

Partnership with Christ

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[0 : 00] Now this morning we turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 9 where the Apostle says, God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now we speak about the plan of salvation and when we are thinking of the plan of salvation we must bear in mind that the Trinity, that is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are involved in this plan of salvation.

What happens is that God the Father sends his Son into the world on his saving mission. God the Son comes forth from his Father to effect this salvation by his life of obedience and by his death. And God the Holy Spirit applies this salvation to those for whom it is intended. And so what is the purpose?

What is God's purpose in all this? God's purpose in all this is to reconcile to himself lost guilty men and guilty women to bring them to himself and to bring them into a holy partnership with his Son Jesus Christ.

[1 : 38] And so sinners must be called into this unique fellowship. But the question is, how are sinners called into this wonderful partnership, into this fellowship with God?

Let us then just think of this call of God that the Apostle is speaking of where he says, God is faithful. By whom he says, ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Well the Apostle here is speaking to the Corinthians and reminding them of the faithfulness of God. And God is very faithful.

Faithful towards sinners who don't deserve it. And he is calling these sinners into this partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ.

And before we can enter into this partnership, before we can participate in this grace which God bestows, God must call us to it.

[2 : 52] And the question that we have to ask just now is, how does God call men and women into this state of grace?

How does he do it? Well he does it through the Gospel. And we can never cease to be full of wonder at the God who has provided us with the Gospel.

And the Gospel is simply the good news. God's good news to a lost world. And the good news is here in his own words. This is why the Bible is so important.

How could I ever know about Jesus unless I read the Bible? How could I ever know about God's sovereignty? And God's graciousness?

And God's condescension? Unless I read about it in his word. I'll never learn these things by simply going out into the fields and by looking at the fields or looking at the sky above me.

[3 : 59] I must sit down with God's word and I must listen to what God is saying. And God is speaking to me through his word. And as I sit down with the Gospel, with the good news what is it that God is saying, telling me to do?

Well God is telling me that he is the justifier of the ungodly and that we can only become just through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and he is telling me that the initial step towards my justification towards me being made just in the presence of God the initial step in my justification the initial step in my being saved is my repentance.

That is the initial step that I take as a Christian or in becoming a Christian. God is calling me to repentance God is calling you to repentance in the Gospel God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son and so when God's call comes to you and to me from the Bible what is it?

It is a call first of all to repent and to believe in his Son that is what God is saying to me in the Bible He is telling me that I must repent of my past of my sins He is telling me that the only hope for me is

to believe in his Son whom he has sent so when I come to God's Word and when I sit down under the sand of the Gospel God's call is being addressed to me and God is saying repent repent repent of your sins and God is saying to me believe in my Son the only way out of your condition as a sinner is by coming to my Son and by believing in him believing in him you know just as God spoke through the prophet Ezekiel long ago this is how God speaks to us there in chapter 14 of Ezekiel verse 6 this is what God says thus saith the Lord God repent and turn yourselves from your idols and turn away your faces from your abominations that was God's message through the prophet Ezekiel to the people of his days turn away from your idols turn away your faces from your past abominations and if God is saying anything to this generation he is saying precisely that he is saying to the people of Inverness to the people throughout the land of Scotland to the people within these British Isles and throughout the whole world

God is saying to them turn away from your idols turn away your faces from your past abominations and oh how we need to do that break says God with your past break with this materialistic world that you are caught up in set your faces towards me says God you remember the cows who came to hear John the Baptist at the river Jordan what was his message to them his message was similar to what Ezekiel's message was what did John the Baptist preach repent ye and was his word to the people repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand but again let's go to Pentecost here is this great revival that is going to take place at Pentecost but before it takes place there is Peter preaching one of the greatest preachers I suppose it ever was he sees this vast crowd before him on this wonderful day of Pentecost he begins his address and he says to these people who are standing there before him repent he says this is what you've got to do repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and you know it's the same message you see that Paul preached to the Athenians on Mars Hill you remember how there he was at Mars Hill and all these Athenians had come out to hear what this babbler was going to say what was he going to say well this is what the Apostle said to these people these so called wise people of Athens he said this to them

[9 : 22] God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent this is God's call to you God's call to you is in these terms to repent and you know that is God's call to our generation that is God's call to you and to me to repent what are we to repent of to repent of our past indifference to God to repent of our past carelessness of life to repent of our past life of sin that is what God is asking us to do and as well as asking us to repent of these things he is asking us to believe in his own son his only son Jesus Christ as the ground for our reconciliation with him he is asking us accept this is what God is saying to us accept my proper grace this is my grace to you and in my grace there is my pardon in my grace are all my benefits in my grace are all my promises and this grace

I am offering it to you says God through my son Jesus Christ if you will only come and accept him I think that's wonderful if someone were to come to you today with unlimited gold ah your face would brighten up unlimited gold you would be the richest man in the world your heart would throw to this great gift that was being made to you by someone who came to you and said here this is yours my dearest friend that pales into insignificance with the gift that God is offering I can't describe to you the greatness and the wonder of this gift of God his proper grace in Jesus Christ and he is offering it freely it's without money it's without price and he is saying there you are it's you my son believe on him come to him and so God's call is to come out of the darkness of sin into the marvellous light of Christ

God's call is to come out of the slavery that has been imposed upon us by the sinfulness of our flesh and of our hearts and to come out of that into the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free it's a call to come away from a world that is going to perish in its corruption and it's a call to come to a world of everlasting blessedness and glory I don't know of anything at all like this it's so wonderful and it's God's call and it's God's proper grace and you are invited to participate in it but you know this call of God's and the gospel must become effectual in our experience and it does so when the Holy Spirit applies it to us and what will the Holy Spirit do when it comes to you and when it comes to me to apply this wonderful grace to us well when he comes to us the Holy Spirit will first of all do this he will convince us of our sinful past oh my dear friend if you are being convinced about your sinful past thank God for that if now you are beginning to feel a certain conviction that you've never felt before

I don't mean precisely at this service this morning but these last days these last weeks these last months you've been feeling a certain degree of conviction of sin that you've never had before well

praise God for it that's what the Holy Spirit has come to do to convince us of our sin and the second thing you know that the Holy Spirit will do when he is applying this great work to us is he begins to reveal to us as we have never seen it before the suitability of Christ to meet us in our need for years you've come to church you've heard the name of Jesus and Christ and it means almost nothing to you but if suddenly it's now beginning to be realised by you that there is none other name so sweet how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear and if the name of Christ now begins to thrill you then this is the Holy Spirit showing to you the suitability of Christ to meet you in your needs and what else will the Holy Spirit do well I'm only following the lines of the shorter catechism here and what the Holy Spirit will do is this he will persuade you to embrace

Jesus Christ who is offered to you in the gospel and the question is for each one of us here this morning is have we responded have we asked for the Holy Spirit to do these things for as you know Jesus says this ask and it shall be given you he says if anyone asks God will grant to him the Holy Spirit if he asks in sincerity you see Jesus says a human father wouldn't mock a son who in his need comes to him and asks him for bread that human father wouldn't give his son a stone and so says Jesus neither will the heavenly father mock any who come to him in desperation how much more says Jesus shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him and so this is the call of God and the call of God has been coming to you have you responded to it and said yes let me know let me know more about sin in my life and let me see the wonder of Christ more and more and let me just embrace him as my own personal Lord and Saviour what is the purpose of God in this the purpose of God in addressing this call to you and to me well the purpose of God addressing this call to you and me is to bring us into fellowship with his son

[17:16] Jesus Christ you know that word fellowship means communion it carries with it the idea of participation it carries with it the idea of partnership and so when God addresses his call to us he is really calling us into a holy partnership with his own son Jesus Christ he is saying to you and to me I want you to become a partner with my son I want you to enter into a partnership with him you will share the various things that he has to give and so what can we say about this partnership well we can say that when we are called into partnership with Christ we are called into partnership with him as the saviour of the lost you see just as Adam at the beginning carried every one of us we are his prosperity

Adam carried every one of us in his state of probation and he incurred us with him in his guilt and loss you see because we were in Adam what he stood to gain we would have gained with him but what Adam stood to lose during that period of probation we lost with him this was the awful thing about Adam's sin that he incurred us with him in his guilt and loss and ever since that fatal day in Eden I look like Adam don't I my first father and you look like him too we're all the same we're all tarred with the same brush we're all sinners we're all lost but you see just as Adam carried us in that period of probation and lost it all for us so thank

God Christ Jesus in his obedience carried with him his elect people and what Christ stood to gain by his life of obedience and by his death on the cross he gained it for his people what did Christ do he made satisfaction to God's law by giving obedience to it he made satisfaction to that law which was broken by dying to the law and you see when we are united to Christ and God is calling us to be united to him God is calling us into this partnership with his son when we come into this partnership with Jesus we are joined to Christ in this what the old theologians called mystical union with Jesus in this mystical way we were joined to Christ and Christ carried us just as

Adam carried us long ago in that fatal time of probation so thank God if we are in Christ Christ carried us and as he obeyed the royal law of God we in him have obeyed that law and just as Christ made satisfaction for its infringement by his death so we in Christ have made satisfaction too in that sense this is what Paul means when he says I am crucified with Christ ah there is Christ crucified there is Christ and he is dying because he is bearing sin but says the apostle Paul if you look at that cross it's not really Christ you see on the cross but it is Paul I am crucified with Christ it's a wonderful thing to be united to

Christ because God's law cannot demand any more on you it's really been satisfied with what it took out on the son of God I am crucified with Christ as the apostle nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ liveth in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me and so we are called into this partnership with Christ and what he was but we are also called into partnership with Christ and what he is and what is Christ who is he is God's son and having effected our reconciliation with his father we are brought you see into the

family of

[22 : 58] God all the dignity of it all the dignity of divine sonship that is conferred upon him that's no mean honor supposing God has said to you and to me I'm going to bring you into my family but I'm afraid the position that you will have is a menial slave in the household you will be there in my household and you will act as a slave my dear friend if God had said that to you how would you respond oh wouldn't you say thank you thank you so long as I don't go to hell so long as I don't descend into that dreadful place thank you for making me a servant in your house that's enough

I'll do anything I don't want to go to hell but just to be there in your home as a menial slave that's enough for me but you know that's not what God offers what God offers to make you his son in his household to confer upon you the distinction of heirship which raises you up to a position next to God himself as Paul puts it in his epistle to the Galatians wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son and if a son then an heir of God through Christ and in his epistle to the Romans the apostle puts it like this we become heirs of God he says and joint heirs with Christ and you know being an heir of God what an inheritance is at your disposal as I've said before

I was the only son the only son who survived in my own home I became my father's heir he wasn't a rich man but when he passed away and it was left to me to go through his possessions there were these few bits and pieces that he had which were of value to him they've come to me I keep them sometimes I take them out and look at them and they remind me of my own dear father and they are mine because I was his heir I have to think of God think of all that he has to give think of all that pertains to him and if I am in Christ then I'm his heir a joint heir with

Jesus Christ to that inheritance which is undefiled and that never fades away that is the partnership that I'm called into a partnership with Christ in what he was in what he is and I might just say this as I close we are also called into partnership with Christ in what he shall be you say that's strange that you should say that what he shall be you see Christ was raised from the dead on the third day and he has gone into glory but there is still something else that is going to happen as far as Christ is concerned what is it it is this that he is yet to be admired in his saints and his glory is going to be resplendent when every knee will bow to him and when every tongue will confess him and you know dear friend if you are a

Christian you are going to share with Christ in that resplendent glory because these bodies of ours which are corruptible must put on incorruption and what is mortal of us must put on immortality and that is going to happen at the last day the glorious day of the resurrection when our bodies will be raised incorruptible and fashioned like Christ's glorious body and when that happens we shall live and reign eternally with Christ now says the apostle are we the sons of God now now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is so then being called into partnership with Christ it's an inestimable benefit it ends for us our past associations with godlessness and unbelief it brings us into a new and close relationship with God through Christ it means that we become co-sharers with our

[29 : 02] Lord and with our Master it means that our Lord Jesus places at our disposal his resources and what are his resources his resources are the resources of heaven and he places them at our disposal and what do we place at his disposal we place at his disposal these paltry broken lives of ours for his use for his service so wonderful change that takes place you know they say that the oyster on the bed of the river it's got its shell open like that you see and floating inside into the shell sometimes there is a tiny grain of sand sand and it sets up an irritation within the oyster and the oyster can't get rid of it so what it does is by some wonderful means it begins to weave around this grit of sand a certain substance called a nacer and it keeps weaving this around this thing until it becomes very polished and then later on when men are searching for pearls they open the oyster and what began as a tragedy as far as the oyster was concerned is taken out as a pearl fit for a sovereign's crown they began as tragedy the grace of God transformed the grace of God makes us fit to adorn the crown of God oh that's no mean honour let us pray we ask for thy blessing upon each and all of us oh Lord as we hear thy call coming to us in the gospel may we respond repent of our sins turn to

Christ enter into this holy partnership with him in what he was and what he is and what he shall be take us a wee pray to our homes and safety and blot out our sins in Jesus name Amen offer as we would all the possibilities hang Tapi to us our sweet onwards prepare ■ our ■■ eternity and everything and everything and for the us