

Series: 2 Corinthians
Title: The Tenses of Salvation
Text: 2 Corinthians 1: 10
Date: March , 2017
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

2 Corinthians 1: 10: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

Paul is speaking about God delivering him from a great physical death at the hands of wicked men. But it is also true of God delivering his people in salvation. Some ancient translations translate it “deaths.” God delivers his chosen from many deaths. In Adam, we all died multiple deaths. God told Adam,

Genesis 2:17: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

It means “dying, thou shalt surely die.” In and through Adam, we all died physical death. Sin resulted in a decaying body of death which soon shall die. We need to be delivered from physical death. We died a legal death. Adam became guilty in unrighteousness when he disobeyed God and us in him. We need to be delivered from legal death. We died a spiritual death. Adam’s nature became sin. Sin marred God’s image in Adam’s nature. So by natural generation, conceived of Adam’s corrupt seed, we all got Adam’s dead sin-nature. We need to be delivered from spiritual death. And we must be delivered from eternal death which is that eternal death after physical death, the worm that never dies.

Proposition: The delivering of God’s people in salvation is accomplished entirely by God alone beginning to end.

Title: The Tenses of Salvation

THE PAST—2 Corinthians 1: 10: Who delivered us from so great a death,...

Eternal Past

In the eternal past, God delivered all whom he called in divine election:

2 Timothy 1: 9: [God] hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,...

Due to the fact that the purpose and grace of God can never be frustrated or altered God saved all whom he chose in Christ in eternity. Since God is sovereign over all things to bring his eternal purpose to pass, God our Father saved us and called us when he wrote our names in “*the Lambs book of life from the foundation of the world.*” (Rev 17: 8)

It was not according to foreseen works in us. Everything God does for a sinner God creates in the sinner so it could not have been by any works foreseen in us. But it was according to his own purpose and grace, freely “*given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*” (Eph 1: 3-6; Rom 8: 29-30)

When the Son of God, who cannot lie nor be frustrated, entered everlasting, unchangeable covenant with God our Father to die in place of those the Father gave him, he delivered us in “*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” (Rev 13: 8)

This is one reason the Holy Spirit declares that when it comes to the eternal rest God freely gives his people “*the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*” (Heb 4: 3)

Try to go back to eternity before time began. In that eternal now, when God chose us in Christ, everything about us that will be Christ’s finished new creation, was in Christ. And because God trusted his Son, who cannot fail, to do everything to make his people that new creation we were saved right then in God’s purpose in Christ.

Historical Past

In the historical past, Christ delivered us from so great a death on the cross. When Christ cried, “It is finished”, Christ was declaring that he had delivered his people by finishing the transgression for us. Christ delivered us by making an end of our sins. Our deliverance was accomplished by Christ making reconciliation to God for our iniquity. For all his people, Christ delivered us by bringing in everlasting righteousness for us. (Dan 9: 24) Christ delivered us from death’s dominion and delivered us into heavens glory when Christ arose from the grave and sat down at God’s right hand with all his people in him.

Try to enter into this! In Christ we really died to sin and arose anew to glory. What we consider us right now, with the exception of the new man created of Christ, is fleshly, temporary, dust. It will soon go back to the dust. But in that perfect day when the new creation is complete, nothing that we now consider to be us, will remain. The new creation will only be made of that which Christ created us to be anew. We really are dead and really are risen in Christ.

Romans 6: 10: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Colossian 3: 1: If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2: Set your affection [singular] on things above, not on things on the earth. 3: For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4: When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Experiential Past

In our experiential past (the past we experienced), God delivered us. Because our Father predestinated each of his elect to behold “*the exceeding riches of his kindness to us through Christ Jesus*”, God made certain we were conceived in our mother’s womb. And God kept us and God delivered us from our mother’s womb.

Psalm 71: 6: By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother’s bowels: my praise *shall be* continually of thee.

Isaiah 46: 3: Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb: 4: And *even to your* old age I *am* he; and *even to hoar* hairs will I carry *you*: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver *you*.

From that moment we were born, down every dark path we tread, God delivered us from many temporal deaths, while as yet we were dead in sins and did not even know him or what he had done for us.

Isaiah 45: 5: I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 6: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none beside me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else. (Isa 45:5-6)

He carried us sovereignly in his delivering hand and brought us to the hour he appointed from eternity, when he sent his gospel and delivered us “*as a brand plucked out of the fire.*” He did so by making us be born-again in regeneration, revealing “Christ in you the hope of glory”. He delivered us from so great a death to so great a life by irresistible grace. The Spirit of God created a new spirit within us that was not there before. He gave us faith and caused us to believe on Christ and sealed us in Christ by the Spirit of God. (Ephesians 1:13-14; 2:1-9; Psalm 34:6). When he made us willing to believe on Christ, we received from him the atonement, free justification, life eternal, and peace with God!

Oh, how I pray that God might do the same for our lost children! If anyone is asking, “*What must I do to be saved?*” God says, “*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” (Ro 10:9-10) If he has done this for you and you believe on him then publicly confess that Christ is all our salvation in believer’s baptism.

Believer, from the moment Christ called us till now, God has delivered us over and over and over again. Therefore, in present trials, it will help us if we do as God commanded Israel, “*thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee.*” (Deuteronomy 8: 2) Christ said to his troubled disciples, “*O ye of little faith, ...remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*” (Mt 16:8-9) Brethren, remember! God “*hath delivered us from so great a death.*”

THE PRESENT—2 Corinthians 1: 10:...and doth deliver:

At every moment, God constantly delivers and keeps us trusting Christ alone.

Psalm 91:11: For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

We do not see most of the deaths that Christ delivers us from constantly. We face dangers far worse than these eyes can see. He delivers us from:

Ephesians 6: 11:...the wiles of the devil. 12: For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

Back in 07, Scott and Christine Keller took Melinda and me on a boat trip. We put in at Keyport, New Jersey. It was a beautiful day as we motored across that big Raritan Bay and New York Harbor up the Hudson River between Jersey City and Manhattan to George Washington Bridge. Now, imagine crossing that bay during Hurricane Sandy and keeping a candle lit the whole way! Arthur Pink said that it is more miraculous than that, that God delivers his people through this world amidst so many enemies.

Yet, Christ Jesus keeps an every present wall around the believer continually:

Isaiah 49: 15: [I will] not forget thee. 16: Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me.

In the times when we behold a few of our enemies, it appears to us they will surely conquer us. Elisha’s servant awoke one morning to find himself surrounded by a great host of enemies. As he cried out to Elisha, Elisha

2 Kings 6: 16:...answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them. 17: And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”

Psalm 34: 7: The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

Our Savior hath delivered us and our Savior doth deliver.

THE FUTURE—2 Corinthians 1: 10:...in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

Every 10 years or so, religion markets a new catch phrase. I remember when the big slogan was “Hold on and hold out!”

Our future is secure, not by our holding on to God but by God holding on to us. Notice that the promises of God in the following passages are in the future tense.

Isaiah 41: 10: Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. 11: Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. 12: Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, *even* them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. 13: For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

Romans 5: 10: For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

John 10: 28: [Christ said] I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. 29: My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father’s hand. (Joh 10:28-29)

Brethren, by our past and present deliverance, we look to the future, saying with the apostle Paul

2 Timothy 1: 12...I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Philippians 1: 6: Being confident of this very thing, he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.

Brethren, the best is yet to come when Christ returns. He shall deliver us as his entirely new creation—body, soul and spirit—into his presence where we shall dwell forever with Christ!

2 Corinthians 5:1: For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, [it shall be, but] we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

When Christ returns to take us over that river, he shall deliver us just as he has from the beginning:

Exodus 15:16: Fear and dread shall fall upon [our enemies]; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still *as* a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, *which* thou hast purchased. 17: Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, *in* the

place, O LORD, *which* thou hast made for thee to dwell in, *in* the Sanctuary, O Lord, *which* thy hands have established. 18: The LORD shall reign for ever and ever.

When I declare scripture, that, “*Salvation is of the LORD*” this is what it means. Our salvation, and the salvation of all God’s elect, has been, is being and shall be accomplished by our great God and Savior alone beginning to end. Therefore, we glorify God alone. Paul said,

2 Timothy 4: 17: The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me...and I was delivered me out the mouth of the lion...18: [And] The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Amen.