! a secret to you am I telling! We all, indeed, shall not be put to repose, yet we all shall be changed, in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, at the last trump. For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be roused incorruptible,

and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *put on immortality*. Now, whenever this corruptible should be putting on incorruption and this mortal should be *putting on immortality*, then shall come to pass the word which is written, Swallowed up was Death by Victory. Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Death, is your sting?"

Immortality is the fullness of the resurrection life of Christ Jesus. It is life above and beyond the reach of death—all death. Man is not inherently immortal. The Hebrew and Greek words for soul, respectively, *nephesh* and *psuchē*, appear 859 times in the Scriptures. The soul is never said to be immortal, but it is often said to die. Immortality is a most important part of God's salvation which comes to mankind through the sacrificial and saving work of Jesus Christ.

Some idea of what this aspect of salvation involves is indicated in 1 Corinthians 15:42-44 where the present mortal body is contrasted with the body we shall have when we have been made immortal.

<i>Present</i>	<i>Future</i>
Body of corruption	Body of <i>incorruption</i>
Body of dishonor	Body of <i>glory</i>
Body of infirmity	Body of <i>power</i>
Body soulish	Body <i>spiritual</i>

V. GLORIFICATION

Those whom God saves are to become fully conformed to the risen, glorified Son of God. Notice how this is set forth in the following passage. We "are called . . . to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these *He glorifies also*" (Rom.8:28-30).

Think of the grace, the love, the humility of our Saviour in fully conforming us to Himself that He should be the Firstborn among many brethren.

In the Scriptures, our glorification is spoken of in numerous places and in different ways. We are to be completed for the entire complement of God (Eph. 3:19). The ecclesia is the complement of Christ, the One Who is completing the all in all (Eph.1:23). We are to attain to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ (Eph.4:13).

When our glorification is complete, Christ presents us to God "holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight" (Col.1:22). In that day, we shall both express and reflect God according as His risen Son does now.

Having ascended to the highest heights of the glory of God's salvation, let us briefly consider three additional blessings comprised in salvation.

(1) *Forgiveness of Sins*—for believers today is in accord with the riches of God's *grace*, not according to their forgiveness of others, as was the case with the disciples of old (*cp* Mark 11:25,26). God deals graciously with *all* our offenses (Col.2:13; *cp* Eph.4:32). We are having the deliverance through Christ's blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of God's grace, which He lavishes on us (Eph.1:7). It is true that the believer's sins hinder his fellowship with God, destroying peace, joy, and usefulness. Yet it is true as well that God always deals *graciously* with our offenses (even though He does not exempt us from their consequences). This glorious realization encourages us, restoring us in fellowship, and invigorating us in worthy service.

(2) *Personal Cleansing*—from sinful and corrupt practices is also a vital part of God's salvation. Personal cleansing, ultimately speaking, is the work of God. As

much as we want to be rid of sin and to avoid suffering, we must not lose sight of the fact that God alone is our Saviour. We will therefore remain in our weaknesses until God graciously delivers us. We cannot "help Him out." Even so, as God's means of saving us, He may well awaken us and cause us to do many things to "save ourselves." Hence, "Be carrying your own salvation into effect, *for it is God* Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:12,13).

(3) *Eonian Life*—is an aspect of salvation which few believers understand due to incorrect and misleading translation. In the popular versions, the Greek word *aiōnion*, which in English is "eonian," is translated "everlasting" or "eternal." Though there is a close association in some contexts, eonian life is not synonymous with immortality. Life eonian is the life of the coming eons of blessing and glory (*cf* Luke 18:30). Immortality is the state of deathlessness which we will enjoy in that day.

The phrase "eonian life" sometimes has in view a quality of life (e.g., John 17:3). When believers today walk in fellowship with God, the righteousness, peace, and joy of eonian life is experienced as a foretaste of things to come. In this sense, believers are exhorted to "get hold of life eonian" now (1 Tim.6:11,12).

Joseph Kirk

GOD'S GOAL ACCOMPLISHED

HAVE you ever wondered how God was intending to end all this business of running the universe? Did you ever stop to think that God knew how everything would be and how it would become before He created even a single thing? Did you ever realize that, because of this fact, God must have certainly had a purpose in view before He created Adam? Did you ever stop to realize how the teaching of eternal punishment would fit in with that unchangeable truth? Did you never wonder if Christ meant in a literal, actual sense what He said in John 12:32: "And I, if I should be exalted out of the earth, shall be drawing all to Myself"?

Will all men be saved when God has completed His plan for the ages, "His purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph.3:11)? The Scriptures clearly state that God will accomplish this to His great glory, but many are the arguments against this truth. Even so, we believe that, as God grants you understanding, you too will come to reverently worship God as the Supreme One, Who in His love, plans far, far ahead, and by His surpassing wisdom and power makes the most dark and tedious ways all open into the terminus of shining glory.

(1) Colossians 1:20: "And through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His [Christ's] cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens."

Argument: "All things" (Col.1:20, A.V.) means material things only."

Answer: Material things cannot have feelings of enmity or peace. Besides, the Greek, is not “all things,” but simply “the all.”

Argument: “‘Reconcile’ simply means the general satisfaction of God with Christ’s sacrifice for all the world.”

Answer: A reading of verses 21 and 22 disproves that. (Scofield says, “Reconciliation . . . is that effect of the death of Christ upon the believing sinner which, through divine power, works in him a ‘thorough change’ toward God from enmity and aversion, to love and trust.”)

Argument: “Reconciliation can only be accomplished by faith.”

Answer: Paul was saved by sight, the sight of Christ in His glory (Acts 9:1-6). The Lord simply overwhelmed his unbelief with faith (1 Tim.1:13,14).

(2) As Saul of Tarsus, Paul was the *foremost* sinner (1 Tim.1:13-15). If he was saved by God’s deliberate choice and convincing proof of Christ’s divine Sonship, then all other sinners can even more readily be turned to God, in His own time.

Argument: “Paul called himself the ‘chief’ (AV) of sinners, because of that deep humility which makes every convert feel his own depravity.”

Answer: Unbelief, persecution, hatred of God’s people, rejection of Christ, cruelty and murder, are unspeakably vile sins. Of all these Saul was supremely and actively guilty (*cf* Acts 9:1; 1 Tim.1:13). Saul’s sinfulness was magnified by his superior knowledge of God’s revelation (*cf* Phil.3:4-6) and his earlier rejection of Christ, even though he witnessed Stephen’s great testimony of Christ’s divinity and resurrection (Acts 7:56,58).

(3) Philippians 2:10,11: “That in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial

and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.”

Argument: “This passage speaks of what, for most, will be a *forced* bowing of the knee.”

Answer: Such an *awful* scene could never be “for the *glory* of God, the *Father*.” Besides, all will bow “*in*” (not “*at*,” as in the AV) the name of “Jesus,” the name which means “*Yahweh-Saviour*.” Indeed “no one is able to say ‘Lord is Jesus’ except by holy spirit” (1 Cor.12:3.)

(4) 1 Corinthians 15:22: “Even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified.”

Argument: “Only those who die ‘*in Christ*’ will be vivified.”

Answer: This is not what Paul says! Besides if that were the thought, why bring Adam (who affects the entire race) into the picture?

Argument: “All being ‘made alive,’ merely involves resurrection unto condemnation, endless death in the lake of fire.”

Answer: Verse 26, “the *last* enemy is being abolished: death,” makes it clear that this passage speaks of *final, ultimate* vivification, of glorious salvation for all mankind.

Argument: “The *last enemy*’ is the occurrence of dying, not the resultant state of death.”

Answer: It includes both, and the time occupied by that state up to the resurrection (*cf* 1 Cor.15:21: “For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead”).

(5) **General Argument Against:** “There is then no urgency to be saved now.”

Answer: *Every* unsaved man shall be *judged* “in accord with [his] acts” (Rev.20:12) and enter the lake

of fire. Also, eons of glory and joy will not be enjoyed by the unsaved.

(6) **General Argument Against:** “The Bible (AV) speaks of ‘everlasting punishment’ (Matt.25:46) and ‘everlasting fire’ (Matt.18:8).”

Answer: The Greek word translated “ever” is (as spoken in English) “eon,” and the Greek word (in English form) for “everlasting” is “eonian,” which reverts the argument back to the meaning of “eon.” Further proof that the Authorized Version translation of the word “*aiōn*” as “ever” is wrong, is that the Authorized Version itself often translates this word “world,” as in the phrase “*end of the world*” (Matt.13:39,40,49). Yet another proof is that the same version sometimes translates the plural form as “ages” (Eph.2:7; Col.1:26). But in two very important passages, it translates this plural form by the singular form “world” (both of which Scofield changes to “ages”), 1 Corinthians 2:7, “before the world [ages],” and Hebrews 9:26, “end of the world,” or, as Scofield says, “consummation of the ages.” “Eon” (or “age”), then, must speak of a limited period of time; for it has a beginning, an end, and a plural number.

Argument: “‘Eon’ varies in meaning in the Scripture, sometimes having a temporal meaning, and sometimes being eternal and unlimited.”

Answer: No word can have such contradictory usages, else how do we know what it means at any given time? Finiteness and infinitude are as opposite as east and west.

Argument: “Granted, ‘eon’ means ‘age’ or a limited period of time, but ‘for ever and ever’ (Rev.20:10, AV) will not be for a limited number of eons, but, as the Greek has it, ‘for the eons of the eons’: i.e., for an *unlimited* numbers of eons which themselves contain

still additional eons, or 'eons tumbled upon eons.' This must be as endless as Christ's reign (Rev.11:15), and the reign of the saints (Rev.22:5)."

Answer: A period of time cannot contain other periods of time of the same kind, or the term becomes meaningless. "The eons of the eons" are the final "eons" (ages) as distinct from the other scriptural eons. This is because they are the grandest and most significant eons of all the eonian times. Every like expression has a similar meaning: e.g., day of days, heart of hearts, holy of holies. (The Greek also has two singular forms, "eon of the eon" and "eon of the eons," referring to the last great eon. To be correct in our findings, we must note the scriptural forms and distinctions.) Christ's reign is not endless, but only until all is subject (1 Cor.15:24-28). Then all rule will be abolished.

Argument: "If the 'eternal punishment' (AV) of the unbelievers has an end, then the 'eternal life' (AV) of the saints has an end also, at the end of the ages."

Answer: How can life end if death is abolished at that time (1 Cor.15:26)? The life of the eons ends when all are vivified, at the "end" (or "consummation") of the eons (1 Cor. 15:24). Life itself, however, continues on interminably (*cp* Luke 1:38b).

Argument: "Then God is not 'everlasting,' as He is called in Romans 16:26 (AV)."

Answer: The idea of "lastingness" is no part of the Greek word *aiōnion*. "Eonian" is simply the adjectival form of "eon." Just as "American" speaks of that which pertains to "America," eonian speaks of that which pertains to the eons.

It is helpful to take note of the previous text (v.25) observing that the phrase "kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest" (AV) is actually "hushed in times eonian, yet manifested now" (CV).

Therefore “eonian” is certainly not “eternal” (“eonian” also occurs in the phrase “*before* times eonian”; 2 Tim.1:9; Titus 1:2). The adjective “eonian” means “pertaining to the eons.” That God is the God of the eons does not confine Him to these periods of times any more than His title “the God of Israel” precludes His being the God of all. Other “gods” fall and are forgotten; but we have a God Who made the eons (Heb.1:2), Who has a purpose of the eons (Eph.3:11), and Who accomplishes His purposes accordingly during the eonian times (*cf* Titus 1:2). Hence He is the *eonian* God or Subjector. The eons belong to Him and He belongs to them, and His shall be the glory for them long after they are past.

Argument: “In 2 Corinthians 4:18, ‘eonian’ must mean ‘eternal’ because it is set in contrast to the word ‘temporal,’ meaning enduring for time as opposed to eternity.”

Answer: The Greek word translated “temporal” has no connection with the word for “time”; it is literally TOWARD-SEASON, and means “temporary” or “for the era.” In the passage in question, “eonian” is used in contrast between our afflictions, which last for a brief “*season*,” and our promised, long enduring “eonian” glory, which lasts until all opens out into the glorious consummation.

(7) 1 Corinthians 15:28: “Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son [Christ] Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all.”

Argument: “‘Subjecting’ signifies the use of force.”

Answer: Not necessarily, for though He may use force as a means, in the end He will have so led and taught His creatures that they will no longer need government (*cf* v.24, “nullifying all sovereignty and all

authority and power"). God, by His spirit, will become everything in each and every one, for He will become "All in all." What else can these words mean, for all shall be at peace with God?

ALL WILL BE SAVED

"Through the blood of His cross" (Col.1:20), Christ makes peace for all with the Father and at last so teaches each one as to bring all into the blessed family of God. This is "in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Eph.3:11). Thus He gains the enduring love of every creature.

We have just reviewed the most important facts concerning what God's Word teaches concerning universal reconciliation. Our part is to *believe* what the Scriptures state and not to doubt. May we be walking in love toward all, while serving Him faithfully.

God "is operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11), even though we cannot know precisely how He does so. God is "the Saviour of *all* mankind, especially of believers" (1 Tim.4:10; cf 2:4-7). "Seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is *all*: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36).

"For I am the El [God], and there is no further Elohim, *And the limit is as Me. Telling from the beginning*, the hereafter, And from aforetime, what has not yet been done. Saying, All My counsel shall be confirmed, *And all My desire I will do.*" (Isa.46:9,10).

Eventually *all Israel* will be saved (Rom.11:26; cf Isa.45:25). How? They will be saved by the sight of their Saviour in His glory, yet still bearing the marks of their crucifixion of Him (cf Zech.12:10,11; 13:1,6). In the same way, no man will be able to resist Christ's offer of love when faith is replaced by sight, when all

the sinners of all time see their Saviour on the throne of power, and yet displaying the marks of deepest humiliation and suffering which He endured willingly to secure their final reconciliation into the family of God. Grace can only come through the merit of God's righteous Son. God will show all His lost creatures that it is only *love* He is seeking and not forced or fearful obeisance. This was His plan even before the eons. Why should we not believe that God in His great wisdom will work out all according to His greatest glory?

God seeks love, above all else. Glory, yes, but only insofar as it will increase the love of His creatures. All else is subservient to this, for "God is love" (1 John 4:8; 16). God's purpose is not just a wishful longing for love. His only true glory lies in the ultimate *success* of His plan to secure the full and voluntary response of love from His every creature. Then and then alone—even as the shepherd who sought and *found* the *one* lost sheep—will He rest from His *completed* work.

What do you think of this Christ Who lovingly throws His all into such a grand plan to gain the love of every man? If you believe on Him now and His sacrifice for you, you are "justified by faith" (Rom.5:1), and will share in His glories in the grand eons to come.

William C. Rebmann

THE EVANGEL AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

“To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and foolish, a debtor am I. Thus this eagerness of mine to bring the evangel to you also, who are in Rome. For not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God’s power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well. For in it God’s righteousness is being revealed, out of faith for faith . . .” (Rom.1:14-17).

Paul was not ashamed of the evangel because, despite human fears and doubts concerning the consequences of gratuitous favor, it is God’s power for salvation. Our experience teaches us to distrust gifts with no strings attached. We feel that such grace would be dangerous (especially for others) in encouraging wickedness. Besides, we find much precedence in the Bible for discipline based on threats and judgment. Nevertheless the evangel speaks of what God did in sending His own Son (Rom.8:3). It tells us of justification centered in the blood of Christ rather than in our works of obedience. It announces peace from God and reconciliation through the blood of Christ’s cross.

Since we are believing that “Jesus died and rose” (1 Thess.4:14), let us also be believing that God does bring about the consequences He associates with this deed. The following expressions of the evangel and its consequences call for careful attention and much prayer for enlightenment and appreciation.

GRACE TO YOU AND PEACE

“Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ’s faith, for all, and on all who are believing . . .” (Rom.3:21,22).

Christ “was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying” (Rom.4:25).

“God is commanding this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him” (Rom.5:8,9).

“. . . as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life’s justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just” (Rom. 5:18,19).

“For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin’s flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh” (Rom.8:3).

“He . . . spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all . . .” (Rom.8:32).

“. . . we are heralding Christ crucified . . . Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God . . .” (1 Cor. 1:23,24).

“For I give over to you among the first what also I accepted, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures . . .” (1 Cor.15:3,4).

“Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the

conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"... a man is not being justified by works of law, except alone through the faith of Christ Jesus . . ." (Gal.2:16).

In Christ "we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us; in all wisdom and prudence making known to us the secret of His will . . . to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ . . ." (Eph.1:7-10).

"In Whom you also—on hearing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation—in Whom on believing also, you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of His glory!" (Eph.1:13,14).

"For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:8-10).

"... God . . . in Christ, deals graciously with you . . . Christ also loves you, and gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor" (Eph.4:32; 5:2).

"... He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, also,

God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:8-11).

For in Christ "the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:19,20).

"Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners . . ." (1 Tim.1:15).

"For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all . . ." (1 Tim.2:5,6).

"Yet when the kindness and fondness for humanity of our Saviour, God, made its advent, not for works which are wrought in righteousness which we do, but according to His mercy, He saves us, through the bath of renascence and renewal of holy spirit, which He pours out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that, being justified in that One's grace, we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of the allotment of life eonian" (Titus 3:4-7).

THE GLORY OF THE HAPPY GOD

Here in these passages selected from Paul's epistles we are being taken "from glory to glory" (cf 2 Cor.3:18) as the apostle unfolds the evangel. (Other passages could well be added, but these perhaps may serve to bring out the developing proclamation.) There is so much joy, so much exultation and gladness in the words quoted that it is no wonder Paul would speak of

the message as “the evangel of the glory of the happy God” (1 Tim.1:11). The word “evangel” itself is composed of two Greek terms meaning “well” and “message,” so that it conveys the sense of “good news,” or “glad tidings”; it is God’s well-message.

But the most amazing feature of this message is that lying at its very heart, and serving as the foundation of all its goodness is the sober truth of the death of Christ. There would be no good news without this astounding act of God in not sparing His Son but giving Him up, and of Christ in His obedience to the death of the cross. All the joy and exultation of deliverance, justification, conciliation, subjection under Christ’s headship and reconciliation is dependent on the cross of God’s beloved Son.

GOD’S ACHIEVEMENT

The presentation of the evangel given in Paul’s epistles is built on the fundamental fact that all is out of God (2 Cor.5:18). It is His work and His achievement, and it redounds to His glory.

How dismaying, then, that God’s work in and through the death of His Son is not always made the center of attention in what is called evangelism. As Paul’s letter to the Galatians testifies, even those who are called in the grace of Christ can be led to distort the evangel (Gal.1:6,7). Somehow doubts concerning God’s achievements enter in along with uncertainties concerning the outcome of it all.

We would heed Paul’s entreaties in Ephesians 6 and gird ourselves with the truth in these statements of good news, to be readied with the evangel of peace and protected by the cuirass of righteousness and the large shield of faith, and to receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit (*cf* Eph.6:10-17). Let us,

therefore, turn again to these grand declarations and examine them afresh, with prayer for perception and realization of what they say has been done, as well as for boldness in sharing it with others.

WHAT WAS DONE

1. We are justified in the blood of Christ (Rom.5:9). This is the rich blessing emphasized so clearly in the opening chapters of Romans. It is in the evangel of Christ's faith, the good news of His obedience, involving such great loss to Himself, that God's righteousness is manifested (Rom.1:17; 3:21,22).

This revelation of God's righteousness is not just a matter of academic information. When Paul says this righteousness is "for all" and "on all who are believing," he is telling us that it has become an active force in the world. This righteousness of God involves the justification of all and of all that is done during the eons. The consequence of the obedience of Christ is that every descendant of Adam will be constituted righteous, and that everyone's life will be justified (Rom.5:18,19).

2. God's love is commended to us who are sinners and enemies. It is expressed gratuitously, without a cause in ourselves. Deliverance as well as justification is gained in Christ's blood (Eph.1:7). It is the vast love of God's approach present, His sacrifice of His Son, that graciously delivers us from all that is harmful and wrong (Eph.2:8) and into the realm of usefulness where good works are prepared for us (v.10).

This is salvation and deliverance established at the cross. It is not of ourselves. Indeed when Paul says we are God's achievement, he is speaking of the achievement of God gained through the sacrifice of Christ when we will be performing all that pleases Him and brings glory to God.

3. When Christ died, God was there in Him conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them (2 Cor.5:19). Peace is not made by us; it is made by God in the death of His Son. And now God is entreating through us that this peace might be recognized and enjoyed (2 Cor.5:20).

Yet there is a tendency to resist this message of good, whether because its goodness is so beyond what we think is reasonable, or because we would rather take the responsibility ourselves to tear down all the walls of enmity and offense between us and God. Hence we can understand the prayer of Ephesians 1:15-23 for realization and enlightenment, and the entreaty of 2 Timothy 4:2 to stand by the word.

4. The exaltation of Christ was assured by His obedient humbling of Himself. Because of His faithfulness He is exalted above every name. The death of Christ brought about His Lordship and Headship over all, so that in the Name of the Saviour, Jesus, every knee will bow, and every tongue will acclaim Him for the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:8-11).

If we are believing that Christ was obedient even to the death of the cross, we ought to be believing the “wherefore” that follows this great sacrifice. If the one is true, so is the other.

5. Through the blood of Christ’s cross comes universal reconciliation (Col.1:20). This is certainly associated with Christ’s Lordship and His Headship over all mentioned in Ephesians 1:10. Again, we have no license in Paul’s words to speak of this as something uncertain. Since we are believing that God truly did not spare His own Son, and that Christ shed His blood on the cursed tree, we should also be believing these words that reveal its significance for us and the entire universe.

A FINISHED WORK

What was done cannot be undone. The work of God and the obedience of Christ on Golgotha is not something conditional on whether or not we believe it or respond to it or prepare ourselves for it. It has already happened, and its effects are unstoppable.

Consequently, in believing the evangel we are believing that God has done something in Christ. We are focusing our attention on the work of God in and through His Son. The evangel, so far, has nothing to say about our repentance, about our participation in ecclesiastical or liturgical acts, about our obedience or walk. The fundamental revelation is not concerned with us at all, and whenever we are brought into the picture, it is only as this is built on the foundation of God's achievement in Christ Jesus.

Theologians today often refer to this foundational revelation as the "objective" side of the gospel. To stress God's work apart from our own decisions and efforts is to speak of the "objective aspect" of the cross, that which is outside us, as opposed to the "subjective aspect" which is inside, and speaks of the effect the evangel has on us and of the way we respond to it.

Such terminology may help those who are trained to think scientifically, but it probably will strike many as dry and cold. Nevertheless it is not how the matter is worded that is the problem. The problem is our feelings of doubt, our distrust concerning something that we have no part in achieving.

But we do have a part to play. There is the subjective side. Only our part is not in the achieving, not in the gaining of righteousness, peace and usefulness, but in the enjoyment of what God has achieved. There are good works for us to perform, but these are prepared by God. There is grace for us to display and peace for

us to maintain, and patience and love and self-control. But these are the fruit of the spirit, that arise within us as we are believing the evangel.

We have vast blessings both in position and in service. But what have we that we have not obtained? (1 Cor.4:7). It is the evangel that tells us the source of our joy, our peace and any works we may do for the glory of God.

THE "SHOULD'S" AND THE "MAY'S"

Because the consequences of the cross are sometimes expressed by verbs in the subjunctive mode, some have concluded there is an element of uncertainty about these consequences. To be sure, we cannot predict how the evangel will affect people today, but this does not make the results of the cross any less certain. Those who are believing and retaining the evangel (1 Cor.15:2) as it relates to justification *will* be having peace toward God. And every knee *shall* bow in the name of Jesus and every tongue *shall* acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God the Father, Who *will* indeed be All in all.

Why then does Paul use subjunctives in Romans 5:1, Philippians 2:10,11 and 1 Corinthians 15:28? It cannot be that he wished to express doubt about these blessings and glories that issue from the cross. Peace is the divine achievement made through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:20). God will bring all into subjection to the Son, and God shall be All in all (1 Cor.15:28).

The Greek subjunctive does not imply *ought* (see the Keyword Concordance, p.268, under the word "should"). The word "subjunctive" itself means "subjoined" or "subordinated"; it is dependent on some other action. In many contexts where the Greek sub-

junctive is used, we can find statements in the indicative mode that provide the basis for the subjunctive statement. Hence in Philippians 2, the bowing and acclaiming are contingent upon God's operation of highly exalting Christ above every name that is named. And that action, in turn, issues from Christ's obedience to the death of the cross. The bowing and acclaiming are expressed in the subjunctive so that we can pause and consider these preconditions. But since the preconditions are divine actions, the bowing and acclaiming are certain to come about.

Similarly, those who are believing that Jesus our Lord was roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:24, 25), will be having peace toward God (5:1). The enjoyment of this peace will indeed be imperfect and probably quite irregular while we are in the flesh, but justification has been established in the blood of Christ (Rom.5:9). The use of the present subjunctive verb, "may be having peace," again directs us to search for its basis. Our awareness of this good news of justification, our retaining of the evangel which tells of God's achievement in the blood of the cross, our believing that we are being justified, this is bound to instill peace in our hearts toward God.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

The evangel of our salvation is to the glory of God. This means that it speaks from start to finish of God's achievements through the death of His Son. If what we are believing leads us to a sense of self-sufficiency and self-reliance, we have distorted the evangel. But whenever every knee bows and every tongue acclaims that Jesus Christ is Lord, it must be that everyone believes and realizes the truth revealed in the evangel, for it is to the glory of God the Father.

Dean Hough

THE LIVING GOD AND THE EONS

IN the providence of God, concerning all terms of consequence, the sacred writings provide their own internal evidence which establishes the significance of their vocabulary terms and grammatical forms.

Many important passages, however, are nonetheless not definitive passages. For example, in themselves, those passages which refer to the life which pertains to God's people, or to the duration of certain adversative judgments, simply are not definitive. This is because perfectly conceivable ideas may be represented by both "eonian" and "everlasting." Whether these should be foreign or familiar to our traditions is altogether irrelevant.

In many texts it is possible to assign any one of several ideas to a term and still express a conceivable thought through the clause in which it is found. But this is only to speculate; it is not to know. We are not to guess; we are to believe. Yet we cannot know what to believe if we do not know what has been said.

It is popularly believed that many words have two or more meanings. Actually, however, this is not the case. In any certain instance, according to its usage, a word may indeed convey a special *connotation*, one which is not present in other passages in which it is found. Yet no such specialized usage—even in the slightest degree—changes a word's essence, its *denotation* or basic meaning.

Within any certain era, those words which come

into common use during such a period (or already exist at its beginning) cannot possibly *denote* more than one idea, even if they should soon find themselves being employed in a multiplicity of special applications. Otherwise, communication (much less translation), except for perhaps a few well-placed grunts, would be impossible and vanish from the face of the earth.

A "word," then, is simply a linguistic form which is used to communicate an idea, a form which, by itself, is capable of conveying an unmistakable thought. Strictly speaking, a "word" (apart from homonyms) is "a linguistic form that can meaningfully be spoken *in isolation*."^{*}

Dictionary definitions of a word's *usage* must be distinguished from a word's own definition, its *meaning*, which distinguishes it from other expressions. Since many *derived usages* necessarily enter into popular speech in reference to new applications or objects, most people hazily and mistakenly refer to such usages (which, in turn, become dictionary "definitions") as "different meanings." Nonetheless, whether we speak of a dining room table, a multiplication table, a desert table (a mesa or plateau) or tabling (postponing) a project, the meaning of "table" (viz., "a flat, horizontal surface") *never changes*.

This principle, then, must be true concerning the word *aiōn* as well. Therefore, while all scriptural passages in which some form of *aiōn* is found are either definitive or indefinite, none of them present any essential different meaning than the rest. As we shall see, the idea of an "eon," or of that which is in some way eonian, is always present in any of the definitive

^{*}FUNK AND WAGNALLS STANDARD COLLEGE DICTIONARY, The Reader's Digest Association (1966), p.1547.

usages of this word. None of the definitive occurrences of *aiōn* can sensibly be conceived as signifying "that which has no end."

THE MEANING OF "EON"

We have been asked to give a simple explanation concerning the word "eon." Basically, an eon (or age) is simply a *period* of time; in most cases, it is used of a very long period of time. Being a period, it has a beginning and an end.

The Scriptures make reference to five notable eons—five epochal periods—which are determined, or marked off, by exceptionally extraordinary occurrences, tremendous upheavals in the established order. They run their course, (1) from the beginning of creation to a great cosmological *disruption* (evidently of a geological nature though occasioned by moral disruption or sin); (2) from the disruption of the world to the great flood; (3) from the flood to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom on earth (which includes the present era, necessitated by the Pauline evangel which unfolds the untraceable riches of Christ for the nations); (4) from the establishment of the terrestrial kingdom (primarily the thousand years or "millennium") to the destruction of the earth by fire; and (5) from the creation of the new earth to "the consummation" revealed by the apostle Paul.*

After the consummation of vivification and of the eonian times which are revealed in Scripture, the kingdom of the Son of the Most High will continue on, never ceasing, for "of His kingdom there shall be *no* consummation" (Luke 1:33b). The Scriptures do not reveal any certain events during the endlessness which

*cf "Eternal Torment or Universal Reconciliation?" pp.25-28, A. E. Knoch

follows the time when God becomes All in all. Long periods of time may well be marked off by notable events and termed eons, but any such things are not revealed to us now.

Christ's literal rule will be so effective as to "rule out" all rule. None will be needed, for all will be subject, vivified, headed up in Christ and reconciled. The term "kingdom" will be retained not because He is still finding it necessary to rule those who are in insubjection, but, by association, in honor of what was accomplished and permanently established as a result of His literal reign until the time when He gave up the kingdom to His God and Father.

"Eonian" simply means "of or pertaining to the eons [or eon]." In the Scriptures, the "eonian times" are from "the beginning" to "the consummation." The meaning of "eon" and "eonian" never change, even though they are sometimes used in different senses and in reference to more than one subject. *Aiōnios* never means "age-lasting," and so should not be translated thus, even though *some* of its occurrences are in accord with this thought (others are not, only making reference to a portion of an eon). In most cases, it is "the oncoming eons" (Eph.2:7) which are in view. Some passages refer directly to the periods of time themselves; others, by association, have in view the *character* or nature of things which will prevail during the periods being discussed. God has various operations (economies or administrations) during the eons for the accomplishment of His goals, all leading to the greatest one of all, becoming All in all at the consummation.

DEFINITIVE EONIAN PASSAGES

The following are a few representative examples of passages in which the Hebrew *olam*, and its Greek

equivalents, *aiōn* and *aiōnios*, are definitively used in the Scriptures: “Yahweh, He shall reign for the eon *and further*” (Exodus 15:18); “the earth is standing for the eon” (Ecc.1:4); a statute “for Aaron and for his sons, . . . it is an eonian statute” (Lev.24:9); “Across the stream dwelt your forefathers from the eon” (Joshua 24:2); “The years of the eons will I remember” (Psa.77:5); “before the eons” (1 Cor.2:7); “before times eonian” (2 Tim.1:9); “a secret hushed in times eonian, yet manifested now” (Rom.16:25,26); “the present eon” (Gal. 1:4); “the current eon” (1 Tim.6:17); “the eon of this world” (Eph.2:2); “this eon” (Matt.12:32); “that eon” (Luke 20:35); “the coming eon” (Mark 10:30); “the oncoming eons” Eph.2:7); “the conclusion of the eon” (Matt.24:3); “the conclusion of the eons” (Heb.9:26); and “the consummations of the eons” (1 Cor.10:11).

Thus we can be certain that “eon” means a period of time; it is the longest segment of time known in the Scriptures. It is not used to speak of endless time, or of any foggy philosophical speculations about “eternity.”

HE WHO IS LIVING FOR THE EONS

Likewise, concerning God’s living “for the eons” (Rev.4:9,10; 10:6; 15:7), it is only because this expression is unfamiliar to us that it seems awkward or difficult. A parallel familiar expression should make this evident. Were we to declare that the living God *is* living *today*, this would be found quite acceptable. It becomes evident, then, that it is just as sensible (even if most are not familiar with the expression) to declare that He *will* be living *tomorrow*, namely, in the glorious scriptural morrow of the oncoming eons. The fact that He Who is living during this current era will also be living “for” (actually, “*into*,” *eis*) the eons of time ahead, constitutes a further word of assurance con-

cerning His providential care during these future long eras of time.

It is to be regretted that the hazy English “for” can be misused in connection with the eons. The literal rendering “into,” in such cases, however, would unduly strain English idiom. Opposers imprudently couple “for” with their own gratuitous inference “only (for)” in order to “disprove” the meaning of *aiōn* as “eon.” This is done in order to make the meaning *eon* appear to be obviously mistaken with regard to the revelation that God is living *eis tous aiōnas tōn aiōnōn* (“for the eons of the eons,” CV). The Authorized Version rendering, “God, Who *liveth* for ever and ever,” adds to the confusion, and lends support to the popular misunderstanding. For it makes the reference appear to be to the length of God’s life, when it instead is a reference to a *particular* time during which God will be *living* (“God, Who is *living* for the eons of the eons,” CV).

Inasmuch as the word *aiōn* appears in both classes of passages, crude reasonings from the usual mistranslations of those passages which interconnect God, or Christ (Rev.1:18), a form of the word “life,” and the word *aiōn*, are routinely set forth as clear proof in favor of “everlasting (*aiōnion*) punishment” (e.g., Matt.25:46). That is, since God “liveth for ever and ever,” and it is felt that the thought here must be that His life never ends, it is concluded that the punishment of the lost must likewise be endless, since the same Greek word is used concerning these respective revelations.

This conclusion, however, is based on mistaken premises, ones which are derived from false inferences and mistranslation: (1) the injecting of “only (for)” into “for” (in relation to the phrase “for the eons”) while failing to note the literal “into”; (2) the AV mistranslation “liveth” (“lives” in modern English)

instead of the correct form “is living”; (3) the gross mistranslation “for ever and ever” instead of the accurate rendering “for the eons of the eons.”

Whenever we read the expression “*for* the eons,” we should always keep in mind the actual literal idea of *into*. That is, God *will* be living on, *into* those eras of time, in order that He should be living *within* or *during* those time periods as well, even as He *is* living within or during these present hectic times, when we need Him so much.

The fact that I lived during the nineteen eighties is no proof that I now am dead in the nineteen nineties! And if I should say that I *am* living in the *year* 1991, and that, the Lord willing, I *shall* be living on into the *year* 1992, this would give no license to any of those who might translate my words into another language to make a claim, and so translate, to the effect that while in one case where I used the word “year” I actually meant a year, while in another place where I used this same word I did not mean a year at all (even if I did say so!).

Yet this is just the sort of thing that most translators of the Scriptures have done with the words in the Original for “eon.” Most simply lacked the insight to see the point of many of the passages that spoke of the *eons*. Since they were able, however, to make sense of these passages by translating by “everlasting” or “eternal,” they simply went ahead and did so, any resultant problems notwithstanding. Due to a lack of sensible thinking and an abundance of confidence in the flesh, it is impossible for most to face the fact that the usual translations of this word are quite mistaken and extremely harmful.

We believe that God’s life will never end, not because of any passages in reference to Him which in-

clude the word “eon,” but because it is written that His “years shall have no end” (Psa.102:27). Furthermore, since God is the Source of all life, and since, at the consummation, all will be gloriously made alive so that He may become All in each one, it is evident that He must ever have life Himself in order to impart it to His creatures.

As the Lord declared, “Seeing that I am living, you also will be living” (John 14:19). In light of the fearful nature of the terrible judgments in the Revelation, one might infer that all hope is lost. But this is not the case at all. For the living God, Who is living today, will be *living* on as well into the coming eons! The fact that He is said to be *living*, at any time, is not declared in order merely to inform us that He still exists, but is a lively figure of association designed to testify to His great power and subjectorship. He lives! He is the living God, and so is great and marvelous, strong to save, and “able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending” (Eph.3:20).

Let us rely on the *living* God, Who is the *Saviour* of *all* mankind, especially of believers. “These things be charging and teaching” (cf 1 Tim.4:10,11).

James Coram

A CHART OF THE EONIAN TIMES

		2 Tim. 1:9; Tit. 1:2; (Rom. 16:25)	
BEFORE THE EONS.	1 Cor. 2:7; [Jd. 25].		GOD ALL
THE BEGINNING			
2 Tim. 1:21; 1 Pt. 4:11; 5:11; Un. 1:6; 18:4; 9:10; 5:13; 7:12; 10:6; 11:15; 14:11; 15:7; 19:3; 20:10; 22:5			
THE EONS of THE EONS Ro. 16:27; Ga. 1:5; Ph. 4:20; 1 Tl. 1:17			
THE DISRUPTION		c. 2 Pet. 3:6. "The world that then was" and Eph. 2:2. Then	EONIAN
		c. 2 Pet. 2:5. "The ancient world" and Eph. 2:2. Leads to	TIMES.
THE DELUGE		THE PRESENT EON. Gal. 1:4.	Ro. 16:25; 2 Tl. 1:9; Tit. 1:2.
		THE CURRENT EON. 1 Tl. 6:17; 2 Tl. 4:10; Tit. 2:12.	LIFE.
THIS EON.		THIS EON. Mt. 12:32; 13:22; Mk. 4:19; Lu. 16:8; 20:34; Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 1:20; 2:6, 6, 8; 3:18; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 1:21; 2:2 (with world).	Mt. 19:16; Mk. 10:17; Lu. 18:18; Mt. 19:29; Mk. 10:30; Lu. 18:30; Mt. 25:46; Lu. 10:25; Jn. 3:15, 16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2, 3. Acts 13:46, 48. Ro. 2:7; 5:21; 6:22, 23. Ga. 6:8. 1 Tl. 1:16; 6:12. Tit. 1:2; 3:7. 1 Jn. 1:2; 2:25; 3:15; 5:11, 13, 20. Jude 21.
FOR THE EON.		FROM THE EONS Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:26	SALVATION.
		Lu. 1:70; Acts 3:21; 15:18.	Hb. 5:9.
OUT OF THE EON.		OUT OF THE EON. Jn. 9:32.	REDEMPTION.
		CONCLUSION OF THE EON. Mt. 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3.	Hb. 9:12.
THE DAY OF WRATH		THE DAY OF WRATH	Covenant.
		THE COMING EON. Mk. 10:30; Lu. 18:30.	Hb. 13:20.
THE FUTURE EON.		THE FUTURE EON. Hb. 6:5.	ALLOTMENT. GOD
THAT EON.		THAT EON. Lu. 20:35.	Hb. 9:15. ALL
FOR THE EON.		FOR THE EON. Mk. 3:29; Lu. 1:55; Jn. 4:14; 6:51, 58; 8:35, 35, 51, 52; 10:28; 11:26; 12:34; 14:16; 2 Cor. 9:9; Hb. 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24, 28; 1 Pt. 1:25; 2 Pt. 2:17; 1 Jn. 2:17; 2 Jn. 2; Jd. 13.	KINGDOM. IN
THE ON-COMING EONS Luke 1:33; Rom. 1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 2 Cor. 11:31; Heb. 1:17; Jude 25		EVANGEL. Un. 14:6.	2 Pt. 1:11. CHRIST
THE EONS Eph. 3:11; 1 Tl. 1:11		CONSOLATION.	
THE CROSS		2 Th. 2:16.	
THE JUDGMENT		GLORY.	2 Co. 4:17; 2 Tl. 2:10; 1 Pt. 5:10.
THE CONSUMMATION 1 Co. 15:24.		GOD.	Ro. 16:26.
THE CONSUMMATIONS OF THE EONS. 1 Co. 10:11.		FIRE, PUNISHMENT, ETC.	
		Mt. 18:8; 25:41; 46; Mk. 3:29; 2 Th. 1:9; Hb. 6:2; Jd. 7.	
		OTHER OCCURRENCES	
		Lu. 16:9; 2 Co. 4:18; 5:1; 1 Tl. 6:16; Phn. 15; Hb. 9:14.	
		GOD ALL IN ALL	

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