

So I have to ask you, what have you done this week to remember the words of truth that were spoken over your life; to remember how great of a salvation you have been given? Have you been super-abundant to focus on those words? I am a little worried that if you did not really do anything active to ensure your focus then you probably struggled heeding that word; and, if you struggled, then you probably spent more time living as a man or woman of the flesh than a man or woman of the Spirit.

Remember, last week's teaching was a warning to us to constantly consider how much Jesus did for us by dying on the cross, rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven. This great salvation He has given us is not only our eternity, it is our now—it is something to be experienced every single moment of our lives. He has saved us from so much in order that we might live—in the physical realm—as a son of God and not as a slave to the flesh, to the world, or to all that has been passed down to us by our forefathers. He has saved us to live free in Him.

Have you ever asked yourself why He did it? Why in the world did He leave His home in heaven, come down to earth, and cloak Himself in the flesh of humanity just to die? Why us? The answer is really mind-numbing.

### ***Matthew 13:44-46***

"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine

pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."

For some reason, in God's eyes we are that treasure, we are that pearl of great value. He considered us so precious that He was joyfully willing to give it all up just to be able to purchase us as His own.

Talk about a truth to which we need to give super-abounding attention—this is astonishing. This reminds me of those passages we studied in the Song of Songs where God says that: we have ravished His heart and He is overcome by just one glance of our eyes; that we are like His private garden—a spring that no one else can drink from, a fountain of His own. To Him we are like the rarest of perfumes and are pleasant for utter delight. He even longs, yes longs, to hear our voice. We are the treasure and the pearl of in-declarable value.

How many of you struggle with self-worth issues? How many of you feel like you got the short end of the stick? How many of you have dived into all sorts of self-destructive thinking and behavior just because you feel worthless? How many of you long so badly to be special in the eyes of another and are always trying to position yourself so that you can be the special one? It seems that all of us have spent way too much energy struggling through so many self-worth issues striving to be loved and important to others.

However, in the light of how God views us, can you begin to understand how all those feelings and emotions (no matter how strong and intense they maybe) are all misplaced and are founded upon a wrong belief that should have no place in your life? Sure, maybe your parents, relatives, friends, teachers, and others did

not do it right. But guess what? God did. Just imagine, the God of the universe who created all things with His very own hands, who gives breath and life to everyone in all the world, decided that you—yes you—are so valuable that He would give up everything in order to personally bring you this great salvation. How is that for being special, for being unique and having a reason to be secure in His love?

We simply must start to believe this to be true and live in this truth. After all who gets this? Millions and Billions on this earth are wondering around with nothing to validate their lives except for all the futile things this world has to offer: looks, careers, money, education, children, athletic abilities, religion, and so on—everything that perishes and corrupts and never satisfies (which is the reason why everyone is so needy all the time). But we have been chosen by God—you have been chosen by God— to be exalted and lifted above the angels and to be seated with Christ in the heavenly places. This is quite a privilege.

Tonight as we continue in Chapter 2, the Spirit wants us to understand how great this salvation is that we have been given by explaining to us how precious, special, and valuable we are to God.

***Hebrews 2:5-18***

Now it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere, "What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet."

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Behold, I and the children God has given me."

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

We are going to carefully work our way through this so please super-abound in your attentiveness to the word.

Continuing with His argument from Chapter 1 about angels being lower than Jesus and even lower than you and I, the Spirit says that the future “world to come” will not be ruled by angles. You may not be really aware of this, except in the Sunday school kind of way, but the angelic forces of darkness absolutely rule and control this physical world we live in. In ***Ephesians 6:12*** they are described as evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, mighty powers of darkness who rule this world. Satan is their leader and he is referred to in ***2 Corinthians 4:4*** as the god of this world. This is their now. This is their time of glory; but it will all be short-lived. For now, for a brief moment in time, they are able to exercise their power and authority in the affairs of all humanity with devastating effects; but make no mistake their reign will come to an end.

This reference to the “world to come” can apply to a couple of scenarios. First it can apply to the time of Jesus’ second coming when He will literally return to earth and establish His supreme reign over all of creation. The Bible speaks to a time period (hopefully in the not too distant future) of 1,000 years when Jesus will physically and literally rule over all nations of the earth as the supreme monarch. In that time, He will have us run His administration. We will rule along side of Him and with a rod of iron and we, not the angels, will manage the nations of the world. In fact, during this time, Satan will be bound in the abyss so he will not be able to deceive the nations anymore until the 1,000 years are finished. (***Psalm 2:9; Revelation 3:21, 2:27; 5:10, 12:5; 19:15; 20:1-6***).

Now, the “world to come” might also refer to the time after the 1,000 year reign when Jesus destroys the heavens and the earth and creates a new heaven and a new earth; a time when we will actually judge angels and rule with Jesus forever and ever (***1 Corinthians 6:3; Revelation 22:5***).

So either way, the future—*along with eternity*—is the time for man (it's the time for you and me) and not the time for angels; all of which begs the question quoted from ***Psalm 8:4-6***: "What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? The answer: we are that treasure, that precious pearl that is beyond compare.

I find this next part of the passage fascinating as it is layered in its meaning and deals with things that are true right now in the physical as well as things that are already true in eternity although not yet realized in the physical.

The first part of the quote in ***Psalm 8:6-8*** is talking about the dominion that God has given to man. It says: "You put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things—the sheep and the cattle and all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea, and everything that swims the ocean currents."

So in a sense, we have been crowned with glory and honor as we have the highest place and the highest privilege amongst all of God's seen creation (in saying this, I am exempting for the time being the angels in the unseen world). But again, this glory and honor will be more fully realized and perfected when Jesus takes up His physical rule and reign over all of creation. At that time we will rule with Him over all that is currently seen and unseen—nothing will be exempt from our control and everything will be put in subjection under our feet.

As this has all been prophesied, and God always does everything that He says, in a sense everything has already been put in subjection under our feet as this is a sure thing; it's only a matter of time.

Now this reference to the “son of man” is clearly a reference to Jesus in His humanity as He grabbed on to this name and repeatedly referred to Himself as the Son of Man. Now, for a very brief moment in time, 33 years, Jesus was humbled a bit lower than the angels; but He is the one whom we know for sure already exists with everything in subjection under His feet as He is the Lord of Lord and the King of Kings and there is no one like Him (***Revelation 17:4; 19:16***) for no one can oppose what He does or reverse His actions (***Isaiah 43:13***).

Besides, all things, everything, has always been and always will be under His control. Have you not heard? It was the Lord who decided long ago what He is now causing to happen (***Isaiah 37:26***). He directs the affairs of the human race as each new generation marches by as He is the Lord, the First and the Last...the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End (***Isaiah 41:4; Revelation 22:13***). He is the one who has been seated in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else in this world or in the world to come as God has put all things under the authority of Christ, and He gave Him this authority for the benefit of you and me—for the benefit of the church (***Ephesians 1:20-22***).

Now, although God’s plan is still unfolding and we are still in these bodies of flesh which are weak and subjected to spiritual powers and authorities, we know that God is going to fulfill all of these promises to us because what we do now see is Jesus having been crowned with glory and honor because He was willing to suffer death.

This next part of the passage is still to me unfathomable. Because of sin, which each of us by nature and by choice have draped ourselves in, we simply were not

able to be in any kind of fellowship with God. Simply said, as corrupted men and women, we were separated from His holiness and perfection with no means for redemption. This was physically pictured for us by the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies within the Tabernacle of God. Without the required blood offering, man was not allowed to enter into the Holy of Holies or he would be instantly smitten—struck dead! And even at that only one man one time a year could go into His presence. This was a serious problem if God wanted to enjoy His treasure and marvel at His beautiful pearl.

Therefore, mankind needed to be sanctified (or made holy) by the blood of one who has the ability to sanctify so that man would not die in the presence of God but could be reconciled to God. This was the Old Testament role of the priests—the “sanctifiers.” They would sanctify the altar with blood in order to temporarily reconcile man and God (*Exodus 29:33-36*). But it was never enough!

How could it be? There was still this huge penalty that needed to be paid; a judgment for sin that could not be satisfied by the blood of animals. We talked about this a bit in John. Because it was man who violated the law of God, it was only fitting that man had to take the full punishment for his crimes. Justice demands that it is the criminal who must be punished and not some innocent bystander.

But God loved us too much to let us suffer that punishment. That is why Jesus came down and took on the cloak of humanity so He could, as a man, stand in our place (and the place of all humanity) and provide the sacrifice of perfect blood that would take away the sins of the world. He chose to experience death on our behalf so that we would have the opportunity to experience life through Jesus.



This was always God's marvelous plan. Now you have to understand that this plan did not fit into the construct of the Messiah to which the Jews held. They were looking for a conquering Messiah who would come to earth to rule—more in alignment with what will happen in Jesus' second coming. But it was the Father's Messiah. By the Father's grace Jesus did not only what was needed but what no one else was able to do. The Father rightfully chose the One, through whom and by whom all things exist, to be the one to lead the way to salvation through suffering. In fact, it is through Jesus' death that we, and our great salvation, were made perfect.

I don't want you to get confused with the way the ESV translated this part of the passage. Jesus did not need to be made perfect as if to imply that He was not already perfect. But His act of voluntarily suffering and dying made Him the perfect Savior and His suffering perfected this great salvation for us.

Why did He do this? He did this because God is also our Father which makes us Jesus' brothers and sisters. When it says that we all have "one origin" it means that we all share the same nature—His nature. Honestly, I can read these words but I simply cannot even begin to contemplate the reality of this truth; but one thing for sure, it is big. Jesus the high and exalted one, the One to whom every knee will bow in heaven and in earth, considers us His brothers and sisters and in so doing shares with us not only His nature but all that is His. How is that for being special, unique, and set apart? Then add to it that the Father loves us so much that He actually gives us equal rights to everything that He has given to Jesus (**Romans 8:17**). Consider what Paul told the church in Corinth:

***1 Corinthians 3:21-23***

So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things belong to you, and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God.

As brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, as joint heirs, all things belong to us...yes, all things! This is who you are; as such, there is no place for all that self-loathing attitudes and behavior. There is no place for us to walk around making choices based on the lie that we are worthless! You are not worthless and you should not listen to that lie another day in your life. Did you hear me! You are not worthless; ***you are special and have been chosen of God***. You are worth the life of the Son of God, the Son of man, whose blood was holy and precious. He did not deserve to suffer and die, but He chose it willingly so that you can come to understand that you are His precious pearl of the rarest kind full of luster and beauty.

I love the way the way the Spirit address the relationship between the Father and the Son and all of us. In ***Psalm 22:22*** Jesus is talking to His Dad and He says: "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise." Jesus unabashedly calls us His brothers; it's as if He is actually proud of us—amazing. Not only that, imagine, one day He will explain to us the fullness and depth of the most holy "***Name***" and in the midst of all those gathered in heaven Jesus will praise His Father through song. This just means that the thickness of the ***Name*** must be beyond anything we can imagine. The greatness

and marvel of the Father must be so glorious that even the Son can't hold back but He busts out in songs of praise. While on earth He definitely declared to us the "**Name**" and He told us about the Father (**John 17:6**), but what is coming is surely going to blow our minds.

Jesus also says: "I will put my trust in him" (**Psalms 18:2**). And, again, "Behold, I and the children God has given me" (**Isaiah 8:18**). Trust is the center of the relationship between Jesus and His Father as it obviously should be the center of our relationship with Jesus and our Father. In the same way as we are His brothers and sisters we are also His children and our lives that we live here and now are about perfecting this trust so that truly we will be like Jesus in all things. Then with Him we will declare to the Father: "I put my trust in him."

**2:14-16** introduce an aspect of God's work that again places us in such an amazing exalted place and explains why the enemy hates us so much and hates God so much. You see the angelic hosts who followed Satan in his rebellion sinned against the majesty of God; in reality, not much different than what you and I have done. Sure our experience with God has been extremely limited compared to the angels who dwelt in His presence; but then again we have the Holy Spirit of God living within us and that is a privilege that they have never experienced. So who blew it the most? I don't know; but we do know that they fell to temptation, believed a lie, and they chose to sin just like we do.

But notice that Jesus did not become like the angels in order to sanctify them and restore them to the Father. Absolutely not! He did not take on the substance of angels but He took on the substance of humanity so that He could share in flesh and blood with us not with them.

You might have thought that He would have done the same for the fallen angels. After all they were the first of His creation (at least before us). I am sure that if He did for them what He did for us that they would have all instantly returned without hesitation (as I am sure they realize now that Satan had full-on deceived them and he will never be exalted as a god). But still Jesus did not do it which is why I am sure that they hate Him so much.

Imagine, if He would have given His life for them and they would have returned, it would have made it next to impossible for Satan to dominate humanity. Steal away his army and the captain of evil stands weak and incapable of ruling the world. Keep in mind, Satan is a finite being—a created being—and unlike God can only be in one place at a time; therefore, Satan would have a very tough go at trying to rule the world by himself.

But that was not the plan. The Father's plan was to permanently crush the work of Satan and have our Captain lead us to the Father through the gateway of death. It was Satan who introduced death into the world. He seduced man into this place of great fear and separation; as death is to be understood not just as the loss of our physical life but also an eternity separated from God—an eternal cage of suffering. In this understanding, death is to be absolutely feared as it is terrifying. But Jesus faced death knowing that God had given Him the power to take the one tool that the enemy has consistently used against humanity and crush it.

As it says in **Romans 5:12**, “just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.” So everyone was trapped, everyone was caged; no one escaped—at least that is

what thought Satan. He thought that by killing Jesus he would be able to rule over Him through death and permanently defeat Jesus' work in this world and thereby secure his own kingdom. I think he really thought that he had triumphed over the son of God.

But just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave the Son to have life in Himself (**John 5:26**). As such Jesus had the power to both lay down His life and the power to overcome death and take it up again. This is the command He received from His Father (**John 10:17-18**). Death could not hold Him down. Death could not separate Him from His Father and, by the way, Jesus is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God (**Romans 6:9-10**). Jesus destroyed the power of death so that way you and I, like Him, could walk in life. He set us free from the law of sin and death (**Romans 8:2**) which is why He tells us to consider ourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (**Romans 6:11**).

Do you understand? We get to live the fallen angels don't. We have been sanctified, they remain in their sin. We have been restored and redeemed to the Father; they will be eternally separated from the Father and will experience eternal death in that they will spend eternity suffering with Satan in the Lake of Fire. We, on the other hand, will spend eternity with the Father and with the Son.

You have to know that this really makes them mad. Jesus helps the offspring of Abraham but not the angels. They know their time is short, they know their power is limited, and they are filled with hate and bitterness. And in their rage, their desire is steal whatever they can from us, kill us, and destroy our lives and the work of the Father through our lives.

In addition, you have to add to the mix the fact that they know that we, mere humans who are weak and frail, are the glory of God as we have been made in His image. They know that we will be given new bodies and in a very short time we will rule and reign over them. We will even judge them and through Christ have dominion over all things.

Through Christ we have supplanted the kingdom of the enemy for even now they are subjected to us for as long as we are clothed in the armor of God they can't do anything but threaten us. They hoped to rule and dominate men through fear, sin and death but all that has been overturned through the one man who has the ultimate power! Now we hold this place of glory merely because we are that precious pearl of immeasurable value.

I have to wonder what the good angels think about this. Peter tells us that it was announced to them that they would not be serving themselves but serving us in the matters of the kingdom and our salvation, things into which angels long to look (**1 Peter 1:12**). It seems they do not fully understand why their brethren were not helped, but we were. But don't worry, they are on our side. We know that they full-on rejoice whenever anyone becomes a true offspring of Abraham (**Luke 15:10**).

Let me clarify that phrase the "offspring of Abraham." Although the immediate audience were Jews, still they were believers and they would have understood this is to be a reference to all those who believe by faith in the Son of God—as all those who believe (whether Jew or Gentile) become the true offspring of Abraham (**Galatians 3:7**).

So Jesus did all of this for us. We are that special; we are that loved. And more than that; He also knew that the enemy would retaliate against us and come against us in our place of greatest weakness. Therefore, He became like us in every respect so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, so He could offer up a sacrifice to take away the sins of the people. I want you to understand the power behind these verses.

How many of you when you sin, and blow it over and over again, have to deal with not just the guilt but the torment of your weakness and inability to do anything right? How many of you are hard pressed with the reality of your ongoing failure? Well guess what? He understands. He knows that you are weak. He knows that your flesh does not have the power to walk a sanctified life much less obey God in anything. That is why He gives you *new life*—His life. He knows that your frame has been corrupted by sin and no matter how hard you try to do it right on your own you simply cannot get it done. In your flesh you will always fail; you will always sin.

But Jesus is a merciful High Priest. In fact, we are told that even now, right at this moment, He lives to make intercession for you and me with the Father (**Romans 8:34**). He knows what it is like to be tempted. After all, He was tempted by Satan himself; something that I am sure so few has ever had to endure. He knows what it is like to struggle with the yearnings of the flesh. He knows and has experienced it all; yet He was without sin. He did it right and He fulfilled the requirements of the Law of God, the requirement for perfection, in us (**Romans 8:4**).

Do you understand? Not just “for us” but “in us”? He has literally put perfection in us—this is our ***New Creation*** where the Holy Spirit of God dwells; as such, we truly have come to experience reconciliation, peace and oneness with God.

How comforting it is to know that we truly have a friend, a brother, a Savior, a God, who not only knows us though and through but understands us and is patient, kind, and merciful to us. He knows that the enemy is going to constantly come after our flesh, our faith, and everything he possible can. But Jesus made the sacrifice for our sins and the sacrifice was perfect. Therefore, we can actually relax trusting that He does not deal with us on the basis of sin (***Psalm 103***). After all, how can He if it has been completely removed? Instead, He now deals with us on the basis of His life in us.

Jesus is also able to help us when we are tempted. He has given us this new life in the Spirit in order that through our ***New Creation*** we might walk by faith and live free from the power of sin and death. In fact, He is the one who even gives us the desire to obey Him and the power to do what pleases Him (***Philippians 2:13***). This means that we do not any longer have to yield to the temptation that has for so long captured us as He has given us the ability to live for the glory of God (***Romans 6:11***).

I still can't get over the fact that He was made like us in every respect just so He could be merciful to us and in so doing cripple the efforts of the enemy in our lives. So we have to once again consider the question: “What is man that you should think of Him?”

- We are the ones He sanctifies.
- We are sons of the Father and we have been given His nature.



- We are the ones that Jesus considers to be both His brethren and His children.
- We are those chosen to rule and reign with Him throughout eternity.
- We are the ones who have been delivered from the fear of death.
- We are those to whom He chose to give help so that we can be reconciled with the Father.
- We are His objects of great mercy and compassion.
- We are the ones who receive help when we are suffering temptation.
- We are that hidden treasure.
- We are that pearl of immeasurable value.

As we studied in Chapter 1, Jesus is greater than all so we must give heed to the words He has spoken over our lives. And the word He has spoken is so great and so magnificent that this salvation He has given to us is getting larger and more amazing with every passage we study. We need to live in this truth. We need to take pleasure in this truth. We need to always know who we are and who we belong to. So lift your head up from the pool of despair you have been living in. Stop wading in the waters of worthlessness and stop striving and trying to grab something or someone for yourself. Stop seeking to be special in the eyes of those who are just flesh and instead delight yourself completely in who you are in Jesus Christ for you belong to the Father! Amen!

Let's Pray