



Board Members Along With Shane & Abby Jackson

materials into this digital format. These messages will then be placed on CDs or computer chips. We also use messages from pastors that are already on CDs.

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**“SOME DAY MY
EARTHLY HOUSE WILL
FALL,
I CANNOT TELL HOW
SOON ‘T WILL BE;
BUT THIS I KNOW—MY
ALL IN ALL
HAS NOW A PLACE IN
HEAVEN FOR ME.**

**AND I SHALL SEE HIM
FACE TO FACE,
AND TELL THE STORY—
SAVED BY GRACE;
AND I SHALL SEE HIM
FACE TO FACE,
AND TELL THE STORY—
SAVED BY GRACE.”**

Fanny Crosby
The blind hymn writer

Mission To Guyana

John Hunter and his wife, Kathy, recently made a mission trip to Guyana. They were working with Almond Katryan, who has been instrumental in founding two churches and a training center in that needy part of the world. John Hunter described his time in Guyana as “blessed and busy.”

The following is an excerpt from the report written by John Hunter upon return from their mission trip.

“Kathy and I did a number of day camps for children at the missions and at the school on the resurrection of Lazarus using flannel graph. We also did the life of Joseph in flannel graph at the Training Center for the regular students and the after school program children. Kathy also spoke to the staff of the Center and 3 ladies’ meetings. I also preached at both churches and the three missions and conducted a



John & Kathy Hunter

number of evening classes for the pastors in training. The Lord opened the door for me to speak in two public schools—once to high schoolers and once to an entire primary school. It was a busy schedule. One day I spoke five times as well as led singing and games for the children. The Lord was gracious to allow strength of voice as well as blessing in the messages. To Him belongs all the glory for “without Him we could do nothing”.

There are many needs in Guyana as approximately one in every five people has HIV/Aids. This is a product of spiritual darkness and poverty. But hope is always and exclusively to be found in Christ. Brother Almond would like to have a 34-passenger bus to assist in the ministry at a cost of \$30,000.00 US dollars. There appears to be sound reasoning behind this request. He would also like to build extensions over all the mission houses to accommodate the increasing crowd at a cost of about \$1,000.00 a piece. Because of the poverty that exists at present in Guyana, he would also like to supplement the men’s incomes who are leading each of the mission works at a cost of \$300.00 a month for each.

One more request involves my wife and me as we have been asked to replace Brother Almond and Nalin for a year so

they can visit all their supporting churches and resolve some issues with the US government over taxes and citizenship. This would be the first real furlough in over 30 years on the field. I have also been requested to start a Pastors' Training School to meet the future need of Baptists in Guyana. The cost for this venture is estimated to be about \$15,000.00 for the year plus the cost of some means of transportation. I had hoped that in a third world country my wife and I could live on a much smaller sum but Brother Katryan suggests this is a reasonable amount.

I am unable to adequately convey the Lord's blessing on this trip nor the scope of the ministry in a letter but Kathy and I have taken over 400 pictures we are going to edit to present to interested churches. Please let us know if you would like to see

this presentation and please seek the Lord's direction on our behalf."

Contact Information:

Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
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 Pastors
 5440 Highway 202, Anniston,
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“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15

Mission To Mexico



Danny & Janet Roten

Danny Roten always addresses his “Mexico Mission Brief” to “Praying Friends”. He has himself experienced serious physical afflictions in the last years and yet makes the majority of his prayer requests for those to whom he is ministering the gospel of the grace of God. As you pray, please remember Danny and his family. We are to pray for those who go as well as for those to whom they are sent. - Editor

Here is one of Danny's latest reports, including a picture of “Fernando” and others with him. And though you cannot see the color of Fernando's jacket, as mentioned by Danny, he is the second man from the left.

“Dear Praying Friends,

Greetings again. I returned Monday from Cardenas. It is a joy to see the steadfastness and joy with which the brethren of the church there are serving the Lord. For several months now Fernando has been attending the worship services. He is wearing the brown jacket in the attached photo. Last Sunday he gave his testimony of faith to the church and requested baptism. He comes from one of the darkest backgrounds that you would not even want to imagine. He has been beaten by his brothers who are angered that he will not ferry drugs for them anymore. Please do remember him in your prayers.

Grace and Peace,
 Bro. Danny”

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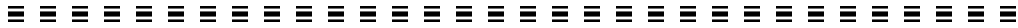
Mission News & Updates continued on next page and pages 18-19

Editor's Note To Missionaries And Pastors

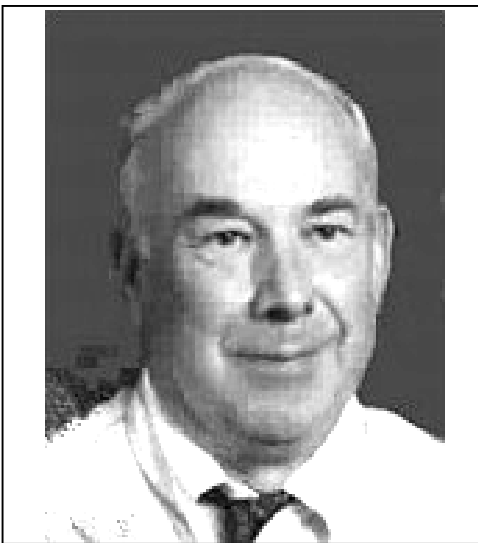
Any news or updates for sovereign grace missionaries, upcoming conferences, special meetings, etc., should be sent to the editor at least six weeks prior to distribution if possible. Please include all pertinent information and send in Microsoft Word (preferred) or Microsoft Works format at the below email address. Issues are scheduled for mailing the first weeks of April, August and December.

Email: ronstaley1@verizon.net

The Russian Bible Society



The Russian Bible Society is the oldest established mission to the part of the world now called the Commonwealth of Independent States (C.I.S.). It was first founded in 1812 in a time when the iron-handed church-state relationship was loosened somewhat. For fourteen years the society went well and a good Russian translation of the New Testament was printed. There is no doubt God used this period to spread His Word in the language of the Russian people, which produced an evangelical revival in the land. However, in 1826, under Czar Nicholas I the Russian Bible Society was disbanded.



Dr. Bob Doom

Dr. Robert R. Doom serves as director of Global Baptist Mission and its sister mission, The Russian Bible Society. Brother Doom also serves as an assistant pastor at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church of Ashville, N. C., the church he pastored for nineteen years before devoting his full time to the aforementioned missions. He is available for speaking engagements and may be reached at the address given at the end of this article.

In 1944, under the direction of Pastor Basil Malof, the Russian Bible Society was brought to new life. Since that time it has been at the frontline of providing Bibles for Russia and its people, and is committed to giving the pure Word of God to various language groups in the C.I.S. We are convinced that the greatest gift we can give to any people is the pure Word of God in their native tongue. Thus, we are interested only in word for word translations (not paraphrases) based on reliable manuscripts, such as the received Greek Text.

It is a goal of ours at the Russian Bible Society to help provide the New Testament

for all the non-Slavic languages, which have one million or more speakers and do not yet have a New Testament. There are nineteen such groups in the C.I.S., so the opportunities are at hand. Bibles have been entering the largest country in the world after years of their rejection and confiscation by the Communist authorities. Never since the history of Marxist control has there been such openness. We are committed to using this open door to its fullest possibility and to do our very best to provide the Word of God for all the people of the former USSR.

We believe that the Living God is using us along with others as an instrument in seeing many *“redeemed...to God by thy blood out of every KINDRED, and TONGUE, and PEOPLE, and NATION.”*

A Personal Testimony

The following incident is recounted by Brother Peter Lunickin who along with others has been overseeing the distribution of the Ossetian New Testament in North and South Ossetia. The Institute for Bible Translation had asked the Russian Bible Society to be involved in printing an Ossetian children’s Bible, but we wanted to wait and invest in a New Testament printing. Others, however, paid for a printing that included verses from the newly translated New Testament.

“She was sitting in tears – the reason was a Christmas gift, the colorful children’s Bible in Ossetian published by the Institute for Bible Translation. I thought that such a gift would result in very positive emotions from this aged lady. I thought that Bella Kargieva, my schoolteacher in the past, would sincerely thank me for such a gift and assure me that she and her grandchildren would read this Bible with joy. But instead she cried...and I helplessly stood by not knowing what to say. She finally calmed down and explained:

‘I am 74 years old. My life is ending. Just ten minutes ago I thought I had a good life. I am a Communist, the living patriot of Lenin’s ideals. I spent all my life teaching. I raised three children of my own, and am now giving a hand with my grandchildren. Peter, by giving me this Bible, you’ve completely changed my outlook on the value of earthly life. I just returned to long-past memories of when my mother used to hold in her hands a notebook of Bible stories for children written by hand. Every night before bed, she told me stories of different Bible heroes. She was a sincere believer in God. She tried to guide me to God from my early childhood. She

wanted me to believe in and love God. And there was a time when I also sincerely believed in and loved Jesus. I believed in Him until I met atheists, people who so pitilessly killed that good seed my mother planted in my heart. In 1937 my father was arrested, and six months later they took my mother away from me. Since then I have never seen my parents. The Soviet authorities took my happy childhood away and threw me into the orphanage where all children were told of a bright future without God. So I adopted those new ideas and the rest of my life I dedicated to Communism. I had almost forgotten that perfect start of my life when my heart was open for God. Because of your Bible gift, I remember those days clearly. In my mind I just saw my mother kneeling before God in prayer. Peter, please teach me how to pray!’

That evening she knelt before God once again. She cried hard asking God’s forgiveness of her sins. And then cried rejoicing in finding that peace her mother knew so much about! I was sincerely happy for the new saved soul who at the end of her life finally came to her Savior through reading a children’s Bible.”



Bella Kargieva

Note: The Russian Bible Society sent 15,000 copies of the Ossetian New Testament to North Ossetia arriving October 3, 2006. We trust to print another edition in 2007, God willing.

For further information, please contact:

Russian Bible Society
Dr. Bob Doom, Director
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Asheville, NC 28816

SALVATION: *PROGRESSING*

Gary Long



“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.” 1st Corinthians 9:24

“Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” Hebrews 12:1b-2a

Please note that the title to this article does not signify a progressing to salvation but in salvation. We believe as The Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship has set forth in its Articles of Faith concerning both Salvation and Sanctification. This essay is to show how closely intertwined these two truths are.

As Martin Lloyd-Jones has pointed out, Salvation is the all-inclusive term for the truth of Justification, Sanctification and Glorification. Once that is established as the point of reference we may proceed with little difficulty. We know from the Fall to the last trump, the Bible is a book about salvation – always the New Testament seeks conformity of the saved to the Savior, and such conformity includes a serious and steady progression in the grace of God.

Do we not all believe that in a real sense we were saved in eternity past, are being saved continually from the power of sin now, and that the salvation that is ours will be completed when we die? Past, present and future, is this most excellent gift of salvation from God to His people. In Galatians 3, Paul gives but two understandings as to how we receive the Spirit of God – 1) By the works of law, or 2) By the hearing of faith. There are no other options. The question is thus asked after Paul graphically presents Christ crucified before them, *“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”* This question presents to us where the great revelation of salvation is begun – belief

(hearing of faith) in the crucified – which is the same as ‘obeying the truth,’ in verse 1. Salvation, though decreed in eternity, is manifested in time by the working of the Holy Spirit, through conviction of sin and revealing Christ in the sinner. It is in accordance with Romans 10, etc., that we firmly believe God has chosen the means of the proclamation of His Word as that which men hear and believe. And if the salvation of the sinner is the greatest work Heaven can do, it is equally true that the keeping of that sinner saved is also a miracle.



Gary W. Long

Brother Gary Long is pastor of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Springfield, Missouri. He also oversees the ministry of Particular Baptist Press, which is also based in Springfield, Missouri.

Philippians 2:12-13 says, *“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”* Paul tells the Philippians that they have an important part in this salvation, not in its procurement, for that was accomplished at Calvary, but in

its reception and progression. Our ‘working out’ becomes the sure evidence that God has worked within!

How then do we ‘work out our own salvation?’ We shall condense the answer simply to this – fruit bearing! *“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”* (John 15:2). The connection between bearing fruit and abiding in Christ is inseparable, *“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”*

It is obvious that the work of God in a man's heart does not end when that man believes; rather, it continues as that saved sinner (through the Holy Spirit) then begins to work out his own salvation, or to bear fruit. The parable of the Sower is the best illustration of this ‘progression in salvation’. The emphasis of this parable is not on the eternal decree of the sinner's election unto salvation, rather on the result of the spread of the Gospel. The seed is cast forth on different soil and then we see the goal of that seed on the good ground, which is the progression of salvation in bearing fruit.

We confess the difficulty in trying to separate progression in salvation from progressive sanctification, for in most respects, they are the same and have the same result. Thus, the terminology is interchangeable, so that just as progressive sanctification is dependent upon positional sanctification, likewise progression in salvation is de-

pendent upon election unto salvation, God always working first.

An impossible conclusion made from Scripture is that the work of God in salvation creates passivity. We are not fatalistic and fully recognize the great responsibility and work put upon us. We should never see salvation as doctrine only, but as an experience that cannot be separated from the doctrine. We may argue the doctrine, but we are awed by and joy in the experience. It is true predestination and election affirm a 'no works' salvation yet those truths will produce the most diligent saints, who gladly and earnestly work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

What is the purpose of the Bible? Is it not from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation

22:21 a book about salvation? Peter would have us to know, "*And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge...*" etc. Then to establish a correct understanding of what their calling and election is, Peter tells them to give diligence to make those wonderful truths sure. It is when diligence is given to this 'addition,' or when diligence is given to bearing fruit, or when diligence is given to working out their own salvation, that they will never fall. (I Peter 1:10)

There is great error in Christianity regarding this essential truth and we must be

careful to distinguish between salvation of the Holy Spirit and that of which man is a determining contributor. The 'fig leaves' of human effort have been sewn with the thread of carnal desire and both thread and leaves will eventually fail and the nakedness of depravity will be exposed. Free-willism, by its very nature, has led to inventions that will try to cover its faulty premise, of which carnality is the obvious outcome and so, the creation of a 'carnal Christian' – a 'Christian' that has no desire for the things of God, since he has been taught the importance and vitality of his own fallen, human will! How could such a doctrine evolve? Not from those who give diligence in working out their own salvation, nor from any who have been shown the necessity of bearing fruit, as true Christians do; rather, such doctrines have come from those who receive the seed, but are wearied with the things of God, or drawn away by the cares of the world.

God is perfect holiness and requires such from all who will spend eternity with Him. "*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.*" The only way any person can have the holiness that God requires is to have His holiness, His perfection, and that is to be found in but one place, in His Son. We must be in Christ if we are ever to experience the Kingdom of God.

Salvation is eternal, but it is manifested in time. And though it may happen instantaneously, like Paul, it was long in process from God's side. All of his training as a Pharisee and even his hatred for the things

of Christ were preparatory for his conversion and apostleship. Salvation to Paul was his life, not just a habit or weekend happening.

John Bunyan understood the progression of salvation well and that is what *The Pilgrim's Progress* is about. He clearly shows we cannot live in 'Vanity Fair' or go back to the 'City of Destruction' and end up entering the 'Celestial City'. Once we leave the City of Destruction, there is no turning back; there is progression, even when we falter, when we are attacked, when we spend time in 'Doubting Castle', still there is progression. Christians press on because they *are* Christians. The unbeliever fails to maintain progression because he is *not* Christian. The unbeliever may walk with Christians, be a church member, and "progress" while it is to his advantage, but sooner or later he will wither up and die – either because he had no root, or because the cares of the world choked any religious inclination.

As Christians progress toward the completion and perfection of salvation, which is to see and be with Christ, it is with the understanding that this progression is effectual, continual and necessary. As the songwriter has penned, "O I want to see Him, look upon His face, there to sing forever of His saving grace." Praise God for every soul who desires Christ unto the end! Truly, only a sheep would do so. "*My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*" That, in essence, is the progression we experience in salvation.

FUNDING OF THE SOVEREIGN GRACE MESSENGER

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It is our desire to publish the Sovereign Grace Messenger three times yearly. This depends upon sufficient funds being received by contribution to the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship (SGBF) general fund and those specially designated for the Messenger.

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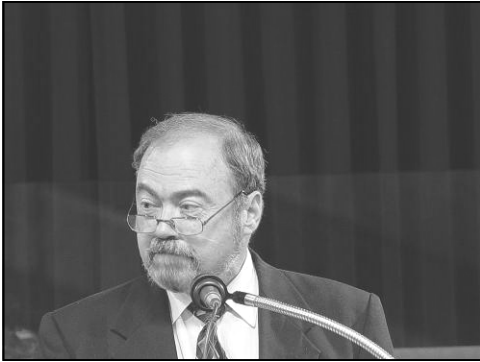
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SALVATION: CONSUMMATED

Mark Webb

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

2nd Timothy 4:7-8



Mark Webb

Brother Webb is the pastor of Grace Bible Church of Olive Branch, Mississippi. He is an accomplished musician, composer and singer, as well as an able expositor of the Word of God.

In an article this short it is difficult to cover all the many facets of the salvation that is yet future. All Christians agree, however, that what we have experienced of God’s saving grace thus far—as wonderful as it is—in no way empties the vast reservoir of what God has in store for His people.

Perhaps the easiest approach to this subject is to think of our future state and destiny as our *inheritance* (see Eph. 1:11). Like an inheritance, it is ours because it is willed to us. God is said to have predestined us to it according to His purpose. Further, also like an inheritance, it is ours due to a familial relationship. It comes to us due to the fact that by faith we’ve entered into a living union with Christ, the Son of God, and are now ourselves adopted as God’s children. Thus, we stand as “joint heirs” of God with Christ (see Rom. 8:17). Finally, just as an inheritance speaks of that which is to be ours in the future, not the present, this aptly describes our situation. Our present state is no indication of our future state. The inheritance may be in our *name* but it is not yet in our *hands*. Consider the following observations concerning future inheritance.

Complete Conformity

The ultimate purpose of God in salvation is not to populate heaven with a race of forgiven sinners who still retain their disposition towards sin, but to bring to glory a new race totally conformed to the image of His Son (see Rom. 8:29). Not that we are to physically resemble Him, but that our characters display the same sinless obedience He manifested. At present, every true Christian has, through the work of regeneration, the writing of God’s law on his heart. To obey God is our heart’s delight (see Rom. 7:22). We would be perfect if we but could be perfect. If it were up to us, we would never sin again. To our dismay, we find ourselves hamstrung and beset with indwelling sin. Though we don’t plan to sin, we find ourselves often ambushed by sin. We find that we are engaged in spiritual warfare against the Devil and the world without and with our own lusts within. Therefore, we are given many exhortations to press on, not to fall, not to yield our bodies to sin, to mortify the lusts of our flesh, etc. The very presence of these commands indicates that, though we’ve been saved from sin’s penalty, and though the power of sin over us has been broken, we’ve not yet been fully delivered from sin’s presence.

What will bring about our final state? The old writers spoke of the “beatific vision” of Christ whereby the saints are transformed fully into a state of perfect holiness. To see Christ in His glory, as the Spirit of God reveals Him to our hearts through the Word, no matter how partial and incomplete, is a transforming, conforming thing (see II Cor. 3:18). What we behold in Him, the infinitely lovely Jesus Who loved us and gave Himself for us, causes us to live and act differently—to love righteousness, to hate sin, and to strive to be like Him. But one day, we shall see His glory, not “*in a glass*”, but directly; not mediated through God’s Word, but face to face. We shall

“*be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is*” (see I John 3:2). When faith gives way to sight, our sanctification will be complete, and we shall “*be saved to sin no more*”.

Fullness of Glory

If we are presently the children of God, then why don’t we look like it? Be honest. If you knew nothing about the Bible and were told that the God of the Universe has some who are His children on this planet, wouldn’t you think they’d be those with the most money, the most power, or the most physical beauty? Look around at those with whom you worship on Sunday morning. Do they really look like children of God?

The answer is that, though we are *now* God’s children, we do not *now* appear as such (see I John 3:2). Just as Christ first endured humiliation before glorification, and suffering before entering into His glory, so we first must suffer, sacrifice and serve before entering into this future state of glory (see II Tim. 2:12). Whatever suffering might be required of us now as Christians, it’s not worthy to be compared with the glory awaiting us. Our suffering now is temporal and light; the glory following is eternal and weighty.

What is this “*glory*”? The word itself speaks of splendor, radiance and light. As such, scripture speaks of it in terms of natural light, such as the sun, moon and stars. Thus, the righteous are said to “*shine forth as the Sun*” in the kingdom of their Father. Just as earthly sovereigns grant royal and costly apparel to those they would glorify, so shall the God of heaven grant that His sons be arrayed with splendor, radiance, and beauty. But to receive “*glory*” means more than simply the reception of an appearance. It also includes such matters as the receiving of honor, rank, privilege, etc.

We'll now move on to investigate a few of these subjects.

Great Authority

Another feature involving our future inheritance, often mentioned in scripture, involves the matter of authority. One of the promises given to the overcomer is that he would be granted the privilege of sitting with Christ in His throne, just as Christ is set down on His Father's throne (see Rev. 3:21). The clear insinuation is that we will share in Christ's reign.

Note how this is seen in the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:12-27. Among the features of this parable is the idea that the servant who was faithful with his master's money is afterwards rewarded with authority over cities. The better-known sister parable of the talents in Matt. 25:14-30 expresses a similar notion. The servant was faithful over a few things—now he'll be made ruler over many things.

Over whom, or what, will Christians be given authority? The matter is not exactly clear, yet Paul assumes that the Corinthians know that they will one day judge angels (see I Cor. 6:3). It's more or less assumed in scripture that Christians, in this present life, populate the bottom rungs of society. With few exceptions, they are not reigning over much, if anything. Yet, when Christ returns, all this is to be reversed. Not that we will then rule with the same arrogance and self-centeredness with which the rulers of this world exercise their authority. It's simply that those who serve Christ well in this life—by serving His people—will be advanced to greater positions of service and responsibility in the life to come.

True Possessions

Closely connected to the preceding is the teaching that future possessions are promised to the saints. This is best seen in the difficult but intriguing parable of the unjust steward in Luke 16:1-13. Without attempting to unravel the parable, simply notice that it contrasts two kinds of money—unrighteous money (*i.e.* the money of this present age) and true riches (*i.e.* the money of heaven). Our faithfulness in using earthly money now corresponds to our being rewarded with the money of heaven then.

And that latter kind of wealth is called the "true", in that it abides as a lasting treasure, opposed to our wealth on earth that decays and vanishes.

Further, an additional contrast is developed regarding what we have now (which isn't really ours, but belongs to our master) and what we will have then (which will truly be our own). The things of earth that we now see as ours really aren't. We will either lose them or leave them. Our heavenly reward, however, will never be lost or removed. It will be truly ours, in every sense of the word. What are these heavenly riches? I'm not sure, as the Bible doesn't satisfy our curiosity on this point. However, I've been prone to speculate that this vast Universe around us, so vast and, apparently, so empty, may well be the inheritance awaiting the children of God. That's just my speculation, mind you, but whatever these heavenly possessions and riches may be, they will far excel anything we presently know.

Immortal Bodies

Man is made with a two-fold nature. On one hand, he is comprised of an immaterial, spiritual component with which he may commune with God.

On the other hand, he is comprised of a material, physical component with which he communes with God's physical creation. Both are essential to our makeup as human beings. At present, when we believers die, our souls go to be with Christ, but our bodies return to the dust. Death is the dissolution of the bond between our two constituent components. At present, our souls may be saved, but our body still reflects the effects of God's curse on the material earth. However, according to scripture, God's redeeming work through His Son will ultimately extend not only to our souls but to our bodies as well.

When Christ appears from heaven, our bodies—whether alive at that moment, or long ago decayed through death—will be transformed from a lowly, corruptible, mortal state to a glorious, incorruptible, immortal state (see I Cor. 15:51-53; Phil. 3:20-21). Using Christ's own resurrected body as our guide, we thus reason that many of the restrictions now present upon our bodies will be removed. I've often wondered if God didn't give us the natural phenomena of "metamorphosis" as a testimony to the reality of such a change. Who would dare dream—if we didn't know better from having actually witnessed it—that a lowly, earthbound caterpillar could possibly be

transformed into a beautiful, flying butterfly? Yet, a change of that magnitude and more awaits Christ's people as a result of His redeeming, not only their souls, but their bodies as well (see Rom. 8:23), to be seen in due time.

Perfect Communion

The ultimate end of salvation is to bring us—God's people—into full and complete fellowship and communion with our God (see Rev. 21:3) in heaven. Heaven is sometimes depicted in scripture as a *country* (see Heb. 11:14-16), in reference to its expansiveness; in other places, it's seen as a *city* (see Rev. 21:2), in reference to its population; and, in other places, it's seen as a *house* (see John 14:2), in reference to our communion with God.

Note John's description of the heavenly Jerusalem in Rev. 21-22. It is splendorous, secure, stable—*immersed*, as it were, in the presence and glory of the Lord God and the Lamb. The curse and its effects are completely removed and blessing abides upon its inhabitants. Here is seen the final destiny of God's people. The salvation that God ordained for His people—conceived in eternity past, executed in time—is now fully realized in eternity future.

Conclusion

This is the inheritance that awaits us. In the meanwhile, we have the *earnest* of this inheritance in the presence of the Holy Spirit. And "earnest money", as homebuyers know, has two features. First, it's the same *kind* of money that comprises the entire price. So, Christians have already received a taste of heaven in the first fruits of the Spirit. They've already caught a glimpse of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ. They've already experienced the blessing of communion with God. They already know something of the joys and blessedness of heaven. Thus, we can truly say that if a man has no "heaven" in his soul now, he has no prospect of entering heaven in the future. Secondly, the most evident characteristic of earnest money is that it's but a small portion of the overall price. Likewise, heaven for the saints will be to know, experience, and enjoy to the fullest degree that which they know, experience, and enjoy but in part now. This old hymn expresses it well:

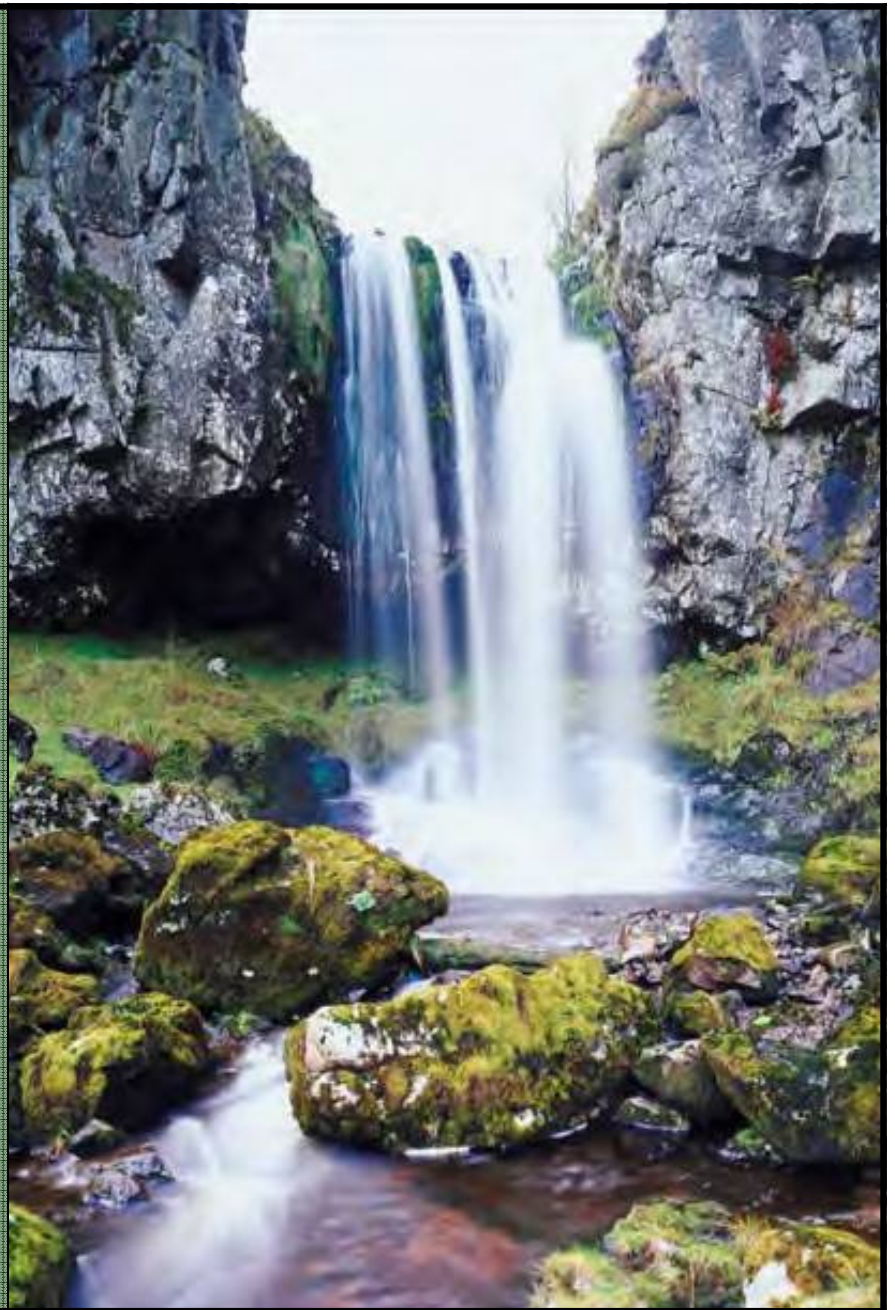
*Then we shall be where we would be,
Then we shall be what we should be,
Things that are not now, nor could be,
Soon shall be our own!*

**“How vast the benefits divine
Which we in Christ possess!
We are redeemed from guilt and shame
And called to holiness.
But not for works which we have done,
Or shall hereafter do,
Hath God decreed on sinful men
Salvation to bestow.**

**The glory, Lord, from first to last,
Is due to thee alone;
Aught to ourselves we dare not take,
Or robe thee of Thy crown.
Our glorious Surety undertook
To satisfy for man,
And grace was given us in Him
Before the world began.**

**This is Thy will, that in Thy love
We ever should abide;
That earth and hell should not prevail
To turn Thy love aside.
Not one of all the chosen race
But shall to heav’n attain,
Partake on earth the purposed grace
And then with Jesus reign.”**

Augustus Toplady
(Also author of the well known and well loved
Hymn, “Rock Of Ages”)



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