

Your Incredible Future

Have you ever wondered who you are?

We in the body of Christ know full well that we are creations of God, made in His image and with the awesome responsibility to “have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Genesis 1:26). We are not products of green slime or random amino acids that self-assembled in some primordial sea millions of years ago.

We also know we were predestined to be God’s people from before the foundation of the earth (Ephesians 1:4-5). Romans 8:29 says that we are predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that we might be the first-born of many brethren.

Yet, do we really understand who we are, and the incredible plan God has for us despite how insignificant and humble we might feel about ourselves? God’s word tells us that we need to have a correct view of ourselves (Romans 12:3), but many of us at times think that we do no measure up, and cannot possibly be qualified to be a Son of God at the resurrection ... this in spite of the fact that we are destined to be God, and even now are brothers of Christ, if indeed we possess His holy spirit (Romans 8:9, 29; I John 3:1-2).

How is it that this message of us not being qualified and fit to reign with Christ is broadcast and received by so many of us in day-to-day living? We can be sure that such messages of being unqualified to reap God’s promises are broadcast by Satan the devil, the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2). This problem has been put into sharp focus by DuSean Berkich in his book *How to Keep on Living* (Self Management Institute, 1984).

“The need for self-worth is the one factor common to all the negative feelings we so easily have about ourselves, and the subsequent behavior these feelings motivate. Think about it: every ‘bad day’ is one in which something happens that either subliminally or with sky writing says you don’t matter and, therefore, you’re worthless. Every intimidation, argument, and conflict occurs because someone is treating you as if you were worthless, or you are treating them that way.

“To gain worth is our greatest quest, and to gain it by whatever means we can is an imperative. In the face of death, we are desperate to show ourselves that we matter in spite of that humiliating end. We become cruel to each other as we seek to annul the worth others have — and they ours — in order to feel more worthwhile. To give up these mean and dangerous ‘games’ people play, we must perceive and hold ever dear the inherent worth of ourselves as God’s very own divine creatures.

“There is an unmistakable sense within us about ourselves that we have the potential of divinity, immortality, and should have true worth as we keep on living. We can’t tolerate anything to the contrary. We are threatened by what tends to show that we are worthless. The feeling that we are worthless makes us kill each other.”

Here is something to think about: ***Evil is not the problem we face. Not knowing our worth, feeling worthless, is the problem. Evil behavior***

stops when we are convinced of our self-worth and have a positive view of who we really are, and thus which laws of living we must follow.

I recall a sermon given by an “evangelist” at Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas, in 1974. The speaker was talking mostly about the faculty, of which I was a part, when he said, “You can all be replaced!” Talk about a statement that made some of us literally sick! How totally wrong he was: we cannot be replaced, and have been called by the Creator for a great purpose and future: “In My Father’s house are many mansions” (John 14:1-3), and those responsibilities He has for us are incredibly important. Those positions are reserved for each of us specifically, and He is not going to let us escape His grasp!

We Are to Become Like Jesus Christ

So, to help convict you that you have an incredibly wonderful future beyond anything you can imagine, alongside Jesus Christ at the Father’s right hand, I want to outline a number of identities of the saints with Jesus Christ, to show that our destinies are parallel.

1. WE HAVE AN ETERNAL NATURE.

— PAST EXISTENCE—

Jesus Christ

As we well know, Jesus existed as a spirit before coming to earth as a man.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ...” (John 1:1-3, 14).

“No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven” (John 3:13). *Heaven* (Strong 3722) = *ouranos*, the sky (elevated in height); by extension, heaven (as the abode of God).

“And now, Father, glorify me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed” (John 17:5).

The Elect

The saints likewise preexisted, if we are to believe the scripture.

“Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). [Thus, the spirit, the “real person,” was once with God who is in heaven.]

“And again: ‘Here am I [Yahweh = Jesus Christ] and the children [the elect] whom God [the Father] has given Me [Jesus Christ; quoted from Isaiah 8:18]. *Inasmuch then as the children [the elect] have partaken of flesh and blood*, He Himself [Jesus Christ] likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil ...” (Hebrews 2:13-14).

“And when the gentiles heard this they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed” (Acts 13:48). [Ordained (5001) = *tareo*, “to arrange in an orderly manner, i.e., assign or dispose (to a certain position or lot).”]

Just as Jesus Christ became flesh and blood,

but before was a spirit, so the elect were first eternal spirit with God before they became flesh and blood. The analogy between Christ's and the elect's state is unmistakable. Adam, from whom all of mankind has descended (Acts 17:26), came directly as a "spirit germ" or template from God's express image (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7), a Son of God (Luke 3:38). The elect, physically speaking, have come from Adam through generations of procreation, carrying his genes ... which are exact copies of God's spiritual form (now converted to physical).

This fact explains why God could know beforehand — before converting the spirits of Elohim into flesh and blood — those who were predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, walking in His footsteps and inheriting salvation. To predestine them He had to know them beforehand, and indeed He did, in the heavenly spirit world. This explains why He could call them "brethren", and how he "knew" them, for they were of His same spiritual genetic family, Sons of God [Elohim] in heaven before becoming flesh. Once in receipt of God's spirit they were in totality His Sons, prepared to be once again perfected spirit Sons of God as Jesus Christ was.

"For *whom He foreknew* [before being made flesh and blood, as spirits in the spirit world], He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Sons that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He predestined these He also called; whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified" (Romans 8:29-30).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as *He* [The Father] *chose us in Him* [Christ]

before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having *predestined us to adoption as sons* by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will ... that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth — in Him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him ..." (Ephesians 1:3-5, 10-11).

Jesus Christ therefore, as relatives ["brethren"] of these predestined adopted Sons, knew them in the spirit realm before they became flesh and blood, as He said:

"And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice" (John 10:4).

— FLESHLY EXISTENCE ON EARTH —

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ came to earth as flesh and blood. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh ..." (Romans 8:3).

The Elect

Man is a "nephesh," a "living soul" as stated in Genesis 2:7. Possessing the human spirit that imparted intellect and gave him form and being in God's image, man reflected the human

life in the material world that continued the motile power under control of the spirit reality which he is. *Nephesh* (Strong 5315) = “a breathing creature, i.e., animal or (abstract) vitality.”

“Inasmuch then as the children [the elect] have partaken of flesh and blood ...” (Hebrews 2:14).

— FUTURE ETERNAL EXISTENCE —

Jesus Christ

“And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was” (John 17:5)

Jesus Christ is now at the right hand of God the Father in heaven, to live eternally with Him (Acts 2:33-34; 5:31; 7:55-56; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; I Peter 3:22).

“Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” (Revelation 11:15).

The Elect

“And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him And they shall reign forever and ever” (Revelation 22:3, 5).

“To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Revelation 3:21).

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall

not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible” (I Corinthians 15:51-52).

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with a voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (I Thessalonians 5:16-17).

“And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one even as We are one” (John 17:22).

2. WE ARE DESTINED TO RECEIVE RULERSHIP OVER THE NATIONS AS SPIRITS.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ has received power to rule over the nations, just as will the saints (Revelation 2:26-27).

“And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords” (Revelation 19:14-16).

“You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause

I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth” (John 18:37).

“... Jesus Christ ... the ruler over the kings of the earth” (Revelation 1:5).

The Elect

“Arise, shine: For your [the elect’s] light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you, for behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising” (Isaiah 60:1-3).

“And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations — ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter’s vessels shall be broken to pieces’ [Psalm 2:9] — *as I also have received from My Father ...*” (Revelation 2:26-27).

“... For you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we [the elect] shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:9-10).

3. WE ARE TO INHERIT ALL THINGS.

Jesus Christ

“ ‘The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine’, says the Lord of hosts” (Haggai 2:8).

“All things were made through Him [Christ], and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:3).

“He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him” (John 1:10).

“Of old You laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands” (Psalm 102:25).

“I have made the earth, and created man on it. It was I — my hands that stretched out the heavens, and all their host I have commanded” (Isaiah 45:12).

“... which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:9).

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (Colossians 1:15-17).

“... Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands... (John 13:3).

The Elect

“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son” (Revelation 21:7).

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven Blessed

are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5,3, 5).

4. WE RECEIVE GOD’S SPIRIT BY BAPTISM AND THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

Jesus Christ

“Then Jesus, when He had been baptized, came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him” (Matthew 3:16; see also Mark 1:10 and Luke 3:21-22).

Jesus was baptized along with a number of other people; see Luke 3:21. Like the elect, God’s holy spirit was given at baptism, for it is pictured descending as a dove, a dramatic demonstration of the Father’s spirit-impregnating power. Such signs seldom accompany the baptism of the saints, but God’s spirit is granted nonetheless. Jesus Christ’s sinless life resulted from His strength of mind, body, and human spirit, in touch with His Father, bequeathed through direct birth from the Father, without the inherited faults of sinful preceding generations of fathers and mothers.

The Elect

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

“And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive

your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit’. Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized” (Acts 9:17-18).

“Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized” (Acts 18:8).

“When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied” (Acts 19:5-6-).

“Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery” (I Timothy 4:14).

5. WE ARE SPIRITUAL BROTHERS, WITH THE SAME FATHER, FAMILY, AND POTENTIAL.

Jesus Christ

“Then one said to Him, ‘Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You.’ But He answered and said to the one who told Him, ‘Who is My mother and who are My brothers?’ And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, ‘Here are My mother and My brothers!’ ” (Matthew 12:47-49).

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image

of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren: (Romans 8:29).

“I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father” (John 16:28).

“... Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead ...” (Revelation 1:5).

As an Elder Brother whose mission it was to live a sinless life, and pay the penalty for men’s sins as the pioneer or forerunner of the saints’ salvation, Jesus Christ is the mediator between the elect and the Father (I Timothy 2:5), a function the elect could never perform at this time.

The Elect

“... that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (John 17:21).

“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:18).

“For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of me, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren ... And again, ‘Here am I and the children whom God has given Me’ [Isaiah 8:18]” (Hebrews 2:11, 13).

Recall the discussion earlier where it is contended that it is very likely that, as physical sons

grow in stature and maturity to become physical fathers themselves, so will spiritual sons such as Jesus Christ and the saints grow in the spirit realm to become spiritual Fathers someday. The analogies between the physical and spiritual realms are unmistakable.

6. WE ARE SENT TO EARTH BY THE FATHER.

Jesus Christ

“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him ...” (John 6:44).

“I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father” (John 16:28).

“... Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hand, and that He had come from God and was going to God ...” (John 13:3).

The Elect

“It is written in the prophets, ‘and they shall all be taught by God’ [Isaiah 54:13]. Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me” (John 6:45).

“And again: ‘Here am I and the children whom God has given Me’. Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same ...” (Hebrews 2:13-14).

7. WE WILL REIGN WITH THE FATHER ON HIS THRONE.

Jesus Christ

“But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (Revelation 21:22).

“... We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens ...” (Hebrews 8:1).

The Elect

“To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Revelation 3:21).

8. WE WILL BE WORSHIPED [ONLY GODS CAN BE WORSHIPED].

Jesus Christ

“For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God” (Romans 14:11).

“That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ...” (Philippians 2:10).

“And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, ‘All hail.’ And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshiped Him” (Matthew 28:9).

“And Jesus said unto him, ‘You have both seen him, and it is He that talks with you.’ And he said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshiped Him” (John 9:37-38).

The Elect

“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before your [the saints’] feet, and to know that I have loved you” (Revelation 3:9).

“And kings shall be your nursing fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers: they shall bow down to you with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet; and they shall know that I am the Lord ...” (Isaiah 49:23).

“The sons also of them that afflicted you shall come bending unto you: and all they that despised you shall bow themselves down at the soles of your feet ...” (Isaiah 60:14).

9. WE PRAY DIRECTLY TO THE FATHER.

Jesus Christ

“Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: ‘Father, the hour has come’ ” (John 17:1).

“He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, ‘O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will but as You will’ ” (Matthew 26:39).

The Elect

“In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your

name” (Matthew 6:9).

“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly” (Matthew 6:6).

10. THE FATHER SPEAKS DIRECTLY TO US.

Jesus Christ

“And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’ ” (Matthew 3:17).

“While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’ ” (Matthew 17:5).

The Elect

God the Father speaks to the elect through the Word, the Scriptures.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ...” (II Timothy 3:16).

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God ...” (Ephesians 6:17).

11. WE ENDURE TRIALS, SUFFER, AND OVERCOME AS LIVING SACRIFICES.

Jesus Christ

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).

“To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Revelation 4:21).

“If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish [typifying Jesus Christ]: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord” (Leviticus 1:3, and similar references elsewhere).

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; he was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:3-5; see also I Peter 2:21-24).

“... and when he (Pilate) had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified ... And they [the soldiers] stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe. And when they had plaited a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head And they crucified Him ...” (Matthew 27:26, 28-29, 35).

The Elect

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:17-18).

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1:6-7).

“... and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together” (Romans 8:17-18).

“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son” (Revelation 21:7).

“I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives 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” (Galatians 2:20).

12. WE ARE MINISTERED TO BY ANGELS.

Jesus Christ

“Then the devil left Him, and behold,

angels came and ministered to Him” (Matthew 4:11).

“ ‘Father, if it is Your will, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not My will, but yours, be done.’ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him” (Luke 22:42-43).

The Elect

“But to which of the angels has He ever said, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool’? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?” (Hebrews 1:13-14).

“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels” (Hebrews 13:2).

13. WE FORGIVE THE SINS OF OTHERS.

Jesus Christ

“... and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; ‘Son, be of good cheer; your sins be forgiven you.’ And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, ‘This man blasphemeth’. ‘Wherefore think you evil in your hearts? For whether is easier to say, ‘Your sins be forgiven thee’; or to say, ‘Arise, and walk?’ But that you may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up your bed, and go unto your house’ ” (Matthew 9:2-6; also in Mark 2:3-12 and Luke 5:18-26).

“Father, forgive them; for they know

not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:9).

“I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake” (I John 2:12).

“But if her father disallow her in the day that he hears; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she has bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her: (Numbers 30:5).

“For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon You” (Psalm 86:5).

The Elect

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matthew 6:12, 14-15).

“So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses” (Matthew 18:35).

“And when you stand praying, forgive, if you have aught against any: that your

Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses” (Mark 11:25-26).

“... forgive, and you shall be forgiven” (Luke 6:37).

“Take heed to yourselves: If your brother trespass against you, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turns again to you, saying, I repent; you shall forgive him” (Luke 17:3-4).

“So that contrariwise you ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow” (II Corinthians 2:7).

“To whom you forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ” (II Corinthians 2:10).

14. CHRIST AND THE ELECT ARE EQUIVALENT AT THE RESURRECTION.

Jesus Christ made no distinction between Himself and Mary — and all of His ecclesia — at His resurrection. He stated, “I ascend unto My Father and your Father; and to My God, and your God” (John 20:17). A special point was made to emphasize that He considered Himself no greater than one of the brethren in terms of the true Parent for each of us. He considered Himself, in fact, a part of the brethren by this declaration. Besides, He acknowledged that the *true* Parent of each of us is the Father, and the

only wellspring of hope we have — just as He had — is the resurrection from the dead to eternal life.

The Greek words used in John 20:17 for Father and God are as follows:

Father (Strong 3962) = *pater*, a father (lit. or fig., near or more remote).

God (Strong 2316) = *theos*, a deity, esp. the supreme Divinity, fig. a magistrate.

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God [the Father] bring with Him” (I Thessalonians 4:14).

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does 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 just as He is” (I John 3:2).

“... who [Christ] shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself” (Philippians 3:21).

“For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29).

“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (I Corinthians 15:49).

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 3:4).

“... whereby are given unto us exceed-

ing great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (II Peter 1:4).

15. THE LAW IS WRITTEN IN OUR HEARTS, WE DO THE FATHER’S WILL, AND WE HAVE HIS MIND.

Jesus Christ

“Then answered Jesus and said unto them, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do, for whatever things He does, these also do the Son likewise’ “ (John 5:19).

“That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You have sent Me” (John 17:21).

“The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honorable” (Isaiah 42:21).

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matthew 5:17-18).

“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and

write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jeremiah 31:33).

The commandments and fruits of the spirit codify for God’s way of love to the Father and love to one’s neighbor (Exodus 20:2-17; Galatians 5:22-23; Matthew 22:3;6-40).

The Elect

“Your kingdom come, Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

“For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ” (I Corinthians 2:16).

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5).

See Jeremiah 31:33 and Hebrews 8:10.

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophecy” (Acts 2:17-18).

“But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness” (Romans 8:24; righteousness is defined as keeping the commandments in Psalm

119:172).

16. WE ARE GIVEN A NAME THAT NO ONE ELSE KNOWS.

Jesus Christ

“His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written that no man knew, but He Himself” (Revelation 19:12).

The Elect

“He that has an ear let him hear what the spirit says unto the churches: to him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in that stone a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it” (Revelation 2:17).

17. WE ARE TO BE EXAMPLES OF GODLY LIVING TO THE WORLD.

Jesus Christ

“In the mean while his disciples prayed Him, saying, ‘Master, eat’” (John 4:31).

“Then answered Jesus and said unto them, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do: for what things soever He does, these also does the Son likewise’” (John 5:19).

“I can of Mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which has sent Me” (John 5:30).

“I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night comes when no man can work” (John 9:4).

“For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me, he gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak” (John 12:49).

“Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me: or else believe Me for the very works’ sake” (John 14:10).

The Elect

“For even hereunto were you called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: who did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judges righteously ...” (I Peter 2:21-23).

“He that says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked” (I John 2:6).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever” (I John 2:15-17).

“Come unto me, all you that labor and

are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

“For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you” (John 13:15).

“He that speaks of himself seeks his own glory: but he that seeks His glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him” (John 7:18).

18. THERE IS HOPE OF GREAT GLORY IN THE SPIRIT REALM AFTER PHYSICAL DEATH

Jesus Christ

“... looking unto Jesus the Beginner and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the stake, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2). *Joy* (Strong 5479) = *chara*, “cheerfulness, i.e. calm delight.”

The Elect

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

“But as it is written, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him” (I Corinthians 2:9).

19. WE HAVE BEEN SENT INTO

THE WORLD

Jesus Christ and The Elect

“As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world” (John 17:18).

20. WE ARE NOT OF THE WORLD

Jesus Christ and The Elect

“I have given them Your word, and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.... They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (John 17:14, 16).

21. WE ARE TEMPTED WITH EVIL

Jesus Christ

“For we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).

The Elect

“Blessed is the man that endures temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love Him.... but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” (James 1:12, 14).

22. WE ARE MADE A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS

Jesus Christ

“You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor” (Psalm 8:5).

“But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone” (Hebrews 2:9).

The Elect

“But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘What is man, that you remember him? or the son of man, that you are concerned about him? You have made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, and have appointed him over the works of Your hands; you have put all things in subjection under his feet’” (Hebrews 2:6-8).

There are many more identities of Jesus Christ with the elect which one could explore. Note some comprehensive scriptures that clearly denote **the same pathway which Jesus Christ and the saints walk**.

“Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted” (Hebrews 2:17-18).

“He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (I John 2:6).

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me

through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. and the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have love Me” (John 17:20-23).

Of special interest is II Corinthians 3:18:

“But all of us who are Christians have no veils on our faces, but reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord. We are transfigured in ever-increasing splendor into his own image, and the transformation comes from the Lord who is the spirit” (Phillips translation).

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Conclusion

God has prepared for you a future that is so incredible that you simply cannot comprehend it. As Paul said in Corinthians 2:9,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him.”

Yet, He says in verse 10 that “these things God has revealed to us through the spirit, for the spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.” We can know some of that glory that will be revealed in us, and one thing we can be certain of is that if God has invested in us His spirit, He will not neglect helping us to the very end of our journey, to gain entry into His eternal spirit realm at the resurrection. As Philippians 1:6 says,

“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

You are incredibly important to God, and *essential* to His plan! Knowing this, we can wipe out our feelings of worthlessness that can come upon us at times. Let me quote again from DuSean Berkich’s book:

“We must remember that the death of Jesus Christ changed death for us all. He was truly ‘somebody’, God’s Son. [And remember that we are also His sons, brothers of Christ!]. He died, not because He was worthless, but because He was so valuable to God within His plan, JUST AS EACH OF US IS. Just think if Jesus had not come to us: we would have no evidence whatsoever to explain why we live, why we die, who we are, and who God is!”

We do not need to fear death, and be subject to bondage to that fear (Hebrews 2:15) as most people in the world are, who then are able to be swayed by politicians and governments so easily. We instead have liberty and freedom to not be tied to the fear of death, and the harsh words of Satan’s leaders of government and education (Galatians 2:4; 5:1, 13; James 2:12; II Corinthians 3:17). We have liberty to live, and live abundantly, for God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (II Corinthians 1:7). Let us live in the light of that spirit that dwells in us, and realize just how important each one of us is, for Jesus to have paid the ultimate price for our sins by His death — the perfect for the imperfect — that we may have life forever as His brother!

If you truly need to have a “boost,” then read Psalm 8:1-9.

Verse 1. God’s name is above the heavens.

Verse 3. The work of His fingers is the sun,
moon, and stars.

Verse 5. We are crowned with glory and
honor.

Verse 6. We have been given dominion over
all things.

The Father will serve the brethren—that is
us! What a great God we have!

“... and you yourselves be like men who
wait for their master, when he will
return from the wedding, that when he

comes and knocks they may open to
him immediately. Blessed are those
servants whom the master, when he
comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I
say to you that he will gird himself and
have them sit down to eat, and will
come and serve them” (Luke 12:36-37).

Is this not speaking of the Marriage Supper
of Revelation 19? I think so! What a great
Father in heaven and Elder Brother we have!