



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Study 8: FINAL SALVATION THROUGH SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14

In the first 12 verses, the Apostle had revealed the doom and damnation of the Antichrist and all his deceived prophets and deluded followers. Now, he turns to believers and followers of Christ, praising God for their calling and destiny by way of contrast. As he turns the thoughts of the Thessalonian Christians from the Antichrist and his perdition to Christ and His provision, he gives thanks to God for them as **“brethren beloved of the Lord.”** By their decision to respond to the call of God, they became saved, converted and included in God’s family, who will live with Him forever. By their repentance and faith in Christ, they were now separated from the world and the god of this world. Once they became converted, they continued following the Lord and obeying His word (1 Thessalonians 1:5-7; John 8:30-32). Their Christian life became Christlike; they sought more grace to face the challenges of the Christian life and continued living righteously. Having received His **free** salvation, they prayed for and pursued **full** salvation, expecting to see the **final** salvation at the end. God called, they responded and were converted and saved. God commanded, they responded and were cleansed and sanctified. God commissioned, they responded and continued in spiritual, sacrificial service until the final consummation in glory. Separated from sin, separated unto the Lord, sanctified and serving the Lord faithfully until the end, true believers in Christ expect to partake of Christ’s glory throughout eternity.

GOD’S CHOICE TO SALVATION BY THE GOSPEL

2 Thessalonians 2:13a; John 15:16,19; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; Acts 15:7-9; Matthew 22:1-14; 1 Samuel 2:28-30; Matthew 13:15; Deuteronomy 30:19, 20; Psalm 119:30,173; 1 Thessalonian 1:2-5

“God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.” **“The beginning”**, in relation to God, means from eternity (John 1:1; Ephesians 1:4). In relation to the believers in Thessalonica, **“the beginning”** refers to the time they heard and responded to the gospel (1 John 2:24; 1 Thessalonian 1:5; 2:13). God, in His sovereignty, made the choice of the believers; the believers, on their part, accepted the choice. God calls us to salvation and those who repent and believe are chosen to salvation. The word of God is very clear on God’s part and man’s part in present salvation. **“The LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be special people unto Himself”** (Deuteronomy 7:6). **“I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live”** (Deuteronomy 30:19). **“The LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself”** (Deuteronomy 14:2). **“Choose you this day whom ye will serve.”** **“If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then He will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that He hath done you good”** (Joshua 24:15,20). Those who reject or turn away from the Lord make His choice of none effect in their lives (1 Samuel 2:28-30; Matthew 13:15). **“Their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them”** (Acts 28:27). Those who reject God’s love and His saving grace are doomed to eternal suffering; all who respond to His gracious choice and live for Him will live with Him eternally.

GRACIOUS CONFORMITY THROUGH SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT

2 Thessalonians 2:13b; 1 Peter 1:2-5; Ephesians 1:4-7; 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3,4,7,8; 5:22-24; Luke 1:72-75; John 17:14-24; Hebrews 13:12-14; Revelation 17:14

“Because God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit.” There is a present salvation and there is a final salvation. **“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved”** (Matthew 24:13). That is final salvation at the end. **“Call for Simon, whose surname is Peter, who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved”** (Acts 11:13b, 14). That refers to the believer’s present experience of salvation. **“But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they”** (Acts 15:11). The Apostles and the house of Cornelius already had present salvation. So, the words of Peter here look forward to the future, final salvation.

“God hath from the beginning chosen you to (final) salvation through sanctification (holiness of heart and life) of the Spirit” (through the agency of the Holy Spirit). This sanctification refers to the gracious experience of inward holiness with all outward conformity to godliness without which no man (Jew or Gentile) shall see the

Lord. This sanctification, provided by Christ, performed by the Spirit and possessed by the believer through consecration to God, absolute surrender to Christ "**and belief of the truth**" (2 Thessalonians 2:13), is necessary for the final salvation - to be fitted for the inheritance among the saints in light. To be saved at the end, safe in His heavenly Home beyond the reach of danger, forever safe in an eternal state of joy and glory, we must abide in salvation and holiness through the grace of God, love of Christ and power of the Spirit.

GLORIOUS CONSUMMATION FOR SAINTS IN GLORY

2 Thessalonians 2:14; Hebrews 2:10, 11; Romans 8:16-18; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:16-18; Colossians 3:1-4; 2 Timothy 2:10-13; Philippians 3:20, 21, 1 Peter 5:1-4, 10; 1 John 3:1-3

"Wherefore He called you by our gospel." God called the Thessalonians to salvation, to full salvation by the preaching of the gospel. Paul did not preach a partial gospel, he preached "**all the counsel of God**" (Acts 20:26,27). He referred to the gospel as "**our gospel**" (2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 Thessalonians 1:5), also as "**my gospel**" (Romans 16:25; 2 Timothy 2:8). This was not a personal, private gospel which he formulated by himself. He received it from God. "**I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, ... which I also received... according to the Scriptures**" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). "**But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ**" (Galatians 1:11,12). What Paul preached is "**the gospel of Christ**" (Romans 1:16) as well as "**the gospel of God**" (Romans 15:16). The gospel of God is the whole counsel of God, all we need to know to have full salvation now and final salvation at the end. This is the same as the gospel of Christ, the full revelation of Christ, to make known all He has provided for us - from salvation to glorification. This gospel of God, the gospel of Christ, reveals all He has done to provide our justification, regeneration, adoption, liberation, redemption, sanctification, glorification. The ultimate outcome of our salvation, "**the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ**" will be the crowning joy and blessedness of our response to God's call and choice.

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