

# Session 1

## *Christ is our All in All*

Every church and believer is always in need of revitalization - as shown in –  
Acts 15:41, “Paul . . . was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.”

Why doesn't it say he was growing the churches?

Because, biblically, health trumps numbers.

Bigger is better only if the growth is the result of spiritual health.

Only 9% of professing evangelicals live from a biblically healthy world view.

This is because they do not understand:

- The specifics of the work of Christ (not Gospel driven and Christ centered)
- The real and ultimate purpose of salvation
- The nature of grace and how to capitalize on it
- The biblical relationship between Christian and the church

Isaiah 5:16

Isaiah 30:18

**Christ** is our Justification - - - having no indictable offenses before God

**Christ** is our Atonement - - - practical removal of separating sin

**Christ** is our Propitiation - - - absorption of God's wrath

**Christ** is our Expiation - - - removal of uncleanness

**Christ** is our Redemption - - - ransom payment

**Christ** is our Satisfaction - - - all legal requirements fully met

**Christ** is our Reconciliation - - - fully restored before the Face of God

**Christ** is our Sanctification - - - maturation in conduct

**Christ** is our Glorification - - - complete perfection at last

## CHRIST IS OUR SALVATION

These truths, about Christ, when understood, believed and accepted, provide:

- recognition by us of our need to be changed
- hope/assurance of imputed/credited change

*“The prime focus recovered in the Reformation was the justification of the sinner on the basis of the objective, historic work of Christ for us.”*

“Catholicism had reversed the vision so that the prime focus was on the work of Christ or his Spirit *within* us. This meant the reversal of the relationship of sanctification to justification. Infused grace, beginning with baptismal regeneration, internalized the Gospel and made sanctification the basis of justification. This is an upside down Gospel. I would add that this ‘upside down’ gospel has not gone away—neither from Catholicism nor from Protestants. . . . When the ground of justification moves from Christ *outside of us* to the work of Christ *inside of us*, the gospel (and the human soul) is imperiled. It is an upside down gospel.

**Graeme Goldsworthy,**

*Visiting Lecturer in Hermeneutics at Southern Seminary from Moore Theological College,  
Sydney, Australia*

- openness to being changed
- power to live the change (Colossians 2:8-10)

Romans 3

# Session 2

## *It's All about Him*

### *Salvation, Christianity and Church are about God!*

I Peter 4:10-11

#### Analyzing and Understanding theText

- Serve one another with gifts “as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”
- “Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God,”
- “Whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies;”
- “So that in all things God may be glorified
- “Through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

#### Illustrating the text

- Bach
  - “Sola Deo Gloria”
- Handel
  - Hallelujah Chorus
- Reformation “Solas” all point to One
  - Faith Alone
  - By Grace Alone
  - In Chrsit Alone
  - According to the Bible Alone
  - For the Glory of God Alone

Discovering the Bible’s expansive emphasis on the ultimate point of the text

- The Bible “drives down” the point of becoming God/Christ/Spirit centered.
- The elemental and paramount purpose of God’s forgiving us is for God to be recognized and magnified in the demonstration of His righteousness. (Rom. 3:25-26) for His own Name’s sake (Ps. 23:3).
- It is ultimately all about Him, and deservedly so.

Ezekiel 36:22-32  
Romans 3:25-26  
Isaiah 48:9,11  
Psalms 85:6  
Psalms 23:3  
Psalms 130:4  
Philippians 1:11  
Matthew 7:13-14

2 Thess. 3:1  
Joshua 4:24  
1 Peter 2:9  
2 Cor. 4:15  
John 9:2-3  
Psalms 73:28  
2 Cor. 5:15

Romans 11:30  
Romans 16:27  
Psalms 30:12  
1 Samuel 17:46  
1 Kings 8:43  
2 Kings 19:19  
Psalms 25:6-7

Eph. 1:3-6  
Eph. 1:11-12  
Psalms 25:10-11  
Isaiah 43:25  
Col. 1:18  
Psalms 109:21  
Psalms 31:3  
Psalms 79:9

## The Concluding and Ultimate Reality

### SALVATION

- IS ULTIMATELY FOR GOD
- IS GOD CENTERED NOT MAN CENTERED
- LEADS TO WORSHIP WHICH IS FOR GOD
- IS GOD CENTERED NOT MAN CENTERED.

## The Concluding Questions

- What have I learned from this?
- What changes are required in my thinking and in my actions?

## Session 3

### *Understanding and Capitalizing on Grace*

#### Saving Grace Defined

Romans 5:8

- Grace, therefore, is giving salvation to actively undeserving people.

2 Corinthians 5:21

- Mercy proceeds out of grace, and is the compassionate application of grace to us in our helplessness.

#### Sanctifying Grace Defined

- Sanctifying grace is the outward evidence of Saving grace.
  - Gal 5:22-23 -Fruit of the Spirit
  - Phil 2:12, Work out your salvation
  - 1 Thess. 5:18-20 (These are a unit of thought.)
    - “In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
    - “Quench not the Spirit.”
    - “Despise not prophesyings.”
- Sanctifying grace is the outward evidence of Saving grace.

Eph. 4:29-30
- Sanctifying Grace is both the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit which changes the function/works of true Christians.

Galatians 3:3
- Saving and sanctifying grace are delivered to us through **the means of grace**.
  - The means of saving grace is the preached gospel of Christ.

- Our primary focus in this point is to learn to “capitalize” on the means of sanctifying grace.
  - Progress in sanctification is in proportion to his/her use of the God ordained, God provided, and God instructed Means of Grace.
  - Important to know - this is not a legalistic duty.

### What are the means of sanctifying grace?

#### ➤ **Scripture**

- The word of **GOD**
- The only infallible rule of faith for practice
  - what to believe
- The only infallible rule of faith for practice
  - what to do with what we believe
    - » James 1:22, “prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”
- What do we actually follow as our “infallible” rule for practice?
  - **CULTURE**
- If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. John 15:7

#### ➤ **Prayer**

- Unhurried, intimate, worshipful communion with God, Coram Deo
- Meditative listening to God in Scripture, i.e., waiting on Him, combined with communing Prayer
  - see nature and purpose of prayer
  - Survey (see next page for survey)

#### ➤ **Church**

- Word
  - Preaching
  - Teaching
  - Small groups
- Prayer
  - Pastoral
  - Congregational
  - Small groups
  - Sacraments
  - Accountability
  - Fellowship

A Christian’s growth in grace is in proportion to his/her faithfulness in using the God ordained, God provided, and God instructed Means of Grace.

- Spiritual Disciplines by Don Whitney
- Our belief is indicated by what we practice. (Heb. 3:12-19)



## Session 4

### *The Biblical Relationship between the Christian and the Church*

1 Peter 2:4-10

Matthew 16:15-18

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

1 Corinthians 12:25-27

- **Historic assumptions about the relationship between the Christian and the Church**
  - I was never taught that my relationship with Christ was anything other than personal.
  - I was never taught that my personal agenda must never be allowed to compete with the welfare of the Body/Church.
  - I was never taught that it is actually sinful to think that I can have a personal agenda which competes with the Church, and, therefore, with its Head, Jesus.
  - I was never taught that my true welfare in Christ is impossible apart from my fitting into His Body under His Headship.
  - I was never taught that if I do attempt to live in such an exclusive manner, I quench the Spirit in my own life, by quenching Him in the Church.
  
- **The common idea about the church in the average evangelical has been:**
  - The church's job is to provide for and promote individual spiritual welfare.
    - It is a service station for fuel and repair for meeting our needs so we can go on our way.
  - It is like FSS and ATC which is to provide for information, obstacle clearance, and directional guidance through clouds, fog and darkness for a safe flight and successful landing on a route chosen by the pilot himself for the accomplishment of his own agenda.
  - The church is seen as an "intruder" into personal and family space. Participation is seen as an infringement rather than functional normality designed by Christ. "Consumer Christians" evaluate the church on the basis of personal preference, and sinfully shop around for personal satisfaction
  - Rising resistance toward vows of membership has resulted in some "churches" no longer requiring membership. This undermines effectiveness in the practice of developmental and corrective disciplinary accountability required by Christ.

This makes faithful participation optional rather than mandatory as is taught in Scripture.

- **These historic ideas and practices have been and are unacceptable to God. They reveal the degree to which personal preference preempts devotion to Jesus, and His Body, the Church.**
  - “I have no one *else* of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus.” Phil. 2:20-21

### **The Bible’s instruction about the relationship between the Christian and the Church**

- The individual exists more for the church than the church for the individual.
  - E. g., the body does not serve the thumb, rather, the thumb serves the body, which, in turn, properly serves the head.  
Further, no individual may ever be a satellite “Christian.”  
If one’s thumb gets hurt It doesn’t go spastic and leave the body. Simply put, it cannot be “I and mine,” at the expense of “we and His.”
  - I wrongly changed “our Father” to “my Father.”
- The functional purpose of the individual believer is seen in this:
  - You are:
    - A CHOSEN RACE,
    - A royal PRIESTHOOD,
    - A HOLY NATION,
    - A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION. -
  - You once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD.
    - That you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

### Matthew 16

- Individual salvation and blessing are for a collective function
  - “You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:4-5
  - “‘I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one’” Jn. 17
    - No person in the Trinity acts independently of the others.
- The emphasis on unity (*oneness*) in Ephesians is for purposes of fruitful function in the church.

- “you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. Eph. 2:19-22
- “No member of the body of Christ is endowed with such perfection as to be able, without the assistance of others, to supply his own necessities. A certain proportion is allotted to each; and it is only by communicating with each other, that all enjoy what is sufficient for maintaining their respective places in the body.”
- John C on Eph 4:7
- Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Eph. 3:20-21
- There is both individual and collective accountability
  - The authenticity of “Remember, Repent, and Return” in Rev. 2 is evaluated by the degree of collective results.
  - The authenticity of individual response to Christ is determined by the evidence of individual commitment to the collective function of Christ’s Body. -
- Clear instruction against personally customized interpretation of scripture.
- “No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.” 2 Pet. 1:20
- “We who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.” Rom. 12
- This subject is one of those matters described in the saying “we can’t see the forest for the trees.”
- You don’t have to go to church to be a Christian.”
  - The truth is you cannot be a biblical Christian while being *para* church. I know that this runs contrary to our historic assumptions, but, here again, our assumptions reveal more about our preferences and our cultural conditioning than they do about biblical truth. The Bible says, “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and gooddeeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near. 26 For if we go on sinning willfully (*by ignoring God’s truth*) after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.” Heb. 10:24-27

## Conclusion

It took me a long time to make this connection, and I guess I understand why. Satan attacks the essential heart of God’s design, and tries to prevent clarification which

would enhance obedience and biblical health and welfare. Just look at how he has and continues to attack the church and its individual parts by diverting individuals away from the church. In doing this he “succeeds” against the individual, because the individual needs the church more than he or she realizes. He succeeds against the church because “the Body” is hindered when its parts are “absent,” or “sick,” or both. The individual is unhealthy apart from the church which naturally results in bad health for the church itself.

I close with this:

“Because this people draw near with their words And honor Me with their lip service, but they remove their hearts far from Me, And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned, therefore behold, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, wondrously marvelous; And the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, And the discernment of their discerning men shall be concealed.” Isaiah 29:13-14