

Now is the Day of Salvation

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[0 : 0 0] In Galatians chapter 2 we read at verse 20, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me.

And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. Christ has come to bring life, life in all its fullness.

That is the purpose of the free offer of the gospel. That sinners might have life with the Lord for all eternity. God wants that.

He wants that eternal family relationship with his children in heaven. And indeed for it to begin already on earth. That's part of what the offer of the gospel is about.

That we can begin to enter into that relationship now here upon earth. But that life that he desires us to have is not the fallen earthbound existence we have in this world apart from Christ.

[1 : 0 7] You see without Christ rightly or wrongly we are all going through this world trying to do what we ourselves may instinctively feel is right.

Whether in general or right for us in particular. And whether we think about it or not. All individuals. You know whether it's the criminal or the people trafficker or the Nazis in the 1930s.

Or the North Korean communists and the Kim Jong-un or whatever. Or terrorist organizations or Islamic jihadists. You know there is within all of them. However twisted.

However dark or perverse. If you were to ask them. Why do you do these things? Why do you kill these people? Why do you behave so brutally or whatever? Why are you such a criminal intent?

They would give some answer which corresponded to their idea of what they understand to be good. That they might say that a criminal who's trying to make massive profits.

[2 : 1 0] Oh I'm just providing for myself and my family. He might say. Or North Korea. They would say oh the greater glory of the North Korean people. Or the glory of the party.

Or the Nazis would say for the purity of the alien master race. Or the Islamic jihadists might say oh it's for the glory of Allah. They all manage to justify to themselves at least.

That what they are doing is somehow in their eyes perceived as good and right. Whatever may be the reason behind it.

Whatever drives these people. Whatever motivates their actions or their atrocities. They define their own actions to be good. To be right in terms of their own understanding.

Their dark, lost, twisted, inverted sense of right and wrong makes perfect sense to them. Now that's very scary isn't it in a way.

[3 : 1 0] They are driven essentially by a sense of law. It's just that their law is not God's law. And it will be the death of them.

Unless they are saved and set free by Christ. But then again Western liberal democracy. Man-centered and humanist as it is. Also lives by its own code.

Seeking to fulfill their godless understanding of so-called right and wrong. And that is not God's law either. And it will be the death of them too.

You know. Except they be redeemed by Christ. Now of course they are not as bad as the others we mentioned a minute ago. But they will perish just the same without Christ.

And what about those who do embrace God's law. Who may study the Old Testament laws and teachings and commands. And make it their life's work to conform to every detail.

[4 : 0 6] To fulfill every command. Will they live? No. They too will perish. Not because the law of the Lord is bad. Or godless.

Or it is good. But they cannot keep it. No matter how hard they try. So they too will perish. Without Christ. Just as those who like it. If you think about the North Korean communists. Or the Nazis. Or the terrorists. And jihadists. As if they are far out to sea. Drowning.

In 6,000 fathoms of water. And then. So. Liberal democracies. A bit nearer in the shore. But still going to drown. And then. Those who are trying to keep God's law faithfully. They are almost at the shore.

But you can drown in 6 inches of water. Inches from the shore. Just as surely as you can drown in 6,000 fathoms far out to sea. And the point of the matter is.

[5 : 0 1] That without Christ. All. All. Are lost. If they be. Without. Without Christ. The law. Whether man's dark and twisted ideas.

Of right and wrong. Or God's perfect and righteous definitions. Of good and evil. The law. Is the death of us all. As long as we are seeking to.

Be good. And do our best to please God. Or hope that we've done enough. That God would be merciful to us. At the end of the day. By all of these measurements. We are as lost.

As lost can be. Now the life that Christ has come to bring. Is a new life. It is not just about making the old one work better.

It's not about putting a sticking plaster on the old wound. Christ talks about being born again. But we don't have two selves. There's not two of me.

[6 : 0 0] One standing right next to me. And there's a good one. And there's a bad one. And the good one. Well that's in Christ. And the bad one. Well that's. That's the old world. And so. There's not two selves. We only have one self.

Therefore. If we are to begin to be born. In this new life in Christ. Then something inside. The one existing self. Is going to have to die.

The old hopes of being acceptable. By our own efforts. Of having done enough. Must die. So that the new life. The real life.

In Christ. And with Christ. Can actually begin. Whatever it was that was our law. Our sense of fair play.

Our loyalty to the party. Our devotion to our country. Whatever was the benchmark of right and wrong. Even if it was God's own holy law.

[6 : 5 5] That we sought to fulfill. To the eighth degree. It will ultimately be the death of us. Without Christ. And with Christ. It is the death only of the old self.

The old law. The old bad part. Of the me within. For I through the law. Verse 19. Am dead to the law.

That I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless. I live. Yet not I.

But Christ. Live within me. And the life which I now live in the flesh. I live by the faith of the son of God. Who loved me. And gave himself for me.

To die is never easy. At the very least. The facing of the unknown. Carries with it a sense of dread. Truly. We are called to walk by faith.

[7 : 55] And not by sight. But the cocoon must break. And perish. If the butterfly is to live. And if it does not.

The color. And beauty. And wonder. Of the new creature. Will never see the light of day. It will be dead. Before it has begun to live. So.

Likewise. The bud. Must break. If the blossom. Is to flourish. The shell. Must break. And perish. If the little bird. Is ever to fly.

And the old. Hard heart. Must break. If the child of God. Is to be born again. And to live. Through those. Newborn tears.

It is hard. To die. To the old self. It is not for nothing. That Paul says. I am crucified. With Christ.

[8 : 53] But this death. To the old self. Is the beginning. Of life. In its fullness. I am crucified. With Christ. Nevertheless.

I live. Yet not I. But Christ. Liver than me. And the life. Which I now. Live in the flesh. I live by the faith. Of the son of God. Who loved me.

And gave himself. For me. Now. You do not live to self. For the self. Does not live at all. Save in the death throes. Of unrepentant.

Or besetting sin. Which linger. Yes. And which we all have. And which must be fought. Yes. If we turn a couple of pages. We find in chapter 5. Verse 17.

For the flesh. Lusteth against the spirit. And the spirit. Against the flesh. And these are contrary. The one to the other. So that ye cannot do the things. That ye would. But if ye be led of the spirit.

[9 : 49] Ye are not. Under the law. Not under the law now. So when it says. I through the law. Am dead to the law. Why? That I might live.

Unto God. In verse 20. And the life. Which I now live. In the flesh. I live by the faith. Of the son of God. Who loved me. And gave himself for me.

The Lord understands. That it is hard. To let go. Whatever be. The definition. Of our understanding. Of the law. We are programmed.

By our fallen nature. Our ruined race. Fallen. By the violation. Of the covenant. Of works. At the beginning. We are programmed. By our nature. To still keep on.

Vainly trying. To put right. What our first parents. Did wrong. Trying to do. What we define. As right. To as it were. Spend our way.

[10 : 46] Out of this. Spiritual debt. Instinctively. Scraping. And gathering pennies. Toward a debt. Of billions. That we can never repay.

While Christ. In his mercy. Stands. Before us. Holding out. The bill. Of receipt. Stamped. Paid in full.

If only. We would. Empty our hands. Long enough. To receive it. Because the crucifixion. Of our Lord. Is the price. Paid in full.

And the resurrection. Of our Lord. Is heaven's. Demonstrable. Acceptance. Of his sacrifice. And God's. Proof. Of receipt.

That the price. Has been paid. For the justification. Of sinners. By this Jesus. Who was delivered. For our offenses. And was raised. Again.

[11 : 43] For our justification. Romans 4. For the divine. You see. Sometimes. If you send off. You've got a bill. You send off a check. Say in the post. Sometimes you'll get back in the post.

Either the invoice itself. Stamped and signed. Saying received. With thanks. And the date. Or else you might get a separate form. Of receipt. But when the point is. That when it comes back again.

You know that the payment. Has been received. And accepted. Now Jesus. Upon the cross. Makes that payment. For our sin. If we are trusting in him.

He dies. He goes into the ground. He's dead. He's buried. And then. As proof. That heaven's justice. Has been perfectly satisfied. The receipt.

As it were. Comes back. The risen Christ. Appears again. On earth. Now risen again. To the dead. As proof. That the payment. Has been made.

[12 : 37] And accepted. And stamped. And signed. God has approved. Of this payment. That is made. And for all. Who will believe. In this savior.

That price is paid. In full. Yes. It is hard. To let go. Of our painstakingly. Gathered. Little heaps. Of pathetic. Filthy rags.

We call. Our righteousnesses. It is hard. To die. To the old self. Hard. To have it. Crucified. And put to death. Without Christ.

This old life. Is all that we know. And we claim to it. But it is not all that we were meant to be.

You know. You know. Somewhere deep inside yourself. You know. That your chief end. Is designed. To be so much higher.

[13 : 35] Now that the old self. Is put to death. As Paul is describing. Healing. What Paul is describing.

Is a kind of. Both. And. Situation. Yes. He himself. Is still alive. But what he is saying. Is it is not really him. Now. It is Christ.

He is the only one. That is alive. Inside himself. Paul is physically still there. Still present. In the flesh. But he is not. Living. After. The flesh.

Now. But rather. Living by faith. Of the son of God. Who loves him. Once such a soul. Is born again. Of Christ. This I believe.

Is what the Lord meant. When he said. The kingdom of God. Is within you. As he says. In Luke 17. 21. Means that he's planted.

[14 : 29] His own seed. His own spirit. Inside you. The kingdom of God. Is within you. Because it has begun. To manifest itself. There also. Now.

I suppose. Verses in 1st John. I think I've made reference to. In the past. That always. Always kind of scary. 1st John 3. Verses 8 and 9. Certainly always used to. Terrify me.

He that committed sin. Is of the devil. For the devil. Sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose. The son of God. Was manifest. And that he might destroy. The works of the devil.

Whosoever is born of God. Doth not commit sin. For his. That is God's seed. Remaineth in him. And he cannot sin. Because he is born of God. Well. That doesn't fill you with fear.

And doom. And gloom. It all certainly used to fill me with it. Because I do sin. That means I must be of the devil. That means I must be lost. That means I can be of God. Because if I was of God. I couldn't possibly sin.

[15 : 24] And that's what it says. You know. He that is of God. He cannot sin. Because he is born of God. Well if I think I'm born again. And I'm still sinning. Well that's me. I've had it. I must. And even if you put it in the more modern version.

You know. He cannot keep on sinning. Because he has been born of God. It's still scary. Scary enough for those of us who are very conscious. That we do. Keep on sinning.

Despite ourselves. But. As I say. I think I mentioned in the past. I personally. Now understand these verses to me. That if God's seed is in you.

Then. As Jesus says. You know. Behold. The kingdom of God is within you. As the seed grows. It's like if you think of a little pot. Or a flower bear. Or something. Where you plant a seed of something good.

But you've also got weeds as well. There's going to be a struggle. Between the good seed you've planted. And the weeds as well. And there's going to be a competition. As it were. For the nutrients in the soil.

[16 : 23] As the seed grows. That kingdom of Christ. Within you. That kingdom of God. That is within you. Fights. And wrestles. And overcomes. More. And more. Of the old.

Lingering. Sinful. Nature. The sin that is left there. Still sins. That which remains of the old me. Still sins. It's still in there.

Lusting. And fighting. And designing. All that is evil. And causing me to sin. And I sin willfully with it. The last remnants of the old you. Dying.

Struggling. Agonizing. In the long death of crucifixion. And that's one reason I would suggest to you. Paul says this. I am crucified with Christ. Crucifixion was a notoriously long.

Agonizing death. That's one reason why it was used. And the old self takes a long time to die. But it doesn't go through phases.

[17 : 20] If the Lord is also. And he doesn't know. He says. Oh now I'm feeling stronger. The old self. Now my sin is so much more powerful. No. Just like the soul on the cross. He's only going to be going one way.

He's only going to be weakening. He's only going to be dehydrating. He's only going to be getting weaker. And weaker. And dying. More. And more. Whoever is on the cross.

Whether it's in the criminals. Or whether it's Christ himself. There is only going to be one trajectory. And that is down towards death. And so likewise. With the old self within.

Yes. There may be a battle going on. With the spirit of Christ within us. But it's only going one way. Because there's nothing replenishing. That old sinful self.

And the old self that is there. Agonizing in the long death. Of crucifixion. It still sins. The holy seed on the other hand. The kingdom of God.

[18 : 15] Which is within you. That cannot sin. The holy thing the Lord has planted. Within the soul. The heart of his own children. That cannot sin.

And the more it grows. And expands and matures. There are the less room. The less space. The less power. The less strength. The less oxygen.

There is for the old. Dying. Sinful self. What is of God. Cannot sin. What is of the old self.

Will and does. But it grows weaker. And dimmer. Till at length it perishes. And all that is left. Is the cross.

Which has put it to death. And the life of the saviour. Who loved me. And gave himself for me. As Paul writes here. Chapter. In verse 12.

[19 : 13] When we are thus perfected. When the old self. Is finally put to death. Completely. When that which is of God. Has completely taken control.

When we are thus perfected. Perfectly filled. Perfectly filled. With the full grown seat of the kingdom. Full filled. That I believe. Is when we leave behind.

This body of death. And finally. Fully ripened for glory. Are ushered into heaven. It takes a lifetime. If it didn't take.

However many years you have. Then you'd be in heaven sooner. Wouldn't you? Because you'd be perfected. You'd be absolutely made. Sinless and complete. Because the old self in you. When you're completely put to death.

That doesn't happen. Until we finally breathe our last. And Christ in you. The hope of glory. Becomes Christ in you.

[20 : 13] Fulfilled. And ripened for glory. And we are ushered into heaven itself. Now we think because there's a struggle going on. We think because there's a war.

Oh I can't possibly be a Christian. Oh I can't possibly be saved. Look at all the sin that is within me. Look at how it's always battling away within me. If the Lord was not doing some kind of work within you.

There would be no wrestling. There would be no warfare. There would be no problem. You'd be quite content. Because the worldling who has nothing of the Lord in him.

By and large. Nine times out of ten. Is quite content with himself. That's what I was like as well. I remember being and thinking. I'm a good guy. I'm not bad. You know. I don't do this.

I don't do that. I'm not a murderer. I'm not a rapist. I'm not a drug deal. I'm okay. You know. I pay my taxes. I do my stuff. You know. I try to be a good neighbor. I'm a good guy. What could possibly be wrong with me?

[21 : 10] I think. If there is a God. You know. Then. He's bound to say. Well. You know. You did your best. Come on in. That is the worldling view of the Lord. And of themselves. They are quite content.

God is okay. I'm okay. Everybody else is pretty much okay. Some people differ from me. Some people are nastier than me. But hey. I'm nastier than some other people. But you know. I'm okay.

That is the worldling's assessment. It is only the one in whom the Lord has begun to work by grace. Who recognizes there's a war going on inside. Because something new has been born.

And something old is fighting for breath. And it is kicking and screaming. And it is sinning loud and proud. And it is making sure that I know about those sins.

And that I feel them. And that I'm drawn to them. But each time. And each day. Each year that passes. The seed that is planted. The Lord's grace grows a little higher.

[22 : 09] And stronger. And taller. And there is less and less. For the old self to draw on. Has it begun in your life yet? This conflict.

If it has. Then the kingdom of God. Is within you. As Jesus said. And when Jesus said those words.

His hearers were looking for a spectacular messianic event. A conquering king. Messiah. That would crush. And throw out their enemies.

And establish a righteous kingdom of God. Now. Rest assured. That will come. But that will be the second coming. And it will be God's enemies.

Rather than those of any nation state. That will certainly. Be the case. They will be destroyed. But yes. If you want power and glory. To come from heaven.

[23 : 04] That will certainly be the case. But. Be careful what you wish for. Especially if you are not. As yet prepared. Just like in our own.

Darker moments. When. In my own moments. For example. When I bewail the state of the world. Or the country. Or the church. And plead with the Lord. Lord. How can you do this?

How can you allow this? How can you. How can you allow evil to triumph? And your people to be persecuted. In so many countries. And sin to run rampant.

In the corridors of power. Why don't you just. Eliminate evil. Well. Aside from the fact. That the Lord. Eliminate evil. Zap. Just like that. I guess we'd be right.

In the fighting line. And guess whose own evil. Would be dealt with. Right then and there. In the way that. I think I want the Lord. To act. God knows far better. Than we do. What is right.

[23 : 58] And good. And what it is. Perfect. Kindly. But when I finally stop. Moaning to the Lord. Long enough. To actually listen. For the still. Small voice.

As though. I hear him say. Well I will. Lest assured. I will be doing. Precisely. What you will say. I will. Indicate my people.

I will. Eliminate the evil. And the cruel. And the God haters. Such that you will. Seek for them. But not find them. They will cease. From the earth.

And that. Will be the new heaven. And the new earth. It is as though. The Lord is saying. For now. The wicked. Are filling up.

Their portion. And giving them. Free reign. To show. To themselves. How deep. And far. Their own. Wickedness.

[24 : 51] Will run. If it is only. Unfettered. And then. When I judge. Then. When I judge. Even. They will be. Unable to plead. Any mitigating.

Circumstances. For I gave them. Power to do good. Or to do evil. I gave them. Strength. To protect. Or to oppress. I gave them. Liberty to choose.

I gave them. Space. And time. To repent. And in the end. The only thing. That ever. Limited the depth. Or extent. Of their evil. Was. The want.

Of time. And opportunity. To commit more. So it's not. If you're lying. Prone on the guy. And somebody's. Coming up at you. With a knife. And they've already. Killed you other people.

And here they are. Coming at you. Just as they're about to. Somebody clocks them. In the head. And they fall down. Now. What stops them. Killing you. Did they suddenly. Have a change of heart. And say. I must go unconscious.

[25 : 45] Just now. No. They don't suddenly. Change their minds. What stops them. Is. They have run out. Of opportunity. Because somebody. Clocks them in the head. With a piece of wood.

Or some other weapon. In there. And they fall. It's not that. They have changed their minds. It's not that. They didn't want. To come at you. And kill you. It's not that. That something different.

Happened in their heart. They just ran out. Of opportunity. And time. To do it. And so it is. With those. Who end up. On the side of the wicked. If they had another lifetime.

They'd fill that up. With Christless. Enmity as well. With persecution. With hatred of the Lord. With self-indulgence. If they had ten lifetimes. They'd fill those up as well. The thing that we need.

To be concerned with. Is not. Oh Lord. Why don't you destroy evil. But rather. To be thankful. The Lord. Doesn't yet destroy. All the evil. All at once. Because. We'd be right there.

[26 : 40] In the flying line. We need to have. The evil within ourselves. Dealt with first. And that is something. Only Christ can do. That is something. Which is seed.

Planted in our hearts. By his grace. Begins to crucify. It's not a zap. Pow. Nuking of all our sin. All at once.

It's a slow crucifying. A putting to death. I am crucified. With Christ. And Christ. Christ took a long time. To die.

Even though it was short. By terms of crucifixion. For those days. Crucifixion is a long. Slow death. And for the old self. And the old sin. It's a long. Slow verse.

Nevertheless. I look. Yet not I. But Christ. Live within me. And the life. Which I now live. In the flesh. I live by the faith. Of the son of God. Who loved me. And gave himself.

[27 : 36] For me. Now. When the curtain. Comes down. On this. Fallen world. And the judgment. Is set. And the books. Are open. Where would you rather be?

Now. Standing with the powerful. And the rich. And the godless. And those who have. Ruled as they wanted. In this world. But still without Christ. Waiting for your name.

To be called. Saying. Oh well. I give it a good go. I live my life. To the full. I love the life I had. I did this. I did that. I did the next day. I did everything. On my bucket list.

I am fulfilled. Now. Let's see what God has to say. You want to be with that crumb? Waiting for your name to be called? Hoping that your understanding of the law.

Whatever motivated your sense of right and wrong. Was good enough to impress God? Or. Having been crucified. With Christ.

[28 : 32] To be living. By the faith of the son of God. Friend. You are going to let go of the law. Whatever your understanding of the law is. You are going to let go of the law.

Let in the life. Everybody is living by their definition of good and evil. Their definition of the law. You are going to let go of the law. Let in the life.

For this. Is a life the world cannot take away. This is a joy the world cannot suppress. I am crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless I live. Yet not I but Christ live within me. And the life which I now live in the flesh. I live by the faith. Of the son of God who loved me.

And gave himself for me. If you know yourself a sinner. Then this is good news. For you. Because this is good news.

[29 : 30] For sinners. And this is a good day. In which you hear it. For the Bible says. Now. Is the accepted time.

Behold. Now. Is the day of salvation. The day of salvation. The day of salvation.

And this is a good day. For sinners. So is the day of forgiveness. This is good news. This is the day of salvation. This is an episode of Rome. But this is the time of salvation. So let's look at here. For sinners. It's good news.

It's good news. Listen! Um, beware. Those numbers have changed. For sinners. They stand there.