

*** An In Depth Look at PERSONAL SALVATION

Part 5 - Questions and Answers***

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[0 : 00] but I kind of think I need to go to the kitchen maybe take a look at the title of message biblical leftovers need the microwave from last week but I'm certain pastor Marv will warm them up for us please turn to the book of Revelation to chapter 20 and in Revelation chapter 20 we'll be looking at verses 11 through 15 then I saw a great white throne and him who sat upon it from whose presence earth and heaven fled away and no place was found for them and I saw the dead the great and the small standing before the throne and books were opened and another book was open which is the book of life and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds and the sea gave up the dead which were in it and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them and they were judged every one of them according to their deeds then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire this is the second death the lake of fire and if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire

I'm sorry children's church oh all right uh children you may be dismissed now children who are going to children's church you may feel free to excuse yourself now and uh go join that happy throng in children's church I must confess I'd never thought in terms of microwaves with uh uh biblical leftovers but uh we will be warming up that text again so I guess you can call it that we we dealt with it last week and uh I made a faulty assumption and the assumption was that I dealt with it adequately and answered the possible questions that would arise from it but as the week wore on I learned throughout uh that I had not done so and there were still some questions that different people had regarding the subject of salvation and works and faith etc so we will revisit that just briefly before I also then want to return to Romans chapter 7 which I pointed out last week but then failed to get to because we ran out of time so we'll still have Q&A; this morning if anybody uh has questions that they'd like to raise from the congregation before I look to the text however in chapter 20 I just want to make this statement and I'm counting on sweet Marie to remind me for next Sunday and that is we were talking about the name and his name is wonderful and the scripture often refers to believing on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ but as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God even to those that believe on his name what is this business about believing on his name how does that figure in and what is that all about and that's something that

I've come across just recently from the pen of a commentator one of my favorites and I'll share that with you next week and the reason I'm relating it now is because I can count on Marie to remind me of it so when that time comes so let us look back at we may at revelation chapter 20 and the issue had to do with the subject of works which we already discussed were not involved in our salvation and numerous passages of scripture declare that much to the consternation of the public at large because salvation by grace or justification by faith does not fit the mold of the thinking of the average person who has nothing but a fallen mind with which to reckon these issues and we talked just a little bit about that in the nine o'clock hour salvation by grace justification by faith is completely contrary to the way people think to the way fallen man reasons and the way he reaches his logic we automatically apply salvation to uh well like every other aspect you get what you deserve but salvation by grace means you do not get what you deserve hey that's why it's called good news you don't get what you deserve you get what you deserve that's bad news and i don't know how many people i've had over the last few weeks asked me how are you marvin i invariably reply better than i deserve and they smile sometimes they think that that's funny but it's fact it isn't it isn't intended to be funny it's intended to be factual we are all better than we deserve and if i am privileged to have a memorial service there won't be a body but there'll maybe be a picture of here or something down there in front that people can gawk at and see what i looked like when i was 20 years old and in the army had hair and everything and don't be surprised if there is a caption below the picture that says definitely better than i deserve yeah all because of grace so the issue and the question surfaced around this about these individuals being judged the small and dead being judged on the basis of their works and their deeds and apparently this surface resulted in a question surfacing in connection with this so i guess to make a long story short i would just say while it is true that man is not saved by his works but he is lost by them and judged for them does that help at all it is our deeds as a believer it is the works done in the body after we came to faith in christ whether they are good or bad because christians can do bad things and for those bad things there are no rewards so the text that we dealt with from second corinthians 5 indicates that we are going to be evaluated as to whether or not we are going to be rewarded or to what extent we are going to be rewarded god knows what we did and he knows why we did it and he knows what our motives are and all the rest of it and god the all-seeing perfect eye and understanding and wisdom of god will reward

reward every believer with exactly what he deserves as a believer what you do after you become a christian really matters and while we are not saved by our good works paul informs us in ephesians 2 that were that our salvation is unto good works and once we come to faith in christ and have been justified by faith saved by his grace you better believe it matters a whole lot what you do and how you conduct your life it's a serious business to be a christian and we have the indwelling spirit of god to aid us and we have the word of god to inform us and we are to get busy and be about the business of living a life that is honorable unto the lord and all of us have the capacity to do that but we still have an old sin nature that's what paul is talking about in romans 7 we'll be there in a moment and that's what enables us to do things that displease god even as a believer and those things that we do that displease god are described by the apostle paul in first corinthians chapter 3 as wood hay and stubble now how enduring are they the all-seeing eye of christ is going to consume deeds that we performed that were nothing but wood hay and stubble and they're going to go poof up in smoke and you will not be rewarded for that but those things that you did that were honoring to the lord that were unselfish deeds of kindness that were deeds of service to others that were acts of obedience to the lord all of those things are not going to go unnoticed by god and he's going to reward that and the reward will be absolutely perfect no one will be rewarded more than they should be or less than they should be but that's for the believer and the text here in revelation 20 is talking exclusively about unbelievers there's two different judgments well actually there's more than two there's there there's also the judgment of nations we won't get into that now but but essentially there is a judgment for unbelievers and there will not be any christians there that's the revelation 20 these are all unsaved people and even as believers are going to be rewarded on the basis of what they did right and what they did good unbelievers are going to be rewarded on the basis of their evil deeds and some of them are going to have something commendable about what they did because you know it is entirely possible for unsaved people to do some really nice things to be very philanthropic to be very generous to be very kind in fact there are some people who are atheists who are a lot nicer people and easier to get along with than what some christians are i know that to be a fact and that shouldn't be true but it is it is because just because you are a christian doesn't mean you've lost your ability to be nasty or mean or difficult you can still walk in the flesh and if you walk in the flesh you'll produce the works of the flesh and that's what we are admonished against because none of us as a believer has any excuse for walking that way because god has empowered us with everything that we need to live a life that is pleasing to him so we've got two different categories here and you've got to keep them separate don't whatever you do don't commingle these

these are strictly unbelievers and they are going to be evaluated and i don't know a better word to use so i'll just use the word they are going to be punished with a punishment that is perfectly appropriate and deserving for what they did and why they did it and the god who sees the works of the believer also will see the works of the unbeliever and there are people who are going to be accountable in a much greater way with much more severe penalties than what you would call the common ordinary garden variety unbeliever so all of these things come into play and bottom line is this being a human being is a serious business and you better believe there is going to be a time of reckoning i don't care who you are where you are what your station is or anything else so coupled with that now if you may please would you go to um romans chapter 7 and this is something i intended to get into last week but did not get there and it's a key passage actually i guess i'm a little reluctant to call it a key passage because it isn't as clear as i would like it to be i don't want to read into the text something that isn't there but i would just go so far as to say apart from a passage like like what david mentioned in the psalms upon the death of his infant son and david just almost in what appears to be in passing made the statement that he cannot come to me but i shall go to him gives us a clue that david was at least anticipating a reunion with his infant son that passed away and this issue came up in connection with children reaching the age of accountability which we dealt with last week and i have no illusions that i dealt with it as thoroughly as it needs to be i guess i probably couldn't do that anyway but uh there are always questions that you leave unanswered and what i just shared with you from from king david ties in i think with romans chapter 7 and what we find here and i'm not suggesting that my interpretation of this passage is uh spot on but i'm just saying that uh to the extent of my ability to understand it and what is involved theologically and doctrinally this is the way i see it and you can agree or disagree but let's uh let's begin if we may with chapter 7 and verse 5 and uh the apostle the apostle is giving a kind of personal testimony here and when he says we i'm convinced he's including himself and he says for while we were in the flesh and for the benefit of uh of the younger folks here who might not be familiar with the term when the bible speaks of the flesh sometimes it's talking about human flesh as such that is tissue and blood and bone and that kind of thing the physical that's the flesh but more often than not doctrinally and theologically when the bible is talking about the flesh it is talking about our adamic nature that is in us that we received from our parents automatically just by being a human being we were born as creatures of the flesh we were born

[16 : 36] fleshly beings physically and we are born fleshly beings spiritually and the greatest demonstration of our fleshliness is our desire and our intent for self-service we tend to put our self first in everything self-centeredness is part of the curse and we all partake of that now granted some people are less self-centered than others and some are less selfish than others but essentially when it comes right down to it we are all self-centered that's part of the fall don't beat up on yourself for that because then you're beating up on yourself for being a human being and we are all locked into that and this by the way this is why christ came and this is why we need redemption this is why we need salvation to be delivered from that so when the text goes on to the word is what we need to say here in verse 5 when we were in the flesh he's talking about actually he's talking about when the time existed before we came to faith in christ and had a new life as a believer then while we were in the flesh the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in the members of our body the church the family to bear fruit for death but now you see the contrast here he's making a quantum leap he's saying from the old life previously to the new life but now we have been released from the law having died to that by which we were bound so that we serve in newness of the spirit and not in oldness of the letter now we have time to go into the other related verses here but essentially what he is saying here is having died to that or died to the law this literally means that in the death of christ in the death of christ it is just as if we were there on that cross with him dying with him paying the penalty of our sin with him that's the official way god looks at it that's the judicial forensic way god reckons us that is called positional truth and the old spiritual that came out of the south was understood by the african americans who were slaves back then when they got together in the cotton fields and saying were you there when they crucified my lord what does that mean well of course i wasn't there that was 2 000 years ago i wasn't there well if your faith is in jesus christ and you put your trust and confidence in him for his salvation and his forgiveness you were there that's the way god views it that's the way god sees it god sees us as having died to sin in the same way that christ did and what that means is the penalty is paid wages of sin is death jesus died and when he died he made the payment and he paid it in full which enables us to say jesus paid it all and if you are in christ god regards you positionally of course not practically positionally officially you were there and you were buried with him and you were raised with him in newness of life and you are even ascended with him on high you are seated with christ in the heavenly places and that's a difficult concept for us to get our brains

around especially for young people because they think well boy the last time i looked i was seated in a seat right here in grace bible church what's this all about well it is looking at it from god's perspective from god's viewpoint from god's viewpoint jesus christ was the lamb of god slain before the foundation of the world because that was in the mind of god he's looking at it from his perspective and he's letting us in on what his perspective is this is the official one folks this is the one that counts in the same way in the same way when someone is brought before a law court and accused of a crime and the prosecution presents the case and the defense presents its case and the jury comes in and they say they say we find the defendant not guilty but don't we all know of cases where sometimes somebody beats the system and later we find out they were as guilty as sin but what counted what counted was not the fact that they were really guilty what counted was the official verdict brought in by the jury and the judge says you're free to go oh you can't let him free he's really guilty nope as far as the court and the law is concerned he's not guilty that's the way god views everyone in christ you are as guilty as sin and so am i so are we all that's all the flesh can do they that are in the flesh cannot please god so let's look at this text now get on i've got to get one having died to that by which we were bound so that we serve in newness of the spirit not in oldness of the letter what shall we say then is the law sin may it never be on the contrary i would not have come to know sin except through the law for i would not have known about coveting if the law had not said you shall not covet no the law is not sin that's the problem the law is the law is righteous but but we aren't but sin sin says paul sin taking opportunity through the commandment which contains a lot of thou shalt nots and thou shalt not and thou shalt not but we did anyway taking opportunity through the commandment produced in me coveting of every kind for apart from the law sin is dead and i was once alive apart from the law but when the commandment came sin became alive and i died now i think it's really very important to understand to whom does this personal pronoun singular apply in all the context it strongly indicates that the apostle is giving a personal testimony here he's talking about himself he's using his own experience to explain this situation to the audience at rome when he sends this epistle to them and when he says i was once alive apart from the law that doesn't make sense does it no if you're thinking of physical life which we all enjoy just sitting here to say i was alive once apart from the law just doesn't make any sense unless he was saying i was alive apart from the law with a different kind of life

what does that mean what is the different kind of life spiritual life the bible is replete with this there is such a thing as spiritual light and there is physical light there is such a thing as spiritual fruit and there is physical fruit there is spiritual life death and there is physical death and there is physical death and our problem is we tend to focus on the physical because that's that with which we are so familiar and it's difficult for us to get in touch with the spiritual because it is intangible and non-physical but don't you think for one moment it isn't just as real and listen i want you to consider this you might find it hard to believe because the physical and the body is so much with us but i'm satisfied that this is true totally true it is the spiritual that takes precedence over the physical it is the spiritual that is more important than the physical in fact it is the spiritual that predates the physical the physical is a creation of the spiritual not vice versa see what i'm saying so i'm saying the non-physical is predominant over the physical this is exactly what jesus was referring to when he called god spirit god is spirit and they that worship him must worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth so it is it was the spirit that created the physical think of that that which is immaterial non-physical is responsible for the creation of all matter throughout the universe now the real conundrum for us is this we know that with our physical body we can do things we can do things we can walk and talk and pick up things and carry things and move around with our physical body so it's only natural for us to give preeminence and first place we can do things we can do things we can do things we can do things we can do things we can do things and that's where we go astray because in the scriptures in the plan and economy of god it is the spiritual that takes precedence over the physical and so many places that is demonstrated and then when paul goes on to say i was alive once apart from the law but when the commandment became sin became sin became alive and i died and all he is saying is that sin was latent in me that tendency to sin is born in us that cute precious darling little cherub that everybody oozes in the house over whether male or female and a newborn we see the epitome of innocence and and and everything else that's positive positive and what you're looking at there is a little sinner that's what you're looking at a cute adorable little sinner and when it comes to age wherever that is that cute little thing demonstrates its orneriness

and all my kids got that from their mother so paul says sin taking command taking opportunity through the commandment deceived me and through it killed me really killed me how killed me spiritually didn't kill him physically he went right on living but something inside of him died and you know what it was it was that spiritual capacity because when we are born we are born redeemed now here is a very interesting concept i don't want to split hairs but i want to be clearly understood of this when christ died on the cross to what extent was he able to undo the damage and the death that was imposed being managed by adam and his sin how many people came under the curse of adam in adam's sin all all for as in adam all die not most but all all so in christ so in christ shall all all be made alive what does that mean it means exactly what it says and i do not think that any sound and i do not think that any sound hermeneutic will allow you to make the first all mean all and the second all to mean most all means all in both places and what the text is saying is that jesus christ in the death that he died was fully capable and fully accomplished all of the wreck and ruin that was brought to humanity by adam's sin in other words we are assigning an efficacious quality um i can't think of a different word other than efficacious it means it means effective and a combination of effective and efficient to the death of christ so that he fully satisfied the demands of the law in paying the penalty for the whole human race and that's what enables every human being that is born to be born in a state of redemption and to my thinking this is the rationale for unborn babies and for newborns and for children who have not reached the age of accountability which we don't know what it is of being ushered into the presence of their lord they are under the blanket of redemption accomplished by christ and yet when the time comes that that baby reaches an age where they become responsible for their own sin for their own behavior and they violate a divine standard they die they die they die spiritually born redeemed die spiritually now we're not saying they are born saved they are not born saved and they are not born regenerated they are born redeemed they are under that blanket of redemption that god was in christ

reconciling reconciling what the world not reconciling most of it or part of it but reconciling the whole world to god and then he goes on in the very next verse and says i beseech you therefore brethren be ye reconciled to god well he just said we are well we are judicially and we are officially and we are as a member of the human race but when it comes time to the place of where you have a volition and you have reached the age of accountability and you have displeased god and you have sinned what you need is to be born again and at whatever age that occurs that's different with different people so the text is saying and i think paul is saying by words of testimony i was alive apart from the law i was spiritually alive to god so that if something happened to me then i died i'm in the presence of the lord but the problem is when sin when the commandment came resulting in life proved to result in death for me sin taking opportunity through the commandment deceived me and through it killed me spiritually so then the law is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good so here this ties in i think as well with the idea of uh salvation of in of babies and not reaching the age of accountability so all of this is part of the same package and it's just amazing how everything in scripture is tied together with everything in scripture now before i conclude this is there some need for further clarification on some point that somebody has is are we good nathan yeah so with your comments about redemption would you say that when somebody a believer comes to christ that's a second redemption i don't know that i'd call it a second redemption i i guess i would call it regeneration um i i'm thinking of titus 3 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he has saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the holy spirit i i i guess i've never heard or thought of the term of a new redemption but but i'd say definitely regeneration yeah regenerated and you know this this is not going to answer all questions it doesn't answer all of my questions but it is as clear as i am able to see it with the light i have at the present time i am absolutely committed to the idea and and i i taught this in a in a another scene one time and i had a brother write to me and uh he took great exception to this and he said that that this was dangerously close it was dangerously close to universalism and universalism is the teaching and the belief that eventually everybody's going to end up in heaven universal salvation for everyone and i tried to make it clear to him that that's not what i was teaching at all but what i was teaching was that through the redemptive work of christ whereby the entirety of the human race was redeemed that automatically made everyone savable savable savable a lot of difference between being savable and being saved

[36 : 56] if you are savable that implies that you aren't saved but you may be and that's exactly what paul is saying there in second corinthians 5 after having said that god was in christ reconciling the world unto himself not imputing their trespasses unto them and has committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation we beg you in christ's stead be ye reconciled to god well what does that mean if he just said we are now he's saying do it what he's saying is as a humanity as the human race we were all reconciled to god put in that position we all were beneficiaries of the redemptive work of christ in the same way that adam was the destructive work of christ and as a result of that we have a gospel to preach and because you are savable you can put your faith and trust in jesus christ god has flung the doors of salvation wide open in the price that he paid through his son to make you savable now will you apply to your own life that which god has provided for you and that is you make a deliberate decision of your will to put your faith and trust in jesus christ because you can do that you are savable you need to exercise your will and make that decision and if you haven't done that there's no reason in the world you can't do it right now would you pray with me father there's still so much about this that we do not understand simply because you are who you are and we are who we are and our comprehension and ability to understand is so inferior to yours but to the extent we do understand we want to be obedient to what has been revealed and our prayer for anyone here boy or girl man or woman who may never have really dealt with this issue before we trust that they will see themselves as savable god commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners christ died for us that makes us savable and when we exercise our will our volition and say i want to put myself i want to put myself into christ and i want christ to come into me i want to trust him as my savior because he died to make me savable and i want to complete that transaction thank you lord jesus for doing for me what i could never do for myself here is my heart oh take and seal it seal it for your courts above thank you for that redemption in jesus name amen you are dismissed