

The much more gospel

*Discovering deliverance from
danger in life and fulfilling God's
eternal purpose*

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Introduction

Gospel -- Good News. Yes, it most certainly is.

Have we seen and recognized just how good the 'good news' really is?

Have we confined the good news to matters eternal – which of course is vitally important but not the whole account of what Jesus achieved, the much more gospel, as we shall see.

The Apostle John in writing to Gaius (3 John verse 2) wrote, *'Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.'*

We read and know the concept of being saved - that is salvation. We readily and correctly apply it to our eternal deliverance from the wrath of God, the judgement of God. We apply it to eternal matters. BUT we can easily miss the fact that the Greek word '*soteria*' means 'deliverance from danger,' which applies just as much to our lives whilst on earth – what I am calling the 'much more gospel.' [So 'salvation' and 'deliverance from danger' are interchangeable.]

I am not alone - the Apostle Paul from whom I am taking the lead, writing to the Romans in chapter 5, uses 'much more' 5 times. In looking at these and others we will come to understand the 'much more gospel.'

As John said to Gaius - *'prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.'*

In all of this we remember Jesus telling His disciples, in response to their question, that the most important commandment is, *'to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength.'*

This is not the 'natural' position for mankind- so asking the Holy Spirit to fill us with more and more love for Jesus is the most important thing we can ask.

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Chapter 1

Salvation is both eternal and temporal

This is where we - start where we consider the proposal that there is much more to the 'good news' of the gospel. It is very easy to focus intently on what we call salvation (literally deliverance from danger) and then on evangelism. That is not wrong – but it is not the fullness of the good news. Deliverance from danger for believers now, whilst on earth, can be overlooked, even to the point of being ignored or down graded. Frequently this is the case.

So a quick look at God's provision and design for matters eternal and temporal will get us on the right track and properly balanced and complete.

Eternal

'For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.'
Matthew 18:11 (Note this verse has been wrongly excluded from the NIV**

All those who become believers are the Father's gift to His Son and none are lost.

'Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.' John 18:9

The father wants all to come to repentance.

'The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.'
2 Peter 3:9

Hence the importance of spreading the gospel of salvation – that all may hear and have the opportunity to come to Jesus.

Temporal (relating to the present time)

Once saved one becomes a believer with the promise and guarantee of eternal life. Whilst still on this earth he or she becomes a member of the worldwide church and normally a local expression thereof.

The Lord has His design for the church which is expressed in the scripture:

‘And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers and after that miracles (or miracle workers), then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.’ 1 Corinthians 12:28

The passage goes on to stress the importance of love (Ch 13) and the injunction to seek after the spiritual gifts (Ch 14)

Ephesians 4 tells us His purpose in giving gifts to mankind – *‘He gave some as (or to be) apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers’* chapter 4:8-11.

For *‘the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure and stature of the fullness of Christ.’* Chapter 4:12-13

Eternal salvation (deliverance from danger) is to do with the wonderful promise of eternal life.

Temporal salvation (deliverance from danger) is to do with being fully equipped for life and works of ministry – being like Jesus in the world.

And so that the working out of God's eternal purpose: *'to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ (wrongly omitted from NIV**)* to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access with confidence through faith in Him.' Ephesians 3:9-12

So there we have it. From the very beginning God knew man would fall into sin – so He had a strategy to deal with that in order to demonstrate His manifold wisdom to His and our enemies.

** All references are to the New King James Bible which is based on the Textus Receptus – used by all past generations. The modern versions are based on later texts of very poor quality containing errors and omissions. See the booklet 'Is the bible reliable.'

Once saved, delivered from danger, the indwelling Holy Spirit gets to work changing us from glory to glory – a life long process, without which we would make no progress.

Chapter 2

Delivered from danger by Jesus blood sacrifice.

Delivered from wrath.

We are considering the 'much more' gospel.

Much more is '*pollus mallon.*' Bullingers Critical Lexicon defines this as very very much, exceedingly, more, more strongly and denoting constant increase – more and more.

This is how Paul describes the effect of Jesus death –
'But God demonstrates His own love toward us that whilst we were still sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved (delivered from danger) from wrath through Him.'

Romans 5:8-9

The key words are 'justified' and 'saved from wrath.'

Justified by His blood – His sacrifice cleansed us from all sin so that the judicial decision is, 'no fault or defect can be charged against us.'

This we will refer to as 'stream A.'

Saved from wrath – the wrath of God is set against all sin and will find its outpouring in the period we call the tribulation at the end of the age before Jesus returns for His millennial reign. Believers are not destined for wrath and Jesus '*snatches us to Himself from the wrath to come.*' 1 Thessalonians 1:10

The book of Revelation describes God's wrath being measured out through the scroll with seven seals. Jesus is worthy to open the scroll , *'for you are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals for you were slain and have redeemed us to God by your blood.'*

Revelation 5:9 part verse

The seventh seal released seven angels who had seven last plagues - then the wrath of God is complete.

Much more then, because we have been justified, much more we are saved from the wrath of God. Delivered from the danger of the righteous wrath of God against sin.

Jesus death and blood sacrifice accomplished this for all those who believe because through His sacrifice we have been reconciled to God. (verse 10)

This wonderful aspect of the much more gospel is guaranteed, for those who are born again, by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit within our human spirit, now transferred from death to life.

It is Finished

Complete

Guaranteed

**This is GRACE - bought by His blood, His death.
There is more to GRACE as we shall see.**

Chapter 3

Delivered from danger by Jesus life

Delivered in order to reign in life.

'For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be saved (delivered from danger) by His Life.' Romans 5:10

It is the fact that Jesus rose from the dead, and is alive now at the right hand of God, that brings the multiple benefits of His abundance grace. Grace being unmerited favour. We deserve nothing, we achieved nothing - He did it all and gives grace to us as a free gift.

'But the free gift is not like the offence. For if by one man's offence many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.' Romans 5:15

'For if by one man's offence death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.' Romans 5:17

Sin abounded through all humanity. Due to Adam's disobedience and death entered the human race, such that everyone born after Adam and Eve were created, was born into the kingdom of death - in Adam all died. Hence the need to be born again.

Jesus death and resurrection were acts of grace at the highest level - the completely innocent giving His life for the totally unworthy, thus satisfying the penalty of sin for all who will believe.

Jesus resurrection being the absolute victory over death.

Both His death and resurrection to life were essential to fulfill God's purposes.

Even though we still sin, God's grace is bigger and greater than our failures.

'Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'
Romans 5:20-21

This we will refer to as 'stream B.'

This is GRACE as we come to believe and understand and can say with PAUL, *'I have been crucified with Christ; It is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me.'* Galatians 2:20

Work in progress

It will be completed

'Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.' Philippians 1:6

Chapter 4

The two streams of deliverance from danger

The work of the Holy Spirit

So we see two streams of salvation - that is of deliverance from danger. One eternal and the other temporal.

It is important to see that both are of vital importance. To see people 'saved' for eternity is, of course, at the very centre of Christianity. God's grace and purpose is fully served when those who are saved for eternity are fruitful whilst still on earth.

So far we have seen the desire of the Father and the obedience of His Son to bring about our redemption, our reconciliation to Him.

Now we just take a moment to see the role of the Holy Spirit in our wonderful salvation. (Stream A)

'Most assuredly, I say to you , unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' John 3:3

'Most assuredly I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.' John 3:5-6

When we live in the spirit we are fruitful, in the flesh we profit nothing – no fruit.

The gift of the Holy Spirit for eternal salvation is given when we are born again - it is His work and He, the Spirit, accomplishes it when we believe in Jesus - bringing our human spirit back to life. Then He, the Spirit, takes up residence in our human spirit sealing us and guaranteeing our inheritance - filling our human spirit with His presence.

'In Him (Jesus) you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.
Ephesians 1:13-14

The role of the Holy Spirit in our temporal salvation (Stream B) - He, the Spirit, in power, is the gift of the Father and of Jesus:

But we are examining the much more gospel and whilst the hope of and the promise of eternal life is truly wonderful there is much more to our salvation - that is our deliverance from danger for the remainder of life on earth.

This is the gift of the Father as we read in Luke 24:49 when Jesus promised to send the gift to the disciples, who had already received the Spirit dwelling in their human spirits earlier:

'Behold I send the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued (clothed) with power from on high.'

Whilst the Holy Spirit comes to reside inside our human spirits (as in John 20:22 for the disciples **) here, in Luke 24:49, as the Promise of the Father He comes upon us like a garment – that is the meaning of the word ‘endued.’

So these are not one single work of the Holy Spirit but two complementary works. One to bring new life and to be the guarantee of our salvation and the other to give us power to reign in life and to demonstrate His wisdom to His, and our, enemies.

** The disciples had to wait to receive the Holy Spirit indwelling them until after Jesus was resurrected – *‘But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.’* John 7:39

The disciples received the indwelling Holy Spirit on the evening of Jesus resurrection when Jesus breathed on them. (See John 20:19-22) They had to wait 50 days until Pentecost to be clothed with the Holy Spirit and power.

Confusion – receiving the Spirit

This understanding that there are two impartations of the Spirit – one to dwell in our human spirit when we first believe and another to empower us, has led to poor teaching, misunderstanding and confusion.

There is some confusion over the 'filling' with the Holy Spirit. It is clear that in the first outpouring over both Jews and Gentiles people were born again and clothed with power, speaking in tongues, in one instant. However, as we read on in the scripture we find Peter, John and Paul asking believers they met, 'are you filled with the Spirit?' Some had not even heard of the Spirit others had not received the impartation of power. Acts 11:1-3 and Acts 8:14-17

The receiving the fullness of the Spirit, the impartation of power, can be seen to happen in a demonstrative way or it can be quiet and gentle. Both are fully valid – the Spirit knows how to deal with each of us individually. Equally for some it is necessary to actively take hold of (receive) the Spirit.

Not a once off experience

The coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell us on initial belief is a once off experience - He comes, never to leave. After that we read in Acts that the believers were 'filled' with Spirit more than once (Acts 4:31).

Ask, ask, ask and keep asking, was Jesus message to the disciples – Luke 11:9-13:

'So I say to you, ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, and to him who knocks it will be opened. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If then you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?'

Take note of the 'much more.' Note also the heavenly Father 'much more' giving the Holy Spirit is in the context of us continually asking.

For us to be continually full of the Spirit asking and keeping on asking is to be recommended!

Chapter 5

The eternal (stream A) once and for all.

Key features:

Eternal - for eternity

Guaranteed by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit

Purchased for us by Jesus blood

Grace - Freely given to us for justification and reconciliation. Giving us the gift of righteousness.

Absolutely complete - 'It is finished.'

Our part - to believe in Jesus and His sacrifice on our behalf. The moment we first believe we are born again, indwelt by the Spirit and our inheritance guaranteed

Our human spirit is filled with the Holy Spirit

This is hope for eternity, the certainty of future blessing.

Powered by Jesus death - Romans 5:9

Chapter 6

The temporal (stream B) ongoing day by day – God's eternal purpose.

Key features:

Temporal - for our time on earth

The gift of the Father – freely given by the grace of Jesus

Clothed with the Spirit's power – we call it the baptism of the Spirit.

Abundant grace – to reign in life

Equipped to fulfill God's eternal purpose of the demonstration of His wisdom to principalities and powers

Our part – 'work out your own salvation (deliverance from danger) with fear and trembling'

This is hope, the certainty of blessing for today

Powered by Jesus life - Romans 5:10

'He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.' Hebrews 7:25

The much more gospel - is both filled and clothed with the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 7

In this world – trouble

We have three specific enemies whilst we are in this world:

The devil and his cohorts - *'the thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy.'* John 10:10 Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

The world - *'do not love the world or the things in the world.'* 1 John 2:15 The world is under the rulership of the devil, the prince of this world – and thus evil abounds.

Ourselves - *'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.'* 1 John 2:16 We have free will, it is our choice to use it wisely.

With these set against us no wonder Jesus said, *'in the world you will have tribulation.'* John 16:33

But, in the same breath He said, *'but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.'*

For, *'He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.'* Hebrews 7:25

Trials and temptations

It is James who gives us much to learn about trials and temptations. The original text *'pierasmos'* is translated both as trial or temptation so can be read both ways.

So what does James teach us:

- 1) First and foremost, *'count it all joy when you fall into various trials.'* Chapter 1:2 Impossible? It certainly seems so when one is in the midst of a trying situation. But James brings our attention to the outcome:
- 2) The testing of our faith produces patience. It is through faith and patience that we inherit the promises of God. Hebrews 6:12.
- 3) Perfection - this to make us perfect and complete, lacking nothing
- 4) Then if we lack wisdom - ask for it. As Jesus said, *'ask, he who asks receives.'*
- 5) James tells us that the Lord does not test or tempt anyone - that is the result when we are drawn away by our own desires.
- 6) Finally, *'do not be deceived my beloved brethren. Every good and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.'* 1-17

Peter wrote, *'Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may be glad with exceeding joy.'* 1 Peter 4:12-13

Essential understanding and thinking - It is not our Lord God who is testing or tempting us. He is good, very good and the answer not the problem.

Paul wrote, *'Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.'*

Ephesians 6:11-12

So we should not be surprised when we suffer trials and we should be aware that our enemy seeks to rob, to kill and to destroy.

Now we can become aware that there is spiritual power behind the trials and the losses we suffer. Then the scripture urges us to resist the devil and he will flee from you. 1 Peter 5: 8, James 4:7

With the baptism of the Spirit we receive power. The much more gospel is for us to reign in life – so we need to know, understand and live in the much more gospel.

Paul, to the Corinthians, wrote – *'No temptation (or trial) has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted (or tried) beyond what you are able, but with the temptation (trial) will also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.'*

1 Corinthians 10:13

This is not saying that the Lord has sent the trial or temptation, as we read in James, but that He is faithful to help us.

Now we must consider the profitable truths which will make us complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Chapter 8

Work out your own salvation – grace and the essential principles

We have just considered Jesus warning that in this world we will have tribulation – trouble. We share Christ's sufferings, just as He had the opposition of the devil, the world which rejected Him and the need to deny His own flesh.

Now we have the injunction to work out our deliverance from danger, the salvation of our souls.

'Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.' Philippians 2:12-13

We have read about the gift of the Father which is sent by Jesus – the baptism of the Spirit, clothing us with power.

In order to fulfill this injunction we need to ask ourselves –

- 1) Do we understand and agree with the baptism of the Spirit as an additional work and experience of the Holy Spirit - that is additional to His initial work of bringing our human spirit back to life on conversion?
- 2) Have I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

If not please realize that without it there will not be the power to enjoy all the benefits.

Working out our own deliverance from danger is an ongoing matter of day to day being led by the Spirit - whether that leading comes via our own indwelt human spirit or by another means used by the Holy Spirit to communicate with us.

There are key elements of truth which are taught in the scripture to help us to successfully work out the deliverance from danger of our souls whilst on earth. Here they are dealt with in a summary form and more detailed information is in the booklets mentioned under each heading - highly recommended for further study. These booklets are available as free downloads at freebiblebooklets.com or in printed form at Amazon - type in the name of the booklet.

We have already discussed the baptism of the Spirit and the fact that it is all ours by the abundance of grace that the Lord makes available to us. **Here are the key elements of truth and understanding needed for working out the salvation of our souls:**

- a) By grace we are individually chosen by Him - *'you did not choose Me but I chose you and appointed that you should go and bear fruit.'* John 15:16
That makes each believer SPECIAL.

In the ICCB booklet series 'Inherent power' has details of our salvation and of the various elements of our relationship with Jesus.

This clarity of our position as believers is foundational.

- b) By grace the Lord has prepared a calling for each of us. *'For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which He prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.'*

Ephesians 2:10

The works the Lord has prepared for each one are SPECIAL – whether it be a secular job, as it is for the majority, or a seemingly ‘spiritual’ job.

Being in the calling God has prepared is essential – as this is where His power towards us will be manifested day to day.

The ICCC booklet ‘Work is a first class calling’ has much more detail.

- c) Hope is an essential feature. It is hope - that is the certainty of future blessing, that helps us, strengthens us to work out our deliverance from danger. Before we came to Christ we were without hope and without God in this world. Now it is, *'Christ in you the hope of glory.'*

Colossians 1:27

There is a great deal more on hope in the ICCC booklet, ‘Hope’ the certainty of future blessing.

- d) Faith. *'Without faith it is impossible to please Him.'*
Hebrews 11:6

To understand faith is therefore vital. There are two elements to consider – i) there is trust – *he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.* Hebrews 11:6

ii) Then there is faith – *‘faith comes by hearing and hearing by the (spoken) word of God.’* Romans 10:17
‘Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ Matthew 4:4
Much more in the ICCC booklet ‘Faith or presumption.’

- e) Hearing God speak. Essential to acts of faith. Things done without God’s instructions are works of the flesh and count as ‘filthy rags. Jesus did what He saw and heard His Father doing – we can be fruitful no other way.

Much More in the ICCC booklet ‘Hearing God speak.’

- f) Renewing the mind. Keeping our minds focused on following the Spirit, and on thinking only on things which are helpful to a fruitful life, is an essential element. Scripture tells us that the way a man thinks is the way he is or becomes. (See Philippians 4:8 for a list of things good to think about and meditate on.)

The ICCC booklet ‘Renewing the mind’ for much more.

- g) Working from rest. This is a major principle of which we hear very little – it is so easy to get caught up on what we think are good works, good things to do. Scripture is very definite. *‘There remains a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest.’* Hebrews 4:9-11

Much of what we think of as good works are not commanded from the Lord, but come from our flesh, and thus lack His power and effectiveness.

It is necessary to get rid of the thinking ‘I must be doing something for the Lord, and replace it with patience as we wait upon Him and walk by the Spirit.

Much more on this vital doctrine in the ICCC booklet, ‘Working from rest.’

- h) Be strong in the battle. Another major principle of which we hear little. Whether we like to acknowledge it or not we are in a spiritual battle as both Peter and Paul teach. (1 Peter 5 and Ephesians 6 among others.) If we ignore it we lose – and then we tend to put continual problems, minor and major losses, difficulties and sicknesses down to just natural causes.

Again much more in the ICCC booklets – this time ‘Be strong in the battle.’

Chapter 9

Prayer and His exceeding greatness

Prayer

Sometimes prayer can be thought of as a bit mysterious. It is helpful to get back to the simplicity of the original language.

There are two principal Greek words translated as 'prayer.'

- i) 'Proseuchomai' – means to speak out loud towards – in this instance towards the Lord.
- ii) 'deomai' – means expression of need – request.

No special words, no special format – keep it simple.

In addition praying in tongues is very helpful, especially when we don't have clarity in what to pray for or how to pray. When we pray in tongues the Spirit makes intercession for us. Praying in tongues has the effect of building us up.

'But you beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' Jude 20-21

'Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.' Philippians 4:6-7

His exceeding greatness

We get a glimpse of Jesus exceeding greatness when He is transfigured before Peter, James and John, as recorded in Matthew 17:2 and Mark 9:2. – His face shone like the sun, and His clothes were shining exceedingly white like the snow. The Father spoke - *'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, – hear Him.'*

Jesus as our bridegroom and first fruit *'is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'*

2 Corinthians 4:18

Paul Teaches of His exceeding greatness in his letter to the Ephesians, praying that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened:

- 1) *'that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe.'* Chapter 1:18-19
- 2) *'Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to His power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations.* Chapter 3:20-21

This is the way we can come to pray – being certain of His exceeding greatness towards us, and certain that He is able to do more than we ask or think.

Exceeding greatness

Paul expressed the truth of God's exceeding greatness to the Ephesians urging them to know God's good intentions for them – and for us.

He did not cease to give thanks for them, praying for them, *that the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, they may know the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe.*
Ephesians 1:18-19

The same power that raised Christ from the dead is towards us to empower the glory of His inheritance in us. We need to see much more of this don't we! At the coming rapture of the born again believers we will experience the fullness of His exceeding greatness - a wonderful prospect.

When we consider the salvation, the deliverance from danger of our souls we need to understand the truth given to us in the scripture. *Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine (what we believe), for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.* 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Paul urges the Ephesians to understand that *God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.* Chapter 3:20

So Paul is teaching, urging us to know and understand the exceeding greatness of God and he prays accordingly - for he knows and understands prayer and its power.

So we come to look at how prayer helps us.

We need to work out the salvation of our souls and prayer is essential.

We are not going to be able to rise to the challenges we face whilst on earth and we will not be able to generate the strength and power from our own resources. We need the day by day enabling and the changing power of the Holy Spirit.

So we have to ask – that is to pray. The word pray in the original is ‘*proseuchomai*’ which means to speak out loud or ‘*deomai*’ which means to make our request. It is simple - we address our Father, through our relationship with Jesus. It not a religious exercise – it is simple and straight forward.

It is worth repeating Jesus instruction:

Ask, ask, ask and keep asking, was Jesus message to the disciples – Luke 11:9-13:

‘So I say to you, ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, and to him who knocks it will be opened. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If then you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?’

This is humility - recognizing we cannot do it ourselves without Him and His exceeding greatness towards us. Ask, keep asking, and receive.

Sit Paul writing to the Ephesians in chapter 1 outlines our blessed position in Christ – it is a good chapter telling us where we ‘sit.’

Jesus praised Mary for sitting at His feet. Martha on the other hand was busy, busy. Busy – *‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.’* Luke 10:41-2

It is so easy to get caught up with doing things and doing things ‘for the Lord.’ Much better to sit and wait for instructions from the Spirit. That way we follow Jesus example - He did what He saw and heard the Father doing. The Holy Spirit brings us the words of Jesus to enable us see and do what good works He has already planned for us - instead of getting into our own good works, which being like filthy rags count for nothing. *‘our righteousnesses are like filthy rags’* is in Isaiah 64:6

Sad to say, a great deal of ‘christian’ and ‘church’ activity falls into this category.

Walk

Still with Paul in Ephesians chapters 2 to 5 are all about walking on earth as believers in Jesus Christ.

- A) Starting in Chapter 2 we are told that God has prepared where we should walk – *‘For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that should walk in them.’* Verse 10

Interpretation! Should we see this as specific works for each one of us or as a generalized instruction to do good things? David, in the Old Testament, saw each of his days as being fashioned for him by the Lord, and written in the book before they even existed. (Psalm 139:16.)

Faith comes when we hear the voice of God (Romans 10:17)– *‘man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds (is proceeding) from the mouth of God.’*

Matthew 4:4

As we are expected to walk by faith we conclude that the meaning of Ephesians 2:10 is specific – God has prepared specific good works for us to walk in. That we have specific things to do is confirmed by other scriptures – 1 Corinthians 7:20 stay in the calling you were in when you were called (saved.)

Change if God tells you to. i.e. some are given as gifts to mankind – some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. No one can assume these roles – it is God who determines it, instructs it, and blesses it.

B) Chapter 4 :1 ‘Walk worthy of your calling.’

When we walk in our calling God’s grace is there, *‘to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift.’* (verse 7) Christ’s gift is that of abundance

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‘For if by one man’s offence death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.’ Romans 5:17

So as we obediently stay doing what we were doing when we were saved (or changing because what we were doing was illegal, or because the Lord has clearly spoken to us to change), the presence and the power of God will be with us – we call that His anointing.

As we go we are urged to be careful to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace with our brethren.

C) Not in the futility of our own thinking (4:17)

Put off all forms of unrighteousness – don't steal, lie, speak corrupt words – don't give any space to the devil.

The biggest problem is our own thinking. Instead of listening and waiting at rest we think we know better and strive to do things 'for the Lord.' Many go into 'church' or 'spiritual' work without His instruction to do so and then fall away or lack any effectiveness.

D) Walk in love (5:2)

Put away all unrighteous actions, because they do not glorify God and they harm others.

E) Walk in light (5:8)

Light is truth. Truth sets us free. Walk in truth. Find out what is acceptable to the Lord – what He wants you to do – and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

F) Walk circumspectly (5:15-21)

Don't walk as fools, do not be unwise – rather understand what the will of the Lord is. Be filled with the Spirit. Speaking and singing in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks.

In other letters Paul says:

'Walk in newness of life' – as we have been raised in Christ Romans 6:4

'Walk honestly' Romans 13:13, 1 Thessalonians 4:12

'Walk by faith and not by sight' 2 Corinthians 5:7

Frequently he says 'walk in the Spirit,' 'not after the flesh'

Stand

Ephesians 6 verses 10 to 18 give Paul's teaching to the Ephesians on the necessity to stand and when we have done everything to keep standing – against all the wiles of the enemy. Spiritual warfare is a subject in itself the ICCC booklet 'Be strong in the battle' has much more.

Standing is resisting the devil . He will seek to rob, kill and destroy in small ways and in bigger ways. Often our problems are put down to 'natural' causes and we forget that the wiles of our enemy include using what appear to purely natural event. We are to stand in resistance of all his ways. We cast our cares on the Lord and stand steadfast in the faith.

It is His eternal purpose

Working out our own salvation, deliverance from danger, is our objective so that we fulfill God's eternal purpose – that is, *'that the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.'* Ephesians 3:10-11

This why God appointed some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists and some pastors and teachers – to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Chapter 10

Filled and clothed with the Holy Spirit, to be led in God's purposes.

The key to enjoying the much more gospel is found in our relationship with the Holy Spirit. That starts with being born again when the Spirit brings new life to our human spirit, transferring us from death to life, and indwelling our human spirit from that point on. Guaranteed!.

Then the promise of Jesus:

*'And I will pray the Father and He will give you another** Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.'* John 14:16-17

(** there are two Greek words translated 'another' – 'allos' and 'heteros.' 'Allos' is another of the same type whilst 'heteros' is another of a different type. Here the Holy Spirit is said to be of the same type as Jesus Himself.)

About to leave Jesus said to His disciples, *'Behold I send the promise of My Father upon you, but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued (clothed) with power from on high.'* Luke 24:49

We can see that the Holy Spirit comes to fill our human spirit when we first believe and are born again, and that He comes again to clothe us with His power. This double blessing is confirmed in Acts 8:16-17 –

'Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen on none of them, they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit' Acts 8:14-17

Experience tells us sometimes it does happen that at the moment of being born again a new believer receives both the indwelling and the empowering with the Holy Spirit. However in my experience that is rare. The empowering of the Holy Spirit is accompanied with signs, commonly speaking in tongues and miracles. It is a gross mistake to assume you have received the empowering of the Spirit on initial belief without any evidence of spiritual power.

So lets consider the effect of being empowered by the Holy Spirit – we refer to that as the anointing.

Anointing

The Old Testament has examples, shadows, of what was to come in the New Covenant. For example, the prophet Samuel anointed with oil, here representing the Holy Spirit, both Saul and David for their role as King. (and others)

The anointing itself does not mean that everything one does is right - for we all still have free will. It does mean that when we walk in God's preplanned works for us His power will be with us to accomplish His purposes – often beyond anything we could imagine.

Anointing is for fruitfulness in what we are called to do, whether it has the appearance of being secular or spiritual - the key point is obedience to His plans for our lives.

The ICCC booklet 'Anointing' has much more on this subject.

Fruitfulness - the goal of our faith

'By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit.'
John 15:8

'You did not chose Me but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.' John 15:16

Fruitfulness of character is defined in Galatians - as we *walk in the Spirit*, the fruit of the Spirit is more and more developed in us - *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, self-control*. Chapter 5:16 and 22

Fruitfulness of actions we see in Paul's instructions to the Colossians. *Seek the things which are above, set your minds on the things above, then - 'whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.'* Chapter 3 verses 1, 2 and 23

Above all things remember the first commandment.
'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength.'

We have tried to cover the important truths that enable us to successfully fulfil our objective - that of working out our deliverance from danger whilst still on this earth. In so doing God has a divine purpose revealed in Ephesians chapter 3 verses 10 to 11.

'To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

As we work out our deliverance from danger we also fulfill God's eternal purpose.

The ICCC booklet 'Fruitfulness' has much more on this subject.

Conclusion

'Much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.'

I pray this study may help you through life's journey.

'Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.'

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