The Gospel of Our Salvation

The gospel of our salvation today in this dispensation of God's longsuffering and grace

A 26-Lesson Radio Series by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

In this 26-lesson radio series Keith Blades takes a close look at the gospel of our salvation and at the assurance of our salvation that God wants us to have. Keith first shows that the gospel of our salvation today is the gospel of the grace of God given to the Apostle Paul, and from Romans 1:18 – 3:26 sets out its three parts. Salvation is by grace, through faith, without works of any kind at any time, yet the gospel is often perverted — sometimes subtly, through gospel cliches that mix together salvation and serving the Lord. From Lesson 10 Keith works through the eight most common reasons Christians lack assurance. The series closes with a survey of the riches of God's grace — at least 35, Keith says — grouped as pertaining to our justification, our sanctification, and our exaltation in Christ.

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Lesson Summaries

L1

Which Gospel Is the Gospel of Our Salvation? *II Corinthians 4 and 11; Galatians 1; the Gospel of the Kingdom; Revelation 14; Romans 3*

The Gospel of Our Salvation and Its Perversions

- The series looks at the gospel of our salvation — salvation from the debt and penalty of our sins, which becomes ours when we trust exclusively in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior — and at the assurance God wants us to have

Satan's Policy of Evil Against the Gospel

- Perversions of the gospel exist because of Satan's strong desire to keep people from being saved; he has a whole policy of evil dedicated to producing and propagating false gospels
- From Galatians 1: God has only one gospel of our salvation today; Satan has a number of false gospels, perversions of the gospel of Christ

The Gospel Given to the Apostle Paul

- God suspended His program with Israel when the Lord Jesus Christ returned from heaven (Acts 9) and raised up Paul as a brand-new apostle, giving him the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of our salvation in this dispensation
- To find the gospel of our salvation we go to Paul's epistles — for example, Romans 3 from verse 21; the gospel of our salvation today is God offering salvation freely by His grace from the debt and penalty of our sins, obtained through faith placed exclusively in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, our substitute Redeemer

L2

The Three Major Parts of the Gospel *Romans 1:15–3:26: Worthy of Wrath, No Escape by Works, Justified Freely*

The Good News God Is Proclaiming Today

- Christ died as our substitute Redeemer, in our place, taking upon Himself the debt and penalty of our sins; He propitiated, or completely satisfied, God's perfect justice with respect to our sins

The Power of God unto Salvation (Romans 1:15–17)

- The gospel is the power of God unto salvation — not your works, not my works — activated in response to faith; verse 17 makes plain that faith alone activates it, the only thing God's grace can respond to

The Three Major Parts

- Part one, Romans 1:18 through the end of chapter 1: God declares all men worthy of receiving His wrath — the gospel starts off with bad news
- Part two, Romans 2:1 through 3:20: nobody can escape being worthy of His

wrath by anything they may try to do

- Part three, the third and final aspect, Romans 3:21–26: only here does the good news begin — God offers to justify any man freely by His grace through the work His Son has done on the cross as our substitute Redeemer

L3

By Grace, Through Faith, Without Works *Romans 9, 3:24–4:8, 11:6; Galatians 2: Grace and Works Mutually Exclusive*

Faith Alone in Christ Alone

- To believe in Jesus means to trust Him and Him alone for salvation — no ritual, ceremony, aisle, promises, or works of any kind; God saves you the moment you place your faith in Christ

Boasting Excluded: Abraham and David (Romans 3:27–4:8)

- Boasting is excluded because our works have no place at all in either the providing or the procuring of our salvation
- What you get in response to works you get not by grace but by debt (Romans 4:4); belief is not a work but a non-meritorious response, compatible with grace

Mutually Exclusive and Mutually Destructive (Romans 11:6; Galatians 2)

- Any time anything is by grace, works have nothing to do with it; works is a destroyer of grace, which is why Satan propagates perversions — injecting works into a message of grace destroys the grace in it
- Something is either one hundred percent by grace and zero percent by works, or the reverse; there is no mixture — they are mutually exclusive and mutually destructive to each other

L4

Faith: The Only Response Legally Compatible with Grace

Romans 4, 11:6; Galatians 2–3; Ephesians 2; Titus 3; I Corinthians 1:21

God's Longsuffering Will Not Continue Indefinitely

- Only God and His grace can save you, and the only thing His grace can accept is complete faith placed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your all-sufficient Savior

Of Faith, That It Might Be by Grace (Romans 4)

- The promise of inheritance is "of faith, that *it might be* by grace" (Romans 4:16): grace could be the operating principle only if faith was the only response upon which it could be given

Works Fit Debt; Grace and Works Exclude Each Other

- Works is compatible with debt, not with grace (Romans 4:4–5); believing is completely compatible with grace — the only thing legally compatible with it
- Because God justifies us freely by His grace, our works are 100% excluded, and faith is demanded as the only response to the gospel

Saved by Grace, Not by Works of Righteousness (Ephesians 2; Titus 3)

- By nature we were children of wrath — what the first part of the gospel declares — but God undertook for us, as the third part declares; we are saved by grace, through faith, not of works (Ephesians 2:3, 8)

L5

Giving Your Heart and Life: Service, Not Salvation *Ministers of Righteousness; Subtle Perversions; II Corinthians 11; Romans 3:21–26; Romans 12:1–2*

Ministers of Righteousness (II Corinthians 11)

- Satan's ministers in this dispensation of grace are not ministers of evil, sin or iniquity but, Paul says, ministers of righteousness: they preach that human good works are necessary for someone to be saved

Subtle Perversions and Gospel Cliches

- As with any counterfeit, the closer a perversion resembles the truth, the more successful it will be; subtle perversions use terminology that sounds legitimate but is taken from passages about discipleship or service to the Lord

The First Misstatement: Give Your Heart and Life to the Lord

- Romans 12:1–2, often used in tracts as if it were about how to be saved, speaks to brethren already saved about how they ought to respond to the mercies of God
- Only a saved person has any capacity to give their heart and life to the Lord; telling someone they must serve the Lord to be saved confuses salvation with Christian service and is a perversion of the gospel of Christ
- Give your heart and life to the Lord is not how to be saved; trusting the Lord Jesus Christ completely as your all-sufficient Savior is how you get saved

L6

Make Jesus the Lord of Your Life *Salvation vs. Discipleship — Matthew 10, Luke 14, Romans 3 and 10*

Subtle Perversions Mix Salvation and Service

- Subtle perversions go unnoticed because they mix the issue of salvation with the issue of serving the Lord; salvation and serving the Lord, and salvation and discipleship, are not the same thing

Giving Heart and Life Is for the Sanctified

- When an individual trusts the Lord Jesus Christ and not anything he can do, God's justice counts that faith for righteousness, forgives his sins and gives him the perfect righteous standing of justification
- In this dispensation of grace God also sanctifies the one who trusts Christ; it is in view of that sanctified position in Christ that a saved person ought to give his heart and life to the Lord

Faith in His Blood, Not Making Him Lord

- Romans 3:21–26 nowhere says anyone is saved by making Jesus the Lord of his life — it doesn't say unto all and upon all them that make Him Lord or give their heart and life to Him; the issue is "faith in his blood"
- Making Jesus the Lord of your life is an issue of serving the Lord, something that should be done once someone becomes saved, but not how you become saved in the first place

L7

First Turn From Your Sins, Then Accept Christ *Romans 6 and 13, Titus 2, Colossians 3 — Turning From Sin Is for the Saved*

Turning From Sins: Another Gospel Cliche

- Telling an unsaved person he must first turn from his sins to be saved is another very common gospel cliche, often linked with others, and a misstatement of God's requirement for salvation
- God does talk about turning from one's sins, but not as a requirement for being saved; He urges us to do it once He has saved us — Christian service in view of the sanctified position He gives us in Christ

Romans 6: The Sanctified Position

- A Christian is also a sanctified individual — God sanctified him when he trusted Christ; because of that sanctification he has the capacity to turn from sin, which an unsaved man has absolutely no power or capacity to do

Urged on Christians: Romans 13, Titus 2, Colossians 3

- In Romans 13:11–14 turning from sins is urged on those who have salvation, in view of who they are in Christ; no unsaved person has any capacity to do that, and telling him he must do it in order to be saved is a perversion of the gospel of Christ

God Has Done Something About Sins

- Sin is the reason people need to be saved, but it is not true that a person must do something about his sins — God has taken care of the sin issue Himself through Christ's redemptive work

L8

Repent: To Change One's Mind *Genesis 6, Matthew 3, Hebrews 6, Romans 1–2 — What Repentance Means*

The Wrong Definition and the Right One

- To repent does not mean to turn from one's sins but to change one's mind about something, to think differently about it; a change is involved, but a change of mind
- The gospel says things about us we don't naturally think; not until we change our mind about how we really stand in God's sight will we ever see the need for a Savior

God Repented (Genesis 6:6–7)

- In Genesis 6:6 and 7 the word repent is applied to God both times; if it meant to turn from one's sins, these verses would say God has sinned — and God hasn't sinned, never has, never will

Repentance and the Gospel of God's Grace

- A person in this dispensation of grace hearing the gospel of God's grace needs to change his mind too: Romans 1:18–32 tells us we are worthy of God's wrath; the second part of the gospel, in Romans 2, convinces men there is absolutely nothing they can do to escape wrath worthiness with God
- In Romans 2 God's goodness leads you to change your mind about thinking you can escape His judgment by good works; repentance does not mean to turn from sin but to change your mind about how you stand in God's sight

L9

Invite Jesus Into Your Heart *God Does the Inviting — Romans 10, Luke 11, Revelation 3:20*

Believing Is Not Inviting

- The final gospel cliche Keith looks at — invite Jesus into your heart — is, like

all the others, a misstatement of God's requirement for salvation

- Someone can invite Jesus into his heart and yet not completely trust in Him as his Savior; believing isn't the same as inviting or asking — they are two completely different things

God Himself Does the Inviting

- It is God Himself who does the inviting, the beseeching or the asking in salvation; as we function as ambassadors for Christ (II Corinthians 5:20–21), it is God's message, and He has given us the privilege of being His spokesman

Luke 11 and Revelation 3:20: Israel's Program

- Of the verses appealed to, Revelation 3:20 is probably the most commonly used, and this is a tremendous and unfortunate misuse of Scripture: the letters to the seven churches are to the churches of the remnant of the nation Israel, and standing at the door is not standing at the door of anybody's heart

Exposing the Perversions

- It is absolutely necessary to expose gospel perversions: the gospel of Christ is perverted when works of any kind are made a requirement for salvation; salvation is not by works, nor by faith plus works — it is not of works at all

L10

The Three Judicial Results of Being Saved *Romans 5:1–2: Peace with God, Access, and Hope of the Glory of God*

Riches of God's Grace and Three Judicial Results

- The moment you trusted the Lord Jesus Christ you became the immediate possessor of a great number of the riches of God's grace; Paul teaches throughout his epistles that we possess over thirty distinct riches
- The very first ones he teaches us about are the three judicial results — the three benefits we receive from God's justice as a result of having been justified (Romans 5:1–2)

First: Peace with God

- The very first judicial result is no longer being under the wrath of God, no longer being a child of wrath

Second: Access — Complete Acceptance with God

- Access has to do with a gracious standing we now have before God: complete acceptance with God. As sinners we were alienated from God, at enmity with Him, and declared His enemies

Third: Hope of the Glory of God

- "Our expectation is no longer indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish"; our hope now is the glory of God — living forever with God in a glorified, immortal body

L11

God Expects Us to Have Much Assurance *I Thessalonians 1:5; Romans 4; I John 5:13: Eight Most Common Reasons for Lacking Assurance*

Justification: A Completely Secure Possession

- Justification cannot be lost, revoked, reversed, renounced, altered, diminished or repealed; it is "an irrevocable, permanently fixed judicial transaction of God's justice"

The Gospel Came in Much Assurance (I Thessalonians 1)

- The Thessalonian believers are set before us as examples of a positive and proper response; the gospel came to them not in word only but "in much assurance"

By Grace through Faith: The Promise Sure (Romans 4)

- When something is by grace and faith procures it, there can be assurance or surety of possessing it; in Romans 4:16 the result is that you understand the promise is sure — if something is sure, you can have assurance of it

Eight Most Common Reasons Christians Lack Assurance

- (1) Failing to really understand and appreciate salvation being by grace; (2) not learning to appreciate the judicial act of justification; (3) failing to learn the other doctrines designed to produce much assurance; (4) lacking an understanding of their two natures
- (5) A lack of comprehension of what happens when a Christian sins; (6) confusing salvation with service and rewards at the judgment seat of Christ; (7) walking by sight rather than by faith; (8) careless, slack handling of God's Word

L12

The Eight Reasons: A Word of Explanation *Eight Most Common Reasons Christians Lack Assurance, Romans 11:6 to Matthew 24:13*

Reasons One and Two: Grace and the Judicial Act

- Reason one: when something is by grace, works are completely excluded (Romans 11:6) — and that's exactly the way it is with our salvation
- Reason two: the judicial act of justification consists of forgiveness of all sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to our account; there is no such thing as disjustification or recondemnation for the believer

Reasons Four and Five: Two Natures; When a Christian Sins

- Reason four: the sin nature is still possessed by Christians — we still have the lust of the flesh and can still sin — but having such lusts is not a sign that we are not saved
- Reason five: God's response to a Christian's sin is not wrath and recondemnation — justification forbids that — but the indwelling Holy Spirit is grieved (Ephesians 4:30); Paul does not say grieved away

Reasons Six and Seven: Rewards; Walking by Sight

- Reason six: our service to the Lord involves our works — the rightful place for good works; Christians think they find Bible verses that talk about losing salvation when actually those verses are talking about losing rewards at the judgment seat of Christ

Reason Eight: Careless Bible Handling (Matthew 24:13)

- Reason eight: careless and slack handling of God's Word misapplies passages, ignoring the context and failing to rightly divide the word of truth

L13

Reason One: Salvation Really Is by Grace *Romans 3:24–4:16: Works Legally Excluded, Abraham and David, the Promise Sure*

Freely by His Grace (Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8–9)

- Reason one: such Christians think some work inconsistent with their salvation

will cost them their salvation; they have failed to grasp that God justifies by grace through faith alone

- God offers to justify us "freely by his grace" (Romans 3:24); when something is free, it's not something you have merited at all
- Being saved by grace means our works have absolutely nothing to do with our salvation (Ephesians 2:8–9); no works, past, present, or future, are taken into account by God when it comes to saving us

Justified the Instant He Trusts Christ

- God's justice justifies a person and eternally saves him the instant he trusts Christ; it doesn't have to wait to respond to the issue of works

By Grace through Faith: The Promise Sure (Romans 4:13–16)

- Since works are excluded, no works we ever perform can make it so that we no longer possess the promise; being by grace through faith makes it sure, so we have assurance

L14

Reason Two: Stuck Being Justified, Permanently Reconciled

Romans 11:29; 8:33–34; 5:10–21: Legal Implications of Justification and Reconciliation

Reason Two: Almost the Capstone

- Reason two: Christians failing to understand and appreciate the legal implications of both the justification and reconciliation that took place when they trusted Christ
- The legal implications of our reconciliation is the ultimate assurance doctrine — almost the capstone — designed to show that we are stuck being justified; there is no way we can ever be at enmity with God again or get back in Adam

No Disjustification, No Recondemnation (Romans 8:33–34)

- There is no such thing in God's justice as disjustification — the cancellation of our justification — or recondemnation, the returning of us to a state of condemnation; in other words, losing our salvation

Not as the Offence: Permanent Reconciliation (Romans 5:10–21)

- Christ did not simply reverse what Adam did: what Adam had before he sinned was probationary life with God, conditional fellowship — there would be no way we could ever have assurance of salvation there; Christ provided for us to have what He has
- As sin reigned unto death in Adam, so now grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life; we are stuck being justified unto eternal life, permanently, eternally reconciled to God

L15

God Is for Us; God Cannot Lie

Romans 8:31–39; II Corinthians 1:17–22; Titus 1:1–3: More Assurance Doctrines

God Is for Us (Romans 8:31–39)

- Every aspect is for us, but Paul cites four in particular: His power (verse 31), His grace (verse 32), His justice (verses 33–34) and His love (verses 35–39)

His Power, Grace, Justice and Love

- Having begun in grace, God is not going to change horses in midstream and deal with us on the basis of our works: we don't only obtain salvation by

grace — salvation is maintained by God's grace

- We have a perfectly secure, eternally secure, permanently established position of reconciliation to God in Christ; the understanding and appreciation for the security of his salvation that Paul expresses (verses 38–39) is the same every member of the body of Christ ought to express

The Veracity of God's Promises (II Corinthians 1)

- Veracity means God always tells the truth — He is truth itself; He cannot lie. Our promise of eternal life in a glorified immortal body is secure also because it is based on the veracity of God

God, That Cannot Lie (Titus 1:1–3)

- God promised eternal life to Himself before the world began, then promised it to us in the gospel He committed to the Apostle Paul; because God cannot lie, the promise is true and will come to pass

L16

Sealed and the Earnest of the Spirit *II Corinthians 1:21–22; 5:1–5; Ephesians 1:13–14; 4:30; I Corinthians 3:8–15*

Two Security Issues (II Corinthians 1:21–22)

- At the moment we trusted Christ, God did some things to us designed as security issues; Paul names two in connection with the Holy Spirit — the earnest and the sealing — to convince our hearts we will receive what He has promised

The Earnest: Earnest Money from God (II Corinthians 5)

- God purchased us out from the slave market of sin and Satan's possession; the earnest of the Spirit is like earnest money from God declaring His purpose to return and receive us unto Himself

Sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13–14; 4:30)

- We were sealed with, not by, the Holy Spirit — the Holy Spirit Himself functions as the seal; a seal is not only for identification but also for security

The Judgment Seat of Christ (I Corinthians 3:8–15)

- The judgment seat is not about whether one is allowed into heaven; it concerns the evaluation of our service and the privilege of being rewarded for service well pleasing to the Lord
- Only saved individuals in this dispensation of grace will be at the judgment seat; a Christian could receive no reward at all and yet be perfectly secure in his salvation

L17

The Old Sin Nature Is Still With Us *Reason Four: II Corinthians 5:16–17; Romans 6:1–13; Galatians 5:16*

Reason Four: Sin Still Dwells in Our Members

- Of eight common reasons Christians lack assurance, three have been covered; the fourth is not understanding that even though we are saved, sin still dwells in our members

Sanctified: Sin's Mastership Broken (Romans 6)

- Romans 1–5 teaches that God justified us; from Romans 6:1, that He has also sanctified us. The old sin nature hasn't been eradicated: sin's mastership is broken, but sin has not been evicted from our members yet

- Being dead to sin, our sanctified position in Christ, is sin's mastership being broken over us; the mechanics is the Holy Spirit baptizing us into Christ's death, burial and resurrection — no water baptism at all

Let Not Sin Reign

- The lusts of sin are still in our bodies, appealing to our mind, mentality and will; in view of who we are in Christ we don't have to let sin reign or obey its lusts
- Galatians 5:16 doesn't say you won't have the lusts; it says you won't fulfill them — when lust or sin comes along, it is not a sign that you aren't saved

L18

When We Do Sin as Christians *Reason Five: Romans 8:33–34; 5:20–21; Ephesians 4:30; 5:16; II Corinthians 7:11*

Reason Five: What Takes Place When We Sin

- Reason five is very closely related to reason four: Christians often do not understand what takes place when they sin, how God responds, and how He wants them to respond — and this can contribute to a lack of assurance

No Disjustification, No Recondemnation (Romans 8:33–34; 5:20–21)

- The starting point: when Christians sin, the loss of justification and the return to a status of condemnation in God's sight does not take place at all

Grieved, Not Grieved Away (Ephesians 4:30)

- When we yield our members unto sin, the Holy Spirit who dwells in our bodies is grieved — that is God's response; but He is not grieved away: the last part of verse 30 shows the impossibility of that

Wasted Time and the Loss of Rewards (Ephesians 5:16)

- When we sin, we have wasted time — for Christians sin is the biggest waste of time there is; because of our sanctified position we have the privilege of redeeming time, purchasing time to God's honor and glory

Sorrowing After a Godly Sort (II Corinthians 7:11)

- God wants us, when we sin, to have a change of mind consistent with who we are in Christ; but the first and most important thing is that there is no such thing as disjustification

L19

Misunderstanding the Judgment Seat of Christ *Reason Six: Suffering Loss, Castaway, Denied — I Corinthians 3, 9; II Timothy 2*

Reason Six: Misunderstanding the Judgment Seat

- The sixth reason is misunderstanding the judgment seat of Christ — in particular verses that speak about suffering loss, being a castaway, or being denied by the Lord in that day
- The judgment seat evaluates our service as Christians, not whether we remain saved or have entrance into heaven — that is guaranteed by the judicial act of justification when we trusted Christ
- God also sanctified us; the issue at the judgment seat is rewards for walking consistent with who we are as sanctified people

Suffer Loss, Yet Saved (I Corinthians 3)

- Suffering loss in verse 15 is loss of rewards, not loss of salvation — "he

himself shall be saved"; Christians take the expression out of its context

A Prize and a Castaway (I Corinthians 9)

- A member of the body of Christ may not be rewarded at all; Keith says the literal concept behind "castaway" is being disapproved — disapproved for rewards

If We Deny Him (II Timothy 2:11–13)

- Verse 12, "if we deny *him*, he also will deny us," is not terminology describing possibly losing salvation — that's not the context; it is possible to be denied the right to reign with Christ as a reward at the judgment seat

L20

God Isn't Dealing With Us as With Israel *Reason Number 7: Deuteronomy 28; Romans 6:14; Galatians 4; Romans 8:18–39*

Reason Number 7: How God Deals With Us Today

- Christians often think God is dealing with us today just as He dealt with Israel in time past; when bad things happen, they often conclude that maybe they aren't even saved anymore

Deuteronomy 28: The Law Contract

- In God's program with Israel a law contract was in effect: God would deal with Israel on the basis of their performance of that law, blessing or cursing them

Not Under the Law: Dealt With as Adult Sons

- We're not under the law (Romans 6:14); a grace system of operation is in effect today, and there isn't any blessing or cursing from God on the basis of our performance
- As Paul teaches in Galatians 4, God deals with us as adult sons, not as little children under the tutor and governor principle of the law

Sufferings in This Dispensation (Romans 8:18–39)

- Paul experienced the sufferings of this present time and, aboundingly, the sufferings of Christ, yet was well pleasing to the Lord; nothing we experience is to be interpreted as separation from the love of God

L21

Improper Bible Handling: Physical Salvation, Seeing the Lord

Reason Number 8 begun: Matthew 24:13; Hebrews 12:14; Isaiah 33:13–17

Reason Number 8: Improper Bible Handling

- The 8th and final reason: all too often Christians are just downright careless in their handling of God's Word

Matthew 24:13: A Physical Salvation

- Matthew 24:13 is taught to mean you have to maintain your salvation, but it isn't talking about possibly losing your salvation at the end of your life at all
- The salvation in verse 13 is the physical deliverance the disciples will experience at the end of the Lord's day: they'd be physically delivered by the angels gathering them together unto the Lord in the land of Israel

Hebrews 12:14: Seeing the Lord

- Hebrews 12:14 does not say "without which no man shall be saved" but "without which no man shall see the Lord" — and seeing the Lord and being saved are not the exact same thing

- Hebrews is not an epistle written by the Apostle Paul to the body of Christ; it is written to the Hebrews, and deals with members of the remnant of Israel who have the prospect of ruling and reigning with the Lord in His kingdom

L22

What Kind of Salvation Is in View?

Reason Number 8 continued: Luke 14:25–33; I Timothy 4:16; Philippians 2:12

Luke 14:25–33: Discipleship, Not Salvation

- Discipleship and being saved are two different things: no one can be a disciple until he is first saved; discipleship is an additional issue, and it does involve one's works
- The Lord speaks of this in His program with Israel, where the cost of discipleship was very extreme — not of discipleship or service in this dispensation of grace

Save Simply Means Deliverance

- The word save simply means deliverance, and there are many kinds of deliverances; there is the kind of salvation the Lord provided for when He died upon the cross and functioned as our substitute Redeemer, our Savior

I Timothy 4:16: Delivered From Satan's Policy of Evil

- Paul speaks of Timothy and the local assembly he oversees being delivered or saved from being victimized by the satanic policy of evil

Philippians 2:12: Working Out Their Own Deliverance

- Mishandled, "work out your own salvation" is used to teach that we can't assume we've got it; Paul speaks of deliverance from the intimidating tactics of their adversaries

L23

Keep Verses Within Their Context

Reason Number 8 concluded: Romans 8:12–13; Colossians 1:21–23; Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 6:4–6

Romans 8:12–13: Functional Life and Functional Death

- These verses are used to argue that living after the flesh means we will spiritually die and lose our salvation; but the life and death here are not spiritual, and not even physical, life and death
- The context is clear from chapter 6, where Paul began the doctrine of our sanctified position in Christ; in Romans 6, 7 and 8 the issue is what we might call functional life and functional death

Colossians 1:21–23: Presented to the Father

- At and after the judgment seat of Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ presents us to God the Father as He found us in our service; that evaluation will be used to determine rewards from the Father — the passage isn't about potentially losing our salvation

Galatians 5:4: Fallen From Grace

- Falling from grace isn't something done when a Christian sins; the people who fall from grace are the people who try to justify themselves by the law

Hebrews 6:4–6: The Apostate Element

- Hebrews is written to the Hebrews and pertains to God's program with Israel, not this dispensation of grace; the people spoken about in verses 4, 5 and 6 aren't even saved in the first place

L24

Surveying the Riches of God's Grace *Numbers 1–10: Colossians 1:12–14; II Corinthians 5:20–21; Romans 1, 5, 6; I Thessalonians 1:10*

Numbers 1–3: Forgiveness, Justification, Eternal Life

- Keith gives the riches as a list, with at least a verse or two for each; there are at least 35, and that doesn't exhaust the list
- Number 1 (Colossians 1:12–14): complete forgiveness of all our sins, past, present, and future; God's justice was put in the position in which it could completely forgive them all
- Number 2 (II Corinthians 5:21), like the flip side of complete forgiveness: perfect justification; our sins were imputed to Christ, and Christ's righteousness was imputed unto us
- Number 3 (Romans 6:23): as part of our salvation package we received the gift of eternal life; we were justified unto eternal life

Numbers 7–10: Saints Through Promised Deliverance

- Number 7 (Romans 1:7): God no longer calls us sinners but saints, and we no longer bear a moniker of unrighteousness; we are called saints because He justified us, forgave us all our sins, and sanctified us the moment we trusted Christ
- Number 8 (Romans 5:5–9): being justified, we are the objects of God's much more love. Number 9 (Romans 5:11–21): permanent reconciliation; taken out of Adam and put into Christ, it can never be lost, forfeited, revoked or diminished

L25

Sanctified Position, Adoption of Sons, the Spirit's Ministries

Numbers 11–22: Romans 6 and 8; I Corinthians 2, 6, 12; Ephesians 1:13–14; II Corinthians 5; Philippians 1:28–29

Number 11: Baptized Into Christ (Romans 6)

- Number 11: the moment we trusted Christ, the Holy Spirit baptized us into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, giving us a sanctified position in Christ so we can live unto God, even though we still have bodies of sin

Numbers 12–13: Under Grace; the Adoption of Sons

- Number 12 (Romans 6:14–15): part of our sanctified position is the liberty of no longer being under the law but under grace; the law was never designed to enable someone to live unto God by being under it
- Number 13 (Romans 8:14–15): God deals with us as sons in this dispensation; we have received the adoption of sons

Numbers 14–15: Indwelt and Sealed by the Holy Spirit

- Number 15 (Ephesians 1:13–14): we are sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption; He sealed us the moment we trusted Christ, He Himself is the seal, and He functions as the earnest of our inheritance

The Spirit's Ministries; Numbers 17–22

- Number 18: members of God's new creation, the church, the body of Christ, which is different from the nation Israel. Number 19: the capacity to earn rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. Number 20: the capacity to know God in intimacy of daily fellowship

L26

Riches That Pertain to Our Exaltation in Christ *Justification, Sanctification, Exaltation; Numbers 23–33: Ephesians, Colossians, I Timothy 3:16*

Three Main Categories of Riches

- The riches group into three main categories: the first, at the beginning of the list, pertain to our justification in Christ; the second to our sanctification, such as the adoption of sons, the Spirit's indwelling, and earning rewards at the judgment seat of Christ
- The remaining riches all pertain to our exaltation in Christ: we not only have justification and sanctification in Christ, we also have exaltation in Christ

Numbers 23–25: Deliverance, Citizenship, Vocation and Inheritance

- Number 23 (Colossians 1:13): total deliverance from Satan's ownership; we were actually owned by him. Number 24: complete legal heavenly citizenship; translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, we belong there
- Number 25 (Ephesians 1:19–23): we now possess a vocation and inheritance in the heavenly kingdom of Christ as the head of all principality and power; the members of the church, the body of Christ, will function as the fullness of Christ's governmental authorities in the heavenly places

Numbers 29–33: Fit for the Heavenly Places

- Number 32 (I Timothy 3:16), in Keith's words: “we possess the privilege now of the fulfilling the mystery of godliness.” Number 33, the final richness: the grandeur of the dispensation of the fullness of times to look forward to and function in throughout eternity

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Which Gospel Is the Gospel of Our Salvation?

There is more than one gospel in the Bible; the gospel of our salvation today is not the gospel of the kingdom, which pertains to God’s program with Israel. When God raised up Paul, He suspended His program with Israel and gave Paul the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of our salvation in this dispensation.

Grace vs. Works

Grace and works are mutually exclusive and mutually destructive: something is either one hundred percent by grace and zero percent by works, or one hundred percent by works and zero percent by grace. If you work for something, you get it not by grace but by debt; belief is not a work but a non-meritorious response, and faith is the only thing legally compatible with grace.

Salvation vs. Service, Discipleship and Rewards

Salvation and serving the Lord are not the same thing; salvation and discipleship are not the same thing. The judgment seat of Christ has to do with the evaluation of our service to the Lord and reward for service well pleasing to Him; it has nothing to do with whether we are saved or kept saved.

Repentance: A Change of Mind

To repent does not mean to turn from one's sins but to change one's mind, to think differently about something; where God is said to have repented in Genesis 6 it cannot mean turning from sins, for God has never sinned. In this dispensation repentance is spoken of in connection with the gospel as changing your mind about how you stand in God's sight; turning from sin is something God exhorts Christians to do after He has saved and sanctified them.

Justified and Permanently Reconciled

A believer's justification is an unalterable, irrevocable, undiminishing, eternity-lasting act of God's perfect justice; there is no such thing as disjustification or recondemnation for the believer. Christ did not simply reverse what Adam did; He didn't provide for us to have what Adam originally had, but what He has: His perfect righteousness and perfect acceptance with God.

Dead to Sin vs. Sin Eradicated

When we trusted Christ God not only justified us (Romans 1–5) but also sanctified us (Romans 6); being dead to sin is sin's mastership being broken over us. Being dead to sin does not mean sin has been eradicated from our members; we still have the old sin nature, and lust or sin coming along is not a sign that we aren't saved.

Israel's Program vs. This Dispensation of Grace

The gospel of the kingdom is the good news about the time having come in God's program with Israel for the kingdom of heaven to be established on this earth; it is not the gospel of our salvation today in this dispensation of Gentile grace. God isn't dealing with us today on the basis of the law contract; we can't use Deuteronomy 28 or Leviticus 26 to evaluate the circumstances of our lives.

What Kind of Salvation Is in View?

Every time you come across the word salvation in the Bible you can't assume it refers to salvation from the debt and penalty of your sins; the word save simply means deliverance, so keep verses within their context and let the context tell you what kind of salvation is in view. In Matthew 24:13 the salvation is a physical salvation for the members of the remnant of Israel at the end of the great tribulation — God's program with Israel, not this dispensation of Gentile grace.

Key Scripture References

Romans 1:15–17	The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, activated by faith and faith alone
Romans 1:18–32	The gospel's first part: all men are worthy of God's wrath

Romans 2:1 – 3:20	The second part: nobody can escape being worthy of His wrath by anything they do; here Paul says men need to repent
Romans 3:21–26	The third part: God offers to justify any man freely by His grace, received simply by faith in His blood
Romans 3:27 – 4:8	Boasting excluded; Abraham and David justified by faith without works
Romans 4:13–16	Of faith that it might be by grace: being by grace through faith is what makes the promise sure
Romans 5:1–2	The three judicial results of justification: peace with God, access, and the hope of the glory of God
Romans 5:12–21	Christ did not simply reverse what Adam did; He provided for us to have what He has — permanent reconciliation
Romans 6:1–15	Turning from sin dealt with among the saved; the sanctified position — baptized into Jesus Christ, dead to sin, sin's mastership broken; under grace
Romans 8:31–39	God is for us — His power (v31), grace (v32), justice (vv33–34) and love (vv35–39); nothing can separate us from His love
Romans 11:6	Any time anything is by grace, works have nothing to do with it
I Corinthians 3:10–15	The judgment seat of Christ: suffering loss is loss of rewards, not loss of salvation
II Corinthians 1:17–22	As God is true, all the promises of God in Christ are yea; sealed and given the earnest of the Spirit
II Corinthians 5:1–5	Paul doesn't say we hope — he knows this without a shadow of a doubt; the earnest of the Spirit is the promise that our bodies will be redeemed
Galatians 1:6–7	Perversions of the gospel of Christ — another gospel which is not another
Ephesians 1:13–14	Sealed with the Holy Spirit, who Himself is the seal — for identification and also for security
Ephesians 2:1–9	By nature children of wrath; saved by grace, through faith, not of works
Titus 3:5	Not by works of righteousness; the washing of regeneration is not water baptism