

CHAPTER 3 THE CLEANSING EFFECT

In the early 1990s, my dad bought a house to fix up and sell. By looking at this house, I had good reason to wonder why he chose one so badly needing repair. A fire had damaged large portions of the floor, walls, and ceiling. For three years after the fire, rain poured through the damaged roof, contributing to the house's demise. The floor bowed, the walls hid behind a black stain, and all the windows bore witness to the rock-throwing skills of mischievous boys. My dad, however, held high hopes for this piece of rubbish.

Shortly after my dad purchased the house, I returned to my hometown for a few weeks and helped him clean. I remember feeling overwhelmed at such a hopeless sight and thinking my dad to be a bit crazy. Sweeping up the debris seemed like an endless task. After seemingly endless hours sweeping debris, with dust irritating my eyes and lungs, I gladly returned to Dallas.

Several months later, I returned to Tennessee and discovered that the house had undergone a remarkable transformation. That renovated dwelling showed that my dad had poured countless dollars, sweat, and hours into rebuilding the once dilapidated house. He replaced the windows, painted and papered the walls, rebuilt the floors, and covered them with new carpet. The smell of newness hovered in that work of art. Only someone with diligence, skill, and immense patience could do such a thing.

This amazing transformation symbolizes what Christ did for me. I was wretched, vile, polluted, and nasty. Surely I was more hopeless than my dad's burnt house. Then God came along and changed me. He gave me new life and cleansed me from the inside out, like my dad did for his house. Of course, God did not do this for me only but for all believers.

God has cleansed countless spiritually dirty humans, allowing them to have a relationship with Him. He demonstrated His desire to offer hope to sinful humanity with the first two humans who lived thousands of years ago in the Garden of Eden.

Humanity

Adam and Eve were the first humans on earth. God formed Adam from the ground (Genesis 2:7; 2 Corinthians 15:47-49). Not wanting Adam to be alone, God created woman (Genesis 2:18, 21-25).

Humans seem to be the only creature that God created in His own image (Genesis 1:26).¹⁹ God created humanity, and everything else, for His purposes (Isaiah 43:7; Revelation 4:11). God exists perfectly complete without us and does not need humanity. Nevertheless, out of the deep reservoirs of the Lord's love, He created people so we could interact with Him. In fact, our ability to fellowship with our Creator is what makes us distinct from the rest of creation.

¹⁹ It is highly debated as to what Scripture means when it says that Adam and Eve were created in God's image. At least part of being created in God's image includes an ability to have a relationship with God through means of salvation from sin. See Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990 reprint), 498-517.

Sin

Sin is rebellion against God. It is any thought or act not in compliance with God's will. In short, sin means wrongdoing. Sin became a problem for the human race when Satan tempted Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit, and she succumbed to his temptations and sinned (Genesis 3:1-7). Adam then did likewise. She and Adam sinned after God had explained what could, and should not, be eaten (Genesis 2:16-17).

Genesis 2:17 says that if they partook of the forbidden fruit, they would die.²⁰ Why did they not drop dead immediately when they disobeyed? What God said in Genesis 2:17 meant more than physical death but spiritual destruction.²¹ Spiritual death signals that an individual is separated from God (i.e., no ability to fellowship with God) just as physical death indicates the soul is separated from the body (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:14-15).

Immediate consequences, however, transpired because of Adam and Eve's sin. Genesis 3:16-19 explains some of the physical penalties which resulted from their sin.²² The human race fell into sin because of Adam and Eve's disobedience.

Sin separates mankind from God (Isaiah 59:2). Jeremiah 17:9 states that the heart (the innermost part of a person) is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.²³ Because Adam represented mankind, he passed on his sin to all of humanity.²⁴

Because Adam and Eve sinned, their natures became sinful. Therefore they could only produce sinful offspring. As such, we are born with a sin nature--a proclivity to sin. With the progression of time, our sin nature blossoms. Adam's disobedience brought sin and death, but Christ's obedience brought forgiveness and life (1 Corinthians 15:22).

God's Love for Humanity

"God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whomever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."²⁵ God the Father demonstrated His love to you through His Son Jesus (Romans 5:8).

²⁰ Sin brings death (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23; James 1:15).

²¹ By sinning, however, they probably forfeited a never-ending physical life (Genesis 3:22-24).

²² See Numbers 30:8, 11; Ephesians 5:22-25, 28, 33; Titus 2:5; 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

²³ Also see Matthew 15:18-19.

²⁴ Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23; 5:12-19; and Galatians 3:22. See Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 632-39.

²⁵ Author's translation of John 3:16

He loves you because of who *He* is, merciful and gracious. He does not give you what you deserve, eternal death (see Psalm 145:9). Yet, He gives you what you do not deserve, eternal life (see Ephesians 2:8-9).

God does not love you because of any intrinsic goodness you possess. Rather, if you have believed in His Son Christ, He loves you with an ultimate, unconditional, unchanging love stemming from His intrinsic goodness. As a believer, God will never love you more or less than He does now.

Salvation

Just as my dad made that ruined house look beautiful, so God is making you into a beautiful masterpiece (Ephesians 2:10). As that house couldn't change itself, you too couldn't save yourself because you were dead in your sin (Ephesians 2:1-5).²⁶ But now that Christ saved you, you possess true spiritual life. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come."

Christ saves people from their sin and rescues them from God's wrath. "Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him" (Romans 5:9).

Romans 6:23 says "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." If you are a believer, your sins have been covered (Romans 4:7), canceled (Colossians 2:13-14), and forgiven (1 John 2:12).

Jesus is the only way to peace with God. Acts 4:12 teaches, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." As Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Jesus was the gospel (the good news) in the flesh.²⁷

In Romans 1:16, Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." No one can be saved without believing the gospel. People receive salvation only through the forgiving work of Christ. God allows people to believe as Philippians 1:29 stated, "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for Him." Also, see 1 Corinthians 1:30.

Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God." In other words, if you are a Christian, God saved you not because of anything you did to merit it but because He is good.

²⁶ A person who has trusted Christ is often referred to as "saved," "born again," "a convert," "a Christian," and "a believer." Saved, in short, refers to the process by which God delivers believers from His wrath and the penalty of sin.

²⁷ "Gospel" means good news and refers to the good news of forgiveness that comes to believers through Christ's death and resurrection, Romans 10:14-17. Also, see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

As Romans 2:4 states, God's goodness allowed you to repent: "Or do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?" Repentance does not mean that you turn over a new leaf or straighten up your life *so God will accept you*. Rather, repentance is a change of mind which *results* in a change of behavior.²⁸ Your desire then is to turn away from sin and turn to God. This "turning" to Him is faith (Romans 10:9-10, 14-17).

Faith consists of two facets. The first aspect is merely mental assent. The Bible says that even the demons believe in God (James 2:19), but, obviously, demons are not Christians. The kind of faith that demons possess consists of mental assent or the accepting of facts. Many people possess only this type of faith, but they are not believers in the true sense of the word.

The second aspect of faith is total reliance upon Christ. If anyone has faith, he or she must realize that God provided it (Ephesians 2:8; 1 John 5:20). True faith consists of more than just accepting facts; true faith relies completely upon Jesus, that He destroyed sin's debt, and that He has authority over all areas of one's life.

Since you lack the power to save yourself, putting your faith in Christ means trusting what Christ did on the cross to bring you into a right relationship with God. True faith entails more than believing doctrine. Having faith is trusting Christ to change your life; it means you trust God with your life now and after death.

Just believing facts about Jesus will not save a person any more than believing facts about a chair will hold up that person; a person must trust the chair enough to sit down. Likewise, he must trust Christ to forgive his sin. When a person trusts Christ to forgive sin, he receives salvation and surrenders his life to Christ's authority.

"*Faith* is the evidence of things hoped for; the substance of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). To have faith in God does not indicate that Christians have taken a blind leap of faith (i.e., believed something without substantial evidence), but that they cannot see or touch the person they trust (John 20:29). Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith it is impossible to please God.²⁹ Furthermore, Habakkuk 2:4 states, "The righteous will live by faith." In other words, since humans cannot see or touch God, the only way to relate to Him is by faith.

Assurance and Security

Often, Christians wonder whether trusting Christ to forgive their sin gives them a relationship with Him. They fear and doubt that there might be something left undone about their salvation.

But God wants His children to have assurance that He has saved them from their sin. "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:11-13).

²⁸ God initiates the change of mind and enables you to carry out the change of behavior.

²⁹ See Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38.

"Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). According to the Bible, if you have trusted Christ, you are saved.³⁰ You can also have assurance of salvation because salvation stands secure. In other words, when a person receives salvation, he or she can never lose it. You did nothing to deserve it, and you can do nothing to forfeit it (John 10:27-29; Ephesians 1:13).³¹

A word of caution must be added here, because often people think that since they are assured of salvation then they can sin as much as they want. Being assured of and secure in salvation indicates that you submitted to Christ's authority. Salvation implies that you now live for Christ and not for your own sinful pleasure (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Be careful not to abuse God's goodness. If you desire to use God just to enter heaven, and you intend to do whatever you want, even if Scripture says it is wrong, then you are probably not a Christian. "If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of Him" (1 John 2:29).

Relationship

Becoming a Christian means that you have entered into a relationship with your Creator. God gave you eternal life (Romans 6:23).³² Your body will die, but you will not be separated from Him. Eternal life begins at the moment of salvation (John 17:3) and will continue forever.

³⁰ Again, Schreiner and Caneday, authors of *The Race Set Before Us*, help us think through our theology of salvation: "We conclude that it is wrong to conceive of salvation exclusively in terms of the past. Believers have been saved, yet the New Testament emphasizes even more that we shall be saved on the last day. We are already saved, yet our salvation has not yet been completed or consummated. We must uphold the tension in the New Testament between the already and not yet when we think of salvation in the New Testament. Believers today are prone to oversimplify the biblical teaching and to think of salvation only in terms of the present. When this happens, a crucial element of biblical teaching is surrendered, and we shall see that abandoning part of the biblical teaching has practical consequences that are of great importance" (52).

³¹ Many Christians disagree on this point. Hebrews 6:4-6, and other passages, are often used to support the view that a person can abandon his faith. But, I think Scripture in its entirety teaches that we cannot lose our salvation. Such warning passages, however, should not be glossed over by those of us who believe in eternal security. These warnings are real. If one does not persevere in his faith, one isn't saved.

³² Eternal life may be simply defined as a believer's unending fellowship and existence with God. Consider what the Old Testament says concerning eternal life (Genesis 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11; Psalms 49:9; 139:8, 24; Ecclesiastes 12:7). Also see further New Testament verses (John 3:15; 10:28; 1 Timothy 6:12; Titus 3:7; 1 John 5:11; Jude 21).

God the Father forgives all the sin of those who trust Him to do so (Psalm 103:3, 12; Colossians 2:13).³³ If you have trusted Christ, God has pardoned your wrongful deeds and has forgiven your guilt and penalty based on Christ's death on the cross.³⁴

You were a slave to sin--it had power over you. While enslaved to sin, Christ delivered you from its chains. The act of God buying you is called *redemption*.³⁵

God purchased you from sin's penalty--eternal separation from Him (i.e., hell). To put it another way, God owned the bank, and you had accumulated an unpayable debt. Someone had to pay--either you suffering in hell or Christ suffering for your sin, and Christ chose to pay that debt for you. Scripture uses the term *ransom* to indicate the payment Jesus made with His shed blood.³⁶ Christ gave you a new bank account, forever

³³ Even though I approach these issues from a Reformed or Calvinistic perspective, as opposed to an Arminian perspective, if the reader wants to delve into passages on both sides of the debate related to foreknowledge, predestination, election, foreordination, sovereignty, and free will, etc, see: Genesis 6:6; 1 Kings 18:37; Psalms 22:9-10; 76:10; 115:3; Proverbs 8:17; 16:4, 33; Isaiah 14:27; 42:9; 46:9-11; 54:16-17; 63:17; 65:12; Jeremiah 29:13; Lamentations 3:37-38; Ezekiel 18:31-32; 34:11, 16; Daniel 4:32; Habakkuk 1:6, 11; Matthew 18:14; 22:3, 14; 23:37; 25:34; Mark 6:5-6; Luke 7:30; 16:16; 22:22; 24:16, 31; John 3:27; 5:40; 6:37, 39, 44, 65; 10:26; 17:6; Acts 1:7; 2:23; 4:27-28; 7:51; 13:48; 16:14; 17:26; Romans 8:29-30; 9:11, 15, 18, 20-21, 23-24; 10:21; 11:2-5, 7, 22, 32; 1 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 1:4-5, 11; 2:10; 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9; 2:10; Hebrews 11:6; 1 Peter 1:2, 20; Jude 4; Revelation 6:11; 13:8; 17:8, 17.

For a brief summation of these ideologies, under "Arminianism" and "Calvinism," see *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 79-81, 186-88. For further succinct discussions, see J. S. O'Malley, "Arminianism," in *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, ed. D. G. Reid, R. D. Linder, B. L. Shelley, and H. S. Stout (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 77-79. Also see R. W. A. Letham, "Reformed Theology," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. J. I. Packer, S. B. Ferguson, and D. F. Wright (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988), 569-72. Also, for various articles in support of Arminianism, see Clark Pinnock, ed., *The Grace of God and the Will of Man*, Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1989. And, for various Calvinistic articles, see Thomas Schreiner and Bruce Ware, ed., *Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.

³⁴ Acts 13:38; 26:18; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14.

³⁵ Romans 3:24; 8:23; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:12, 15; 1 Peter 1:18-19. Notice, also, the future aspect of redemption in Ephesians 1:14; 4:3.

³⁶ Genesis 22:13; Matthew 20:28; Acts 20:28; Psalm 5:10; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 2 Corinthians 5:18; 1 Timothy 2:6.

debt-free (i.e., new life). The Bible calls this new spiritual life *regeneration* or *renewal* (Matthew 19:28; Titus 3:5).

Now that you serve Christ, peace reigns between you and God; your sin no longer separates you from Him. The mending of this broken relationship is called *reconciliation* or *restoration*.³⁷ God considers you part of His family, one of His heirs; *adoption* refers to the act of God making you His child.³⁸

You will receive an inheritance from God because you are a joint-heir with Christ.³⁹ Receiving an inheritance means you will receive the benefits and pleasures of living with God forever.

Christ died on the cross and suffered for your unrighteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21); He then credited to your account His undefiled character or *righteousness*.⁴⁰ You needed Christ's purity because you were sinful by means of your and Adam's corruption (Romans 5:12-13). Yet Christ credited His purity to you.⁴¹ Now God views you, and all Christians, as possessing Christ's righteousness.

God's act of declaring you righteous is called *justification*.⁴² He cleansed you and declared you to have a right status with Him. Because of Christ's death on the cross, God sees you as pure.

To better understand justification, consider the situation of a good friend of mine who lived in a slum of Jacksonville, Florida. While growing up, his family lived in poverty. But because of skills he learned in the Navy, a millionaire offered him a position as navigator of his yacht. The yacht owner even made his bank account available to my friend, supplying all the cash he needed. Needless to say, my friend took the position.

Picture yourself having grown up in a ghetto and now traveling around the world, able to buy anything you want. This became my friend's situation.

If you are a believer, something even more spectacular has happened to you. Christ made you a partaker of His own righteousness. Just as the millionaire made his account available to my friend, so Christ credited His purity to you. He did not forgive only some of your sins, and add the stipulation, "Do not ever mess up or you'll have to

³⁷ Romans 5:10; 1 Corinthians 7:11; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20-21.

³⁸ John 1:12; Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5.

³⁹ Romans 8:17; Ephesians 1:11; Colossians 1:12; Galatians 4:6-7.

⁴⁰ Romans 3:21-22, 25-26; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 13; Galatians 3:6.

⁴¹ Psalm 32:2; Romans 4:6, 11, 22-24; 5:13; James 2:23.

⁴² Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:26, 30; 4:25; 5:16, 18; Galatians 2:16; 3:24; Titus 3:7.

get saved again." Instead, Christ forgave all of your sins and declared you eternally pure. He gave you unlimited forgiveness.⁴³

You have been, and are being, *sanctified* (i.e., set apart from sin unto God). Sanctification consists of at least two aspects. First, God spiritually seated you in the heavens when you entrusted your life to Christ (Ephesians 2:6). This means that your ultimate home is in heaven with God. Second, God is daily sanctifying you.⁴⁴ He continually seeks to make you more like Christ in your thoughts and actions.

The last stage of salvation is *glorification*.⁴⁵ This will take place when you pass from this life into God's visible presence. Glorification does not mean that you will become God. You will, however, shed all earthly limitations which impede you from maximum intimacy with God. "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). One day we will see God as He really is.

A Christian can also be termed a *convert*. Conversion indicates a turning or change in one's life. It's not wrong to label the initial salvation experience a conversion, but the whole process of salvation, from initial faith to glorification in heaven, is the conversion of the believer.⁴⁶ New believers, sometimes called new converts, have the privilege of entering into fellowship with God, the One who created everything.

⁴³ What about Jesus' "if" statement in Matthew 6:14-15? (Also see Mark 11:25-26.) Matthew 6:14-15 sounds as though Jesus was saying that forgiveness is conditional (i.e., if you forgive others, He will forgive you). Jesus seemed to be saying, "You want me to do good things for you, and you want others to respond to you in a wholesome fashion, so treat them in a wholesome fashion. You ought to forgive just as you have been forgiven."

In other words, you would not want Christ to hold a grudge against you; therefore, do not hold a grudge against anyone else. Treat them the way you would want God to treat you. If you do not forgive others, you are acting as one who is unforgiven. In fact, the biblical warning means that if you don't forgive others, God won't forgive you. Also see Matthew 5:44-45 and John 1:9. For a detailed discussion on how believers can affirm eternal security, while at the same time take the warning passages and conditional statements seriously, see John Piper, *Future Grace* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah, 1995), 231-71 and the previously mentioned Schreiner and Caneday, *The Race Set Before Us*.

⁴⁴ 2 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 4:8. Also see Numbers 7:1; Deuteronomy 32:51; John 17:17, 19; Acts 26:18; Romans 8:29; 15:16; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 5:26; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 9:13; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2.

⁴⁵ Romans 8:17-18, 30; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 15:52-54; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 John 3:3.

⁴⁶ Psalms 19:7; 51:13; Matthew 13:15; Mark 4:12; John 12:40; Acts 3:19; 15:3; 28:27.

Love Toward God

You should love God because He first loved you (1 John 4:19).⁴⁷ You demonstrate your love for Him by submitting to Him (James 5:8). If you love Him, you will obey Him; and if you love Him, obedience will be a pleasure (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3). This is not to say that you'll always want to obey. Sometimes temptation will be strong and disobedience will seem more desirable. But pleasure comes from knowing and obeying God. Despite some failures, your love for Him will grow as you get to know Him through prayer, Bible study, and fellowship with other believers in the local church.

A Sinner's Prayer

If while reading this material you have realized that you're not a Christian, and want to follow Christ, then this paragraph is especially written for you. Below, I've written a prayer. The words aren't magic, and simply repeating them will not make you a Christian. You must be sincere with God and surrender your life to Him. If you desire to become a Christian, and don't feel comfortable creating your own prayer, then you can say this prayer:

Dear God, I am a sinner. I deserve to die and suffer in hell, but Jesus your Son made the way so I would not have to perish. He died on the cross and rose again. I know that you are right and I am wrong in my rebellion. I have sinned against you and I am sorry. Please forgive me and save me from my sin. I accept and confess you as Lord of my life. Thank you, Father, for adopting me as your child.

The Bible says that whoever puts faith in the Lord will not be turned away (Romans 10:13). If you have sincerely asked God to forgive you, then you are His child.

Summary

God created Adam and Eve as sinless beings, but they rebelled. And, as a result, all of humanity enters life sinful (with a proclivity to sin). Because God loves people, He provided a sacrifice for humanity's sin by sending His Son Jesus to die. Humanity can fellowship with God, but humans must trust (submit to) Him to take away their sin. They must also receive the gift of forgiveness. Those who trust Christ have assurance and security of salvation and have entered into a relationship with their Creator. Therefore, a believer should love, obey, and enjoy God.

Assignments

1. Memorize Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
2. List how God has changed you. Write how areas of your life are now different. If you have recently become a Christian, write how you want to be different.

⁴⁷ Also, see Deuteronomy 6:4 and Mark 12:30.

3. Did you become a Christian while reading this chapter? If so, tell someone what happened to you.

Discussion Questions

1. Why should you love God?
2. What does it mean to be justified?
3. According to me, how many aspects of faith are there?
4. What does it mean to be a sinner? (See Romans 5:12.)
5. Why are all humans born with a proclivity to sin?
6. How would you explain salvation to someone else?

Answers to Chapter 3 Discussion Questions

1. Why should you love God? *You should love God because He first loved you (1 John 4:19). And because He continues to be merciful to you.*

2. What does it mean to be justified? *You have received Christ's payment for sin and God has declared you righteous and forgiven. You have trusted Christ with your life, and have asked Him to save you and forgive your sin, which has led to a transformation in your life.*

3. According to me, how many aspects of faith are there? *There are at least two aspects to faith. There is mental assent (believing God exists) and then there's true life-transforming trust (believing Christ has forgiven your sin and made you His child).*

4. What does it mean to be a sinner? (See Romans 5:12.) *Among other things, it means that your heart is tainted by sin, that you sin because your heart is turned against God and His ways.*

5. Why are all humans born with a proclivity to sin? *We are born with a sin nature because Adam and Eve sinned, and therefore, we share their sin nature. We are innately sinful.*

6. How would you explain salvation to someone else? *Salvation isn't something you can manufacture yourself. You can't work your way to God. You must receive His gift of forgiveness--Christ. He died and rose again to glorify God the Father by forgiving sin, because we as humans are rebellious. When we trust that only Christ's death can make us right with God the Father, then that's called faith. We simply ask God to forgive us and, by His grace, we turn from our sin, trusting that we now have a right relationship with God. Salvation will come to full fruition when we meet God face-to-face at death or during Christ's return.*