

Joy of Salvation

Isaiah 35:1-10

Introduction

Is salvation past, present or future tense? It's a trick question; the answer is, "All three." We **were** saved when we believed that Jesus died on the cross for us. *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved ... For by grace you have been saved through faith (Ephesians 2:4-5, 8).* Paul says we're **in the process** of being saved in this life. *For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18).* Peter indicated there's a **future tense** to it when he addressed the Jerusalem council in **Acts 15**. *But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will (Acts 15:11).* Today, we're going to look at just what these three tenses of salvation are and the way we find **Joy** in them all.

Justification

Justification is being made right with God. It doesn't mean that God **pretends** we're OK, or that He just **says** we're OK. **Psalm 103:11-12** says: *For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.* God takes away our sins. In **verse 5, Isaiah** says: *The eyes of the blind will be opened.* **Chromatius of Aquileia** says this about this passage: *Although these blind men (referring to the two men Jesus healed in Matthew 9) had no bodily eyes, they had the vision of faith and heart with which they were able to see the true and eternal Light, the Son of God.* When we receive faith to believe, our eyes are opened to see Jesus.

Joy in Justification

The **Joy** we receive in this is the **Joy** of being **forgiven**. I come from an Evangelical background and one of the knocks against them is they're too emotional. Some even go so far as to say that Evangelicals base their salvation on their emotions. Actually, *Evangelicals base their salvation on the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross as explained in the Word of God.* Some get carried away with emotions, but that's not what is taught. We get **excited** about the big things that happen in our life. What's bigger than being forgiven and saved from an eternity in hell?

Sanctification

In **verse 8, Isaiah** mentions the *Way of Holiness*, the highway in the land. This is **sanctification**, which is how we become more like Christ as we grow in the faith. The best picture of this I can think of is John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. *Christian* must follow the *King's Highway* from the *Wicket Gate* to the *Celestial City*. **Sanctification** is a life-long journey, a walk with Christ over hills and through valleys.

Joy in Sanctification

The **Joy** we receive here is in the comfort of **God's presence** in our lives. In **Matthew 28**, before Jesus ascended into heaven, He said, *"I am with you always."* Indeed, He is always with us spiritually. He is **Immanuel**, "God with us." We find **Joy** in His rod and staff as He walks with us through *the valley of*

the shadow of death. We also find **Joy** in His real bodily presence when we receive Communion. There is great **Joy** in this life in Christ.

Consummation

Consummation is the point at which something is **complete** or finalized. It's one of the terms we use for the end of time, when Christ returns. A good portion of our reading deals with this. When you see *the glory of God*, the *deserts blooming* and the *burning sand becoming a pool* you know it's the return of Christ. He also comes with a **vengeance**.

Joy in the Consummation

The **Joy** here is obvious. Our salvation is complete. We will spend eternity with God in heaven. *And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isaiah 35:10)*. What a great time that will be! There will be no more death or sickness, mourning or crying, pain or suffering. All will be joy and gladness, because Christ has won the war and this struggle is over!

Means of Grace

Until then, **verse 3** applies: *Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees*. We're here together to help each other along, but more importantly, we have the **Means of Grace** to strengthen our faith and firm up our feeble knees, so we can experience the **Joy** of living for Jesus, now.

*May the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
