

Introduction: The Persons and Works of the Triune God

- Because we serve the Triune God, we at times struggle to accurately speak of and understand the works of God and the relations of the Persons of the Godhead (Father, Son, Spirit) to those works.

“So far as our human experience goes, God comes towards us as one. Yet the one in whom he comes is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The coming is such that in the one the three come; and that in each the other comes. Yet we have an experience of each which is different from our experience of the other. There is an ‘Abba, Father!’; a ‘Lord Jesus!’; and a ‘Come, Holy Spirit!’ The three co-inhere in a single being so that there is no relation with the being apart from a relationship with the persons; no action of one person which does not have his own distinct mark upon it. The external acts of the triune God (the opera ad extra) are indeed common to all three persons, but that does not mean that each acts in the same way. The triune God creates; but the Father creates as Father, the Son as Son (or Logos) and the Spirit as Spirit. Each works in his own proper way.”

—Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ*

- Although there is but one work of salvation that God accomplishes on behalf of mankind, the Scriptures describe various aspects of that work and highlight the roles of the persons of the Godhead within them:

The Father _____ (Eph. 1:3-6) **The Son** _____ (Eph. 1:7-12) **The Spirit** _____ (Eph. 1:13-14)

Key Point: Recalling God’s _____ work of salvation that He has accomplished in us by His Spirit, humbles us and reminds of His power transform sinners into His servants.

Living as the Church in the World—Titus 3:1-10**The Structure of Titus 3:3-5**

(–) ³ For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

(+) ⁴ **But** when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ **he saved us**

How? not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit

- Having spoken of their former way of life, Paul then reminds them of God’s love for sinners demonstrated in the work of *salvation* that He accomplished for them.

“goodness”

“lovingkindness”

⇒ These general terms refer to God’s love for _____ in general in light of our condition of foolishness & disobedience.

“God our Savior”

“appeared”—ἐπιφαίνω (*epiphainō*)—To bring to light or to become visible; to make fully known.

⇒ This term has been used already by Paul (2:11,13) and emphasizes the unique manifestation of God’s grace as shown in the _____ and _____ of Jesus Christ.

“he saved us”—σώζω (*sōzō*)—To save or preserve from transcendent danger or destruction (from eternal death).

⇒ This is an all-encompassing term that refers to justification, but also to the deliverance from a former way of _____.

- Paul then employs a contrast in order to properly describe how it is that believers came to experience salvation:

1. Their salvation was not based upon their own righteous works (–)

“not because of works”

Gal. 2:16—nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

“done by us in righteousness”

⇒ Because of Paul’s prior exhortation to faithful living and his reminder to them of their past, it was possible that they could have the wrong impression about the means by which they were saved.

Key Point: We must be reminded that our works do not _____ in any way to our salvation.

2. *Their salvation was based upon the mercy of God.*

“mercy”—*ἔλεος (eleos)*—Kindness or concern expressed for someone in need, mercy, compassion, pity, clemency.

⇒ This term is used in the both OT (Num. 14:19) and the Gospels (Luke 1:72) of God’s covenant _____ for Israel.

⇒ Used in the NT, it refers primarily to the _____ nature of God’s favor.

Eph. 2:4-5—⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved

Rom. 15:8-9—⁸ For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

* *In reference to Israel, God’s mercy is shown in His faithfulness to keep the promises that He had made to them.*

* *In reference to Gentiles, God’s mercy is shown in giving them access to the blessings of the promises not made with them.*

Eph. 2:12-13—¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Gal. 3:14— in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Key Point: We must be reminded that God has mercifully _____ to show us His undeserved favor.

• Paul then highlights the Holy Spirit’s work of spiritual renewal in the lives of believers.

“the washing of regeneration”—*παλιγγενεσία (paliggenesia)*—New birth, reproduction, renewal, recreation, regeneration.

⇒ The image of ‘washing’ is associated with _____, imagery from the OT that describes what was necessary in order for one to be fit for service to God.

⇒ The concept of ‘new birth’ shows that it was not enough to simply purify the _____.

John 3:5-7—⁵ Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

“the renewal of the Holy Spirit”—*ἀνακαινώσις (anakainōsis)*—A renewal or renovation; a complete change for the better.

⇒ The emphasis of this term is on the _____ of life associated with the Spirit’s work.

* *This is simultaneously a finished work (our position) and an ongoing work (our condition)!*

2 Cor. 5:17—Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Cor. 4:16—So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

Key Point: We must be reminded that it is the work of God’s Spirit in us that has _____ us.

Concluding Thoughts

1. The present reality of our salvation is experienced as we live by the power of the _____ within us.

He _____ us new life!

John 1:12-13—¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

He _____ the new life He has given!

Eph. 3:14-16—¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

2. God has regenerated us in order that we might be set apart as His people who live _____ in the world as His witnesses.

Acts 1:8—But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”