



# How Are We Saved?

1. Saved ... *From What?*  
Saved ... *For What?*

St. John in the Wilderness

■ Save me Lord, king of eternal glory, you who have the power to save us all. Grant that I may long for, do and perfect those things which are pleasing to you and profitable for me. Lord, give me counsel in my anxiety, help in time of trial, solace when persecuted, and strength against every temptation. Grant me pardon, Lord, for my past wrongdoings and afflictions, correction of my present ones, and deign also to protect me against those in the future.

■ Latin prayer, 11<sup>th</sup> century. From *Oxford Book of Prayer*, page 53

# Question

- Answer (silently):
  - Are you saved?
  - Are you being saved? ■

A dense collage of religious art, primarily depicting the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The central focus is the text "Saved... from What?". The background is a complex arrangement of various religious paintings and icons. In the top left, there's a crucifixion with figures in prayerful poses. To its right, a seated Christ figure holds a book. Further right, a scene of a crucifixion with a figure being lowered from the cross. The top right features a dramatic scene with figures in a landscape, possibly a resurrection or a similar event. The bottom left shows a group of figures, possibly the Last Supper or a similar gathering. The bottom center has a crucifixion with a figure being lowered. The bottom right features a large, prominent image of Christ with a book, and another crucifixion scene. The overall composition is highly detailed and layered, with many smaller scenes and figures interspersed throughout.

Saved... from What?

# Saved... From What?

- Saved from:
  - from vulnerability to temptation (= concupiscence),
  - from our inability to stop sinning,
  - from our inability to act with pure motivations, our very action, however noble, tainted by ignoble motivations,
  - from the threat of death as a final end, a complete termination of all that we are,
  - from the danger we will never achieve that purpose for which we were created, beings created in the image and likeness of God. ■

# Saved... From What?

- Saved from the brokenness of this world:  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;  
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,  
Where youth grows pale, and specter-thin, and dies,  
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs,  
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

*from: John Keats, Ode to a Nightingale* ■

# Saved... From What?



- In Christian theology, everything we have been describing,
- all these problems we need and desire to be saved from,
- can be said to be a consequence of a single event in pre-history termed **"The Fall"**
- In Genesis chapters 1 and 2, we read of how God created the first man, Adam, in God's image and likeness. He placed him in the paradise of the Garden of Eden, and made him a suitable companion, the first woman, Eve.
- In Genesis chapter 3, we read of how sin first entered into creation through Adam and Eve ■

# Saved... From What?

- In Genesis 3:16-19, we learn of the consequences of Adam and Eve's first or "original sin:"
  - To the woman [the LORD God] said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." (NIV) ■

# Saved... From What?



- Augustine of Hippo (354-430) developed a theology of this "Original Sin:"
  - This theology has been *enormously* influential in the West (but not in East Christianity).
  - Before the Fall, the human condition was *posse non peccare* (possible not to sin).
  - After the Fall, our universal human condition is *non posse non peccare* (not possible not to sin).
  - The Fall caused a total depravity of human nature, a spiritual corruption pervading every aspect of our being, leading inevitably to personal acts of disobedience to God. ■

# Saved... From What?



- Augustine of Hippo (354-430) developed a theology of this "Original Sin:"
  - Furthermore, the Original Sin and the guilt for the Original Sin is *inherited*:
  - All babies are conceived in sin, born guilty of Adam's and Eve's sin and deserve damnation.
  - Everyone one born in this world is part of a *massa damnata*, deserving of hell just because of Original Sin. ■

# Saved... From What?

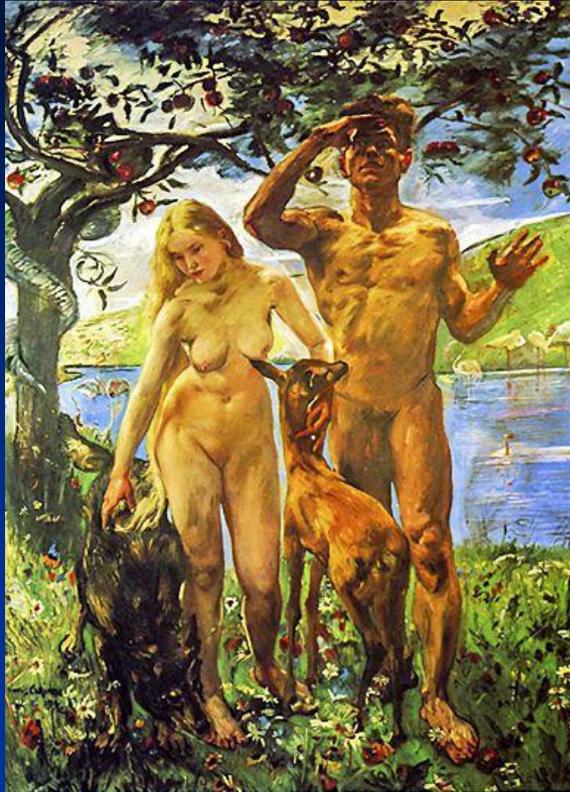


- Not all Christian traditions accept Augustine's view of "inherited" guilt for Adams and Eve's "Original Sin," but all teach that the entrance of sin into the world has caused a corruption of the likeness of God within us, a corruption we must be saved from.
  - We are all "fallen," we are all sinners.
- And God sent a savior to save us, Jesus, The Son of God, the second "person" of the Triune God. ■

# Saved... From What?

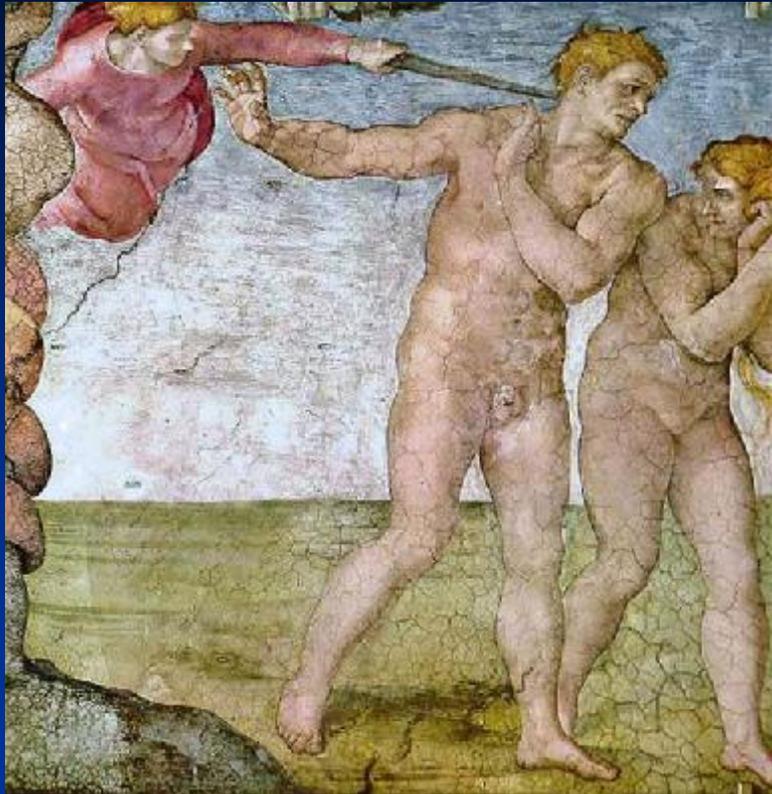
- We can thus describe three "phases" of humanity:
  - 1. The human being before the Fall.
  - 2. The fallen human being.
  - 3. The “regenerated” human being; the human being redeemed through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. ■

# Saved... From What?



- 1. **Human Being before the Fall**
  - Human beings (Adam and Eve) lived in complete harmony with God and creation.
  - They were holy and just (= Original Justice or Original Righteousness)
  - This is the existence God intended for us. ■

# Saved... From What?



## ■ 2. The Fallen Human Being

- Although we remain beings in the "image" of God, the *likeness* of God in us has been tainted, corrupted, or even destroyed.
- We have difficulty, or are incapable of doing anything but a sin.
- We have difficulty seeing, or are blind to truth, to goodness and to the beauty of God. ■

# Saved... From What?

## ■ 3. The “Regenerated” Human Being

- The human being who is “born again” (= “regenerated”) in Christ.
  - In other words / language: the human being who has taken on, or lives in Christ, the “Second Adam,” the “New Adam.”
- Original sin is erased in us, and we are turned back towards God.
- But our nature is still weakened, still inclined towards evil. ■

# Saved... From What?

## ■ 3. The “Regenerated” Human Being

### ■ Asides:

- in the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican\*, and Lutheran traditions, “regeneration” is typically achieved in Baptism. In Methodist, Reformed and Baptist traditions, it is typically associated with an initial experience of conversion and faith.
  - \*some evangelical Anglicans may side with the Reformed views.
- As we will see, Christian traditions differ greatly on the degree to which the “regenerated” Christian can achieve virtue and holiness (always with God's grace) in this life. ■

# Saved... From What?

- Aside: there are some interesting ideas and proposals on how we might reconcile the Theology of the Fall and Original Sin with:
  - the evolution of human beings from lower forms of life,
  - modern psychology of human behavior.
- However, these ideas have not been integrated into the systemic theology of most Christian traditions.
- We will here assume the traditional, classic theology of The Fall and Original Sin, as this is what has shaped and continues to direct Christian discussion of salvation. ■

# Saved... From What?

- Three “Metaphors” of Salvation:
  - 1. The Courtroom Metaphor
  - 2. The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor
  - 3. The Medical Metaphor
- Each of these metaphors emphasize different facets of what we need to be saved from, and suggest remarkably different “Christian spiritualities” of how we should view the journey of our lives. ■



# Three “Metaphors” of Salvation

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation:

## 1. The Courtroom Metaphor

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Courtroom Metaphor



- You stand before the judge.
- You know you are guilty.
- Your heart and mind is corrupt and full of filthy things (you are a sinner)
- You deserve death.
- You deserve the wrath of the infinite being (God) whom you have wronged.
- You can do nothing to help yourself.
- The debt you owe is infinite. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Courtroom Metaphor



- To your amazement, the judge, (God, the Infinite Being you have wronged) declares:
- “I hereby declare you to have the legal status of “innocent.”
  - The legal “status” of “innocence” has been “imputed” to you. Your guilty true self has been “cloaked,” “covered” by the legal “status” of innocence.
- “The punishment you deserve and which justice requires, will be borne by and paid by another.
- “You are released.” ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Courtroom Metaphor



- You can't believe this. It is impossible.
- You can't move:
  - Because you are guilty of everything as charged.
  - Because your mind is still teeming with wicked schemes you would like to do if you had the chance.
- The judge walks over and puts his or her arm around you.
- "It is true he or she tells you. Believe it."
- And he or she leads you out of the Courtroom. "You are free." ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Courtroom Metaphor

- Outside you feel subtly changed.
  - You realize it is really true. You have been declared “innocent.”
  - Your mind is still teeming with wicked schemes, but less so.
- This moment, this “experience” when you realize the Judge has declared you “innocent” is a special and even unique moment. It is the moment, the experience of “conversion;” you have been “regenerated;” you are “born again.” ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Courtroom Metaphor

- You find out the judge has also given you an inheritance, a chance to go to a place that, as you think about, is the what you've always wanted, is the fulfilment of all your dreams.
  - Some traditions would say your “conversion experience” guarantees this inheritance to you, regardless of what happens later on. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Courtroom Metaphor

- You also begin to think about this inheritance.
- You realize you have been provided instructions about how you can best enjoy this inheritance.
- These instructions are the laws and commandments:
  - Previously the law and commandments seemed to you to be just a list of all the criteria that you could never measure up to. They just condemned, terrified, humbled you (the so called "Second" or "Evangelical" use of the Law).
  - Now you understand the laws and commandments are just instructions for how to enjoy the inheritance *that is already yours* (the so called the "Third Use" of the Law.) ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Courtroom Metaphor

- The rest of the journey of this life is preparing yourself for your inheritance,
- using the instructions provided by the laws and commandments,
- confident, persevering in the belief that *the inheritance is yours, a gift already given to you.* ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation:

## 2. The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor

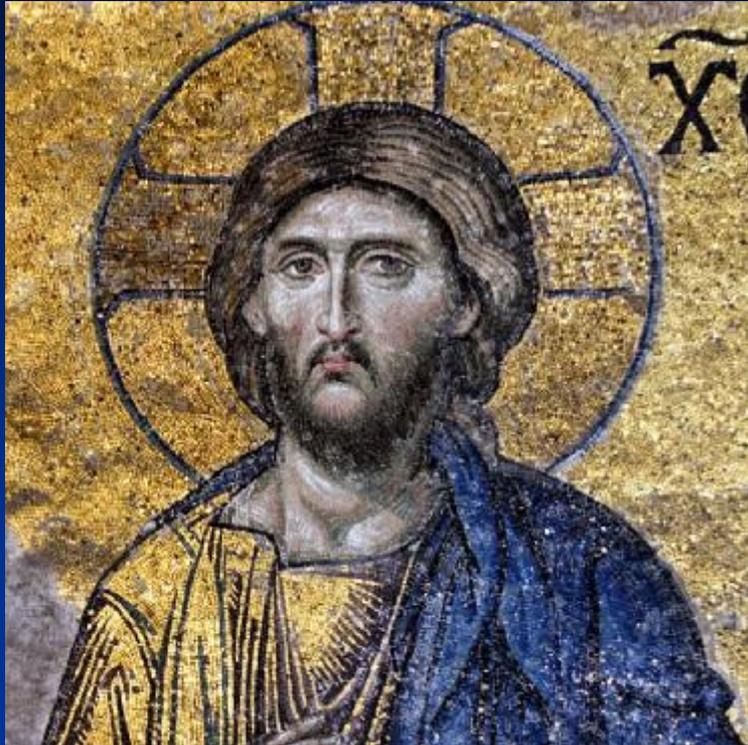
# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor

- You are a prostitute.
- Your heart and mind is in the gutter.
- You have no means to better yourself, and you don't really want to.
- This is how you live, how you make a living.
  - = The image and likeness of God in you is deeply corrupt or lost. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

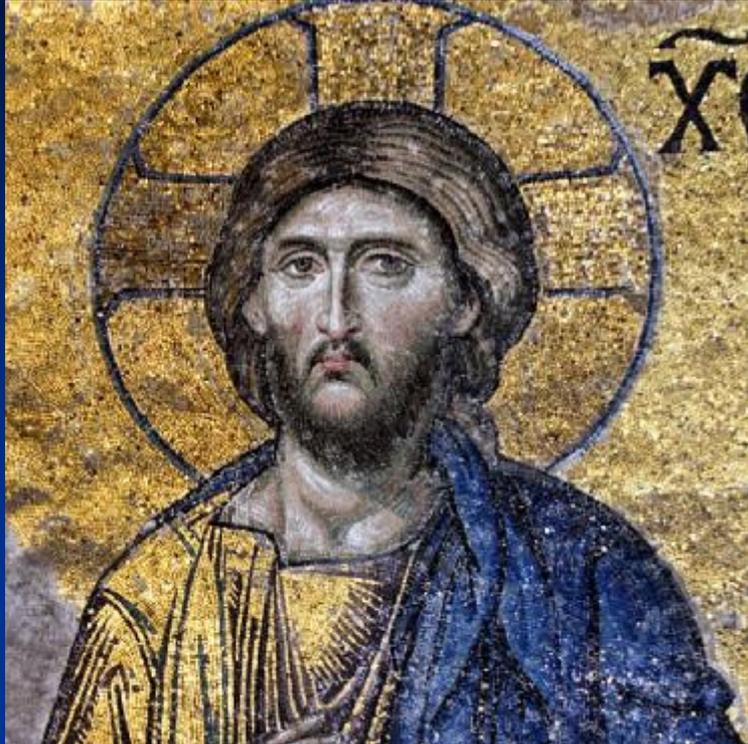
## The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor



- Then out of the blue, the King's Son arrives.
- He declares he loves you and wants you to become his bride.
- He reaches out with a ring,
- “Let me place this on your finger. Please accept this and become my bride. All that I have will become yours. Become my Queen and share my life.” ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor



- All you have to do is accept the ring, let him put the ring on your finger.
- There are no conditions.
- You don't have to first reform yourself.
- All you have to do is trust the King's Son (have *faith*) and let him put the ring on your finger. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor

- You accept and go to live with the king's son in his great castle.
- Everything of the King's Son is also yours, yet your mind is still in the gutter.
- You are at the same time both the "Queen" and a "prostitute."
  - Luther: you are at the same time both righteous and sinner, *simul justus et peccator*. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor

- There are many days you wake up and it all seems like a dream:
  - You could never be the wife of the King's Son or the Queen.
  - You cannot believe it.
  - You are just a prostitute.
  - Your mind is in the gutter.
  - You still long for all the same things you longed for as a prostitute. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor

- Luther called these spiritual assaults on faith *Anfechtung*.
- You can suffer *Anfechtung* every day.
- Every day you must look at that ring on your finger and:
  - try to believe,
  - try to have faith, convince yourself of the reality of the promise of the King's Son (the Gospel promise): "The King's Son did put this ring on my finger, and I am the Queen." ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor

- The challenge of the Christian life is simply:
  - each day to try to believe,
  - To overcome *Anfechtung*, the spiritual assaults of disbelief,
  - To believe you are the wife of the King's Son,
  - To believe you are the Queen,
  - To believe that you are not merely a prostitute.
- All sin is simply disbelief.
- The journey of this life is simply getting “used to” the promise that you are Queen, for that promise is the power that will change you. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation:

## 3. The Medical Metaphor

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- You have just been in a terrible wreck.
- You are unconscious, unable to help yourself.
- You are dying. You are in cardiac and respiratory arrest.
- You are good as dead. You are technically dead.
- Through the work and the grace of the emergency responders around you, you are brought back to life. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- In the ICU you recover.
- You are “born again,” “regenerated,” brought to “new life” through work of the doctors and nurses about you, work “given” to you as a pure gift, pure “grace.” ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- Finally you are up on your feet again.
- You are ready for discharge from the hospital.
- You are ready to start to start living your “new life.” You have the life of a new man, the life of the “new Adam” or “second Adam.” ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- Your Doctor (who is God and who loves you) wants nothing less than for you to achieve *perfect health*: only with perfect health can you achieve and fulfill everything you have been made for. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- You are out of the hospital but you are by no means a specimen of perfect health:
  - One of your wounds has become infected.
  - You have taken up smoking again (a habit of the “old life,” a habit of the “old Adam” or “first Adam”), aggravating and worsening a cough and shortness of breath you had not fully shaken after developing a pneumonia in the ICU.
  - You walk with a limp. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- Your Doctor gives you an antibiotic for your wound infection.
- You “cooperate” with your Doctor, do the “work” of taking the antibiotic (= a grace given to you), and the wound heals.
- Your Doctor is pleased that you took your antibiotic, allowing the wound to heal. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- The Doctor now offers (= a gift, a "grace") a program of smoking cessation.
- You "cooperate" with the program, do the "work" of the smoking cessation program (the program a grace given to you), and are finally able to stop smoking. Your stamina and breathing improves.
- Your Doctor is pleased that you did the work of "smoking cessation", improving your stamina and breathing.
- Given your improved stamina and breathing, your Doctor can now offer (another gift, another "grace") you a course of intensive physical therapy to improve your limp. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- Aside:
  - the Doctor's pleasure (for the Doctor is God and loves you) when you cooperate with a therapy regimen (that is, cooperate with the Doctor's gift = "grace"), allowing your health to improve,
  - and the *additional* therapy regimen (the *additional* "grace") your Doctor can now offer you because you are healthier,
- is what Roman Catholic theologians mean by "merit." ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- Aside on Merit:
  - you have “earned” merit -- the "grace" of a regimen of physical therapy and the Doctor's pleasure in offering it -- because you cooperated with the grace of a program of smoking cessation.
  - merit = a term most Protestants are “allergic” to;
  - merit = “grace that crowns grace.” The additional grace God can offer us when we cooperate with a previous grace and become "healthier;" it includes God's "pleasure" and "favor" (for God loves us) in being able to do so. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## The Medical Metaphor

- The journey of our Christian life is to try to become as healthy as we can by cooperating with the Doctor (God)'s therapy regimens, with the Doctors (God)'s "graces" to us,
- so that one day we might be healthy enough to fully enjoy life in the divine world and divine community we were made to live in.
  - Some suggest the "healthier" we are, the more we will enjoy life in the divine world
- It is a journey with ups and downs, for we can always injury ourselves in new ways in this life -- even grievously injury ourselves. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## Mixed Metaphors

- Discussion Question: a Problem of Mixed Metaphors. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## Mixed Metaphors

- In the Courtroom metaphor,
- we are profoundly grateful and moved when the Judge declares us legally "innocent,"
- striking our crimes from the legal record,
- even though we are in fact guilty. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## Mixed Metaphors

- Now go to the Medical Metaphor.
- We have twisted our knee. We grimace with every step we take.
- The Doctor exams us and writes on the medical record, "sprained cruciate ligament."
- "Not good," he says. "Tell you what I'll do for you. I'll just strike this diagnosis from the medical record."
- He smiles and bids us have a great day. ■

# Three "Metaphors" of Salvation

## Mixed Metaphors

- Why don't we leave this Doctor with the same profound gratefulness for striking our diagnosis of "sprained cruciate ligament" from the medical record, that we have when we leave the Judge after he strikes our crimes from the legal record? ■

A dense collage of religious art, primarily focusing on the crucifixion and the Virgin Mary. The central text "Saved... For What?" is overlaid in white. The background is a complex arrangement of various religious paintings and icons, including depictions of the crucifixion, the Virgin Mary, and other biblical figures. The style is a mix of classical and modern religious art.

**Saved... For What?**

# Saved ... For What?

- In the three metaphors we have discussed, we see different emphases on what we need to be saved *from*:
  - *from* the infinite guilt we carry as sinners against the infinite God (**The Courtroom Metaphor**)
  - *from* our disbelief of God's Gospel promise: Christ died *for you*. (**The Bride of the King's Son Metaphor**)
  - *from* our lack of spiritual health, our spiritual sickness (**The Medical Metaphor**) ■

# Saved ... For What?

- What are we being saved *for*?
- For eternal life with God and God's people. ■

# Saved ... For What?

- In the Western traditions, the unspoken emphasis has been on how can we gain admittance to this life with God and God's people. How can:
  - a sinful,
  - unholy,
  - unjust / unrighteous
- people
- stand before a
  - infinitely good,
  - infinitely holy,
  - infinitely just / righteous
- God? ■

# Saved ... For What?

- The West has focused on how a sinful, unholy, unjust / unrighteous people can be made:
  - sinless enough, holy enough, and just / righteous enough,
  - or least appear to be sinless, holy and just / righteous enough
- so they can be admitted to eternal life with God and God's people.
- The alternative is to be turned away at the pearly gates, the gates of admittance to eternal life with God and God's people. ■



# Saved ... For What?

- In other words: the West has wrestled with and focused on what the Protestants reformers called "justification" (how can we be made just/righteous or at least appear just/righteous) so that we can get "into" heaven. ■

# Saved ... For What?

- The Eastern tradition would say this Western focus misses the boat.
- In the East, the emphasis is on not on *how we can gain admittance* to life with God and God's people, but rather on *preparing for that life*.
- In the East, there is no "pearly gate" of admittance where we might risk getting turned away. ■

# Saved ... For What?

- In the Eastern tradition, in the world to come:
  - God's presence is everywhere
  - God is in "heaven"
  - God is in "hell"
  - God's infinite goodness, love, beauty permeates all of the world to come. ■

# Saved ... For What?

- Those who have prepared for participation in the life of the world to come:
  - By learning to love others and be loved,
  - By learning to appreciate goodness and by participating in goodness by doing good acts,
  - By becoming sensitive to beauty,
- will find the infinite goodness, love, and beauty permeating all the world to come a delight, a joy; to them, the world to come will be “heaven.” ■

# Saved ... For What?

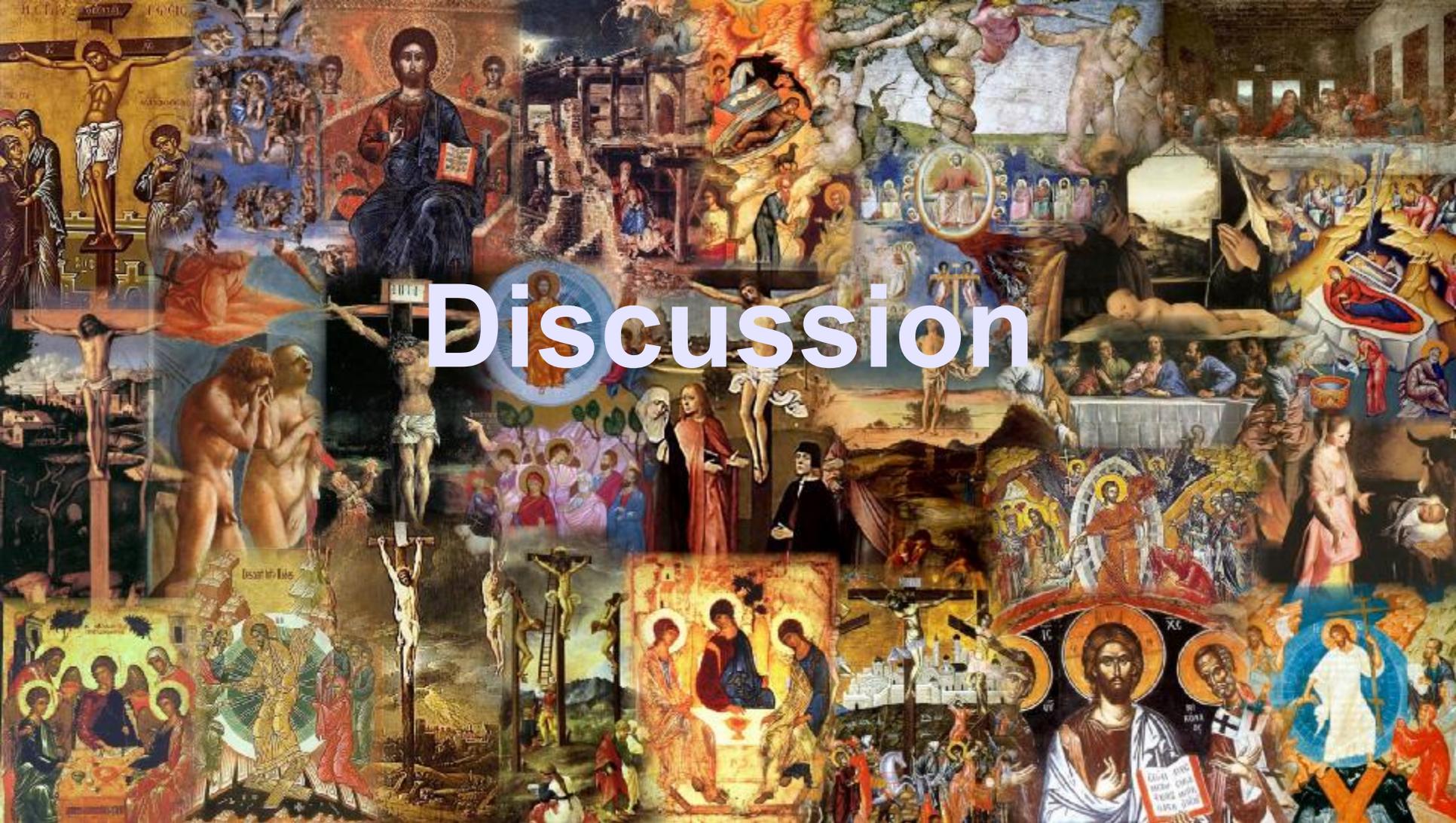
- Those who have not prepared for participation in the life of the world to come:
  - Who have not learned to love others and be loved.
  - Who have not learned to appreciate goodness and have not participated in goodness by doing good acts,
  - Who remain insensitive to beauty.
- will find the infinite goodness, love, and beauty permeating all the world to come painful and dissonant; to them, the world to come will be “hell.” ■

# Saved ... For What?

- Dostoevsky: Hell “is the suffering of being no longer able to love ... And yet it is impossible to take this spiritual torment from them, for this torment is not external but is within them.”
- St. Isaac the Syrian: the fire of hell is the fire of God’s love (as felt by someone unable to love).



**Next Week:  
Grace vs. Free Will.  
What is Faith?**



# Discussion