

## CHARLES COLSON

### Topic: Salvation, Sanctification, and Service

Prepared by Ted W. Fuson and Deborah Upton as the first of seven topical studies in the Summer of 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic for Bon Air Baptist Church

This is the fifth of seven studies based on Scripture and Eric Metaxas' 7 Men and 7 Women and the Secret of Their Greatness, Nelson Books, 2013, 2015, & 2016.

#### Some Scripture References:

*1 Peter 3:15—But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*

*Matthew 25:34-36—“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’”*

*Acts 4:8-12—Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and everyone else in Israel: it is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you completely healed. He is ‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.’ Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.*

*2 Thessalonians 2:13—But we ought always thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.*

*Matthew 20:28—“...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

*1 Peter 4:10—Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.*

*Romans 8:28—And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

**The topic is Salvation, Sanctification, and Service.**

Charles Colson was a top performer whether in the Marines, serving the President, or founding Prison Fellowship Ministries. However, he failed in his first marriage and in ethics regarding political power. He knew that God existed (page 187), even prayed to Him. But he was not saved until August 1973 (pages 190-194). Doug Coe and several Christian men (page 194) began to guide him to grow as a new Christian. The Holy Spirit used these men in the process of sanctification. His salvation led to growing as a saint, cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ and being changed by the power of Christ in Him, the “hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). He then told the truth, took the penalty for his crime, and continued being sanctified in prison as he served there. Upon being released from prison, he started Prison Fellowship Ministries.

His sanctification, being a process, led him to service, which is a process, as a result of his salvation which is a process. Got it? Following Jesus is a process of daily denying oneself, taking up one’s cross, and following Jesus. Charles Colson’s life is a great example of that process being filled full of the grace of God. This lesson #5 is about Colson and about us.

When were you born again? Saved? Given new life? Was it an event? Did it happen over a period of time when finally you knew you had received the power of God in your life to live for him? Sanctification begins when and as we acknowledge we belong to the Jesus Family because we have been born again, born anew. A significant part of sanctification is service. Another part is reading and studying the Bible. It means developing a Christian view of the world. We should be constantly learning more and more about God, a Christian lifestyle, and how to serve others in Jesus’ name.

To serve in Jesus’ name is to serve as identified with Jesus. It is not just his name, but who He is within us. You know, don’t you, that you are a temple of the Holy Spirit, Christ in you? You, we, are the church. We are being saved to grow in Christ, to serve by denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily to follow Him.

Following are some discussion topics:

1. Have you ever had an experience like that of Hughes and Colson (p.195)?
2. How is our BABC Jesus Family leading others to be saved, to be sanctified, and to serve the risen Lord Jesus Christ?
3. Are you a member of a group that includes Christians and new believers or unchurched people? Will you tell us about it if you are?
4. Have you served in the BABC Prison Ministry? Other Prison Ministry?
5. Who led you to know Jesus? Tom Phillips was the one who led Colson to Christ. It's a joy to be present when someone says, "I now believe in Christ."
6. What about the "coincidence" on page 203? Ever had a holy coincidence?
7. On page 207 Colson advocates a Christian worldview. He is correct that crime comes from a non-Christian worldview. What is involved in developing a Christian worldview?