

Christ for us, by which we are saved. Those who are saved by faith are also sanctified by the Spirit, and these two ways and means are one way Paul has chosen to describe our salvation. Peter describes salvation in a similar way.

1 Peter 1:1-2 - 1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are **chosen 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ** and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure. NASB

See then that salvation is expressed in many different ways in different context's of Scripture, but nevertheless is the great reason that God has created mankind upon the earth, and allowed people fall into sin and death, that He might work His great **plan of redemption** upon His elect people, to *"the praise of the glory of His grace"* (Eph 1:4-6). God the Father is the author of salvation, and Jesus is the Savior who carried it out, and He applies it to us by means of His Spirit in regeneration, and in these we see that salvation belongs to the Lord, and that it rests wholly on the work of God. Therefore Paul is moved to thanksgiving for these Thessalonians, *"we should always give thanks to God."* His reason, *"because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation."* See here a very great and precious promise from God of which we can gain a **certain assurance** that we shall persevere in our faith unto a final salvation, even if an Antichrist be empowered to deceive the whole world, God's elect shall never perish with the unbelievers, for God has *"chosen them from the beginning for salvation,"* and *"called"* us out of the darkness of sin and deception into the marvelous light of salvation, and this He has done by means of *"sanctification by His Spirit"* and the gift of *"faith in the truth."* Of the surety of our salvation, John Calvin comments on these verses, *"For he does not merely exempt from fear a few individuals, who had been led to Christ immediately on the commencement of the gospel, but this consolation belongs to all the elect of God, without exception. When, therefore, he says from the beginning, he means that there is no danger lest their salvation, which is founded on God's eternal election, should be overthrown, whatever tumultuous changes may occur. "However Satan may mix and confound all things in the world, your salvation, notwithstanding, has been placed on a footing of safety, prior to the creation of the world." Here, therefore, is the true port of safety, that God, who elected us of old, will deliver us from all the evils that threaten us. For we are elected to salvation; we shall, therefore, be safe from destruction."*

It is for this *"salvation"* of our souls that Paul says is the reason we were *"called"* by God, *"It was for this He called you through our gospel."* Notice here that it is the *means* of the *"gospel"* that we are *"called"* by God and unto Him, yet another expression of salvation and its means. It is through the agency and working of the *"gospel"* that God calls sinners to be saved. Even though we may have been elected by God, *"from the beginning,"* yet there comes an appointed time for us to believe and be saved as we respond to God's *"calling"* us through the *"gospel."* It is very helpful to think of salvation in terms of the order in which it happens, although there is some controversy on exactly what parts of it happen in which order. This discussion is called the *"ordo salutis,"* meaning **the order of salvation**. Wayne Grudem presents a brief but helpful discussion of this in his Systematic Theology, in the beginning of chapter 32, (see the attachment – "The ordo salutis or order of salvation.").

And more than this, as if Paul had not given sufficient cause for their assurance he says, *"that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ,"* a description of our future state of **glorification** when we shall be transformed eternally and made immortal by God, when Jesus comes again (1 Cor 15:51-54, Phil 3:20, 1 Thess 4:15-17). Sharing in the *"glory of our Lord Jesus Christ"* is a yet another marvelous expression of the future tense our salvation, as the great hope of the Christian is to be finally transformed into our immortal state and share in the glory of

Lord, a promise which is mentioned in several places in Scripture (John 17:24, Rom 8:17-18, Eph 1:18, 2 Tim 2:12). It speaks of a time when Christ will have conquered all of His enemies and brought us safely and finally to His eternal rest, when all the elect people from every nation under heaven shall be gathered before Him in the glorious New Heavens and Earth, and evil shall be no more, and God shall be visibly and eternally exalted in His proper place, forever. In that place, *“the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ”* will be bright shining as the sun, and Christ will visibly rule as the great King on the throne of God forever and ever, the glory of His majesty will be greater than anything that can be imagined in the heart of man (1 Cor 2:9).

1 Corinthians 15:22-28 - 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's **at His coming, 24 then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death.** 27 For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. 28 And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all. NASB

Revelation 21:3-5 - 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and **God Himself shall be among them, 4 and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."** 5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." NASB

Revelation 21:23-27 - 23 And **the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.** 24 And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. 25 And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed; 26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 27 and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. NASB

Revelation 22:2-5 - 3 And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him; 4 and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. 5 And there shall no longer be any night; and **they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them;** and they shall reign forever and ever. NASB

It is no small promise for a fallen sinner like you and me, that we should *“gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* This is an amazing promise of a world of paradise which is far beyond our imagination and of pleasures forevermore in a world where evil, sin and death have been abolished forever. These things Paul writes to reassure the Thessalonians that they are indeed held tightly in the grip of the eternal God, in whom is their salvation, and on His promise to save they rested their hope. The Christian's hope shall never fail, for God will see to it that His promises to us are fulfilled, and this He will do very soon, for the end of all things is near.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 - 15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us. NASU

A. 15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us – Paul now encourages them to *“stand firm”* in the afflictions they are facing, and to *“hold to the traditions you were taught,”* by the Apostles, *“whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.”* They had need to remember the great promises of God to them because they were enduring much affliction at the hands of their persecutors, so much so that they thought they had entered into the tribulation period or *“day of the Lord,”* (2 Thess 2:2-3). Having sufficiently reminded them that they were the objects of God's salvation in Christ, he now exhorts them to *“stand firm”* in this faith, meaning to stand their ground on promises they have believed, and not to be moved by their afflictions to the point of despair. See here that Paul