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Response Paper

This paper will be a combination of the highlights of what I've learned in this class, where I'll be discussing Salvation, Sanctification and Spiritual Healing. I'll also bring topics such as the work of Nyack College (Alliance University) and how I'm sensing God is leading me to be part of this community. Last but not least, I'll present who God is calling me to be, do and what's my mission in this world.

In the first lesson of this course work, we learned about Salvation. "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (Rev 7:10). We learned that Salvation is escape from a dire situation. Salvation is the state of being free from sin and all of its effects. Only Jesus is able to atone for our sins. All humans sin, and sin has a lot of negative consequences. Because of sin, we are separated from God, the source of all life, and we are condemned to spend eternity away from Him. Nobody is able to completely avoid sin and its consequences on their own. A savior is needed. God thus sent Jesus to rescue us. Jesus' death and resurrection gave us the chance to be redeemed and covered the cost of sin. Jesus can help us repair our relationship with God. "The Lord will fight for you; and you need only be still" (Exod 14:13) Our Savior, he is. Despite the importance of human agency, salvation is attributed above all to God. None but God can save (Isa 43:14 ; Hosea 1:7).

I personally believe that all of us need salvation. I am a sinner just like all humans. Sometimes we think about things or do things that we aren't really proud of. Although I do

believe we have to do our best to be the best as we possibly can, we aren't able to save ourselves. However, we can't use our Savior as an excuse to sin. I can't choose to do bad things because I know the Lord will save me. Part of salvation is the intentions you have in your heart. He left us all His teachings for a reason. Jesus was crucified for us for a reason. We have to live up to the challenges of following Him. We have to make ourselves proud of the choices we make.

For the following lesson, we learned about sanctification. I think the best way to explain what sanctification is, is to follow the plan God has made for us. Another way to explain sanctification, in its broadest sense, is the condition of proper functioning as the definition. To sanctify someone or something is to set them apart for the purpose that their creator intended. When a camera is used to capture pictures, it is "sanctified." When they are used to highlight text, highlighters are "sanctified." In a theological sense, when something is utilized for what God wants, it is sanctified. God's design for our lives and souls is sanctification, the process of purifying our hearts and minds via prayer, spiritual practices, and repentance with the intention of bringing us nearer to Jesus Christ. For each one of us, to grow more Holy through time and be closer to God and His plan for us, is sanctification. "For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."(Philippians 2:13)

The process of sanctification, in my opinion, is a life long action. Like a workout, if you stop going to the gym, you stop growing your muscles and you gradually lose it. Same thing with growing Holy. We have to constantly be working on our faith for it to grow. We have to constantly work on it to be closer to God. We have to work to understand the purpose that God has for us and then work towards achieving it. We aren't the ones who choose our path but we are the ones who choose whether or not we will follow it.

About spiritual healing, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.” (Peter 2:24) God is able to heal, and He loves His people very much. He is able to heal because of His love for us, not because of anything else. He can also intervene directly in people's lives when they pray. “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.” (James 5:16) “Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.” (John 1:2) Through praying, you may ask God for help and interact with him. God is the ultimate Healer and He can practice miracles. Alternatively, healing might not happen until the ultimate restoration in heaven, if God so decides. Therefore, being “healed” sometimes means being forgiven and saved, not physically healed. Ultimately, our full physical healing awaits us in heaven. In heaven, there will be no more pain, sickness, disease, suffering, or death (Revelation 21).

This chapter personally brings me comfort. I feel like we are constantly worried about so many things in our lives, and I think this chapter brings me the idea that “God knows best” and what is meant to be only God can decide and once He decides, nobody can take it away from us. He has the power to perform miracles and He knows what's best for us, even if sometimes we don't understand why. I've felt His healing power before, He has personally interfered in my life and it brings me comfort to feel like somethings that are out of my control come for good. I trust Him and His decisions in my life.

I deeply believe that being a student at Alliance University and being part of this community have been changing my life, and I've been here only for the past couple months. The mission statement of the school is “Alliance University is committed to our STUDENTS as our first priority and will work to ensure they flourish under the wise hand of a loving God. Faculty and staff are our most important ACADEMIC resource. Through their professionalism and personal

godly commitment and life, they will, as role models, teach our students to flourish. We will strive to be a community that lives out our VALUES. We will adopt and practice sound ECONOMIC and fiscal models of performance and operations.” I didn’t think much of it before I decided to study here, but now I think this applies to me in a way that I’ll explain.

The values talked about involve serving God and others, which is the key for personal development. I’m reading a book called “Think Like a Monk” by Jay Shetty, and it taught me that when we base our happiness on what we have, we will never be truly happy and satisfied because the tricky thing about “having” something, is the more you have, the more you want. It tells you that happiness comes from who we are and our actions towards others. And that’s the same idea brought up in the school’s mission statement. At the end of the day you will only be happy and have a fulfilling life if you design your life to serve others and grow your relationship with God. Having these values lead to transformation and transformation lead to a positive impact in the student and the world, according to the school’s values section, and I agree.

As much as a ‘cold’ can be contagious, kindness, happiness and positivity can be contagious too, if you’re on the right path and doing things properly. That’s how I feel about the school since I transferred here. Since the first day I went to the chapel ‘just to see how it is’, I’ve been there every week, because I feel people with the same heart, intentions and values that I have, and that even may be struggling themselves, but when they’re there, everyone is in sync to love God and be kind to each other, spreading this feeling like a cold.

As for my mission in this world, and who God is calling me to be, I’ve been thinking a lot about it lately. I actually started thinking about it because of this class. This topic was brought up in one of the discussions and it was like a pdf downloaded in my brain with the title “Hey, you gotta think about that at some point”. However, after I read about defining my mission in this

world in the book I'm reading, I took it as a sign that it is what I'm supposed to do right now. The book makes you ask yourself the 'why's of your life choices, and that's what I did.

First, I thought, "Why do I want to have all A's so badly in school?" and my answer was "Because I want to be able to get into a Master's and Doctor's program in the future", "But why do I want to get into a Master's and Doctor's program in the future?", "Because I want to be able to find a job where I'm really good at what I do, and be able to make good money", "But why do I want to make good money?", "Because I want to be able to give a good life for my future kids and because I want to be able to help those in need and be part of the change in the world."

With that being said, I found out that my intentions behind getting good grades and making money in the future are more for other people than myself. That made me so happy, because thinking about it, this is what truly motivates me and makes me keep going. The idea that I'll be able to help a lot of people and leave my mark of kindness in this world. In summary, I believe my mission in this world is to use the Gifts that God has given me to be able to give back to people in this world.