

1 CORINTHIANS 01:18 SALVATION AND PERISHING

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
1 Corinthians 01:18

Men are placed into one of two categories here, *perishing* or *being saved*. A man goes through life having one of these two experiences: he is either perishing, moving ever downward toward the grave; or he is being saved, moving ever upward toward eternal life. In the Greek, both words are continuous action; that is, a man *is perishing* or *is being saved*. The words are not static; a man is not sitting still. He is ever “perishing,” more and more being gripped by the flesh and being conditioned to accept a perishing, dying world; or he is ever “being saved,” more and more being freed to walk righteously and godly in this present world. The man who is saved is being conditioned to break loose from a perishing, dying world and to look for the glorious appearing of the new world. (See *Salvation*, Rom. 1:16.)

1. The terrible word *perishing* means to be lost, to be utterly destroyed, to lose eternal life, to be spiritually destitute, to be cut off.
 - a. Perishing means to be in a lost state in this world. It means to be...
 - aging, deteriorating, decaying, dying. (See *Disease, Sickness, Corruption*, Mt. 8:17; notes, 1 Cor. 15:50; Col. 2:13; *Sin, Death, Corruption*, 2 Pet. 1:4.)
 - without life (purpose, meaning, significance). (See *Grace*, Jn. 1:4; *Life in Jesus Christ*, Jn. 10:10; *Eternal Life*, Jn. 17:2-3.)
 - without peace (assurance, confidence, security in God’s keeping). (See note, Jn. 14:27.)
 - without hope (of living forever). (See *Deliverance from Death*, 2 Tim. 4; 18.)
 - b. Perishing means to be in a lost state in the world to come. It means...
 - having to die • facing judgment • being condemned
 - suffering separation from God and from all loved ones
 - experiencing all that is hell
(See *Hell Fire*, Mt. 5:22; *Hell Torment*, Lk. 16:24; *Death*, Heb. 9:27.)
2. The great word *salvation* is used in Scripture to describe at least three experiences for the believer.
 - a. The *once-for-all experience* of salvation. It is an experience that has happened sometime in the past: “Your faith *has* saved you” (Lk. 7:50). It is the initial act of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is receiving Christ into one’s heart and life as Lord. It means being saved or delivered from sin, death, and hell; and being

given the assurance that one will never be separated from God — either in this life or in the world to come. (See *Life in Christ*, Jn. 1:4; *Life in Christ*, Jn. 10:10; *Eternal Life*, Jn. 17:2-3.)

John 17:2 “For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.”

2 Cor 2:15 For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.

Eph 2:5 Made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved.

Eph 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

2 Tim 1:9 Who has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

- b. The *continuous experience* of salvation. It is an experience that is occurring right now, in the present. “[You] who are *being saved*” (1 Cor. 1:18). It is a description of God’s work day by day in the believer’s life. It is the Holy Spirit of God working within the believer. (Cp. Rom. 6:14; 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 2:20; Ph. 1:19; 2:12-13; 2 Th. 2:13.)

=> To guide and teach him and to deliver him through all the trials and problems of life.

John 14:16-17 “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever — the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”

John 14:23 Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”

=> To fill him with a heart of love, joy, and peace — all the fruit and resources necessary to live life to the fullest.

Gal 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

=> To conform him more and more to the image of Christ.

2 Cor 3:18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

⇒ To stir and equip him to live and witness for Christ day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, and moment by moment.

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

2 Tim 1:7-8 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.

- c. The *redemptive experience* of salvation that is to occur in the future. “Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed” (Rom. 13:11). This future reference to salvation points to the day of redemption — to the day of Christ’s kingdom — to the day when Christ shall usher in His kingdom upon this earth — to the day when God will create a new heavens and earth and bring about His perfect will and rule throughout the universe.

Rom 8:21-23 That the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

1 Cor 15:42-44 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

1 Pet 1:5 Who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

2 Pet 3:10-13 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

(See *Kingdom of God*, Mt. 19:23-24.) □