

MARY CRAIG MINISTRIES, INC.

SERIES: THE BENEFITS OF SALVATION

MESSAGE: INTRODUCTION PART ONE



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In Psalm 103, we read:

**1**Bless the LORD, O my soul;  
And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name!

**2**Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
And forget not all His benefits:

**3**Who forgives all your iniquities,  
Who heals all your diseases,

**4**Who redeems your life from destruction,  
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

**5**Who satisfies your mouth with good *things*,  
So *that* your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

**6**The LORD executes righteousness  
And justice for all who are oppressed.

**7**He made known His ways to Moses,  
His acts to the children of Israel.

**8**The LORD *is* merciful and gracious,  
Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

**9**He will not always strive *with us*,  
Nor will He keep *His anger* forever.

**10**He has not dealt with us according to our sins,  
Nor punished us according to our iniquities.

**11**For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;

**12**As far as the east is from the west,  
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

**13**As a father pities *his* children,  
So the LORD pities those who fear Him.

**14**For He [\[a\]](#)knows our frame;  
He remembers that we *are* dust.

This was a Psalm of David. The whole Psalm identifies various benefits of belonging to the Covenant Lord. With the New Covenant in Christ Jesus, everything is better. For example, believers have a better covenant, better promises, a better priesthood. Christ is better than angels. His sacrifice of Himself for sin does not need to be repeated but is a once for all time sacrifice on behalf of those for whom He died.

To further our understanding of the benefits of salvation in, through, and by Christ, we must lay the foundation. So we will be delving into the application of the accomplished work of Jesus Christ in His effecting atonement within the post creation world. In other

words, how is a person saved effectually? What is the order of what happens? Who is involved in what?

I. *Two Divine Acts:*

*Effectual calling through  
Regeneration*

II. *Two Divine-Human Activities:*

*Repentance unto life and  
Faith in Jesus Christ*

III. *Three Divine Acts:*

*Justification,  
Definitive sanctification,  
Adoption (and the Holy Spirit's sealing)*

IV. *Two Divine-Human Activities:*

*Progressive sanctification  
Perseverance in holiness*

V. *One Divine Act:*

*Glorification*

I will be drawing on the work of John Murray from his book, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, and on Dr. Robert L. Reymond's *Systematic Theology*.

God is a God of order. He superabundantly provides for the salvation of people, just as He sustains and comforts both people and animals in His creation in order to satisfy the needs of both. Ps 104

The salvation provided by God demonstrates the overflowing abundance of God's goodness, wisdom, grace, and love. We see it in the eternal counsel of God. We see it in the historic accomplishment of redemption by the work of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled all righteousness and who met all necessary and sufficient conditions for someone to be saved. We see it in the application of redemption in the work of the Holy Spirit. So how does an elect sinner become a partaker of Christ's accomplishments at Calvary?

This application of redemption comprises a series of acts and processes. Each is distinct, and not one can be defined in terms of the other. Each has its own distinct meaning, function, and purpose in the overall plan of God flowing out of His grace.

There is an order. Someone must be born again before being sanctified. “Regeneration is the inception of being made holy and sanctification is the continuance.” (Murray, page 80)

John 3:3, 5, 6 – one must be born from above to see the kingdom of God and one must be born of water and of the Spirit before one can enter the Kingdom of God. Regeneration is prior to seeing or entering the Kingdom of God.

1 John 3:9 – The seed of God must abide in someone prior to his being delivered from the reigning power of sin. The new birth causes the state of freedom and is therefore prior to the state of freedom from the power of sin.

1 John 5:16 – the regenerated person does not commit the sin which is unto death because he is born of God and God’s seed is in him to keep him from it.

John 1:12 – faith and adoption. The bestowment of authority to become children of God (adoption) presupposes the reception of Christ (faith in His name). Faith is prior to adoption. The act of “receiving” Christ is in the aorist tense in Greek. The “believing in His name” is a present participle, continuous. Faith appropriates Christ at inception and that same faith is the appointed means whereby a believer continues to appropriate Christ’s benefits through to glorification. Authority here refers not to regeneration but to the grace of adoption, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the children of God.

Ephesians 1:13- sealing with the Holy Spirit follows upon the hearing of the word of truth and believing. God seals the child of God with the indwelling Spirit of adoption at the point of God’s act of adoption.

Romans 8:28-30—calling, justification, and glorification. This order reflects God’s eternal purpose of foreknowledge and predestination. Here is a chain of unbreakable links beginning with foreknowledge and ending with glorification. God’s purpose provides the pattern or plan according to which calling takes place. Purpose is prior to the calling, eternally prior. That purpose consists in foreknowledge and predestination (v. 29). Our order starts with foreknowledge and predestination and ends with glorification. Foreknowledge and predestination are prior to calling, justification, and glorification, and eternally prior. Foreknowledge precedes predestination. Foreknowledge focuses attention upon the distinguishing, or electing, love of God whereby the sons of God were elected. There is an ultimate source to salvation and also an ultimate goal of salvation. Cf Ephesians 1:4, 5 “in love [equivalent to “foreknowing”] having predestined” And we know that calling precedes justification.

Foreknowledge and predestination in Romans 8:29 are both prefixed with the preposition *for* “before.” These precede the three verbs that follow. “They speak of God’s purpose prior to the creative acts of Genesis 1, while the last three verbs refer to acts which occur after the creation of the world, evidencing the sequential order of “precreation, post-creation.” (Reymond, page 705)

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. **29**For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. **30**Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called;

whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. Romans 8:28-30 NKJV

We love because God first loved us. 1 John 4:19. This is electing love. It is demonstrated by all that Jesus has accomplished to reconcile those chosen before the foundation of the world to God. God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. 2 Corinthians 5:19. God so loved...

Salvation is of the Lord. Only God saves. It is God who initiates salvation. He conceived of it. He accomplishes it through the work of Christ on the Cross. He applies it through the work of the Holy Spirit. Mother church does not save. Angels do not save. A person cannot save himself/herself. No pastor or person can save. There is no other Name by means of which someone might be saved. Only God saves. Only Jesus saves. Only the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, the Promise of the Father, applies what Jesus has accomplished.

Bibliography:

Murray, John. Redemption Accomplished and Applied. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989.

Reymond, Robert L. A New systematic Theology of the Christian Faith. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998.

*10*He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. *11*He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. *12*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: *13*who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:10-13 NKJV

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