

## The Progressive Purpose of God Through His Glorified Son Jesus

*Hebrews 6:1,3. Leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God: And this we shall do if God permits.*

Much of Christianity presents salvation as a person who believes, is forgiven, and is assured of heaven. While Scripture certainly teaches justification by grace through faith, the New Testament reveals a larger purpose unfolding through the risen glorified Christ. God's intention was never just to forgive repentant sinners, but to restore us to spiritual maturity through conformity to Christ which includes participation in His Heavenly Kingdom while on Earth. The apostles continually portray salvation as a beginning and ongoing work progressing toward overcoming and sonship before glorification. When this larger purpose is neglected, believers settle into spiritual passivity rather than pressing toward the upward call in Christ Jesus that Paul sought. (*Specific scriptural support will be provided after the main narrative points below*).

### 1. God's Eternal Purpose for us

From Genesis on, Scripture reveals that God's purpose extends beyond legal forgiveness since 1 John says we should continue to confess our sins if we want to keep being cleansed from unrighteousness. We were all created to ultimately reflect God's character and rule under the authority He delegated to Jesus. The fall hinders us, but redemption through the risen Christ helps restore God's pathway toward maturity, sonship, and glorification. Christ has become God's pattern Son leading many sons into righteousness. Shouldn't this then become the expected response for all Spirit-led saints that are hearing His voice?

### 2. Salvation Is Larger Than Forgiveness

The New Testament presents salvation as more than an escape from eternal damnation. Salvation includes reconciliation to a holy God through transformation, regeneration, sanctification, and final glorification. Believers correctly understand the beginning of salvation through grace yet often fail to see that God desires maturity through the ongoing work of His Spirit. Scripture speaks of salvation in the past, present, and future. Believers were saved, are being saved from sin by spirit-led conviction, but 1 Corinthians fifteen claims our final salvation is when we shed our mortality and we inherit immortality.

### 3. The Supply of God's Spirit poured out through the glorified firstborn

The apostles emphasize the death of Christ, His resurrection, exaltation, and present heavenly ministry. Peter proclaimed that God poured out His promised Spirit through Jesus starting at Pentecost. Jesus now leads believers by destroying the works of darkness, transforming, and maturing those hearing His voice and following Him. Therefore, salvation begins as a legal standing before God but includes a relational leadership by the risen Christ until we are caught away or resurrected.

### 4. Grace and Transformation Are Not Enemies

The apostles never taught salvation apart from grace. They opposed trying to attain Jewish law or man made traditions to be justified. However, both Hebrews six and James chapter two are opposing a dead faith that produces no movement toward obedience to Christ or true spiritual maturity. Grace and transformation are not biblically opposing one another. Both terms reveal the complete biblical picture. Grace was never intended to leave believers spiritually passive, unchanged, or immature.

## **5. The Repeated New Testament Call to Maturity**

The New Testament repeatedly urges believers to move beyond spiritual infancy into maturity. Paul says this clearly in Hebrews chapter six. Why press toward the mark of the high calling in Christ if you stop at being born again? Romans chapter eight tells us believers are to be led by the Spirit if they want to become sons of God. John says we are sons of God, and we are positionally and progressively along the spirit led way, although like natural children we know we are subject to the chastising of our spiritual Father. We resist Satan, the so called god of this world whose goal is our eternally damnation. Ephesians describes the church as cleansed and prepared as the spotless Bride. These passages reveal that growth and spiritual maturity are central to God's purpose for all His children through obedience to Jesus Christ.

## **6. Overcoming is Jesus' Preparation Call to His Bride**

The book of Revelation commands watchfulness, endurance, readiness, and yes overcoming. In chapters two and three Jesus said are you hearing what God's Spirit is saying to the churches? Notice He only gives special promises in His future kingdom to those who overcome. Jesus's parable about the wise and foolish virgins teaches purchasing enough oil and spiritual readiness are requirements to enter the wedding feast or the entry door will be shut. These themes suggest that believers are not called to passive waiting, but to active participation as Christ prepares His Bride. Revelation nineteen shows the Bride has made herself ready and she is doing the righteous acts of God.

## **7. The Book of Revelation has heavenly Salvation for overcomers occur at separate times**

Revelation twelve and beyond lists various group comparisons just before Satan is cast down to persecute Christians who enter the Great Tribulation. It reveals the salvation of a group of immortal saints entering heaven rejoicing because they are going to escape the Great Tribulation. Revelation goes on to say the resulting tribulation and wrath end at Jesus's second coming as He ushers in His one-thousand-year Millennial reign. The passages during the tribulation show overcoming victory in stages after Satan is cast down to earth and the Antichrist is given authority to kill Christians. Salvation comes to the overcoming two witnesses and tribulation martyrs who die because they will not take the mark of the beast. This period is also a time of great apostasy. Those denying their faith in Jesus wind up losing their Salvation. Next, we are shown the hundred and forty-four thousand overcoming and making it through the Great Tribulation because they end up standing with Jesus on Mount Zion. The last three groups appear in the prophesied time of trouble such as never been seen before in recorded history. So, overcoming is God's goal for us regardless of the time period! We should all remember that because only God knows who will be counted worthy to escape these horrible judgments at the end of the church age.

## **8. There is Danger in Reducing Salvation to Legal Position Alone**

When salvation is reduced only to a legal standing before God, believers unintentionally neglect the larger purpose of transformation into Christ's likeness. This will produce the kind of lukewarm Christianity warned about to the church of Laodicea which was worldly and resistance to Spirit-led maturity. New Testament believers are continually exhorted to watch, pray, overcome, grow, endure, and walk in the Spirit. God's purpose through Christ is not merely to forgive humanity, but to prepare submitted mature saints for relational participation in the church of Jesus Christ on earth and ultimately prepared by God for use in the new heaven and the new earth. That's why Jesus said to the churches - "Overcome."

**Below is a systematic list of supporting scriptures for the eight points above.**

• God’s call is for all to conform to His image.	Genesis 1:26; Romans 8:29-31
• Christ is that pattern Son to restore humanity.	Romans 8:29; Hebrews 2:10–11
• Salvation begins by grace through faith which continues toward spiritual transformation.	Ephesians 2:8–10; Titus 2:11–14
• The risen Christ pours out the Holy Spirit to lead believers into spiritual life and power as prophesied.	Matthew 3:11; Acts 2:32–33
• As many as are Spirit led become sons of God.	Romans 8:14
• After foundational doctrines, believers are called to go on unto spiritual maturity (milk to meat).	Hebrews 6:1-6
• God disciplines children so they will be like Him	Hebrews 12:6–11
• The church is being cleansed and prepared as a spotless Bride for Christ.	Ephesians 5:25–27; Revelation 19:7-9
• Jesus calls believers to enter in, overcome and occupy spiritually in order to possess His eternal promises.	Revelation 2–3; Luke 21:36
• Scripture speaks of salvation in future and manifested dimensions beyond initial belief.	Romans 13:8-14; 1 Peter 1:3-9
• Adequate oil and readiness separate the wise and foolish virgins. Don’t die in the wilderness.	Matthew 25:1–13; Hebrews chapter 4
• The Bride unites with the Spirit to cry for all to come to Christ before the end comes.	Revelation 22:17-19
• 1 group meets Jesus’ requirement to overcome from chapters 2 and 3 <b>before</b> the Great Tribulation.	Revelation 12:10–11
• 3 more groups meet Jesus’ requirement to overcome from Jesus in chapters 2 and 3 <b>during</b> the Tribulation.	Revelation 11:3-12; 7:9-13; 14:1-5

We are not called to maintain a profession of faith while waiting passively for heaven. We are called into relational leadership by Christ helping believers grow into Bride maturity. God says be Spirit led toward the formation of sons conformed to Christ’s image. Grace initiates salvation, but spirit-led obedience not human effort is what leads us to gain immortality. **God’s grace** can cause us to press toward His desires any time before Jesus’ second coming. The question is not just will I escape but am I overcoming in Jesus?

*This was prepared as a teaching resource by Living the Spirit Filled Life.com. It was compiled from biblical study, historical research, and scriptural analysis using NASB unless noted. It is not intended as a replacement for the Scriptures, but to aid in understanding. You can use this information.*