

SALVATION WHEN?
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Twenty-three years ago, as an itinerant evangelist, and in reaction to an intolerable ignorance among "fundamental evangelists" as to the nature of Bible salvation, I began to preach a sermon under the topic, "Salvation, When?". It was fairly well received in the churches, but, I am certain now, only because they did not understand enough of what I was saying to become offended. In 1971, when I brought the same message at a sizeable Bible Camp where a large number of preachers were present, there was a drastically different reaction. These good and faithful men had become so confused, agitated and upset by the time I finished some had begun to shout at me, and I was somewhat fearful of getting off the platform. Even though it was dinner time, they were so stirred up they would not eat, but milled about and gathered in groups buzzing like angry bees. The Camp director pulled the recording and refused to let anyone have it until he could figure out what had been said. Said he to me, "Conrad, I don't know what you are talking about, but I never heard it before, and if I never heard it before, it must be something new, and if it is something new, it cannot be the truth." My response, as I recall, was that it was not new at all. It was, in fact, too old for him to have heard since solid Bible doctrine had long been purged from popular pulpits in favor of something that would secure response from a people who had no heart for God or the gospel.

At any rate, it became clear to me then that my brief little sermon would not get the job done. The subject matter was too confused in the minds of people to appear clearly at once. A book must be written that could be read, thought about, meditated upon and re-read. Strong, irrefutable Bible truth must be brought to bear on lies and misconceptions deeply rooted in minds.

We must bear in mind that the abundance of Sovereign Grace literature available today did not then exist.

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A few of Arthur Pink's books were gaining some interest. Banner of Truth was gearing up to reprint a mass of Puritan works. There were a few Calvinistic "buds" appearing in obscure places. But for the most part the whole evangelical scene was ignorant of a theology most common less than a century ago.

My own persuasion of these truths did not come through formal theological training or Reformed literature. God providentially put me in company of some men who put certain questions to me which I could not answer. This drove me in earnest to the word of God which ultimately demanded I discard all my ill-conceived doctrinal foundations, and build again from the one sure foundation bearing this seal, "The Lord knowest them that are His" (2 Tim. 3:19).

Let me assure my readers who are unfamiliar with Christian history that the truths set forth in this book represent the most ancient and common gospel soteriology.

To Episcopalians, it is in accord with that preached by the most devout, learned and gifted of Puritan Anglicans, Dissenters and Independents of the 17th through the 19th centuries. To Presbyterians, Congregationalists and other Reformed peoples, it is the doctrine of Protestant Scotland, Wales and Ireland, precious truths for which the Covenanters gave their blood to be shed. To Methodists, it is the theology of the first great Methodist revivals, societies and churches.

This was Calvinistic Methodism, and was only succeeded and supplanted later by the Arminianism of the Wesley brothers. Baptists should be assured that these are the truths which were firmly held by the early Anabaptists, by the Strict and Particular Baptists in Britain and Europe. They succeeded in the founders and early leaders of Southern Baptists. I do not know of a single historic Baptist Confession that does not have a strong statement on Election. Southern Baptist seminaries, now largely apostate, were founded by solid Calvinists. This is also the gospel preached in the Great Awakenings, the great truths that fueled the massive 19th century world mission movement. It is the only gospel that

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"When were you saved?"

"Let me hear your salvation experience."

"Are you sure you are saved?"

"Can you name the time and place where you were saved?"

It is alarming how much error we have accumulated simply by adopting the language and practice of the Christianity we have inherited without examining it in the light of the scriptures. In fact, we will quickly bristle to the defense of something we have believed all our lives, but when we try to defend it by the Bible, we are shocked to learn that we haven't a leg to stand on. The foregoing questions are an example. The very fact of their prominent usage in recent years is a stark testimony of our Bible ignorance and our being deeply steeped in tradition.

We are quite willing to ridicule the Romanists for their tradition, which flagrantly contradicts revealed truth in the scriptures, but I fear on many counts we are living in glass houses. I have no argument with tradition as long as it is scriptural or at least not unscriptural. But when we must choose between what we have always believed and felt was right and scriptural principle, we must let God be true and every man a liar.

No doubt these questions attempting to pinpoint a person's salvation in an experience have been useful to some good in awakening and alarming some who had absolutely no solid grounds of a hope in Christ Jesus. But in the light of the written word of God there is no warrant for such questions. In fact the terminology itself is alien to the Bible. The questions themselves reveal an ignorance of the very nature of salvation.

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only be corrected by a radically changed concept of what the Bible is speaking of in relation to salvation.

I am well aware of how difficult it will be for most genuine Christians to grasp such a wide departure from their traditional beliefs. There will be dozens of statements that will make many readers want to throw the book in the fire without pursuing it any further. Indeed, some chapters or sub-titles may be enough for some to reject it, but truth demands they be there. I will try to be as thorough and simply biblical as time and space will permit. I do not wish to write a long treatise whose tediousness will weary your interest. Nor do I wish to fail to give sufficient proof and reason to come short of convincing the reader to give solemn and serious consideration to the modification of his views. Therefore, I sue for your honest and unbiased meditation on the thoughts which shall be set forth. If you will give that and trust the Blessed Spirit of Truth, I have no doubt of your ultimate conclusions.

Chapter One

THE ERROR AND THE EVIL

The basic error is in viewing Salvation as an experience. That is, an in-time experience to which past, future, and eternity are all subjective. It is all settled in some sort of mystical experience. I want to quickly say that there is experience or experiences in salvation and that salvation . without experience is an illusion; however, the hope of salvation must not lie in that experience.

Experiences greatly vary with persons. For some, they are cataclysmic, others barely perceptible and easily forgotten or obscured by subsequent experiences. Any of these, either great or weak, may be either genuine or false experiences of grace. What was done in the experience cannot be told by the experience itself, but by what follows in the believer's life.

Bible Experiences

If there were a consistent salvation experience in the Bible we might give some consideration to this thought, but there is none. Indeed, it is exceedingly difficult to determine in the Bible where anyone "got saved." That is not Bible terminology. It is not even early church terminology. It is not primitive church terminology. The Puritans did not use it. It

is not the language even of the church of the American Great Awakening. It is peculiarly the language of modern evangelism. It is Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, but not Bible. People do not "get saved" in the Bible. They believe Christ and follow Him. Some continue; others fall away. There would be nothing wrong with changing terminology if it could be done without the loss of truth. But this is exactly what has happened with the modern concept of salvation. Would you like to consider some Bible "experiences?"

Abraham slew his son on an altar. Rahab hid some enemy spies and then lied to her own government's agents. Zacchaeus climbed down out of a tree. Matthew quit his job. Paul saw a bright light from heaven. How would these testimonies of salvation experiences be received by some of our present day experts on the subject? Yet, we have no better in the scriptures. The Bible does not reveal when anyone got saved because salvation is not in a time and place experience. The scriptures only tell us when that person believed God and proceeded to follow and obey Him. This was not an oversight by the Holy Spirit but is deliberate.

The only safe guides that give a man hope of eternal life are found in the scriptures, and no one has any business attempting to base hope on anything else for that matter (or to accuse someone's hope because of a weak experience testimony). Those saints whose lives are set forth in the scriptures simply believed on Christ, set out to follow Him and continued to do so. When salvation is viewed in any other light, a great host of confusion follows.

A Legitimate Experience

One of the evils perpetuated through the doctrine of salvation by experience is a continual torment on the part of a person over the question of whether he has had a legitimate salvation experience or not. The human mind and emotions are fickle. They react differently under different circumstances. Memory dims what was once a bright light and doubt begins to nag. Fed by accusations of demons and

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probings of well-meaning but ignorant "soul winners," these doubts loom bigger and bigger. Soon, one who had been delighted with his experience is convinced he was deceived and needs another experience.

Thus, we have many who have been "saved and baptized" three or four times and still are wide open to being thrown by the next fellow who comes along with a new angle to the salvation experience. Because of the present day emphasis upon results, getting people "really saved" (assuming all previous experiences were not real) is a boon to the evangelist who finds the pickings exceedingly slim among the unregenerate and unchurched world. Thus, sensitive and teachable souls become wretched victims of a cruel, false evangelism built around the unscriptural doctrine of salvation by decision or experience.

The Time and Place

There is a cruel irony in this error that curses in two directions at the same time. I will give one illustration. A young lady was brought to me by a zealous "soul winner" who confided that she was under conviction and deeply disturbed about her soul's condition. Upon counseling with the girl I learned the following. She had been brought up in a home of a different Christian faith from that of the group she was now companying with. Early in her life she had put her faith in Christ as her sin bearer and Lord. There had been a number of subsequent experiences of enlightenment and progressive knowledge of the Lord. Only the previous year she had come to know Him in a most close and intimate way, had learned to pray and commune with the Lord Jesus and delighted in her daily walk with Him. But the group of young people whom she now became associated with were often in concentrated "evangelistic" services where there was considerable pressure exercised for those who had not been saved, to get saved. One of the most common devices used by the evangelists would be for all the young people to stand and give the time and place they were born again. She could give none. There were a number of times which she could

guess might have been her conversion experience, but she was too honest to stand and say, "This was the time."

Naturally, this disturbed her and put her under condemnation. Then the evangelist would say, "If this disturbs you then it means that you aren't really saved." So she would try to get saved all over again. Of course, this was grievous to the Holy Spirit and simply added to her aggravated condition.

But that is only half the story. The same young people who could stand and snap off the date and place so smugly led such worldly, inconsistent, sinful lives, she could not understand how they could so easily profess to be followers of Christ. Actually the same lie that put her, a child of God, under condemnation, gave them, children of the devil, false hope and comfort. Satan is the father of lies. He is at the same time the accuser of the brethren and a comforter of the wicked. I advised the young lady to gain her assurance of hope in the Lord Himself through the written scriptures and the inward witness of the Holy Spirit and then let everyone else hang their hang-ups somewhere else.

Not only does this error leave the righteous in condemnation and give the wicked false hope; it sells salvation short. Salvation includes the complete deliverance of the saint. It includes deliverance from the power of sin, deliverance from demon oppression, deliverance from bodily sickness in many cases, deliverance from the weaknesses of the flesh. The saint who is genuinely born from above knows upon justification he lacks much. He sees in the scripture he has not yet attained. To tell him he is saved and yet hold up before him a holy standard for the saved is to give him an irreconcilable paradox. He must conclude he is not saved or he would not be so unholy and defeated. If you then say that it is natural and reasonable for the saved to be unholy and defeated, you lie and give the wicked hope in his wickedness. The only answer is to put salvation where the Bible puts it. That is, a lifetime of walking with God, claiming back for ourselves that which we lost in Adam and regained in Christ, but which must be claimed by a daily walk of faith and conquering through the Name of the Lord Jesus.

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Once Saved Always Saved vs. Falling From Grace

Another evil given rise by this error is the controversy around eternal security of the believer. Two extreme positions have been taken: One is Armenian and the other Calvinistic. Both have degenerated down to a very sorry replica of those statements first formulated by their founding fathers.

The Arminians now have salvation as an experience in which a person is really saved and would go to heaven if he died just now, but he might sin and lose that salvation he had. In such a case he must get saved all over again; that is, he needs to have another salvation experience. This might continue all his life. If he happens to die at the wrong time or the Lord comes while he is between salvation experiences and he has sin in his life and is temporarily lost, he will go to hell. Otherwise, he will go to heaven.

The Calvinistic position by those claiming to believe in salvation by grace plus nothing has degenerated worse than the above. What was once the Bible doctrine of perseverance of saints is now stated in a simple flippant "once saved, always saved." One greatly respected evangelist, author and editor of a widely distributed evangelical paper, has reduced predestination to this ignorant cliché. Predestination, says he, begins when you get saved. Everyone who accepts Jesus, from that time is predestined to land safely in heaven. Asinine! Predestination that is subject to in-time experience is not predestination; it is post-destination.

But there you have it. Salvation is in an experience. If you have had the experience, it is all settled. Sit back, take it easy, do as you please. No matter how you live subsequently you will get to heaven. You may not have a mansion if you do not diligently serve the Lord and forsake the world, but you will surely make it in because you are "saved."

Now all these liberties are certainly not spoken out by the once saved always saved people, but they are implied and most certainly practiced. Therefore, holiness has become a shunned stepchild and sanctification an option, and obedience

to God's holy law "if you please," and "saved sinners" instead of holy saints the rule and practice of such adherents. The continual admonitions and warnings in the scriptures toward perseverance and diligence to keep one's self from apostasy become useless and ignored.

There would be no division of brethren over the doctrine of eternal security if Bible salvation were understood. The division exists solely because of the idea of salvation being in an experience. Eliminate that error and one big schism between brethren is closed. I shall do all in my power to do so. Please consider!

The Scope of Bible Salvation

Salvation is not an experience: it is an act of God that has its origin and consummation in eternity, and includes all the experience in grace of the object of salvation in his entire lifetime.

We need, first of all, to understand that The New Birth, Regeneration, and Quickening are all the same things. Also, Conversion, Justification, Repentance and Faith are all synonymous. But none of these are in themselves ever equated with salvation in the Bible. Salvation certainly includes these and without them there can be no salvation, but salvation itself is much bigger than these, including also the decree of God in eternity, the atonement of Christ on the cross, sanctification, deliverance and good works in the believer's lifetime, eternal judgment at the close of the age and adoption which is yet to come.

Some of my readers, I am sure, will take offense because I have included good works within the scope of salvation, but I beg of you to not put the book down nor jump from place to place in it picking out bones of contention and leave yourself bitterly alienated from truth you might otherwise gain if you, with open heart, and prayerful spirit read thoroughly in the light of the scriptures all the way through. I do not make salvation of works, but those good

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works are surely included in salvation, which we must confess when we reach that point in our discourse.

A complete yet abbreviated statement of Bible salvation is given in the gospel of John chapter one verses 1:1-13. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Herein we have the Lord Jesus presenting Himself to His own people and His people rejecting Him. If He never did more than that, then there would be no salvation for any one. If the Gospel is only an offer given to unregenerate, fallen wicked men, whose hearts continually imagine wickedness and perverseness, who seek not after God and in whom is no fear of God, then that offer will never be accepted. His own received Him not. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (John 5:40).

Yet we do have people receiving Him, believing on His name, and receiving power to become the sons of God. Who are these people and why are they receiving Him and others are not? Why do they believe on His name when others will not? The answer is given in the text. Those who believe on His name are they who have already been born of the will of God. Left in his natural unregenerate state, man will do nothing but refuse the free offer of Christ. His birth of blood brought with it nothing but all the enmity of the sons of Adam toward their God. His flesh cannot bring forth spiritual life toward God because the flesh constantly strives against the Spirit (Gal. 5:17). Could we amass the will of all the holiest men who ever lived and direct that will toward the regeneration of one dead sinner, it would be as futile and ineffectual as a thousand eagles' attempt to hatch a stone. God, and God alone, must do that; and God does it according to His own predeterminate purpose which He decreed in eternity, to which end the Son gave His blood. That is the second birth. It is preceded and caused by the eternal purpose and unsearchable love of God, and it precedes conversion.

Conversion works through repentance and faith. Repentance and faith awaits regeneration. Repentance and faith are not the cause of the birth from above; they are the effects of it. The cause of regeneration is God alone.

The Bible does not call these who have been regenerated and converted saved by their conversion experience. There is a sense in which they have been saved and a sense in which they are being saved and a sense in which they shall be saved. But we cause ourselves much trouble and give rise to much abuse and misunderstanding when we depart from the Bible pattern and begin to call them as having gotten saved. They are being saved, but the process will continue throughout their entire lifetime embracing perseverance, sanctification, deliverance, eternal judgment, and consummating in glorious adoption.

That is the perfect salvation of the Bible. Nothing else will do. On pages 13 and 14 is a chart of the sequence of the total work of salvation. We readily admit that with God there is no sequence of effects of time, but for our own understanding we must look at some things in this manner. From God's side all that ever will be has already transpired (Isa. 46:10), but for our own profit we must apply our finite minds to an orderly pattern of things. The following chapters will address themselves to dealing with each particular aspect of full salvation.

Chapter Two

FOREKNOWLEDGE AND ELECTION

For those many passages of scripture in which salvation is viewed in the past tense and a completed work for believers, we must look all the way back to the decree of God in eternity.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to [his] purpose. 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. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Rom. 8:28-30).

We have here the entire scope of salvation and God speaks of it as if it were already done; for in the eternal purpose of God, all things that shall be, already are. They have been secured by His immutable decree. His revealed word may be flouted and thwarted for a season but His decree is iron that never bends, a mountain that never moves.

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In this sense we can speak of saints as having been saved.

Who hath saved us, and called [us] with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9).

When were you saved? Before the foundation of the world. All that ever shall be saved were saved by that benevolent decree of God in eternity.

These recipients of God's saving grace are designated in the Bible as the elect or the chosen. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:4).

It is not within the purpose of this book to give an exhaustive study on any of the great doctrines upon which we shall touch, but to present them in an orderly relationship to each other and reveal their function in salvation. Able men through the centuries have written volumes on the subjects of foreknowledge and election. It would be superfluous and presumptuous for me to attempt to add another. However, in order to give proper credence to the place of these truths in salvation, we must deal briefly with some false teaching on the matter.

Foreknowledge Not Information

Opponents of the truth of election are unable to erase the abundance of scripture on the subject so they attempt to wrest it away from the free and unhindered purpose of God and make it subjected to certain conditions. The first of these attempts is to point the cause of election to God's foreknowledge. That is, God, on the basis of what He foreknew, chose certain ones to salvation. This presupposes that He saw something in those persons that motivated Him to choose them. Calvin is quite right when he objects to this on the

basis of, "How could He foresee something that was not
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there?" For has He not declared that "there is none righteous, no not one, that they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one"? (Rom. 3:10,12). If men are all equally bankrupt and bereft of any goodness whatsoever, what should He find in any to motivate Him to choose them?

Others might say, "He foreknew who would choose Him and therefore chose those whom He foreknew would choose Him." How could He foresee those choosing Him when He saw that 'there is none that seeketh after God'? (Rom. 3:11). What man is going to choose a holy and sinless Saviour when every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil? (Gen. 6:5). But setting these impossibilities aside, let us assume some would choose Christ and God's choice was limited to those who chose Christ and He chose all that chose Christ. That makes a mockery out of the term. If God is subjected to certain persons who themselves make the choice and decision, He has no choice. He has not chosen them; they have chosen Him. But the scriptures declare the opposite (John 15:16).

The root of this whole problem lies in a misunderstanding of the word foreknowledge. When the Bible speaks of God's foreknowledge, it is never speaking of God's gathering information about events over which He had no control. God is not passive but active in foreknowledge. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). God did not just gather the information ahead of time that Jesus would be crucified at the hands of wicked men. He determined it by His foreknowledge according to His own counsel. It did not just happen to turn out that way, and He had advance information about it. It turned out that way because He had before determined it should. Otherwise, there would be no hope of salvation for any of us.

"Knowing," when used in connection with the person ' of God, never has to do with specific information, but with

specific intention and directed love and affection. When He
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said of the five foolish virgins, "I know you not," He was not confessing ignorance. He was saying, "I do not know you as I know my own." When He rejected the false professors with, "I never knew you," He certainly knew all about them. But He had never known them in the intimacy the Bible describes between husband and wife as when "he knew his wife." The Lord knoweth them that are His (II Tim. 2:19).

The sure foundation of your salvation is not in your knowing the Lord but in His knowing you. God's foreknowledge is His act in setting His love and mercy upon the sinner in His purpose to save him. He alone is the cause. He alone is the sole motivation for His perfect effectual love.

Election is to Life

The word election has a frightening effect on the mis-learned. I do not say the unlearned, for new Christians who have not been taught error have no trouble at all with the doctrine. Nor do honest sinners have any problem with the fact that God is perfectly just in doing what He pleases with wicked men. In the sinner, it is encouragement to sue for His mercy. In the saint, it is a sweet comfort to the soul and a solid rock that offers refuge from the raging tempests that would sweep it under the torrents of sin and corruption that arise from his fleshy nature. But to the mis-learned the word immediately produces the unscriptural equation of "God elected some to glory and some to damnation." No such thing is taught in Bible election.

God always chooses to life, not to death. It was man that has elected himself to hell. But for the election to life by the sovereign free grace of God, then all would follow the path they themselves had chosen and the whole human race would as surely tumble into hell as the rivers into the sea. God never acts against man's propensity and willingness for life. Man has none. He is dead set on winding up in hell. And God is by no means obligated to keep him from going there.

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It will be argued that God is not fair in electing all that God should justify Himself for not saving everyone. The very opposite is true. God's problem is not in justifying Himself for not saving everyone. His problem is how to justify Himself in saving any one. The solution is revealed in the incarnate Son in Whom God Himself propitiated our sins. (2 Cor. 5:19, Rom. 3:24-26) that He might be just, and (at the same time) the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

Then some will say, "Why did He not elect all?" To those, we have the warnings of Romans 9:20. Who art thou that repliest against God? Are you questioning God's right to do as He pleases with His own? We would do well to learn the lesson taught by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 20:1-16. The laborers that agreed for a penny a day were paid in full. They reaped all they had sown. But when the householder showed free grace to others they wickedly rebelled and claimed he had no right to show favors to some which he did not show to all. Is your eye evil because God is good? His willingness to save some according to His own glorious purpose in no way obligates Him to save all, no more than the fact He healed Naaman, the Syrian leper, obliged Him to heal any of" the many lepers of Israel 2 Kings 5:1-14, Luke 4:27). The basis and cause of His election are in Himself, not in the chosen. He set His love upon them. How, we may ask, could He love sinners when the Psalmist declares He hates the wicked? (Psalm 5:5, 7:11, 10:3, 11:5). He chose us in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:4, II Tim. 1:9). In view of His completed work of salvation, He foresaw us in union with and covered with the righteousness of His beloved Son toward Whom all His great love is directed and in Whom is deposited all His promises. In that way and that way alone a Holy God could behold unholy sinners and love them with an everlasting love that eternally saves.

Election Assures Salvation

Election by free grace is the means whereby God has made sure that all the holy seed should be saved.

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Therefore [it is] of faith, that it [might be] by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all (Romans 4: 16).

The elect seed in view here is not the nation Israel. It is neither of Israel only nor all of Israel. That is, only part of Israel is elected and the rest of the elect are from other people that are not natural descendants of Abraham (Rom. 2:28-29, Gal. 3:29). See also Romans 11:4-7.

I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to [the image of] Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then [is it] no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if [it be] of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

Election and salvation by grace are as inseparable as the Holy Trinity. In securing salvation by grace, God has by election excluded no one, but removed all possibility of man frustrating His purpose and made sure that everyone whom He has chosen to everlasting life will ultimately be saved. If you now have reason to hope that you will ultimately be saved you can point the past time of your salvation to the decree of God in eternity.

Chapter Three

THE FALL

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that (in whom) all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). The doctrine of the fall is embraced by all Christian evangelicals. That is, all will agree that man fell from the state in which he was created by God and as a consequence of that fall he lost something. Just what or how much he lost is of paramount importance in determining the nature of salvation.

Man was God's highest creation. The purpose of His creation as far as we can determine from the scriptural record is twofold. First, he is to be God's vicar on earth. He is to bear the visible image of the invisible God (Gen. 1:26, Col. 1:15, 1 Tim. 1:17). In doing so man must be godly, holy, and victorious. He is to reign and have dominion over all of God's creation. In his behavior he is to display the attributes of God. Secondly, man is a receptacle of all the abundant love and graces that flow freely from God's person. He is to be the object of the expression and display of God's love. In man, God has provided for Himself a creature toward whom to pour out all of His unsearchable riches and treasures which His benevolent Person so yearns to do. This is the purpose of the creation of man, and the ultimate objectives to the

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restoration of all that man lost in the fall, in the full salvation of the Bible (Eph. 3:8-21).

Man Made to Bear God's Image

The unique nature of man possibly may be best understood by comparing him to the next highest order of creatures on earth, animal. The same word "nephesh" translated creature in Genesis 1:21 in reference to animals is the same word translated soul in Genesis 2:7 in reference to man. It defines that order of life that God has created with thinking or reasoning powers, emotional characteristics, and power of volition or will. All three of these faculties are present in both man and animal. In that sense they are both "souls" although there is a great difference between an animal soul and a human soul. The soul is the lower sensual nature of man. It has nothing to do primarily with any affinity toward anything that is good or Godly. It is simply the basic you. You are a soul and what your soul is, you are. Your personal characteristics are determined by your behavior and your behavior is determined by what you think, how your emotions react to what you think, and how your will or volition responds to the stimulus of your mind and emotions. That is the basic you and makes you what you are. But God has placed in man something beyond the body and soul that qualifies the soul of man which the scriptures call the spirit. Whereas animals are dichotomies (body and soul), men are trichotomies (body, soul and spirit) (1 Thess. 5:23, Heb. 4:12). It is the spirit of man that gives his soul the immortal and God-seeking qualities. In this third part of man, that unique faculty God has placed in man alone, He has provided for Himself a throne upon which He, God, Who Himself is Spirit, will sit and reign (Eph. 2:22). "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Feigning there, He will shed abroad in our hearts (souls) the basic emotion of God, which is love (Eph. 3:14-19, Rom. 5:5). He brings His great wisdom to influence in our spirit and we are made recipients of the mind of Christ (2 Cor. 2:16). Then being filled with the love of God, and our

hearts being turned toward the purpose of God, we find our wills conformed to the will of God, and our works verily the works of God. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

The animals were made soulish creatures, to be ruled by their souls, but man was made a spiritual creature to be ruled by his spirit. Because the animals were not to be ruled by a power outside themselves, they were made with built-in behavior patterns. We call this instinct for want of better description, for there is no explanation why animals automatically do what they do without ever having learned it or having been taught. God has seen to it that their behavior will always be consistent with what they are. They can be nothing else. They can rise no higher but neither can they drop any lower. But man has no such safeguards. In order to be free to rise, he also had to be free to fall, and fall he did.

Adam's Failure to Attain His Purpose

Adam never attained to the glorious potential for which God designed him. It is a mistake to say that Adam was made perfect for if he had been made perfect he could not have fallen. Neither can we say that Adam was made imperfectly for to do so would charge God with error, which is impossible. He was made innocent and capable of rising to perfection in the image of God or rebelling and losing his very capacity to bear the image at all. It was the latter choice Adam made. Refusing the tree of life which God made freely available to him, which would have assured him of eternal life through union with Christ, he chose to consort with Satan in a plan to throw off his sweet dependency upon God and wickedly aspire to be God himself. Unsatisfied with the gracious provisions and purposes God had ordered for him, he chose to embrace the satanic lie that slandered the goodness and wisdom of God, and disbelieving God's solemn warning of sure death, he took of the forbidden fruit.

God had warned that in the day that he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil he would surely die. Satan

said, "Ye shall not surely die." Instead, promised Satan, you will be free from the yoke of God and you will not have to depend on Him for knowledge of good and evil; you will know as much as God knows. To the unregenerate man it still looks as if Satan were right. Adam did not die physically. He gets along quite well without God. He is unhindered by seeking God's will about anything. He does what he pleases and is quite happy with the way things are with himself. If A things are not as he likes them, then he simply goes about doing whatever is necessary to arrange them to suit himself. In fact, he is the center of the universe. He, in his world, is god himself. Things happen because he makes them happen, and if he doesn't make them happen they don't happen. Therefore, there is no one to love, trust, congratulate or worship but himself and other men like him.

But the regenerated and converted man knows better. True, Adam did not die physically on that day, for if he had, there would have never been a race of fallen men. You and I would have never been born. No, he continued to live and regenerate his fallen nature, passing it on down to you and me; and this present wicked generation is still in the same fallen state he was. Adam's death was a spiritual one. That is, his body or his soul did not fall but his spirit fell. Instead of being ruled by God in his spirit he chose to be ruled by his soul. Refusing the perfect holy life of God, he chose to go the way of the sensual nature derived from his intellect, his now depraved emotions and his own perverse will.

How Far Man Fell

It is important to note at this point just how far he fell. He did not simply fall to the level of animals. He fell much lower. Man was not given the built in behavior pattern of animals. Animals can fall no lower than God made them because of this safeguard. He has already fixed in their natures how they will live and how they will respond to life. But man was not so. When man fell, he lost all sensible, sane, reasonable direction. Hrs light went out completely. See his miserable state in Isaiah 59:8-11.

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The way of peace they know not; and [there is] no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, [but] we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if [we had] no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; [we are) in desolate places as dead [men]. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but [there is none; for salvation, [but] it is far off from us.

The Bible leaves no doubt as to the moral condition of fallen man. "And God saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). He is totally ruined, all bad. By saying he is totally ruined we do not mean that he can get no worse as if his wickedness could not increase; because it surely does, as testifies Romans 1:18-32. Man is born wicked, and feeding upon his wickedness, becomes more and more wicked the longer he lives in his unregenerate state. In saying he is totally depraved or totally bad, we mean that there is not a single faculty or member of man that was not ruined and contaminated with the fall. Consider a few: The throat is an open fountain of death and the mouth spews out nothing but the corruption of tombs. The tongue is a skillful instrument of lies and deceit, an unruly evil full of deadly poison. Those lovely, youthful beautifully formed lips conceal underneath them the deadly poison of asps. One kiss is death (Rom. 3:13, James 3:8). The mouth is filled with cursing and bitterness (Rom. 3:14). You may have been able to suppress such cursing and bitterness so that you did not utter it, but it boiled in your mouth and raged to flame its destruction. Feet are continuously, feverishly hurrying and hasting about their nefarious business (Rom. 3:15). Ears itch for the filth, foolishness and slander upon which the depraved imaginations feed, for the

vanity and flattery which inflates and bloats the wicked human ego in his rebellion against God (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Eyes dart about fastening themselves upon objects of their adulterous lusts. They cannot cease from sin (2 Pet. 2:14).

Hands are bloody with their murderous acts of sin which as surely nailed the Son of God to the bloody tree as any Roman soldier or unbelieving Jew. Fingers drip with the iniquity of our evil doings (Isa. 59:3). As far as the mind is concerned, God declares fallen man has not the sense of a dumb ass (Psa. 1:3). His intentions, will and imaginations are evil continually (Gen. 6:5). The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness (Psa. 1:6).

God's estimation of man in such a condition is what could be expected. He is no good. He neither does any good thing, nor is there any good thing in him. He is unprofitable and worthless (Rom. 3:12). Not only is he incapable of doing anything good, his imagined righteousness is as filthy rags and all his acts are sin. The very plowing of the wicked is sin (Prov. 21:4).

How wretched a state! All his actions are sin. He opens his mouth and death comes out. He stretches forth his hand defiled with blood and adorned with fingers that drip iniquity. His wicked ears will hear nothing but evil. His eyes cannot cease from sin. Every act begins in a will set on mischief and rebellion against God.

But we do not suggest that man has fallen so low as to be without knowledge of God or to have nothing to accuse him for his sin. He still retains the knowledge of God in his conscience (Rom. 1:18). He is not without moral law and consequent responsibility to it. The unbelieving Jew has the written law of God. The unregenerate Gentile in the Christian community has the law and the gospel. But even the illiterate, ignorant heathen in the darkest corners of earth's wilderness has the written law of God in his conscience so that all men are without excuse before God for their wickedness (Rom. 2:14-15).

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Therefore in this state, the wrath of God is imminently against all men. The first consciousness of God's attitude toward man is not His love but His wrath. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. God's justice demands that He condemn the whole of the human race to hell. His holy person cannot abide the presence of sin and His majesty cannot countenance rebels in His kingdom. For those who would object to God's justice in sending men to hell for Adam's sin we affirm that He does no such thing. God need not point back to Adam's sin. Our own sins are quite sufficient to merit for us eternal destruction from the face of God.

Natural Man Unaware of His State

Then why do not men flee to Christ for refuge from the wrath of God? Why do they not forsake their sins and embrace the holy law of God? Are not men in such a state stricken with the fear of God? Are they not desirous of eternal salvation from wrath to come? Upon the answers to these questions hinge one of the most important and yet completely forgotten of scriptural truths of salvation. Ephesians 2:1, 5 declare the sinner to be dead in trespasses and sins. We have already proved this to be, not a death of the body or soul, but a spiritual death. The spirit fell and the soul now reigns in man. Man is dead toward God. He is not morally dead, although his conscience can be seared until it is morally insensitive, but he is dead toward the reality of life and holiness that is in God. And while he can feel guilty for his sins and be accused by his conscience, and in a sense be subject to the repentance of worldly sorrow that worketh unto death, he is not subject to the godly sorrow that works repentance unto salvation (2 Cor. 7:9-10).

The unregenerate sinner is not miserable and wretched. He is dead toward God and in that state is not sufficiently condemned for his sins to make him anxious about his soul's condition. He is perfectly content in his sins. He has no concern whatever of what God thinks about him and

could hardly care less about his soul's salvation. Although he may be intellectually aware of these and by skillful manipulation of some preachers or "soul winners" become temporarily emotionally upset about them, there is no lasting impression made to bring him toward repentance. Nothing lives in him toward God so there is nothing to draw him to God. He has no affinity toward the spirit.

This sinner might become concerned over the problems that his sins have caused him in his present natural life. And because of the natural immediate consequences of these sins, forsake them. Thus, we have the drunkard leaving his booze, the thief reforming, the liar finding it safer to tell the truth, and the adulterer suppressing his wicked passions. But these have nothing to do with salvation. They are still all acts of the depraved will which is determined to do what it wants in independence and defiance of the God against whom it has rebelled, and have their end only to the satisfying of other fleshy desires.

There is no fear of God before his eyes and there are none among the fallen sons of Adam who seek after God (Rom. 3:11, 18). Such is the state of fallen man when the Saviour appears on the scene.

Chapter Four

ATONEMENT

God, in eternity, has chosen a people for His Name in whom He demonstrates His unsearchable riches, wisdom, holiness, power and glory. That decree, made in eternity, may never fail. It may be apparently frustrated or set aside for a season, but it must ultimately be fulfilled. Donald Barnhouse, in his excellent book, *The Invisible War*, describes the malignant hatred of Satan toward God in which he supposed to overthrow the eternal purpose of God by ruining the man. But God is never taken by surprise. All that happens in time, God has made provision for in eternity. The fall of man was not an unforeseen calamity that stood heaven on its ear and sent God scrambling around to find some way to right the mess made by His enemy. The atonement was not a patch-up job done on an imperfect creation that fell through flaws made by the Maker. Jesus Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8).

Before the first Adam ever fell, the last Adam had already died to redeem him and take His place as the federal head of the race of the sons of God. We err basically and carry our error into all our conclusions if we begin to look at the atonement as an afterthought of God. All His works were finished from the foundation of the world (Heb. 4:3). In His mind, all that

God will ever do He has already done. But for the sakes of our finite, time, and sequent oriented minds, God speaks to us in the order that things actually transpire.

So we have before us the following problem. God has chosen a people for His glory. These people have fallen so low that it is impossible for them in their state to even have any consideration or concern for God, to say nothing of their bearing the image of His holy person. To aggravate this, they are set at enmity against Him and their every intention is only evil. God's holy law demands that they perish, and that the death penalty for sin be satisfied. And this law cannot be set aside. Thus, in view of these facts the following statements can be made.

- 1 . God's people must be redeemed. His immutable decree demands it.
2. They must be redeemed according to His own holy law.
3. They must be redeemed, not only legally, but actually. That is, their redemption must effect an actual restoration of all that they lost and make them holy objects acceptable for His presence.

The Law of Redemption

The law of redemption is found in Leviticus 25:47-48 and Deuteronomy 25:5-6. God is concerned about the perpetuity of both the people and the people's possession. Neither are to be lost or set aside. Therefore, if a man left no children, only his near kinsman could marry his widow. The children then born to the dead man's widow would take the name of the deceased that his name should not be put out of Israel. The same principle applied to the loss of land by a family that had become impoverished. The land could not be purchased by just anyone. The first right to buy it was to the man who lost it. If he were unable to purchase it, then his next nearest of kin had the right to redeem it. If he were

unable, the option continued until a kinsman was found who
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was both willing and able to redeem it. This law applied both to life and to land. It is God's law of redemption. Redemption of God's people lost in the fall then must be effected first of all by someone who has the right to redeem. That is, he must be of the family of Adam, a man born of woman. For this reason, Jesus was made in every respect a man.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on [him the nature of] angels; but he took on [him] the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto His brethren "(Heb. 2:14-17).

In all His holy and sinless life, Jesus lived a man. His purity of life was not maintained because He was God (although He was), but because He was a man obedient and submissive to God. By His holy life, He demonstrated what man could be and should be. He has silenced the slanderous lie of Satan that says man must sin. Jesus did the miracles of His ministry not as God but as man. In His miraculous life He demonstrated what Adam should have been when he was told to "subdue and have dominion." He lived that supernatural life as a man submitted and obedient to the will of God by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:28, John 5:19-21). Thus it is demonstrated that Jesus had the right to redeem because He was a man. Any man of the family of Adam would also have the right, but what man among them can and why redeem?

This brings us to the second qualification of the redeemer. He must be able to redeem. Although all of Adam's seed had the right of redemption, none had the ability for they were all ruined through his bloodline. Therefore, a new blood line must be established through the virgin birth of

the Man, Jesus, Who is to save His own people from their sins. The Saviour must not only be sinless in His life but there must be nothing of ruined Adam in Him. He is not the U son of Adam but the Son of God, born of woman. He is the Son of God, of man. He is the Son of Man Who is of God. Having never been under the curse and consequence of sin, death never had any power or claim on Him. Although He yielded His holy body to the hands of wicked men for crucifixion, death could never claim Him. He could not be killed. He had to give His life. He Himself of His own volition gave up the ghost (John 19:30).

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, _but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father (John 10: 17-19).

Death had neither power to take Him nor hold Him. The redeemer had to be able to pay the full cost of redemption without bankrupting himself. Should he sell himself into bondage to redeem his brother, nothing would be gained. If, in dying for us, Jesus had destroyed Himself salvation could have never been complete. We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, but we are saved by His life (Rom. 5:10). Not only must the Saviour die to save us from the penalty of sins, He must live to save us from the power and presence of sin that He might present us holy before the Father, for nothing less is the full design of salvation. It is the Husband Who is the Saviour of the Bride, and what should we do married to a dead Bridegroom? Glory to God! Jesus has the right to redeem. He is able to redeem, and that to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25). By virtue of His virgin birth and sinless life, He has a flawless sacrifice of intrinsic worth to offer for the transgressions of His people, and the » power to survive the awful cost and rise to reign over all He has conquered.

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The third qualification for the redeemer is that he must be willing. Although a man had the right to redeem and the ability to redeem, he was in no way compelled to redeem. It was within his power to save or not to save. One who had fallen and sold himself into bondage had no claim on his kinsman's redemption. His kinsman did not occasion his fall and was not obliged to rescue him. Any act toward the fallen by the kinsman could only be described as free grace. Only the redeemer's love could move him to save.

We see that because the redeemer must be a kinsman to have the right, Jesus was made a man. We see that because the redeemer must be able, Jesus was virgin born and lived sinlessly. Now we see that since the redeemer must be willing to redeem then the redeemer must be none other than God Himself. It is God Who is not only willing but is determined to redeem. He has set His unchangeable love on the fallen before he fell. His fall and sin cannot set aside His eternal love. Therefore, God Himself will reconcile man unto Himself that His purpose in election might stand (III Cor. 5:19, I Tim. 3:16). What encouragement to the awakened and convicted sinner to lay hold upon the mercy of God! We do not plead for His willingness. We lay hold upon His determined purpose to save us. What an anchor for the soul! He has the right. He is able, and He is determined to save!

Three Views of the Atonement

The atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross is an historical fact. That His death was vicarious or substitutionary is universally accepted by all Christians. None will deny that a power of deliverance flows from the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus. The diverse opinions revolve around the width of the atonement and the extent of the power in the atonement. We will state three views and review them briefly.

1. The atonement is universal, and universally effective.

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2. The atonement is universal, but not universally effective.

3. The atonement is specific, and specifically effective.

Unlimited

The first view will take the least of our consideration for it is not held by any evangelical Christians. It supposes that Christ died for everyone that all men will ultimately be saved. Such theology has no scriptural or logical basis and arises solely from the carnal and perverted sentiment of men who have conjured in their own minds a god to suit themselves. The God of the Bible Whose wrath is turned against wicked men, and Who has prepared hell for the devil and his angels, which hell will be shared by all wicked and unbelieving men, is repulsive and unacceptable to them. The whole system slanders God and strips Him of His holiness and sovereignty. It removes any reason to fear God or serve Him.

It takes away the restraints of the law by extracting its teeth.

It gives man no reason for repentance or aspirations to holiness. It takes hell out of the Bible and puts wicked men in heaven, therefore, corrupting it as earth is now. In short, the theological system to which it belongs is not worth the waste of our time in considering it. It is only mentioned here in reference to the only possible views on the atonement of Christ, and will be useful in determining the solid Bible teaching on redemption.

Limited in Power

The second view has the Lord Jesus dying for everyone, but effectually saving no one. The atonement is supposed to be a gate through which all sinners may, if they will, enter and be cleansed, but which in reality has not assured that any shall be cleansed. It makes it possible for God to forgive sins for everyone, but effectually puts away the sins of no one. It does not procure salvation for anyone,

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but makes it possible for all to save themselves by accepting what God offers.

Limited in Scope

The third view is the only one which will stand the rigid scriptural test. That is, Christ died for specific people and in His death He effectually saved those persons.

Who hath saved us, and called [us] with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (II Tim. 1:9-10).

The Saviour here is said to have abolished death, a strong word indeed! We are told by the Holy Spirit that Christ has gotten rid of death. It is not suggested that Christ has made a way of escape from death, but that He has removed any possibility that death might claim us. All threat is gone. The scriptures speak of two deaths, the first and the second. Jesus did not abolish the first death, for it is still appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment (Heb. 9:27). Physical death is in view here. The scriptures also declare that the second death has not been abolished for all. Revelation 20:14-15 describes death and hell being cast into the lake of fire along with all whose names are not found written in the book of life. This is the second death. If Christ did not abolish the second death or eternal death for these, then for whom did He abolish death? Revelation 20:6 describes some people over whom the second death has no power. These are those for whom Christ died, and they are one and the same that God chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. The second death has no power over them because the penalty for their sins has been paid, and there is nothing to be laid at their account worthy of

death. Because Jesus' sinlessness robbed death of any power over His life, for the same reason His atonement strips hell of any claim on the beloved saints of God.

By now some of my readers will have begun to cry, "But now you are teaching a limited atonement. " I beg of you to give serious consideration to my words and search the scriptures on the subject and then see if you can arrive at any other conclusion than this one. Dr. Loraine Boettner is quite right when he observes that everyone limits the atonement in one way or another. You must either limit it in its scope or in its power. If you make it wide enough to include everyone, you must limit its power to save anyone. If you ascribe to it the power to save anyone, then it must be limited to those whom it saves and its full power extended to all of those whom it includes. The only other alternative is the blasphemous doctrine of universal salvation which we have mentioned in the first view of the atonement. Yet, that is more reasonable. as far as the atonement goes, than a view that Christ died for all and saved none in His death. The Universalist has a higher view of the death of Christ than the man who will not have the atonement effectually putting away the sins of the elect.

Limited Versus Effectual

Yet, it is not necessary to use the word "limited" at all. In fact, in my own opinion, limited is a word that should never be used in conjunction with an infinite God. It is better to speak of the atonement of Christ as it really was, an effectual atonement. That is, it was an atonement that was effective in securing its purpose. And its purpose and design was never intended to save all the fallen sons of Adam, but those whom God had predetermined should be glorified as His adopted sons.

There are those who will cry that we are depreciating the worth of the sufferings of our Lord. Not so. The value of His sufferings and His death are determined by the value of His person. And, since He was of infinite worth, there can be

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no limit or estimation on the sufficiency of His atonement. We are not speaking of its sufficiency but its efficiency. None would dare say the Lord's death was not of sufficient value to save all men. We are only saying that was not the purpose of His death, for had it been then we must assuredly say that God failed in that purpose. For all men will not be saved. If we admit that all men will not be saved, but profess that God intended to save all by the death of Christ, then we will slander the wisdom and power of God. He sought to do something that He could not do either by lack of wisdom or lack of power to carry out what He planned. We charge Him with confusion. He purposes to do something, and being frustrated in that, settles for something else.

It is not necessary for the redeemed to be equal to the price of redemption. It is only necessary for the price to be sufficient. The price of the lamb brought for a sin offering did not vary with the number of the man's sins. The animals that were offered for the congregation did not increase or decrease with the population of Israel. A scapegoat equally carried away the sins of a hundred thousand as of a hundred. Therefore, we take nothing from the value of Christ's blood when we affirm that He gave His life for the sheep (John 10:11), not the goats; the church (Eph. 5:25), not the whole world.

Redemption is Always Specific

Biblical typology bears out this truth. Without exception, every sacrifice in the scriptures was a specific sacrifice for a specific person or persons. A man brought a lamb for his sins, not his neighbor's (Lev. 1:1-4). The high priest, a type of Christ, made an offering for the sins of Israel, not the sins of the Amorites (Lev. 16). The scriptures know nothing of some sort of strange atonement which has no particular persons in view. Why then should this concept of redemption totally alien to the scripture be laid to the account of Jesus' work on the Cross? It is the product of the imaginations of men.

Redemption must be in accord with God's holy law. The law requires that the full penalty be paid for a ransom. Now Christ gave Himself a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28). The same law that demanded the ransom be paid also — demands that the ransomed go free. Now if Christ ransomed all, how can God punish any in hell? Are we not accusing God of injustice, if in His death, Christ fully satisfied the demands of the law for some whom God yet sends to hell? Upon what grounds must men go to hell if their sins have been already expiated in the death of Christ? If God has laid upon Him the iniquity of us all and He has carried that iniquity away, how can He then lay those same iniquities upon us? (Isa. 53:8). And what would be the purpose of Christ's sufferings for the multitudes already in hell at the time He died? The very nature of atonement requires that atonement satisfy, and put away all charges against the person for whom the atonement is made. The justice of God requires that He recognize that atonement and impute to that person the innocence purchased by his substitute. Therefore, it will be impossible for one of these for whom Christ died to perish. He has abolished death for them and secured eternal life.

The Problem Passages

I am aware that many of my readers will now have a multitude of "problem passages" bombarding their minds which seem to teach a universal atonement. I, therefore, must decide on either sticking to the purpose of this book in giving an orderly panoramic view of the scope of salvation, or digress into an apology on the doctrine of the atonement. I choose to stick with my original purpose for the book. For you who honestly will satisfy yourselves with the problem passages, I recommend John Owen's *Death of Death in the Death of Christ*. In the centuries since this classic appeared, its arguments have never been successfully refuted. A more contemporary work would be Boettner's *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, or *Five Points of Calvinism*, compiled and edited by Jay Green of Sovereign Grace Publishers.

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Better yet, get your Bible, and a good concordance. and sit down and go to work! You will discover that when the scriptures use the word "all," it does not always mean all in the ultimate sense, but is often restricted: Matt. 3:5.

21:10, Mark 1:5, Luke 2:1, Acts 2:17, 19:27, 1 Cor. 8:1 to name a few. Also, the word "world" seldom refers to all the people of the world, but must be understood in its context, and in the context of all Bible truth. Consider these passages: John 12:31, 13:1, 15:18, 14:22, Acts 17:24, Rom. 11:12.

It cannot be denied that Jesus has, in a sense, redeemed the entire creation. He has lifted the curse that fell upon the earth and all the lower creatures through the sin of Adam (Rom. 8:19-22). The whole of all creation groans and awaits the full fruition of redemption. John foresaw this and prophesied it from his visions in the Apocalypse (Rev. 5:8-13). The Lamb is worthy to open the book sealed with seven seals because it is the title deed of His purchase (Rev. 5:1-5). He has prevailed, and the earth and all that is therein belongs to Him. In this sense, the earthworms and ladybugs have been redeemed by Him, but they have not been purchased for His bride. That is the church only.

Remember that Boaz purchased all that was Ebimelech's; that would be Naomi. But he did not marry Naomi. He purchased all that was Chilion's; that would be Orpah. But Orpah turned back and died in Moab. He purchased all that was Mahlon's. "Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife" (Ruth 4:9-10). He made a wide general purchase for the sake of the particular purchase of his bride. So it is of Christ. He bought the whole field, but within the whole transaction, was the design of the special purchase of the treasure in the field. But for the treasure in the field, there never would have been any purchase at all.

Redemption wrought in the Lord Jesus Christ at Calvary was complete and effectual. He saved all those who should ever be saved when He died. If He did not save you then, there is no hope of your ever being saved; for nothing

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has happened since to either change what He finished then or to change your status before God.

Does someone desire to know when you were saved?

If you have reasonable hope to believe you ever will be saved, you can answer that you were saved when Jesus died on the cross. In that sense, you can put your salvation in the past.

But it rests, not upon an experience you had, but in a work which God did in Christ, decreed in eternity, and executed and secured by Christ's death in time for all eternity.

Chapter Five

REGENERATION

Man has sinned against God. He has rebelled against the sovereign God of the universe. He has bitten the hand that created him and from which comes the very substance of which he lives. He has spit in the face of infinite Majesty. He has flouted the immutable holy law of God. Angels and spirits of the pre-Adamic earth are cast down into prison bound in chains awaiting judgment without mercy. Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, and yet man lawlessly ignores a far higher and more holy commandment (Heb. 2:2-3). He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses (Heb. 10:28-29). Now, men trod under foot the Son of God. They desecrate and profane the holy blood of the sanctifying covenant. They despise, grieve, spurn, and drive away the Spirit of Grace. This before the witness of God, men and angels: Their god is in their bellies, their crowning glory is their most ignoble, disgraceful shame, their constant obsession is upon the things of the earth, and are avowed enemies of the Cross of Christ (Phil. 3:18-19).

God is an Enemy

God is their enemy (Rom. 5:10). He has whetted His glittering sword. His arrows are drawn in the bow, thirsting to make themselves drunk on the blood of His wicked enemies (Deut. 32:41 -42). Let no man rest upon the false hope oozing from the slick, syrupy tongues of ignorant men who would make merchandise of deceived sinners. "God loves sinners," they say, "and hates the sin." Not so! How can you separate the two and have either? Separate sin from the sinner, and neither exists. Sin is not an abstract that exists in the air. It is only sin when it is conceived in a sinner. Take the sin out of the sinner, and you have no sinner. God judges sin in the sinner. He even had to put sin upon His Son in order to judge it, and He judged it in the Son. The scriptures give no reason for the unrepentant sinner to hope God loves him, but on the contrary, "Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity" (Psa. 5:5). "God is angry with the wicked every day" (Psa. 7:11). "For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth" (Psa. 10:3). "...the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth" (Psa. 11:5).

God has set His face against the sinner. His holiness cannot allow the wicked in His presence. His justice cries for his punishment. His wisdom protests this vile creature's defilement of the universe. All His wrath is poured out toward men who hold the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18).

Man is not ignorant of this. The law from Mt. Sinai scowls down upon him and thunders out its threats and curses., His own conscience accuses him in the very act of his deeds. As Noah's faith and obedience saved his own household, at the same time, it condemned the world. So does the present holy obedient life of the saints constantly accuse the wicked for his unbelief and unrepentance. The elements and all objects of God's creation are fixed witnesses that cry out their testimonies of God's beautiful and glorious order.

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Man is a Slave

Man is a slave to Satan. It might make some sense should a man endure awful judgments to come upon him if he were free for a season to do as he pleased, but such is not the case. You are fast in the paw of that roaring lion who is greedy to devour (I Pet. 5:8), in the snare of the devil, led captive by him at his will (II Tim. 2:26). This is the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2). His drudges they are, and his lusts they do. He is the ruler of the darkness of this world (Eph. 6:12), that is, of ignorant sinners who live in darkness. You pity the poor Indians who worship the devil for their god, but little think it is your own case. It is the common misery of all the unsanctified that the devil is their god. Not that they intend to do him homage. They will be ready to defy him, and him that should say so of them; but all this while they serve him, and live under his government. His servants ye are to whom ye obey (Rom. 6:16) Oh, how many then will be found to be the real servants of the devil, who take themselves for no other than the children of God! He can no sooner offer a sinful delight or opportunity for your unlawful advantage than you embrace it. If he suggests a lie, or prompts you to revenge, you readily obey. If he forbids you to read or pray, you hearken to him, and, therefore, his servants you are. Indeed, he stands behind the curtain, he acts in the dark and sinners do not see who sets them working, but all the while he leads them.

Are you yet in ignorance and not turned from darkness unto light? I fear you are under the power of Satan. Do you live in the willful practice of any known sin? Know that you are of the devil. Do you live in strife, or envy or malice? Verily he is your father. O dreadful case! However, Satan may provide his slaves with various pleasures, yet it is but to draw them into endless perdition. The serpent comes with the fruit in his mouth but, as with Eve, you do not see the deadly sting. He that is now your tempter will one day be

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There is a man with five yoke of oxen. Serve the Lord?
Sorry, I am not interested. I am too busy making money and getting rich. Behold a man who has married a wife. Jesus loves me? That is fine. Glad to hear it, but really it is of no concern to me. I have a wife and all the affection and comfort I want.

What shall we do for these? Shall we pull the cover off hell and expose her boiling pits of brimstone and fire? Shall we take the scriptures and paint before them the beauties and glories of heaven? Shall we attempt to show them the beauties of the Saviour's person? Shall we make to pass before their eyes the day of judgment when the earth and all its lying pleasantries shall melt with a fervent heat? Can we picture for them the awful countenance of God in the day of His wrath? To no avail! They are blind. They have no eyes. They cannot see (Isa. 59:9-10, I Cor. 2:9, Matt. 13:14-15).

Shall we preach louder or more eloquently? Shall we plead more fervently? Shall we cunningly and skillfully reason with them to make them understand the way of truth and light? To no avail! They are deaf. They cannot hear. Like dumb idols of graven stone or carved wood, they have ears and hear not. How then shall we reason with a rock or plead with a fallen log? From where shall we bring our arguments to convince him who has no sense of wisdom? Their minds are dead toward truth. They have all gone after their own way and every man's ways are right in his own eyes.

Man is Not irresponsibly Dead

Such is the miserable state of the unregenerate. He is dead in trespasses and sins and has no inclination toward life and righteousness. He is in bondage to the world, the flesh, and the devil. He is in prison.

In so saying, we do not imply that he is dead as a table or chair. He is alive, but he is only alive toward evil. He is free only to sin and to work unrighteousness (Rom. 6:16,20) A man is alive toward that to which he responds,

and the unregenerate responds only to the world, the flesh and the devil. He has no responsiveness toward God. His only hearing and seeing capacities are that of the natural hearing and the natural seeing. But God communes only in the spirit (1 Cor. 2:10). Being dead in spirit, he has no faculty alive to hear or to see the things of God.

Nor is unregenerate man without convicting conscience and condemning witness. But these acting only upon the depraved senses have not the strength to awaken a man to genuine conviction unto repentance. _

Make no mistake about it. The unawakened sinner is content with his state. He is wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, but he knows it not and so is perfectly content to remain as he is.

All the gospel preaching and teaching in the world will avail nothing in response from the unregenerate. Sinners are not born again through repentance and faith. They are not regenerated through receiving Christ and believing on His name. They receive Christ and believe on His name because they have been born. And that birth is not of the blood, nor of the will of man but of the will of God (John 1:12-13). Repentance and faith await regeneration and regeneration awaits a sovereign act of God the Holy Spirit.

The sinner is dead and will never make a move toward God until God makes one toward him. Regeneration is that initial act of God toward the dead sinner, which resurrects his fallen spirit and restores his sensitivity toward God. Repentance and faith are the responses of the regenerated sinner. Regeneration is God's work alone. Repentance and faith are man's.

Regeneration God's Work Alone

Jesus left us clear instructions on the New Birth in His encounter with Nicodemus (John 3:1-10). He gives two very fitting analogies to regeneration. The first is a birth. We can note some profitable similarities between the natural birth and the spiritual birth.

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The person born has nothing to do with occasioning his birth. He can not promote it, arrange it, hasten it, or delay it. The factors involved in bringing him into this world were totally out of his reach. So it is with the birth from above. Regeneration is a creative act of God and since when has God needed consent from a nonentity to bring it into existence? Did He need Adam's cooperation to breathe the breath of life into that lifeless dust? How much less his fallen sons? Did He seek the cooperation of the worlds which did not exist to create them into existence and set them in motion?

That which is flesh is flesh and that which is spirit is spirit. God is a Spirit (John 4:24). Man is flesh (Gen. 6:3); yea less than that, all flesh is as grass (I Pet. 1:24). Would you look further? Dust thou art! (Gen. 3:19). Shall this vain dust presume to cooperate with God in the creation of something higher? Flesh begets flesh, and spirit begets spirit. Spirit and flesh do not cooperate to beget spirit. The two are in different realms, and constantly oppose one another (Gal. 5: 1 7).

In the natural birth, man is not conscious of its happening. It is affecting him but he is not aware of its affecting him at the time and cannot recall the time of the experience or anything about it. Later he becomes aware that he is alive because he has response to life. He feels, he S hungers, he sorrows, rejoices, suffers, and grows. Because of these he knows he has been born, but of the birth itself he is not conscious.

Such is true of those who have been regenerated and consequently converted. The regeneration cannot be recalled. The effects can be recalled. He can recall, and perhaps date, his initial conversion experience because the mind, emotions, and will were active and impressed in that, but not in his regeneration. He can only remember that there was a time in his existence when he could not care less about God or his eternal destiny. He could sin all day and sleep without any conviction to disturb him. Then suddenly he found himself terribly concerned about the wrath of God. He saw himself slipping into hell and had no power to save himself. His sins

brought such condemnation upon him he could hardly bear it. The preaching of the gospel, which never disturbed him before, now brought such misery upon him he thought he should die. When these tempers characterize a sinner, God has already wrought a work in regeneration that will surely bring forth repentance and faith. Some insist that conversion so closely follows regeneration that they seem to be simultaneous. Others declare there must be a long period between them. I do not make an issue of either, only that conversion must be preceded by regeneration.

The second analogy the Lord gives us is "wind" to the Spirit. Birth from above is a spiritual birth. It is wrought by the Holy Spirit.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit (John 3:8).

Wind is a fitting type of the Holy Spirit, especially in His work in regeneration. It bloweth where it listeth. The Holy Spirit does what He pleases because He is God. He does not need man's permission nor is He stopped by man's opposition. He regenerates whom He will, (born of the will of God) when He will. As the wind, so the Spirit is unseen by the natural eye. We can see the effects of the wind and we shall certainly see where God has breathed His Spirit, but we cannot see the Spirit. The wind is the essence of life. The blood in our bodies derives its life-giving oxygen from the air that "blows" through our lungs. Stop the movement of the wind and everything would suffocate in minutes. So it is with the Spirit. There is no life apart from God and no way to God but through the Spirit. When the Spirit ceases to move there will be no more regeneration.

Begotten by the Word

. But, some will now object, Jesus said a man must be born of water and the Spirit. I will not waste my readers' time with a lengthy refutation of the doctrine of baptism

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regeneration. Suffice it to be said that we are speaking of a birth here, and baptism is always spoken of as a burial. You have to stretch the truth a long way to unite birth and burial in one act. Only a determination to support a pre-decided doctrine can give rise to such an interpretation of John 3:5. It cannot rise from honest Bible study.

Water is often used in the scripture as a type of the word of God. The same word translated washing (Gr. *loutron*) appears in Eph. 5:26 "cleanse it by the washing of water by the word" as in Titus 3:5, "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are Life.

John 1:13 tells us we were born of the will of God. I Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God." James 1:18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." An exhaustive search of the scriptures reveals only three factors in regeneration: the will of God, the Spirit of God and the word of God. The water in John 3:5, therefore, in harmony with all other truths, is the word of God.

It is important for us at this point to correct our understanding of the phrase "word of God." When the Bible speaks of the word of God, it is not necessarily speaking of the scriptures, nor is it speaking of preaching or teaching scriptural truth. Please understand I am not saying that the holy scriptures written in the Bible are not the verbally inspired word of God. I am saying, that when the Bible speaks of the word of God, it is not necessarily speaking of itself. It is speaking of God verbally speaking the God-breathed word that goes forth in creative power. To illustrate what I am saying, consider the much abused passage in Isaiah 55:11:

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please,

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Sand it shall prosper [in the thing] whereto I sent it.

Preachers are adept at comforting themselves in their barrenness with this passage when they do not have the right. It is the word that goes forth out of God's mouth, not mine nor yours, nor out of the book you carry under your arm. It is the word He sent, not the presumptuous sermon I decided upon, nor the scripture passages I picked out. The Bible is truth, and as truth, it exerts moral influence; but that moral influence has no power to regenerate or give life. On/y when that truth is God-breathed does regeneration occur. The truth conveyed in being born of the word of God can be seen clearly in Ezekiel 16:6:

And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee [when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee. [when thou wast] in thy blood, Live.

It can be seen again at Lazarus' tomb when the Son of God stood outside and cried to the dead, "Lazarus, come forth." That is resurrection by the word.

God creates by speaking. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God..." No Bibles, no preachers, no teachers, just the word of God. Bibles are the record of God's word. We preach and teach the word of God but only God can truly speak the word of God, and when He speaks things always happen. Is there darkness? "Let there be Light." Is there leprosy? "Be thou clean." Is there impotency? "Rise and walk." Is the sinner dead in trespasses and sin? He speaks of His own will by His Holy Spirit, "Live"

What motivates God in passing by and beholding us in our lost and insensible state to point His finger at us and say, Live? Nothing but His great love. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ" (Eph. 2:4-5). Those He quickens, are those whom He has chosen and those for whom

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Christ died. It is beholding us in Christ that makes it possible for Him to love us in spite of our wickedness.

New Creatures

It is possible to speak of the new birth as the total work of regeneration and conversion and sanctification with the thought of II Cor. 5:17 in mind. "Therefore if any man be in Christ. [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

Thus, we may speak of a person recently regenerated and converted as a "newborn babe" (II Pet. 2:2). We must understand that the Bible allows for ambiguous usage of words. For instance, when Paul declares to the Corinthians that he has begotten them of the gospel, he is not speaking of the new birth (I Cor. 4:15). If so, he would be ascribing to himself the work of God and calling himself their Father. He is simply saying that they are the fruits of his labor.

The Need of Sight Not Light

But we must understand that the new birth of which Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus was not the total work of quickening and conversion, for He said nothing of repentance and faith. In fact, He gave no command or instructions to Nicodemus on the matter. There are no instructions to be followed to obtain regeneration. Men are not commanded to be born again. They are simply told they must be. Men are commanded to repent and believe, but they will not repent and believe unless they have been born again.

Nicodemus' immediate need was sight, not light.

More light to the blind will avail him nothing. He needs to see. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

A classic example is given unto us in Paul's experience on the road to Damascus. Blindly stumbling along, unaware of his blindness, not knowing he was at enmity with God, he breathes threatening and murders against the saints

of God (Acts 26:9-18). Verse 13 tells us at midday he saw. And when he saw, he fell to the earth in repentance, and when he fell, he heard. And when he heard, he confessed that Jesus was Lord, and when he confessed, he was given instructions. Nicodemus came seeking instructions. But he was far from being a candidate for instruction. Faith awaits hearing (Rom. 10: 17), and hearing awaits seeing, and seeing awaits the quickening revealing word of God. Who hath believed our report? It is he to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed (Isa. 53:1).

Conviction the Fruit of Regeneration

The sinner is not comforted by his regeneration. He loses all the comfort which he had in his deadness. His refuge of lies is exposed. He sees he has been leaning on rotten straws. All the miseries that could not move him in his unregenerate state now fasten themselves to his mind. Instead of giving him hope, regeneration has robbed him of all his false hope. He can never find rest until he is soundly converted.

The question might be asked, "How much time lapses between regeneration and conversion?" I do not pretend to know, nor does anyone else. It may be years or it may be so short a time as for one to immediately follow the other as in the case of Lydia (Acts 16:14). I see no profit in trying to prove either case. The only thing that is certain from the scriptures is that regeneration must precede repentance and faith.

The Gospel Must be Preached to All

Are we suggesting then that the gospel should not be preached to every creature since only those who are regenerated will respond? No, of course not. This doctrine does not change in the least the urgency and primacy of preaching the truth. Why should it? Suppose they all did have power to believe and repent without regeneration? The fact would still remain that many would not believe. But no

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one knows who will and who will not as no one knows who are and who are not regenerated before they repent and behave.

Rather, we are given encouragement to preach because salvation is of the Lord. He does quicken some. And, as we preach, some are going to believe. The wind does yet blow. It blows where it pleases, but it blows. Otherwise, evangelism would be impossible.

Also, the preaching of the gospel is not without profit upon the ears of the unregenerate. All men are commanded to repent and are responsible for doing so whether they do or not. Benefits flow from the truth even to unregenerate men, because of the just principles of life embodied in it. Although they do not understand the gospel of Christ, men are blessed by it. Again, though the unregenerate mind does not comprehend the gospel, it stores those truths in the memory.

When then, the spirit is regenerated, the Holy Spirit brings those things to remembrance and quickens them. In such a way one may be soundly converted immediately after being regenerated without further preaching or teaching of eternal truth. This is the principle illustrated in Ezekiel 37:1-14. The prophet was told to preach to dead, dry, lifeless bones: bones which had no power to either hear or respond. Foolish as it seemed, the prophet obeyed and although the bones had no life, the word of God moved them to an orderly organized position. All was in order and in place when the regenerating, life-giving Spirit breathed upon them and then they lived. The word of God puts things in order, but it takes the Spirit to give them life.

An old and thorny theological question ought to be considered here. Does God use means in regeneration, or does He regenerate without the use of human means? As we reduce the question further, it comes down to the instrumentality of the preaching of the gospel in regeneration. Some maintain that regeneration of intelligent people (not idiots or infants) must always be under the preaching of the Gospel and is immediate/y followed by conversion. Others teach that

God does not use preaching in regeneration, but only in
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conversion and that a long period of time must pass between the two.

There are evidences that the preaching of the gospel becomes the creative word of God when breathed by the Holy Spirit. Being born again by the word of God And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you (1 Peter 1 :23-35). Also Paul claims to have begotten the Corinthians by the gospel 2 Cor. 4:15).

I wish to make two observations in regard to these scriptures. First, as I have already pointed out, sometimes it is not easy to distinguish between the scripture's speaking of regeneration in the implanting of spiritual life or the bringing forth of the evidence of that life in conversion whereby we are discerned to be new creatures in Christ. These passages, and others of similar nature, may well be referring to the total work of regeneration and conversion.

Secondly, let us take the positive approach and say that these passages mean that a person was actually brought to possess spiritual life through the preaching of the gospel. Nor do we deny that this may well be the usual means which God uses to regenerate dead sinners. What we do deny is that God must use this means and that He always uses this means. It is unlikely that any one is regenerated without having previously heard the gospel but not impossible. The God that rebuked the prophet by the dumb ass and smote repentance into the heart of a Christ denying disciple by a cock's voice is not bound by the muted mouths of disobedient men.

Nor can we insist that conversion must immediately follow regeneration any more than we can prove that there must be a long time interval. Conversion will follow regeneration, but we have no grounds to say how soon or how long. What then, it might be asked, is the benefit or purpose of teaching this truth? Much in many ways. We will list a few.

1 . Jesus taught it. If He judged it important then

we must also say it ought to be expounded.
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2. It provides a satisfying answer to the question of the new birth. No sinner or saint with a logical mind will be satisfied with the answer. I "you are born again by repenting and believing." That makes a man's birth his own work. We weaken the whole gospel message by answers that unnecessarily violate man's sense of reason.

3. It harmonizes the truth that puts Christ preeminent and prevenient in all things.

4. It honors God by giving Him all the glory for all of our salvation, and puts the sinner in the only place he can safely be, at God's mercy.

5. It does away with the destructive doctrine of salvation as a once-in-time experience made by a decision of man to which God and all eternity, both past and future, are subjected and powerless to change.

If one should ask you now when you were born again, you need have no fear of giving a perfect scriptural answer. "I don't know. I only know that I have been, and my main concern is to make sure that I am His by abiding in Christ, Who is my life."

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Chapter 6

CONVERSION

Conversion is about as perfectly a translated word as one could hope for from one language to another. The Greek word in the New Testament is *epistrophe* together with its verb form *epstrepho*. It means to turn. That is to turn back from or to. Our English word, *convert*, is derived from the Latin *vertere*, turn. And that is exactly the meaning of the word in our own language. In the realm of religion it means a spiritual and moral change attending a change of belief with conviction; specifically the experience associated with, and involving a definite and decisive adoption of religion, especially the Christian religion. [Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary].

We must recognize, however, that the word *conversion* can be used of many types of turning, some of which have nothing to do with religion. One man, for instance, may convert his friend from one political ideology to another. Or a thief may be converted from stealing to honest labor, a drunkard from his drunkenness to sobriety; but these have nothing to do with salvation proper. In addition to the usage of the term in unbelievers being converted in their unbelief, such passages as Luke 22:32 and James 5:19 are

not speaking of the initial conversion experience when the sinner first turns to Christ, but of those continued conversions that are experienced in the process of sanctification. Peter is not looking forward to his justification when he is to be converted. He is already converted toward Christ. He is looking forward to conversion from his vacillation. The brother whom James is admonishing us to convert, is not a lost man but a brother who needs to be converted from the way in which he has erred.

The Bible also speaks of temporary conversions. The parable of the sower in Matthew 13 speaks of a person who received the word quickly with joy but had no root, and when tribulation or persecution arose because of the word he was offended and fell away. He had no real root in Christ. Such are these of whom Peter speaks in II Peter 2:20-22. "The dog [is] turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." The New Testament bristles with warnings to God's people lest their conversion be a shallow temporary one that does not persevere unto the end.

This is why I prefer to use the term conversion instead of the unscriptural "saved" (Acts 15:3). I realize many Godly men use the term and their use does not offend me. I hope they will not be offended when I point out the problems they bring upon themselves by the use of the term. Spurgeon said, "Who are you to say someone got saved? It will take a lifetime to prove someone is saved." If I use the term converted, then time will tell if they are soundly converted to Christ or if they were only temporarily converted. Until they prove otherwise, I will, of course, regard them as my brethren. But if I say they are saved, then they apostatize, then I must say they fell from grace, or they are saved sinners (another unscriptural term), or that I was wrong and they were not saved. This is why the Bible never tells you someone got saved.

But henceforth in this chapter our usage of the word conversion will be restricted to sound conversion that results

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in a permanent turning of the repentant sinner to Christ in genuine repentance and faith.

The Necessity and Nature of Conversion

God has chosen a people and they have fallen so as to be unfit for His presence. Jesus has redeemed these people from their sins and removed all legal judgment against them. The Holy Spirit has regenerated them but they are still the same wicked sinners they were when they fell. The only difference is that now they are very unhappy sinners, and they are capable of responding to the beauties and glories of the Lord.

But they are still sinners through and through. Their works and thoughts are still evil, for they yet rise from deceitful wicked hearts. These redeemed sinners must be converted. That is, they must be changed from sinners to saints. The whole bent of their previous life has been for themselves and against God. They must be turned so that the whole of their lives is toward God and righteousness and against sin.

Such conversion is drastic. It affects and involves the whole of man. His mind grasps the truth of the gospel message and for the first time gives hearty assent to the judgments of God against himself. He is able to see his wickedness as never before. He is brought to understand that God has loved him and put away his sins in Christ Jesus. As the mind lays hold on these truths the awakened sinner is stirred in his emotions. The fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, now arises in his trembling breast and the pains of hell lay hold on his soul. As his thoughts pour light into his soul, and his emotions are stirred to see the awful state he is in, he volitionally wills to choose to turn from his sin and lay hold upon God's mercy at any cost. He leaves all behind. He literally dies to everything that has been life to him before, in hope of finding life in Christ. So determined and final is this commitment to God, he will never turn back. He has discovered there is nothing but disillusion-

ment and failure in the flesh, and his only hope of fulfillment in life lies in being a love-slave to the Blessed Saviour. Live or die, sink or swim, heaven or hell, he has cast his lot with Christ. Such is the nature of sound conversion. Nothing less is and nothing else will last.

Such a convert is a good candidate for holiness. God has begun a work of transformation in him that will not cease until he is conformed to the image of Christ and has received full adoption as a glorified son of God.

State of Man at Conversion

What brings a man to this wits-end-corner wherein he is willing to close with Christ on whatever terms God makes available? In this we see a glimpse of the great wisdom of God in hiding the future from us and revealing only those things that are profitable to us at the time. We can understand also, if we will, why the Bible sometimes speaks of God purposing to do one thing and then changing His mind. Yet we know that He is the Lord and He changes not (Mal. 3:6). He sends Jonah to Ninevah with one awful hopeless message: "Yet forty days and Ninevah shall be overthrown." No hope is offered to the city. No proposition of mercy for repentance is offered: Only the awful statement that God has determined to put the wicked city out of His sight. The imminent judgment of God is against her. Not until she repents is any suggestion made of God's ultimate will to spare her. Such is the message of God to the unrepentant sinner. As far as his own sensibilities are concerned, God has made up His mind to put him in hell. He might know that Jesus has died for sinners, but he has no reason to believe that he himself was included in that atonement or that there are any grounds upon which he can lay hold of the mercy of God. He is without hope. Ephesians 2:12 makes this clear. It is said of the Gentiles: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." It might be said of the Jew that he had a

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hope in being a descendant of Abraham to whose seed the promises were made. It could also be observed that his hope is the very thing that helped the Jew to stumble at Christ and fall. But to the Gentile, God promised nothing. He gave him no hope. He has a hope of a hope because God has promised to bring in some of the Gentiles (John 10:16). But he has no reason yet to believe he is included.

We do the unrepentant sinner no kindness, and war against the good design of God, when we try to give him hope before God has shown him his hopelessness. We cannot use partial passages such as the last half of John 6:37 to give the sinner hope. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." That passage is conditioned with the first half. "All that my father giveth me shall come to me." The scriptures abound with people who came to Jesus and whom Jesus did not receive. He did not receive Nicodemus, or the rich young ruler, or the man who first wanted to bury his father, or those superficial believers in John 2:23-24. It is the condition of the heart that determines whether Jesus receives those who come to Him. A broken spirit and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise (Psa. 51 :17).

Nor should we give unwarranted hope from such passages as in Romans 10:13. The passage conditions itself.

Those who thus call upon the name of the Lord cry from a broken hopeless heart. It is those to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed (Rom. 10:16, Isa. 53:1), who have received hearing by the word, and faith by their hearing, and God Himself will give them hope in Christ.

Some of my readers will now say: "Will not such teachings discourage the sinner from seeking the Lord at all? Will it not drive him to despair?" Not at all; God does save those who come to Him under these conditions. Millions have found sweet rest for their souls when sinking in despair; and God is yet saving those who come to Him by Christ. We can assuredly say, whosoever will may come. But will you? If you will, you may.

Conversion the Work of Man

Regeneration is something God does to which man responds. Conversion is something man does to which God responds. In regeneration the work is God's and God's alone. In conversion the work is man's but "it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

Two graces are necessary to conversion: Repentance and Faith. It is sometimes argued which comes first. How can people believe who do not repent, it is asked, assuming repentance precedes faith. On the other hand, what reason would a person have to repent if he did not believe, would be the argument from the other side. We answer, they are inseparable. One cannot exist in reality without the other. But it seems the scriptural order is repentance and faith. True, some revelation is necessary and the eye of faith must be opened to strike repentance home to the rebellious darkened heart, but man cannot really close with Christ with a clear conscience in pure faith until there has been full sincere repentance.

Repentance is a gift of God. Except God grant it, no man will ever repent (Acts 5:31, 11:18, II Tim. 2:25). Esau carefully sought repentance, but could not lay hold upon it. There is a worldly repentance that sinners have which is ineffectual to conversion (III Cor. 7:10). Such is the sorrow and repentance that Esau and Judas had. But godly sorrow that works repentance unto conversion is a gift of God.

Although repentance is a gift of God and those who have been regenerated will repent, they must. Do not miss this point dear reader. God will not repent for you. He has nothing of which to repent. That is a work which you must do. You cannot justify yourself in doing nothing toward your repentance by saying God will have to work repentance in you. Take that attitude and you will surely find yourself in hell. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3,5). This was the message of John the Baptist and the

message of the Lord Jesus and it was the last thing the Lord had to say to the seven churches of the Apocalypse. Repent!

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Those who would leave repentance out of their gospel would have sinners in heaven. They would have thieves prying up the golden streets and carrying them off. They would have profane godless men spitting on Jesus as He sits on the throne. They would have harlots and perverts practicing their sodomy in the Holy City. They would have Christ receiving the serpent to His holy bosom.

The sinner must repent. He must turn completely from his wicked ways. He must not only renounce his sins and thoroughly resolve by the grace of God to practice them never again, but he must take God's side in judgment against himself. He must cry with the angelic host as he beholds his wicked person, "Crucify him! He is not worthy that he should live." He must give ready consent that the miseries of hell are wisely fitted for such as he.

As the sinner makes such confessions, a wonderful thing happens. Suddenly the war is over. He has agreed with God in all points and there is no more enmity between him and his Maker. He has bowed before the Lord of glory on every point. What lacks he yet?

"...Without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). In repentance, the sinner has removed all occasion of enmity between him and God but he has yet done nothing to please God.

What can we do to please God? What does He expect of us? "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:29). All our strugglings, cryings, labors, and good works are of no avail to win the smile of God until we believe Him. God is good. Jehovah is gracious. He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Those who seek and will not believe that God is a rewarder will never have the peace of God rise in their hearts. The unrepentant cannot believe this because his conscience is yet defiled, but the repentant has his conscience purged by the

blood of Christ through confession and can, with boldness,

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lay hold upon the hope that is an anchor for his soul (1 John 1:9, Heb. 10:14, 19-22).

Those regenerated will believe God, but they must. Faith is a gift of God (Eph. 2:8). One cannot believe God without the gift of faith but when that faith is given, the man himself must believe. God will not do it for him. Once again I am strongly tempted to deviate from the purpose of this book and elaborate on the cause, substance, and characteristics of real faith. It is the most important subject of the scriptures. Christ is the central person of the scriptures, love is the greatest subject of the scriptures, but without faith it is impossible to know anything of either of these. It is of prime importance that the student of the scriptures give diligence to see that he knows what he is talking about when he speaks of faith.

Through repentance and faith, the seeker has been brought through a conversion experience. It is an experience of which he is sensible and conscious, cataclysmic in some, barely perceptible in others; but it is by no means to be called a salvation experience.

Repentance and faith are not one-time experiences which are done, then never repeated but only referred to as a past transaction. They are attitudes and principles of life that are entered by an initial experience and walked in henceforth. The believer will spend the rest of his life being corrected by the word and the Spirit and turning from newly discovered error into a more perfect walk with the Lord. Four times in the scripture the declaration is made, "The just shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4). "The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). "The just shall live by faith" (Gal. 3:11). "The just shall live by faith" (Heb. 10:38). A justifying faith is not a one-time profession of faith but a life that continually confesses faith. A profession that does not persevere in good works is dead. (James 2:18). Romans 10:9-10 does not teach salvation in a one-time confession. No man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3). The believer confesses Christ as Lord the rest of his life. With the

heart man believeth unto righteousness. A persevering walk

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of faith is foretold which culminates in a holy person ready to be presented faultless before God in the day of Judgment. Conversion is a turning. In repentance, we turn from our sin. In faith, we lay hold on Christ. In repentance, we repudiate and renounce a bankrupt self. In faith, we lay hold upon the riches in Christ. In repentance, we leave behind and forsake that which promises failure, disgrace, and death. In faith, we enter into Him Who cannot fail, in Whom is life, and in Whom we shall surely be glorified.

Cause of Conversion

The cause of conversion is the inclusive cause of salvation: The redeeming love of God. In conversion, man is justified before God and his sins are no longer imputed to him. This could not be legally possible in the justice of God if full atonement for those sins had not been made in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Men must never forget this! God never forgives sins until something has been done about them. He cannot wink at them, turn His back, and pretend they did not happen. His love is immeasurable, but that love cannot set aside His justice and His holiness. The holy law of God must be satisfied and that law requires nothing less than death for every sin. If the saints of God could comprehend that truth they would not take so lightly their so-called "little sins." The putting away of those demands nothing less than death. We are sheltered from the curses of Mt. Sinai only because they fell upon Christ.

The immediate cause of conversion is an effectual call by the Holy Spirit. There is a general call that goes out to all men, and then there is an effectual call that goes to those whom God has chosen. "Many are called but few [are] chosen" (Matt. 22:14).

The general call is illustrated in Matt. 22: 1 -8 and Luke 14:16-20. The response is always the same. None will come. it is not a mock offer. It is a sincere and real call of God to all men. They are invited to come. He has left nothing lacking to cause any to be reluctant to come. "I have

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prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage." God has done everything. It is all at His expense. He asks nothing from His guests but to receive what He has prepared for them. It is always so. God has already completed the work into which we enter before He bids us enter into it (Heb. 4:3). Why should He not then swear in His wrath that they shall never enter who spurn His free offer of grace?

This call goes forth in three instruments: (Rev. 22:17) "And the Spirit and bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The invitation is sent forth by the Holy Spirit, the Church (the bride) and the personal witness (him that heareth). Yet in answer to the general call none will come. They all with one consent make excuse. In Matthew 22 they refuse the servants, God's holy men. In Luke 14 they refuse the Servant, the Holy Spirit. If God never did more than invite men in the gospel every last one of us would surely wind up in hell. "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Whosoever will may come, but none will.

But some must come. Why? Because Jesus has died, and His death cannot be in vain. He has purchased for Himself a bride. He cannot be cheated of the fruits of His sufferings. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied" (Isa. 53:11). Hence, another call must be made that gets the job done.

All who hear the effectual call will come and only they who hear the effectual call (John 10:4, 6:37). Men who refuse the general call go to hell, not because they were not elected, nor because they did not hear an effectual call, but because of their own wickedness and refusal of a sincere call of God to them. There will never be a man in hell who made any sincere effort to keep out of there. There can never be one to accuse God with a lack of extension of love and grace toward Him. Those who will not come do not come because they do not want to come and will not.

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The effectual call is illustrated in Luke 14:21 -23.

After the rich, the strong, the happy have refused their invitation, the Holy Spirit is sent to a prepared people: (Luke 1:17) The poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. These are they to whom the gospel is directed and to them alone. Please read Luke 4:18. Jesus was not anointed to preach the gospel to everyone, but to the poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, the blind, and the bruised. To this agree the prophets (Isaiah 61:1-3).

These people have been prepared for the Lord. They have been regenerated. We should recognize that although the physical sickness and infirmities in the Bible were real and their healings and deliverances were real, they portray in allegory a much higher spiritual truth. People who are converted are not necessarily poorer, blinder, more crippled, more bound, and more bruised than others. They have simply been awakened by the Holy Spirit to see their wretched state. Others in exactly the same poor spiritual condition see themselves as rich, increased with goods, and having need of nothing.

They all come. The poor have no "land" upon which to feast their eyes, and in which to comfort themselves. The maimed have no "plowing" to do. The blind and imprisoned have no "wife" to love them and fulfill their lives. They will respond to the sweet offers in the gospel.

But the house is not yet filled. There is yet room. All the thirsty have come and are drinking. They that labored and were heavy laden have found blessed rest for their souls. The mourners have been given the oil of joy. Those with the spirit of heaviness have been robed in the garment of praise. But there is yet room. Then what shall the Servant do?
"Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23).

How ignorant men have abused this blessed passage! They have used it to justify their blasphemous methods of getting men to come to church. They have excused themselves for

cheapening the gospel and profaning the place of worship.
They have erroneously interpreted it to produce a monstrous
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horde of "religious salesmen" trained in all the clever, deceptive, and persuasive methods which are used to induce gullible men into buying vacuum cleaners and insurance policies. Compel them to come to church, they may. In compelling them to make religious and moral decisions they are expert. But compel them to come to Christ? Never! Only the Holy Spirit can do that. He is the soul winner. The word compel is a strong one. It means to apply such means as are necessary to get the job done. "But," now someone objects; "God will not violate your will and make you come to Christ against your will." Of course He will not. But, His people shall be willing in the day of His power (Psa. 110:3). "In their affliction they will seek me early" (Hos. 5:15).

The Holy Spirit will compel by preparing more people in the same way the previous ones were prepared. He goes about making them poor, maimed, halt, and blind. This seldom needs be in the physical sense. Usually the opening of the eyes is enough. But He will spare nothing to bring His beloved to Christ. He regenerates, quickens, awakens and makes the sinner to see what a miserable state he is in and then gives the awakened sinner a glimpse of the God of Glory. . That always puts the sinner in the dust.

The Holy Spirit convicts (John 16:8). The conscience may convict. So may the law and so may the gospel. s But the Holy Spirit goes further than that. He convicts. He convicts of sin. The awakened sinner sees himself indescribably wicked because of his unbelief. When the glories of the Lord are made to pass but for a moment before his unbelieving eyes, he sees hell as too good for him and wonders why he has not been in it long ago.

He convicts of righteousness. Jesus has ascended to the Father and we no longer have the perfect Image before our eyes. Therefore, the only way we can know purity and . holiness is by the Spirit Who is Holy. It is by Him that we cry

"Holy, Holy," unto the Lord. He is the Holy Spirit. That is His primary attribute.

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He convinces of judgment because the prince of this world is judged. If God spared not the angels that sinned if his majesty, Satan, whom Michael, the archangel, dared not accuse if he has been crushed under the heel of the Seed of woman, how dare we, who have now fallen lower than worms, think we shall escape the judgment of God?

The Holy Spirit gets the job done. Like Abraham's servant who approaches Rebekah with Isaac's riches, the blessed Heavenly Dove woos with the priceless treasures of God's mercy and love until He conquers the weary soul who casts his love-starved eyes toward the Saviour and says, "I will come."

Effects of Conversion

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only [so], but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us (Rom. 5:1-5).

Justification and conversion are inseparable, but not the same. They are simultaneous, but different. We are converted through repentance and faith, but we are justified by faith alone. Repentance can never justify. It is necessary for justification, but justification awaits faith. The work of atonement has been done in Christ's death and can never be substituted by our repentance or penances. God is pleased only by those who reach up with the open, empty, defenseless hand of faith and appropriate what He has done and offers. God then imputes to the sinner's account, on the basis of what his Substitute has done, that Substitute's own

righteousness, He is justified from all his sins (Rom. 4:20-25).

Peace. Being justified he has peace with God. The war is over. There have been no negotiations, treaties, compromises, no wrangling or haggling over the terms of peace. There has been only unconditional surrender from the sinner's side. The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves (Luke 7:29-30) and were never converted, but the people and publicans pleaded guilty to the charges, justified God, and received peace. As long as man refuses to agree with God's judgments against him he slanders and accuses God. He turns his own wickedness back to God's account. As Adam in the garden blaming the woman whom God gave him, he charges God with causing his sins (Gen. 3:12). There can be no peace as long as this contention goes on. But when the contention is removed there is no more cause for war.

In his unconditional surrender, the convert has lost all his rights and privileges to do as he pleases. He becomes, once again, the absolute property of God and consents that God can do as He pleases with him. To his delight, he discovers that he is pleased with God's dealings with him. What he thought he must endure, he finds to be joyous. He has peace with God. No more will he contend with God over His holy law. As the Psalmist, he loves the law: it is his meditation all the day. [His words] are sweet unto his taste, sweeter than honey to his mouth (Psa. 119:97, 103).

Access. He has access by faith into persevering grace. A door is opened to him that he knew nothing of before. When temptations and testing threaten to overthrow his soul, he can now come boldly to the throne of grace and find help. There is no more reason for him to be overcome by evil. He that is in him is greater than he that is in the world. A Source of strength and holiness outside himself is now instantly available through the open door of faith.

Love of God. He who has never known pure love now

finds his whole being flooded with a benevolent love that asks nothing and seeks to give all. Heretofore, he only loved for
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that which benefited him. All his love was selfishly motivated. He loved those who were good to him and from whom he derived blessings. But now the love of God is shed abroad in his heart and he finds himself passionately loving his enemies. No more must men's evil deeds toward him cause anger, resentment, strife, jealousies, envies, and murders to rise in his breast. They are all swept away with the cleansing flood-tide of love, and he longs to see every human being to be made partakers of this wonderful liberating grace of God.

Hope. It is not now said of the sinner that he is saved, but that he has received hope of salvation. A young man approached Jonathan Edwards with the joyful news that he had been saved. Edwards looked at the youth and said, "Young man you have been given strong encouragement to persevere." Are you disappointed with the term hope? You should not be. The convert rejoices in hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2).

The New Testament usage of hope does not convey the idea of a wistful, yet doubtful, desire that things will turn out all right. It is the strongest word that can be used to express the believer's sound expectancy of full salvation. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil (Heb. 6:18-19).

The sinner had no hope before conversion, but now hope is a strong consolation that anchors his soul stedfastly in Christ. Dear reader, you must understand that I am not inventing new terms. I am simply calling your attention to biblical terminology. The new terms were invented long ago and have contributed to a mass of confusion over Bible salvation. The scriptures do not speak of men getting saved: They speak of

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their obtaining hope in Christ. We could do no better than to do the same.

It is Christ in the believer that is the hope of Glory (Col. 1:27). Until a man is made in union with Christ he has no hope (I Thess. 4:13). The hope is the revelation of Christ in the believer (Gal. 1:15-16). This union with Christ is effected by faith.

The law was our schoolmaster [to bring us] unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized {immersed} into Christ have put on Christ (Gal. 3:24-27).

We are not made in experiential union with Christ at regeneration because in regeneration no faith operates in the believer. It is at conversion by repentance and faith, that the believer comes out from under the law by virtue of his union with Christ.

Now this poses a problem for many of us. How can one be regenerated and have life and not have Christ? Is not life in Him: And is there no life apart from Him? The question reveals a lack of understanding of the nature of Adam before the fall and what is restored in regeneration or quickening The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [was made] a quickening spirit. Howbeit that {was} not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual (I Cor. 15:45-46).

Adam never became a spiritual man. Two special trees were in the garden. One, the tree of life, speaks of Christ and eternal life. The other, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, speaks of the law and works death in the disobedient

(Rom. 7:7-13). Adam was not forbidden to take of the tree of life until after he sinned. But he chose, rather than eat of

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the tree of life, foreshadowing union with Christ, and have eternal life in submission and obedience to God, to rebel against God and go his own way with the knowledge of good and evil. Needless to say, this was in collaboration with Satan, the enemy of God, and brought immediate spiritual death.

God does not now call him a living soul but dust. He was dust before God breathed the spirit of life into him (Gen. 2:7) and after that spirit of life left him he died in his spirit and became once again, dust (Gen. 3:19).

It is this dust that God must regenerate. But when man is regenerated he is not made to eat of the tree of life: He is simply brought back to the place where Adam was. God breathes that spirit of life into him again and he stands where Adam stood with the tree of life before him. Partaking of Christ is something the believer must do. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). In order for the believer to enter into eternal life experientially he must close with Christ in faith. What then keeps the regenerated man from doing just like Adam did the first time and rebelling again? As soon as that dead sinner awakens, the first thing he sees is that awful black cloud of God's wrath hanging over his head about to destroy him. He is already under the condemnation of the law. The first Adam did not know the deadly power of the law until he sinned and then it was too late. The regenerated sinner has already sinned and the law stands over him with its sword of eternal damnation driving him into the arms of the Lord Jesus. He will choose Christ just as surely as the Hebrew children chose to cross the Red Sea with Pharaoh's army bearing down upon them. He will cling to the Saviour as surely as Jacob clung to the Lord when all hope of escape was gone with the crippling of his leg. And like Jacob, he will spend the rest of his life clinging to Christ.

What a blessed union All our strength is gone but then we need none. All His is ours. We no longer need deny that we are corrupt through and through and have no

righteousness to recommend us. What need? All Christ's

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righteousness is ours. We do not have to impress God with our worthlessness to have our prayers answered. He will deny nothing to His Son. And where we stand He stands, our plea is His plea, our need is His need, our work is His work and He never fails.

The burden of the gospel message to lost men is not to be born again, but to repent and believe the gospel. Jesus told Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again," but he did not command him to be born again. Indeed, when Nicodemus asked, "How does a man go about that?" what did Jesus say? If regeneration had been by repentance and faith, that would have been an excellent time for Jesus to say so. But He did no such thing. To paraphrase it Jesus said, "You don't do it; the Spirit does. And the Spirit blows where He pleases. You notice the effects, but you cannot tell how it comes or goes. You only know He has breathed. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:4-8). Contrast this with the command of the gospel to lost men.

In Jesus preaching, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

The apostle's answer to the multitude at Pentecost who cried, "What shall we do?" "Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). Paul and Silas' answer to the distressed Philippian jailor, "What must I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!" (Acts 16:31).

Paul's message on his missionary journeys, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). It is not our concern to regenerate men. Regeneration has to do with life, and God alone is the source of life. It is our concern to convert men through the preaching of the gospel. Nor is it of our concern to decide who is and who is not awakened. We are commanded to preach the gospel to every creature, to obey the right and reasonable command therein which is to repent and believe God.

Chapter Seven

PERSEVERANCE

Our man has now been regenerated and converted. Is he not yet saved? In the eternal sense of election, yes. In the modern popular understanding of the term yes, if conversion has been sound and permanent. In the Bible usage as far as experientially, only partially. Notwithstanding death-bed repentance, a real but very shaky possibility, very much yet is lacking in his salvation. God's purpose is to save him from all that threatens to harm or defile him. Sanctification must deliver from the power of sin. He must be delivered from all forms of bondage in body, soul and spirit. There are good works ordained for him to walk in. He is responsible for persevering and continuing in Christ.

Are there those who object to the inclusion of perseverance in salvation? Three passages declare that he that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matt. 10:22, 24:13, Mark 13:13). Paul had many reasons to believe the Corinthians were soundly converted. Nevertheless he said, Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By

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which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have Believed in vain (1 Cor. 15:1-2).

Who are these cocky vainglorious "evangelists" strutting and bragging about how many they got saved last week? Even the Lord Jesus said to those Jews which believed on Him, "if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8:31 l).

Salvation is not of perseverance but perseverance is a part of salvation; and there is none without it. The r scriptures abound with warnings to the saints who have sound hope of salvation that they must continue in Christ or will surely fall. We will name just a few.

(Heb. 3:12) "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." The word used is the same as in I Timothy 4:1. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." It is the word from which we derive apostate, one who falls away (Rom. 1 1:20-22): Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not High-minded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, [take heed] lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in [his] goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

We readily admit the passage is speaking of the Gentile nations vs. the Hebrew nation, but the passage is far too personal to ignore the warnings in it. Nations do not believe; individual persons do. A nation is made of individuals personally responsible to God. An old battle—scarred warrior of God once told me, "We dare not take the teeth out of God's word by explaining it away." We would profit by

heeding the warning. Be not high-minded but fear. There is

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nothing wrong with an abundance of good, healthy fear of God. None of God's saints have ever been without it. But did not the apostle Paul say, " I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim 1:12)? True. That veteran saint who had as much or more reason for assurance of his eternal salvation as anyone even had also said this: "But I keep under my body, and bring [it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (2 Cor. 9:27). To long we have explained that away saying Paul was afraid of being "put on the shelf." God would set him aside and not let him preach any more. Not so! The word is *adokimos*. Translated castaway once, rejected once, and reprobate six times. "God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Rom. 1:28). "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13:5). Paul was not just afraid of getting out of fellowship and losing his ministry. He was determined to make sure he did not end like Judas, who walked with the Lord, preached the gospel, cast out demons, healed the sick, by the power of God!) and yet wound up in hell.

Are we saying that the saints will not persevere until the end? No, we are simply saying that although they will, they must. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Pet. 1:5). We do not within ourselves have power to "hang on." But we do have the power to believe Him to keep us, and are responsible for continuing in faith, otherwise we shall not continue to be kept. The man who made a profession of faith in the past and does not continue to walk in faith has no reason to hope he will be saved.

Eternal security is based on the eternal election of God and only God knows who the elect are. Your hope of eternal salvation is based solidly upon your election. If you have been elected, you can be sure that you will never fall away.

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Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1 :10-11)

Give diligence! A far cry from the sit-back-and-take-it-easy, you've—got—it-made attitude spawned by the once-saved-always—saved error. Your assurance of hope is found in giving diligence to discover that working in you which is characteristic of those who shall ultimately be revealed as the sons of God.

It is something at which you work (II Peter 1 :5-7). Do not be content with your justifying faith. Make sure it is pure by adding to it virtue (holiness), not a blind, ignorant holiness, but a knowledgeable holiness. Learn to temper that virtue so that you do not become self-righteous. In your temperance learn patience toward your circumstances, your brethren and them without. Become godly in all things. Cultivate brotherly kindness and love. Thus you gain strong assurance that you are among those who shall persevere until the end.

Eternal Security

Probably the greatest objection to the truths herein propounded is that they give the saint no place to rest his confidence of eternal salvation. Quite the contrary. They instruct him in the right attitude and in the right reasons upon which to rest his hope of eternal life. In substituting the scriptural assurance of hope for the unscriptural assurance of salvation, I have already pointed out that this is not wishful hoping, but strongest evidence possible for fallible and mortal man to have that anything is true.

We will be reminded of the numerous passages in the Bible whereby we are told that we know we have eternal life, or have passed from death unto life. Let me point out two

things.

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First of all this is man's knowledge. Based upon Bible evidence, true, and the promises directed toward genuine converts, true; nevertheless we must all admit the many times we have been dead wrong when we knew we were right. We must also not ignore the adamant unyielding position of heretics who know they are right. We have the solemn warnings of the scriptures giving examples of many who had strong evidence to know they were and were ultimately left out.

Balaam prophesied mightily under the power of God a true prophesy, gloriously exalting the Lord. He held out for a long time against temptation of wealth and fame, in obedience to God. The Holy Ghost tells us in Jude, he perished!

You could have as much assurance and reason to expect eternal salvation as Esau did his birthright and his father's blessings, yet he lost them both. You could have as much reason to believe yourself among the elect and favored few as Judas, and go to hell. No, dear friend. The righteous will not be cocksure and presumptuous about his position in grace. Recognizing what he is, he will cleave unto the Lord with all his might. He will rest and repose in Him and in Him alone.

Secondly, the assurances in the Bible were never given to strengthen the wicked by promising him life. (Ezek. 13:22). They were given to strengthen the hand of the righteous in his righteousness. Not a single one points back to a past experience. They are all based upon a present attitude of absolute submission to Christ, unfeigned love, and a holy walk in the Spirit.

"... we know we know him if we keep his commandments" (1 John 2:3).

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14).

"Let us ... love ... in deed and truth. And hereby we know ..." (1 John 3:18-19).

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" And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him and he in him " (1 John 3:24).

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (1 John 4:13).

"He that hath the Son hath life " (1 John 5:12).

These and many others similar are the evidence upon which the scriptures bid us to base our hope of being a child of God, and if a child of God, we are eternally secure.

A past experience that is not continually presently saving a man in the here and now is a worthless counterfeit. It is a rotten rope that will drop you into hell. It is a false delusion under which millions, I fear, will slumber themselves into eternal perdition. Awake, thou sluggard, and examine yourself! Is Christ in you now? If not, all your past experiences will avail nothing to save you from the awful wrath which is to come. You have much ahead and you will surely need a Saviour to save you from the fearful judgments of God upon the wicked.

"We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3).

Sanctification

Far too much is in the scriptures on sanctification to consider it an option in salvation. Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. (Heb. 12:14). Practically the entire Bible addresses itself to believers and the great burden of its message is sanctification.

When the gospel is said to have power to save, it is believers whom it saves; and it has sanctification and good works in view. "The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth: to the Jew first and also the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). It is not the power of God unto salvation to the unbeliever. To the unbelieving Jew it is a stumbling block, and to the unbelieving Greeks, foolishness,

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"But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks. Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:23-24). .

The most prominent usage of the word save (Gr. $\sigma\omicron\upsilon\zeta\omega$) is in connection with saving those who have already been converted. Paul writes to young Timothy, a preacher of the gospel, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4:16). Timothy is told that in the diligent study of truth and in the preaching of it he would save himself and them that hear him. Here is a preacher saving himself and his congregation. Blasphemous? Not at all. It is straight out of the scriptures. The blasphemy exists only in the misunderstanding of the Bible salvation. James warns the twelve tribes. "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). To whom is he speaking? Beloved brethren (vs. 19) who are genuine converts and need to be saved from those things that corrupt and hinder their holy walk with God.

Sanctification means basically to be set apart for a singular purpose. In relation to God this must involve the idea of absolute consecration in cleanliness and purity. The scriptures allow two types of sanctification. Positional and experiential. These correspond with two crosses: the cross of Christ and the believer's cross. In the cross of Christ, Jesus put away the sins of the believer and rendered him legally holy before the Father. In the believer's cross, the sin principle in the flesh is mortified and he becomes actually holy. In the cross of Christ we have justification, but in the believer's cross we have sanctification. God imputes to us the righteousness of Christ, and that is perfect holiness. In sanctification, He imparts unto us the nature of Christ and we are made to experience holiness.

This holiness which becomes actually ours is progressive and yet imperfect. Although I have made a

distinction between the believer's cross and the cross of
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Christ we must not forget that the believer's cross is only

possible because of the cross of Christ. In the believer's cross, he is made to partake of that which Christ did as his substitute. We could never reckon the flesh to death if Christ had not put it to death. In short we have died in Christ (Gal. 2:20), and therefore, must agree with that death and enter into its deliverance in our own cross.

God does not snip sprouts. He lays the axe to the roots. Sanctification is not an external appearance. It is deep internal purging that brings forth the fruits of righteousness. For this, nothing is effectual short of the cross. The cross today is nothing different from that which it ever was. It is a place where a criminal is executed where rebellion is put down where that which does not deserve to live is put away. "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27).

Sanctification is closely related with trials and testings in perseverance. Trials and testings are necessary because the gospel always gathers more than it keeps. Because of imperfect presentations of gospel truth by imperfect men and because men themselves are filled with wrong motives, multitudes enter into the realm of professing Christendom and subsequently fall away. God vigorously shakes the net every time it gathers. The good fish are kept and the bad are cast away. The same fire that burns out the dross purifies the gold.

Two men built houses: One upon the sand, the other upon a rock. The storms beat vehemently upon both houses. One stood, the other fell. God will surely send His violent storms of trials and testings upon your profession of faith. If it is possible for you to be shaken loose, you will turn back. But if not, you will only be more soundly anchored in the truth of God.

Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this [word], Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things

that are shaken, as of things that are made,

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that those things which cannot be shaken may remain (Heb. 12:26-27).

He shakes everything that comes His way that the shakable may be shaken out and the unshakable may be firmly planted. Gideon stood and admired the thirty-two thousand that had responded to his Holy Spirit trumpet blast (Judg. 6:34). Then God shook them. Twenty-two thousand fell out. What a blow! Over two-thirds proved to be cowards who turned back at the first opportunity. Then God shook them again; and when the testings were over, Gideon had less than one percent of those who originally responded.

Jesus' miraculous ministry attracted multitudes of followers. But when the ministry turned from loaves and fishes to the Body and the Blood when He made the transition from the temporal to the eternal when the Cross began to come into view, the multitudes got a faraway look in their eyes. They discovered they had somewhere else to go. And the only ones who stayed with Him were those few who simply had nowhere else to go and could not be shaken loose (John 6).

God's purifying fires are inevitable for the believer. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). It is a mistake to consider chastening and scourging in fiery trials a punishment from God. All believers alike receive them. It is a mark of sonship, not disobedience. Its purpose is for our profit that we might be made partakers of His holiness (Heb. 12:10). We should not consider that which is inevitable and normal to be strange (I Pet. 4:12). This trial of faith is more precious than gold that perishes though it be tried with fire and will produce praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ (I Pet. 1:7).

Climactic and Progressive

Sanctification is essentially progressive as opposed to the idea of a single experience wherein one becomes "entirely

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sanctified," "made perfect in love" or other terms used by various "holiness" teachings. We are gradually transformed into the likeness of Christ through mortification of sin in our members. This does not mean, however, that the process is a more or less constant graduated, and uninterrupted incline. On the contrary, the process is more often a series of crises, cycles of trials and testings, failures and reverses wherein we drop into desperate needs and perplexities, are brought out by His divine power and deposited on higher ground. Some of these climax in extraordinary spiritual experiences. These experiences have been called variously, baptism in the Spirit, being filled with the Spirit, the fulness of Christ, faith rest and numerous other titles of varying validity. I realize we are once again approaching ground that has always been controversial so I must plead for your honest consideration of scriptural fact.

We cannot but admit that in order for a person to be regenerated and converted he must have the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9). But this must not nullify the undeniable biblical evidence that multitudes are converted and have not been filled with the Holy Spirit. The disciples were surely converted before Pentecost yet the scriptural record says that the Holy Spirit then fell from heaven upon them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). We need not elaborate on the holy transformation this made upon these disciples. Compare their behaviour in the gospels to their behaviour in the Acts and no doubt will be left of the sanctifying power of this experience. In case there is doubt of the disciples' conversion before Pentecost then there can be no doubt that they were already converted in Acts 4:31 when the place was shaken and they were again filled with the Holy Spirit and spake the word of God with boldness. It was the diligent concern of the apostles that all their converts be filled with the Spirit. Philip's Samaritan converts were real. But the scriptures tell us that the Holy Spirit had fallen upon none of them until the apostles from Jerusalem 'laid hands upon them (Acts 8:6-17). After Paul's conversion he was instructed to go into the city and wait upon Ananias.

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When this disciple laid his hands upon Paul, he received his sight and was filled with the Holy Spirit.

It is futile to argue that being filled or baptized with the Spirit is the same as a conversion experience. The Holy Spirit is never poured out upon any other than a child of God. The holy anointing oil does not fall upon unconsecrated flesh. It is sons who are promised that they shall receive the Holy Spirit for the asking (Luke 11:11-13). The promise is not made to unbelievers, but to as many as the Lord our God shall call (Acts 2:39).

Dear reader, do not let error cause you to fear truth. Because some ignorant extreme fanatics and heretics have abused the blessed truths of the Holy Spirit, many will be frightened away from the genuine sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. How do you expect to become holy without the Spirit Who is holy? This is no option to the believer. You are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18).

Experiences in the Spirit do not in themselves make a person holy. They rather introduce him to new plateaus with God. A fresh glimpse of the power and glory of God renders his spiritual senses keener. He begins to see sin in its proper perspective, exceedingly hateful, and holiness to be passionately desired. He is convinced of truth and emboldened in faith. Thus fortified he is enabled to face and survive other fiery trials ahead of him. This is the meaning of John's words "He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matt. 3:11). He is taught to walk in the Spirit and to be filled with the Spirit continuously. All these speak of a progressive growth in holiness.

God wisely brings us from one plateau of sanctification to another as He prepares us for it. Our life of sin has left deeply ingrained sin principles and patterns in our mortal bodies and carnal minds that takes time to be exposed and rooted out. When one is exposed and mortified it lays bare and exposes another. He reveals progressively, little by little drives our enemies out one at a time. See Exodus 23:28-30.

He plows up for us no more than we can cultivate. Precept by precept the principles of holy living are brought before our
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spiritual eyes. Then we must learn to obey and live in them before He makes further revelation.

This is not to say that the believer tolerates known sin in his life. The doctrine of progressive sanctification has been prostituted to excuse the willful sinner in the practice of his sin. Thus so-called saved sinners continue in admitted sin, saying "When God gets ready, He will take this sin away from me. After all I am not as bad as I used to be." Not so! The holy nature of Christ in the believer cannot indulge in such wickedness. Although the believer may not be perfect in his sanctification, these imperfections do not arise from an unwillingness to depart from sin, but a lack of his know/edge of those sins. No sooner is a sin revealed in a believer, but he recoils in horror from the sight of the wicked thing and quickly yields it up to the judgment of God that it may be put out of his life.

Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith set the pattern in the beginning of His public ministry. immediately after His baptism in water and in the Spirit, He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness where He faced, endured, subdued and conquered all that should ever assail the saints He came to save. He utterly mortified the flesh in forty days of fasting. The devil tempted Him in every principle a mortal man on earth should encounter. Our might Captain overcame this enemy by the power of the Spirit and the written word. And so it shall be with us for whom this Saviour is our succor.

Christian experiences merely lift us from one plane to another. They are no ends within themselves. We have not "arrived" in any of them, merely equipped to face a tougher challenge ahead. Past experiences are nothing to boast in, nor even less to rest in. If they are of God, they will simply give us light, truth, courage and boldness to thrust us into heretofore unknown warfare, but a warfare in which we shall be fully equipped to conquer.

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Means of Sanctification

For this is the will of God, your sanctification 2
 Thess. 4:3). Since our sanctification is the will of God it is not only possible, it is imperative. The will and power of God are working in our Sanctification. Not only is it imperative, it is inevitable. God has predestined that we should be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29). The depraved reasoning of man is such that when he hears the word "predestination," he wants to immediately say that since God has predestined it, there is nothing he can or should do about it. Not so! Predestination never, in any sense, sets aside the responsibility of man. There is a sense in which sanctification is at the same time, the work of the Father, the work of Christ, the work of the Spirit, the work of the word, and the work of man.

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and [I pray God] your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" II Thess. 5:23). It is the Father Who chastens and scourges every son whom He receives. He does this by bringing to bear upon his life through His wise providence such circumstances, trials, and testings that will boil to the surface those wicked traits that would otherwise lie safely hidden in comfortable and pleasant circumstances. Warfare calls up resources of righteousness in Christ and exercises them and expands a wide place for them in the believer's arsenal. The saint is brought, through these tribulations, to see the papier-mâché" of worldliness and the solid reality of the eternal. More and more he ceases to look at the temporal things that are seen and fixes his gaze upon the unseen, yet eternal things of God. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:25-26). Jesus is the Truth. He is the . incarnate Word. He reveals truth not only by His Person but by His teachings through the instructive moral influence of the gospel. t is a wicked person who will not see himself as the scriptures portray him, who will not be corrected by the clear teachings of Christ, and who is a hearer but not a doer of the

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word. It was the doer of the word whose house stood firm upon the rock. The New Testament has more to say to the believer on the subject of sanctification than any other thing.

We must not be like the disobedient children of Israel to whom the gospel was preached, and who died in the wilderness; but not mixing it with faith they rendered it unprofitable for its sanctifying purpose (Heb. 4:2).

But beyond the instructive influence of the scriptures Jesus sanctifies us by a progressive revelation of His Person. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, [even] as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18). It is not possible to behold His glory without being slain with the consciousness of our sin.

Job had thought himself a pretty righteous man, and indeed God bore witness that he was. But Job's sanctification was limited by his revelation. He had only heard of God and God's truth. Thus, he sat in the ash pile for days defending his righteousness. Then one day, God pulled the veil back and Job got a glimpse of the glories of Christ. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor [myself], and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6).

In the year that king Uzziah died, Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up and cried,
Woe [is] me! for I am undone; because I [am]
a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst
of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes
have seen the King, the Lord of hosts (Isaiah
6:1-6).

John saw Him and fell as His feet as dead (Rev. 1:17). And so it is, as we see our sins and cry and confess them, He sends a coal of fire from the altar and purges them away. Thus, we abide in holiness and a pure undefiled conscience until the next revelation of Him brings other sin to light. Thus, the glorious metamorphosis from the image of the

earthly to the image of the heavenly takes place.

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"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3:3). This passage is loaded with dynamite for the shallow professor of salvation. It tells us that every man who has hope of eternal salvation is busily getting himself sanctified. No allowance is made for anyone who is not purifying himself. Failure to do so indicates there are no grounds for hope in him. The degree of purification is not just as good as the next fellow or how little he can get by with, but "as He is pure." Nothing less than the measure of the stature of the Fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13) will satisfy the sound convert. He purifies himself. That man with the hope is busy sanctifying himself. The commands to this end are legion in the scriptures.

Put off sin (Col. 3:8).

Yield not your bodies to unrighteousness (Rom. 6:13).

Come out and be ye separate (II Cor. 6:17).

Mortify the members of your body (Col. 3:5).

Let not sin reign (Rom. 6:12).

Present yourself (Rom. 12:1).

Add to your faith virtue (II Pet. 1:5).

The Bible reader is not unacquainted with these. It would be senseless for me to give references to them. They are there. Man is responsible for putting sin out of his life. But how can flesh mortify flesh? it cannot. Man within himself can do none of these things. It is in the power of the Spirit. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13). it is in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that Paul found victory over the law of sin and death in the members. Flesh can serve nothing but the law of sin. It is capable of nothing else. Thus, any overcoming flesh does is a sinful overcoming. It springs from an evil root and can produce nothing else. But, it is by the virtue of our union with Another that we can choose to render sin to death by the power of the Spirit of God.

We are "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience

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and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:2). We are justified by faith in His blood, but sanctified by the Spirit and brought into perfect obedience as beloved children of God. None others will ever stand in His presence.

Assurance of Hope

in conversion, the hopeless sinner gains hope in Christ. To those who would desire something more than hope, we say there is something more. There is assurance of hope. The Bible says nothing of assurance of salvation, for that would be inconsistent with the nature of salvation. But it does speak of assurance of hope.

And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises (Heb. 6:1 1-12). Hope is gained in repentance and faith, but assurance is gained in sanctification and good works.

Saints are admonished to make their calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10). That is, they are to make sure they are elected. How can one gain assurance of his election? By sanctification.

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make [you that ye shall] neither [be] barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of

our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh

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these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:4-11).

It is possible for a person to have hope, yet no assurance of that hope. Jesus promised that in the day when the Spirit came we should know that He was in the Father and we in Him and He in us (John 14:16-20). It might be a fact before, but the Holy Spirit would make us know that fact. That is assurance in climactic sanctification.

In the same sense a man may be converted, but unless he gives diligence to his spiritual growth in sanctification, he will have no assurance of that. Growth is one of the evidences of life. its evidences are assurance of maturity, and its absence gives strong suspicion of death. Sanctification and good works encourage believers in their hope of eternal salvation. But where these are absent, one has no reason for continued hope. His may have been a temporary superficial conversion.

Deliverance

The subject of our book is salvation. Jesus is the Saviour. He presented His mission as Saviour in Luke 4:18-19 with these words:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.

To preach, to heal, to set at liberty: that is the scope of the Saviour's work. In His preaching is good news to the poor,
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deliverance to captives and recovering of sight to the blind. When John, in prison, sought confirming proof that Jesus was the Saviour, Jesus had His disciples witness deliverance from evil spirits and bodily healing then turned to them and said,

Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind SBB, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached (Luke 7:18-22).

Why did Jesus consider this sufficient proof to John that He was the Saviour? Because John knew the law and the prophets and knew what to expect in the Saviour. He knew what salvation was all about. It was the complete deliverance of God's people from the miserable state to which they fell in Adam.

Beyond justification from cancelled sin in conversion, and deliverance from the power of sin in sanctification, salvation also includes deliverances from the evils of the curse and oppressions by satanic powers. Jesus never cancelled His command to His disciples in Matt. 10:7-8. He modified it in that He lifted the restrictions against going to the Gentiles and Samaritans (Acts 1:8). He modified it again in the matter of taking scrip or two coats or shoes or staves (Luke 22:35-38). But, outside of that, it is the same commandment He summarized in Matt. 28:19-20. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" surely includes, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely give.

Deliverance salvation may be divided into two categories: Deliverance from sick bodies and that from demon spirits.

Bodily Healing

In the first edition of this book I asserted that bodily healing was included in the atonement, not universally for all

the saints, but according to the sovereign purpose of God. L

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held that view based on Isaiah 53:5 which is quoted in I Peter 2:24. Since that time during an exposition of Peter's first epistle, and an in-depth study of those verses, I was forced to reverse my view. The very passage I thought proved bodily healing to be in the atonement I found to prove it could not be. Without question, the Saviour's suffering was penal.

Satisfaction for sin was being exacted. It was not for His sins but ours He bore those wounds and bruises. The stripes (cuts, scars which are said to secure our healing were no different. They were called forth by our sin, and by them the sin penalty was removed. The healing, therefore, these stripes secure is a sickness caused by sin — our personal, individual sin. This cannot be temporal bodily healing on two accounts. First, we would have to say that every time a person is sick it is because of some particular sin he has committed, a false view held by Job's friends and most legalists, but unbiblical. Second, it would be impossible for a Christian to be sick since the healing is effectual, certain and complete. We are not told we may be healed by His stripes but that we are healed.

The stripes in the atonement, therefore can only be said to secure for us, first of all, full spiritual healing. They are specifically for God's elect and effectual to secure deliverance from the disease of sin. Second, the same Saviour's suffering purchased for us a new body to be received at the final resurrection that is free from the curse. Final complete bodily healing is eternal, not temporal or temporary.

Having said that, however, I wish to disavow any sympathy for those who deny any supernatural temporal benefits in salvation. "Healing the broken-hearted" certainly speaks of a sort of psychological healing that is immediately enjoyed by the saints. We are not only comforted and assured in our Saviour's love, forgiveness and care, but our entire thinking processes have been reversed. We are brought out of empty-headed delusions into sound reality. We are found clothed. sitting at the feet of Jesus in our right mind.

Nor may we deny our Lord's power and willingness to heal by His divine power any particular sickness at any time He chooses. He demonstrated that only too well during His incarnation, during the early church era, and continues to do so even today. Such healings do not flow from His penal sufferings but His free compassion, according to His particular purpose for His glory or as a convincing sign. The early churches did not major on praying for the sick, but did not hesitate to do so. In asking for bodily healing as we are encouraged to do in James 5:14-15, we are not to debate on why God heals some and not others. We are to rejoice in that He does heal some. We need to be delivered from the poisonous seeds of unbelief that have been sown in our hearts by an impotent gospel which majors on what God will not do. We should learn to know a loving heavenly Father Who will withhold from us no good thing. The first thought in pain, sorrow or sickness should be to God. Instead of starting from the premise that God is unwilling to heal, assume that He will until He reveals He will not. Then submit and obey Him in whatever purpose He has in your sickness, and to whatever means by which He wills you should be healed. There is salvation in both.

Demonic Deliverance

Our great Puritan theologians had little to say about demons. Contemporary preaching has, for the most part, ignored their existence. It is difficult for us to understand this since the scriptures are saturated with warnings and instructions on dealing with demon powers. But because of the neglect of these things, demonology has been left out of soteriology and a defective salvation has been the result. Some demonic deliverance is effected by repentance and confession of truth (II Tim. 2:25-26), but many are still held in bondage and will never be delivered until the powers of darkness are dealt with directly.

Our basis for dealing with these powers of darkness is the same as all aspects of salvation: The suffering and

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death of the Lord Jesus Christ and His resurrection from the dead. Genesis 3:15 tells us the Seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head; and Romans 15:20 declares "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

Jesus gave His disciples power over unclean spirits to cast them out. His disciples are not without that power today. They have it by virtue of their position in union with Christ. He has been exalted "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1 :21). "And He hath raised us up together, and made [us] sit together in heavenly [places) in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). In Christ we have power to bind the strong man and spoil his goods (Matt. 12:29, 16:19). Demon powers must release their holds on the minds and bodies of men at the command of Jesus. And when the saints minister in the name of Jesus, they minister in the authority of His person. There has been considerable stumbling over the question, "Can a child of God be demon possessed?" Much of this is caused by a mistranslation of the Greek *Daimonizai* which simply means demonized or under the power and influence of demons. Other uncertainty comes from the challenge, "Can you show me a place in the scripture where a saved person had a demon cast out of him?" This is impossible because the scriptures never identify any particular person as saved.

But we might consider Luke 13:11-16. Here was a "daughter of Abraham" whom Satan had kept bound eighteen years. Since it was Jesus Who called her a daughter of Abraham we have strong reason to believe she was in the covenant of grace. Also consider Paul's much celebrated - thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure (II Cor. 12:7). *Aggelos*, translated here and only six other times as messenger, is translated angel 181 times. Couple that with the fact that it is an angel of Satan, and the evidence that Paul had a demon in his flesh is very strong indeed.

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It has been my own experience to see great numbers of persons who gave every evidence of being soundly converted, deeply consecrated children of God delivered from demons which had invaded both their minds and their bodies.

These demons had taken occasion to enter the body or gain hold upon the mind through some sin or superstition during the person's unregenerate past. Because that sin or error is not brought to light and dealt with, these demons have never been ferreted out and expelled. They continue to oppress and defeat the believer and he, thinking it to be his flesh or bad luck or circumstances, never is saved from this demonic influence.

In Christ there is salvation from the following satanic powers as expressed in the scriptures:

Demon Possession (Mark 5:1-15). This is the most severe and extreme type of bondage we have recorded. In it all the person's faculties are taken over by the demon or demons. He speaks and behaves with the characteristics of the possessing demon. He is demonized and has supernatural powers both in the mind and the body and many times can perform supernatural wonders. Often practitioners of sorcery fall into this category. Multitudes of insane are under the power of demons. A regenerated and converted person cannot be in this category because it is impossible for his mind to close with Christ until he is delivered from the demonic bondage. Jesus demonstrated His unchallenged authority to drive out these evil spirits who trespass in the bodies of men.

Demonic Oppression (Acts 10:38). The word means to overpower or to bring into bondage. It does not mean to own or to enslave but to hinder and oppose so that a person is not free to do what he wills to do. Sometimes unconverted men find it impossible to believe until this oppressing spirit is driven out by the authority of Christ in some believer. But even Christians sometimes find themselves unable to trust God, to obey God, to study, to stay awake, to go to sleep because of demonic oppression. The New Testament bears

abundant evidence of the power of the blood of Christ to dispel these demon bondages (Rev. 12:11).

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Demonic Vexation (Luke 6:18, Acts 5:16). The word literally means to be crowded, pushed or harassed. Demons inflame desires unnaturally and drive a person to commit sins he would not commit under normal temptation. Lying spirits cause men to lie when they had no intention of doing so, and nothing is to be gained by it. Unreasonable rages and tantrums, rebellion, fears, destructive urges, strong suicidal suggestions, and a multitude of other strong impulses which have no normal reason for their motivation are usually demonic in origin. Multitudes of believers struggle to get victory over these sins by more mortification of the flesh. But it is futile because their origin is not in the man, but in the demon and the man will never have victory until the demon is dealt with. If the believer recognizes this, often he can deal with the demon himself; but if his faith is weak and the powers have been with him a long time he will often need the help of other believers. There is deliverance in Christ.

Bodily Affliction (Luke 13:1 1-16). Often a bodily infirmity, a sickness, a disease, deformity, blindness, impotency, deafness, muteness, baffles medicine because no organic disorder or cause for the infirmity can be found.

Sometimes the cause is psychological, but often it is demonic. The scriptures give abundant testimony of the deliverance of God's people from such bondages through salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Satanic Hinderances (Dan. 10:13, I Thess. 2:18). We greatly err when we reason that because God is sovereign He will overcome all satanic hindrances and opposition in our lives and ministry without our waging positive warfare against them. God overcomes, but He does it through the saints (Rev. 12:1 1). "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." One of the three phases that occurs in all the letters to the churches of the Apocalypse is "he that overcometh." Responsibility is in glaring focus here. Victory is assured, but it must be won through fighting. The assurance of victory is given to strengthen us in faith to fight

for it, not to replace the fight. Satan hinders ministers from

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getting where they need to be, hearers from going to church, believers from hearing the truth, needed funds from reaching the need, unbelievers from access to the gospel. All this speaks of a spiritual warfare and the saint's responsibility to wage that warfare on his knees. We have a glorious victorious Saviour. Ours is a mighty King. Let us not sell our heritage short.

The question is now going to arise, "Do demons always go out?" No, they do not. Sometimes they do not go out because of the lack of prayer and fasting on the believer's part. Sometimes they are there by the express will of God.

Do you have trouble with this? Paul says the messenger of Satan was given to him to buffet him lest he should be exalted above measure. God showed him that He received more glory by perfecting His strength in Paul in spite of the thorn instead of removing it. But some might say, "that was not really a demon." Then consider the other Saul of the other Testament (II Sam. 16:14). "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." Saul was never delivered from that demon because God sent it.

But praise God, multitudes are delivered. We are not to question why some are never delivered. This is hidden in the wise purpose of God and His reasons are good. We should lay hold on the affirmative that God will deliver; and persevere for that deliverance until He makes it clear He will not.

Good Works

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:8-10).

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Paul is not putting the Ephesians' salvation in the past tense. He is declaring the cause and means of their salvation. If I should say, "by eating is your stomach filled," I would not be saying you had a full stomach, but declaring the way the stomach is to be filled. In this passage we have the declaration that salvation is by grace through faith, not of works. But in the same passage, most people overlook an equal affirmative, "not apart from works." Although salvation is not by works, it is in works and never separated from them. The same God that ordained your salvation ordained the good works. One never comes without the other. The faithfulness of God does not permit half measures. What He has appointed can never be partially fulfilled. His immutability demands every iota.

I know that many of my readers will have difficulty maintaining an open and studious mind now because of several decades of "cheap grace" teaching that slaps at any suggestion of good works in salvation. But I must remind you, dear reader, that there is much do in the Bible and some of it skirts dangerously close to the difference between heaven and hell. For your own sake and the sake of the purity of the gospel, please give honest consideration.
Works and Justification

First I want us to consider the place of good works in justification. The first impulse is to say, "they have no place." But a total view of the scriptures will not allow us to say that. We cannot do as Martin Luther and call the book of James an "epistle of straw" and exclude it from the Bible. That would be to do the same as wicked King Jehoiakim (Jer; 36): and what should keep us from taking our penknives to any other part of the scripture that cuts across our traditional theology? James is not antithetic to justification by faith. The whole book is an expansive commentary on faith. We can do nothing but profit by an honest, unprejudiced study of what he has to say.

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"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18). A mistranslation in the Authorized Version has caused us to miss the meaning of the key verse in this chapter. Ek translated without (thy works) is the same Ek translated by (my works). Elsewhere in the New Testament it is translated by 55 times, with 25 times, out of 131 times, from 182 times and of 402 times. Allow me to paraphrase James a bit. "Sure you may say Show me! Show me your faith by your works and I will show you my faith by my works!"

Every man has faith somewhere, and his works always show it. Faith is something that can be seen. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee" (Mark 2:5). How can you hide what you believe? Every decision you make, every step you take, every act you commit is based upon your belief somewhere. If you trust the arm of flesh, you will lean on it. If you trust God, you will lean on Him. Do not say you are trusting God all the while you are diligently making provisions for the arm of flesh to take care of you.

But let us compare those difficult passages in James to those difficult passages in Romans.

(James 2:21-26) Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend "of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent [them] out another way? For as the body without the spirit is

dead, so faith without works is dead also.

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James is not refuting imputation of righteousness by faith. He is proving it. He begins there and illustrates how faith in Christ justifies. It justifies by bringing with it a principle of holy obedience. As Bonhoeffer said, only those who believe can obey and only those who obey can believe. Faith and obedience are inseparable.

God does not justify the wicked in their disobedience. He justifies them by a faith that is living and transforming and which brings with it simultaneous good works.

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law [is] the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20). Man is not justified by the deeds of the law, but that holy law is not set aside. Its righteous principles must be fulfilled and are in the believer through union with Christ (Rom. 8:4). If those righteous principles are not fulfilled in us, then there has been no union with Christ, no faith, and no justification.

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:28). Paul is most certainly not saying a man may be justified and never obey the law. He is saying a man is justified without the deeds, but not that he is justified apart from the deeds. The deeds themselves did not justify him. I may say to my son, Come to me. My son rises to his feet and walks to me. I account my son obedient, not because he came to me by the work of his legs and feet but because he willed to obey me. I saw that he willed to obey me by the work that he did. Thus, he was obedient without his walking, but not apart from it. I realize this is an inadequate illustration since justifying faith is trust in what Christ has done for us, not willing ourselves to do something for God: but we have already illustrated that faith and obedience are inseparable.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5). Is not God saying here that some are justified who do no good works? No, He is not! Everyone works. That is, as long as man lives he does

things. The things he does are evil or good.

It cannot mean that a

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man is justified in his good works. He worketh not for his justifi'cation. He has long despaired of outweighing his evil deed with good ones, and casts himself on Him Who justifies the repentant believer for Christ's sake.

None have ever been justified apart from good works. Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, followed God, offered up Isaac, built an altar. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. He believed God in obedience and good works the rest of his life. Rahab hid the spies, Matthew quit his job, Paul arose and went to Ananias. Even the thief on the cross offered the only thing about him that was free to work as he hung there, the fruit of his lips. And what a confession he made. He confessed Christ as King when He looked less like a king than ever. When the Lord hung apparently helpless before His tormentors, the object of ridicule, spite and mockery, he confessed Him as his sovereign Lord.

Repentance and faith are never evidenced except in good works of some sort. Failure of obedience in good works, at least in some cases, results in reprobation and eternal damnation. Men are not justified by water baptism, but some men went to hell because they refused the baptism of John (Luke 7:30). Men are not justified by the money they give, but some men go to hell because they will not give it up (Matt. 19:16-22). Men are not justified by mortifying the lusts of their bodies, but men will be in hell because they refused to do so (Matt. 5:29-30).

Works perfect faith. "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" (James 2:22) Works add nothing to the justifying merit of the blood of Christ, but they perfect the believer's faith in that blood. Two acts of God bring forth faith. A revelation from God, and a command or call from God. With the revelation, man is enabled to believe, and with the call he is commanded to believe. His obedience to that command establishes his faith. Peter saw the Lord walking on the water. Then Jesus issued a call to come. That made it possible for Peter to walk

upon water. Could he have claimed faith to walk upon water

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while refusing to step out of the boat on that faith? Of course not; his faith was perfected as real faith when he stepped out of the boat. Paul saw the Lord and cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The Lord commanded him to arise and go into the city. Should Paul have then failed to obey the Lord could it have ever been said that he was justified by his faith without obedience? Certainly not! With the revelation, there is always the call: therefore, faith never exists apart from good works.

Faith dies under disobedience. Jesus tells of two men each building a house. One man built his house upon sand, and it fell under the storms of testing. The other built upon a rock, and the same stormy trials fell upon it, but it stood fast because it was founded upon a rock. The parable illustrates two converts, one temporary and the other real. What was the difference between the two that occasioned the fall of one and the continuance of the other? Just a simple two-letter word. Do. One heard the sayings of the Lord and did them not (Matt. 7:21 -27). He thought he could have faith without works, but his faith proved temporary and died under disobedience. The other heard the sayings of Jesus and gave diligence to obey them. It is a hard work establishing a foundation on a rock. You have to adjust the building to the rock whereas on sand you can scoop the sand to fit the building. But the man who perfects his faith in obedience learns that the Lord can be trusted and depended upon in trials. He continues to move from obedience to obedience, and in each step his faith is established more firmly in Christ. He will never be shaken loose.

Works and Perseverance

The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith (Rom. 1:17). That is, faith builds upon faith. But if faith is not obeyed it dies and nothing is left upon which to build. God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Reprobation begins with a knowledge of God (Rom. 1 :18-21). These wicked disobedient men refuse to respond to the light

of God which they have and therefore, God takes away the light that they have and it is impossible for them to believe. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath For this people's heart is waxed gross, and tIIQll' SETS are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them (Matt. 13:12-15).

The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith in obedience and good works: The unrighteousness of man is revealed from unbelief unto unbelief in wicked works and disobedience (Rom. 1:18-32).

The good works which God has ordained that we walk in are for our sakes, and for His glory. They work for our salvation.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12).

The believer's entire life is made up of good works which have their primary design in saving him.

The good works usually begin with water baptism. It is the answer of a good conscience toward God. (II Pet. 3:21). No man baptizes himself. He can only present himself as a candidate to his elder in Christ. In so doing he learns a fundamental principle in the Christian community. He learns to submit himself to others. He needs to be saved from his cocky independence. There is truth, yet error, in the arrogant assertion, "I have Christ and do not need any one else." No

man lives to himself; and the believer needs the Christian Church. Christ gave His life for that community and it is
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made up of believers who have learned to defer and submit themselves to one another. Three thousand people at Pentecost submitted themselves to a little band of folk whom they had previously despised and ridiculed. The mighty Pharisee of the Pharisees, Saul, had to first submit himself to the hands of one of the humble disciples he had thought to imprison or slay. No one struts into the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ as a dignitary. They come in through the door of humiliation and submission. The saving value of this is inestimable. It is a lesson that will be priceless in the future Christian walk.

In the beautiful memorial supper of communion, the believer is reminded of the Lord's death. The emblems of the Lord's body and blood keep before him the Lord's love. His gratitude and devotion are renewed as his mind is brought to reflect on the Lord's wounds and sufferings for his sins; and his hatred for sin is renewed.

Believers are commanded to assemble themselves regularly to exhort, teach, and comfort one another. In doing so they save each other and themselves. Each one in exercising his ministering gifts is edified and encouraged even at the same time he edifies, rebukes, corrects and encourages others. Jesus washed the disciples' feet saying, "if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." (John 13:8). He was not speaking of initial justification because He said, "ye are clean but not all." He was speaking of progressive sanctification. Then He told them that He had given an example and that they were to continue to do for each other what He had done. We are to care for the cleansing and purifying of each other to in love serve each other to the end that we might all appear holy before Him at His coming. In obeying the Lord's call to evangelize and teach we, by necessity, must give diligent study to the word of truth. In teaching and warning and encouraging others we cannot but teach and warn and encourage ourselves. As the apostle said, The necessity is upon me. Woe is me if I preach not the gospel. I must do it for my own survival. Rewards are fringe

benefits. The desire to see men saved is powerful incentive. But the chief benefactor of my ministry is I.

It is not possible for a Christian to survive without prayer. Continued sustained prayer is necessary not only to wage offensive warfare but to maintain sufficient defense against the lusts that war in our souls. Prayer does not change God but it does change men. It brings us into the knowledge of and submission to the perfect and holy will of God. It enables us to commune with Him and walk with Him and gives us health, without which Satan's poisonous arrows would soon infect and corrupt our holy consciences. People who have learned to pray know the saving power in those hours alone before God.

In tithes and offerings the believer is saved from the awful bondage of covetousness. There is no more cruel unrelenting master than bondage to the love of things of this world. Self is never satisfied. To feed its lusts is only to fan the flames and pour oil on the raging inferno. It will only be intensified to demand more and more. Covetousness and selfishness can be mortified only one way: by the practice of sacrificial giving and a ministry of compassion and love to others. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). God has no need of our substance. The cattle on a thousand hills are His. He can feed His prophets by the ravens or by the poor widow's hand. But it is for our sakes and our salvation that we need to learn to give, to minister to the needy, and to give to the ministry of those who have left their own fields and vineyards to the exclusive work of the Gospel.

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what [is] good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:8). That is the place of good works in salvation. The atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ did not set this requirement aside. It made it possible and sure to be fulfilled in the salvation which

He purchased by His blood.

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Chapter Eight

ETERNAL JUDGMENT

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment (Heb. 9:27). Soteriology (teaching of salvation) has eschatology (teaching of last things) intensely in view. Salvation is an accomplished thing in the eternal purpose of God, fulfilled in the personal work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. It has been applied to the believing elect in free justification, is being worked out in their progressive sanctification; but beyond and over all of this (at least from man's point of view) is the future aspect of salvation. This is that inevitable Appointment, that awesome, fearful Day determined in the unchangeable purpose of God for all men, from which there shall be no excuse or deferment, in which we shall be brought face to face with our Creator and hear our eternal sentence.

Eternal judgment is a vital integral part of the gospel. Paul begins his great treatise on the gospel against the dark backdrop of the "wrath of God revealed from heaven" (Rom. 1:18). which wrath impenitent men treasure up unto themselves against that day when God will render to every man according to his deeds (Rom. 2:5-6). The Roman governor, Felix, trembled as Paul reasoned with him of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come.

Future judgment is included in the innate knowledge which all men have of God. It is revealed from heaven as part and parcel of "when they knew God" (Rom. 1:21), and renders all men without excuse. "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death" (Rom. 1:32). "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor. 5:11). It is thus in view of this great and final judgment the gospel is brought to men and urged upon their conscience. Therefore it is understandable if escape from the wrath of God for our evil deeds looms foremost as the dominant consideration in the minds of unconverted men, at least in the initial motivation toward salvation.

There must be a day of final reckoning. Consider the many cries for judgment: The whole of creation groans, waits, expects, anticipates its deliverance from the awful burden imposed upon it by man's sin (Rom. 8:19-22). Earth, elements and beasts alike suffer from wrong, from violence, from unrequited injustice wrought by sin. "Mother Nature" is not benevolent. The helpless rabbit screams as his life is snuffed out in the jaws of the fox. The mother bird frantically flutters to and fro vainly crying and scolding as a snake swallows her babies. Men insensibly plunder and pollute the earth, transforming God's fertile Eden into a sterile and Poisonous dump. Abused and suffering people cry vainly for justice while being mercilessly cheated by political powers, lawyers, greedy conscienceless merchants and tradesmen. Habakkuk questions how God can behold wicked men devouring the righteous while yet forbearing judgment (Hab. 1:13). Both the defrauded workman, and the wages stolen by his oppressor cry to God for justice (James 5:4). Martyred and suffering saints cry for final compensation and retribution (Rev. 6:9-11). Justice itself demands final judgment. The universe cannot stand without order and law. Law is meaningless unless vengeance and recompense is unfailingly executed. None of that is seen on earth in this present evil age.

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And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in (the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he [that] departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. And the Lord saw [it], and it displeased him that there [was no] judgment (Isaiah 59:14-15).

Finally, the Just and Righteous God demands that justice be done. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" If the creation were silent; if creatures passively accepted such wrong; if no man sought or desired justice, indeed if creation stoutly maintained no rectification were needed, yet the Just Creator and Final Judge renders the only mandate for judgment necessary. His is the only opinion that matters in the final analysis, for all sin and injustice is primarily and most offensively against HIM. Justice must and will be executed.

At no point have the crystal waters of the pure word of God been more befouled and muddied by arrogant and ignorant men than here. The sharp sword of final retribution has been blunted and splintered by a thousand theories, views, systems and speculations. Manifold resurrections, dispensations, covenants, periods, judgments, time-tables, schedules and comings of Christ, have served well to capture men's interest, study and fantasies. The effect has been to draw attention away from the singular fact that one day the dead shall be brought out of their graves together with those yet standing and be summoned before the Throne of Him "from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away: and there was found no place for them" (Rev. 20:1 ll. This is the day when the veil of the heavens shall be rolled back as a scroll, when the kings of the earth as well as chiefs, captains, together with rich and poor, bond and free shall seek a hiding place, shall literally cry to be crushed by a falling mountain or boulder rather than face their just Judge. But there will be no refuge from this judgment or escape from His piercing Eyes and withering Rectitude.

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Who shall be able to stand in the day of the wrath of the Lamb? Many shall have thought themselves standing in the day of His grace and love but shall fall in the day of His wrath. And what of the multitudes who think themselves saved yet are unable to stand in these days of grace and love? Shall they stand in the day of His wrath?

If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan? (Jer. 12:5)

God has not appointed His people to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ (I Thess. 5:9). But, it may be pointed out, Jesus has already delivered us from wrath to come (I Thess. 1:10) True! That is the basis upon which we obtain salvation from wrath. He did not deliver us when we first professed faith in Him, but when He bore the wrath of God in His body at the Cross. It is only in the death of Christ on the Cross that we can put our salvation from wrath to come in the past. It is in our presently maintained relationship with Him that we can have assurance that we shall be delivered in the day of judgment.

The scriptures give us two scenes of this Great and Final Assize; that written by Matthew in chapter 25 verses 31-46, and John's vision described in Revelation chapter 20 verses 11-15. These are not separate judgments as have been postulated by inventors of various eschatological systems, but the one and same final judgment of all men, of all nations, of all times and dispensations. Each puts some particular facets in focus not in the other, but the essential features are common to both. The time of the judgment is at the end of the age. The sentence of the judgment is eternal bliss or eternal torment. The judge is the Son of Man, the King, Jesus Christ, the one true and living God. The subjects are men, all men who have ever lived and whose lives are now ended. It makes no difference if they are brought up out of the grave or if they were yet alive at the Lord's

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appearance. It is all over: the books are closed. So far as this life is concerned, they are dead men. The basis of judgment is works, as just judgment must always be. No one is going to be judged on the basis of whether he "got saved," "professed Christ," was "elected." The sentence passed is in view of what each man did.

It is true that they are separated on the basis of what they are, either sheep or goats. But they are judged on the merit of their works. Our Lord will not have the cavil thrown up that He put people in hell simply because they were non-elect or that He saved people who lived wicked lives simply because they were elect. The wicked have plenty of their own sins to merit for them eternal punishment.

The righteous also have enough evil deeds to damn them, but they have already been judged and punished in the death of Christ. And this our divine Substitute, our great High Priest has deposited before the court in our behalf a life of good works in perfect love and righteousness. Some of these sheep, as the dying thief, have little good works of their own, yet through the New Birth have all the graces necessary to bring forth those fruits. Others have been blessed with nearly whole lifetimes to prove their love of the Saviour and His brethren. All true sheep bring forth such fruit "meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:7-8).

Do not be ashamed of encouraging your hope of eternal life by continuance in well doing. The scriptures abound with evidence that such are the ones who shall be saved from wrath to come. God will render to every man according to his deeds:

To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first

and also of the Gentile: But glory, honour,
and peace, to every man that worketh good,
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to the Jew first and also to the Gentile: (Rom.
2:6-10).

When the evangelical world generally speaks of a person getting saved, it means he got saved from eternal judgment. But that is the one aspect of salvation that is surely put in the future as far as salvation experience is concerned.

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled we shall be saved by his life (Rom. 5:9-10).

Salvation is in the Saviour, Jesus Christ. None of us have yet been saved from wrath. We surely shall be but we must yet be. There is security in Christ but He does not impart salvation, life, or security apart from Himself. There is a day of awful judgment ahead for every man. John says our love is made perfect that we may have boldness or strong encouragement in the day of judgment (1 John 4:17). We shall surely need a Saviour in that day, and if we do not cleave to the One we now have there will certainly never be another.

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against men. Only those who are sheltered in Christ shall escape it. They will surely escape, for the judgment for their sins has already fallen upon Him, and they are secure and safe in the blessed Saviour.

Chapter Nine

ADOPTION

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). Many will wonder at my placing adoption at the end of the salvation sequence instead of between conversion and sanctification where it is usually placed. First, I will give my reasons for placing it where I have, and then we will consider the sense in which it may be viewed as earlier.

Four passages of scripture mention adoption in relation to the Gentile Church. Two of them speak of adoption sometime in the future. (Gal. 4:4-5) "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." This could be understood that believers were adopted at conversion or at any time subsequent to the atonement. (Eph. 1:5) "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Again, this could put adoption anywhere in the future. But Romans 8:19-23 definitely puts adoption after the resurrection of believers, eternal judgment and restoration of the creation from the curse of the fall.

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For the earnest expectation of the creature
 A waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of
 God Because the creature itself also shall be
 delivered from bondage of corruption into the
 glorious liberty of the children of God. For we
 know that the whole creation groaneth and
 travaileth in pain together until now. And not
 only [they]. but ourselves also, which have
 the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves
 groan within ourselves waiting for the
 adoption. [to wit]. the redemption of our
 body.

The fourth passage speaks of our having received the Spirit of
 adoption whereby we cry, "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15).
 Adoption in the proper sense must be yet in the future
 for the believer because the scriptures put it there. The
 creation groans now waiting for the manifestation of the sons.
 They are not yet manifested. We groan now. The "we" who
 groan now are not some sort of undeveloped second-class
 believers. They are those who have the firstfruits of the
 Spirit. The apostle includes himself among the groaners
 waiting for the adoption that will be at the redemption of the
 body.

Sonship Now

Now we will consider the sense in which adoption
 may be understood to have taken place at conversion.
 Supporting passages to testify of present sonship for the
 believer are many. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God,
 they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). "Because ye are
 sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your
 hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). "Wherefore thou art
 no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of
 God through Christ" (Gal. 4:7)

There are two reasons why we can consider believers,
 who have not yet received the adoption for which they yearn,

as already sons. The first reason is the eternal purpose of

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God. He declares the end from the beginning. His works are finished from the foundation of the world. All He has purposed and begun are, in the eternal sense, already finished. Time was fulfilled in eternity before time began.

The second reason is that believers do now enjoy many privileges of sonship. They are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26). This position of sonship is bestowed by virtue of their union with Christ. In union with Christ they have tremendous unexperienced privileges while they are here on earth which most, because of ignorance of unbelief will never enjoy. "As he is so are we in this world." I John 4:17 embraces a principle of present life sonship that few comprehend. But we will speak of a few of the better known aspects of sonship.

We have access to the throne of grace as a son to His Father through Christ. He has invited us, and desires us to make our every need known to Him through prayer. He promises to withhold from us no good thing. "Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matt. 7:8). He "giveth to all [men] liberally, and upbraideth not" (James 1:5). Fear not. little children; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. We have a Father of infinite wisdom guiding us; of eternal love, loving us; of boundless riches, blessing us; of all power, caring for us.

By union with Christ we have been made "partakers of His divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1 :4). The believer is no longer in bondage to sin. We do not say that it is impossible for him to sin, but that it is possible for him to not sin. As a child of wrath he could do nothing else. He was a slave to the corruption of the world through the unbridled lusts that raged in his body. But now in Christ he has been set free and given a nature that loves holiness and hates sin. As a son in the family of God, he takes on the characteristics of that family, holiness. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart. No longer a slave to hatred and strife and violence, he knows a

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love that passes knowledge, for it flows from the bosom of his eternal Father.

As a son of the household of God, the believer has positional power over all the forces of the enemy. Satan's darts cannot pierce the shield of faith in Christ. As a son he takes the name of his Father, and in the name of his Elder Brother he takes the offensive against the gates of hell. He casts out demons, delivering those in captivity. He breaks down the roadblocks and hindrances to the proclamation of the gospel truth.

Because we are heirs of salvation, angels are sent forth as our bodyguards to watch over us making sure nothing touches us without the express will of our loving Father (Heb. 1:14). With such assurances, we can fear no "accidents." All the malignant hatred of men and demons cannot break through the wall of fire He builds around His beloved. "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4).

As a joint-heir with Him to Whom all the promises were made we can claim all those promises. And as He said to Joshua, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, [so] I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Jos. 1:5).

How shall we be dismayed at those who slander and attack us? Upon what ground shall we fear the devices and schemes of men wherein they hope to oppose, silence and destroy us?

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue [that] shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.

This [is] the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness [is] of me, saith the Lord . (Isaiah 54:17).

Thus, manifold are the blessings and privileges to which we are invited by virtue of our sonship now. In this sense it cannot be denied that adoption can be considered as already being experienced by the believer.

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Sonship to Come

Then how are we to reconcile the passages that put adoption in the future? We cannot deny that we, with the apostle, groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. And the same John wrote "power to become the sons of God," wrote by the same Holy Spirit, "We are now the sons of God." A hint to the answer is given in the rest of the passage from I John 3:2. "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." In the same passage where John says we are, he says we are not yet.

It is not our design in pointing out the not yet to take away any of the many incentives the scriptures give us (and they are many) to enjoy our sonship now. This is our only basis of faith in waging our spiritual warfare and conquering in the name of the Lord. We have no power if we have no right to His Name. Rather we hope to give additional incentive to persevere and press on into full adoption for which our spirits yearn. We wish to give sound reasons to hope that we shall ultimately put off mortality and put on immortality. (I Cor. 15:53). We are told that we are sons and God has sent us the Spirit of adoption. He treats us as His children to give us strong encouragement: encouragement to press through to and apprehend that for which we have been apprehended. (Phil. 3:1 1-14).

It was on the east bank of Jordan that God told Joshua that He had given him the land. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon that have I given unto you" (Jos. 1:3). Joshua owned it, yet he did not own it until he walked upon it. He walked upon it because,

- (1) God said, it is yours.
- (2) He did not yet have it.

In the same way, we are told we are, yet we are not yet, and therefore, we have power and faith to become the

sons of God.

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The children of Israel are now on the west bank of Jordan with formidable Jericho standing between them and the land that was already theirs. God speaks again: "I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, [and] the mighty men of valour" (Jos. 6:2). Upon what authority and power did the children of Israel march around Jericho? The flat statement of God. "I have given it unto you." Why did they persevere in marching around the city? Because they did not yet have it.

We should not take these examples lightly. They are given as examples for warning and exhortation to us. The Holy Spirit reminds us that God having saved the people out of Egypt afterward destroyed them that believed not. They came out of Egypt heirs of Canaan, but died in the wilderness and never entered into the inheritance though they may have brashly claimed it was already theirs. They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all went out under the blood of the Passover lamb, but they were overthrown in the wilderness. This is not the salvation of the Bible. It is the temporary partial salvation that is preached and embraced by multitudes of so-called evangelicals today, and it will fall miserably short of the eternal salvation ordained by God that stretches from eternity to eternity. It is a temporal in—time experience that fails because it has man for its author, flesh for its strength, deception for its creed, and corruption for its end.

So you see the two statements by the Holy Spirit through John stand side by side. One gives faith and confidence. The other warns us that we have not yet arrived. So let us state with Paul, "Not as though I had already attained" (Phil. 3:12-15). "God has apprehended me to apprehend something and I will not rest until I have apprehended that which He has given me power to apprehend"

Chapter Ten

OBJECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

It would be impossible to anticipate all the objections that will certainly be put forth to the truths set forth in this paper and I will not attempt to do so. Those who are honestly searching for truth will sooner or later satisfy themselves from the scriptures and the blessed Spirit of Truth. Those whose minds are closed and are unteachable will not be corrected "after the first and second admonition" (Tit. 3:10) anyway. But I will attempt to deal with a few of the more prominent and obvious objections to stimulate the reader's thinking and plead with him to not reject the truth until he has given it fair consideration.

Foreknowledge and Election

It will be objected that these doctrines defame the character of God by presenting an image of Him as unfairly not giving every man a "chance." We assert that the very opposite is true. It is the other system that makes God an impotent disorganized person Who flung everything out into existence. sat back, folded His arms, and hoped for everything to turn out well. God is not a God of change but a God of purpose and power. In order for "God" to mean

what it says then God must be God. He must have purpose and all power to carry out that purpose. To say that God voluntarily limited Himself does not solve anything. Why should God limit Himself, step aside and turn things over to depraved men who will surely ruin all He has done, and overthrow His perfectly wise and good purposes? Such an idea impugns the integrity of God yet more.

God has already answered the argument of "no chance." He has given a universal genuine and sincere call to all men to repent and turn to Christ. We have already shown that this call is just as universally refused because of the inherent wickedness of men. They have all heard and are all accountable by the light they have been given. If they turn down the general call which God has given, how can they charge God with being unfair by giving an effectual call to others? Many are called but few are chosen.

But, it will now be objected, God is no respecter of persons. Many well-meaning people do as Satan did with Jesus and misuse the scriptures to their own end. God is no respecter of persons ethnically. "In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). And "as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law" (Rom. 2:10-12). God is no respecter of persons so far as his social or economic standing is concerned. A person's wealth, fame, strength, influence, and intellect are all impotent to turn God's eyes toward him in any measure of favor. But it is manifest both in history and in the scriptures and even in contemporary life that God does reserve the right to show mercy and favor to whom He will (Rom. 9:15).

He writes by the Holy Spirit of His people. "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life" (Isa. 43:4). Have you ever considered, dear reader, why perhaps you were born in a country where the gospel was preached and published freely and millions

were not? Why you perhaps had Christian parents and

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multitudes around you do not? Why millions are deceived in false religions and you are not? To what account will you lay this? To the laziness and selfishness of Christians who have not, or will not, take the gospel to perishing millions? Be careful lest you charge God with sending men to hell because of the laziness and selfishness of Christians. Will you say that these perish because of their heritage and the wickedness of their ancestors? Then you must say men go to hell for the sins of their fathers. Why do you have plenty to eat while millions starve? Why are your home and loved ones safe while others cringe in fear of thieves, wars and plunderers? The only answer is that all men deserve these things. Yet God has shown special favor to some.

And while we are considering these things you might ask yourself one other question. Why did I receive Christ while hundreds around me in the same circumstances reject Him? Are you better than they? Then why did you accept and they refused? What was it about you that caused a reception of saving grace that was not about them? For who maketh thee to differ [from another]? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive [it], why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received [it]? (1 Cor. 4:7).

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

Some will now say this doctrine destroys the doctrine of man's free will. What do we mean by free will? Free will, in the absolute sense exists only in God. All others are admittedly free. A creature's will is always limited by what he will will and what he can will. Both of these are determined by what he is. Thus a pig's will is free to never wallow in mud again. No one prevents him from willing that. But because of what he is, he will never will such a thing. First he will never consider it and if he did, the desires of his body would be so strong he could never carry it through. The same pig may will to sprout wings and fly. But for the same

reasons he will never do that because he does not think in

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those terms and he has no ability to do so. Man's will is free to will what he will in respect to what he is. Since he is morally depraved he will only will evil; and will never will to turn toward God until God, in sovereign grace, regenerates him and draws him toward Himself. The metal which has no iron in it will never be drawn by the magnet no matter how strong this magnet. Put iron into it and it will immediately turn toward the magnet.

. Some will object that the doctrine discourages and destroys incentive for evangelism. On the contrary, it is this truth that makes evangelism possible. An evangelist armed with these truths knows some people are going to be saved through his ministry, for God is determined to save some; and he works in the faith of that knowledge. The man who does not believe these truths has only the arm of flesh to lean upon and no assurance anyone will ever believe. We do not have to motivate missions with the sentimental, "they will go to hell if you don't go" approach which suggests that men are the saviours of men and that God is impotent to save those whom we are unwilling to save. God is able to raise up others to preach the gospel and gather in His elect if you do not go.

God's warning to Ezekiel was thus: I have made you a watchman. Warn the wicked. If you do not warn the wicked he shall die in his sins and I will require his blood at your hand. If you warn him and he does not turn from his wickedness he shall die in his sins but you have delivered your soul (Ezek. 3:17-19). Ezekiel is responsible for warning and delivering his own soul from its responsibility. It is not said that the wicked will die because he did not preach to him nor that he will live because he did preach to him. Those to whom we preach may die in their sins and they may repent. But we must remove the blood from our hands. Woe unto us if we preach not the gospel!

God has chosen men as His agents in preaching the gospel. And He has chosen the preaching of the gospel as the means whereby men shall be saved. Often men are

regenerated during the preaching of the gospel message.

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Often they are regenerated when nowhere near a church or preacher. But it seems that men are usually at least confronted with gospel truth before conversion. The gospel is always instrumental in conversion. Conversion is a sane, intelligent willful turning from darkness to light, from sin to the Saviour; therefore, truth must be known in order for it to be embraced.

There is nothing wrong with a strong desire to see men saved. There is something sadly wrong with any believer it who does not have such a passion. But we must not cheapen truth by appealing to men's shallow emotions to get the gospel out. A gospel that goes out at the cost of slandering the God of the gospel has already defeated its purpose. It will save no one.

Effectual Atonement

To modify the word atonement with effectual is a bit superfluous. It is something like saying widow woman. How could a widow be other than a woman; and how could you have ineffectual atonement and it still be atonement? However, because the evangelical world is largely ignorant of the meaning of atonement and we have grown accustomed to thinking in other ways, we recognize there will be many objections to the doctrine. We have already dealt with some of these in the chapter devoted to the subject, and made references to sources for study. But we will consider one more objection here.

Some will say that this doctrine will not allow them to tell a sinner that Jesus died for him since they have no way of knowing whether he was included in the atonement or not. First, I wish to call your attention to the fact that no one in the Bible ever told a sinner that Jesus died for him. That is not necessary to secure repentance and faith from the sinner. It is not Biblical evangelism. It is an evangelism suited to an erroneous man-made theology. The evangelism of the Bible declares to the sinner that Christ died for those who repent and believe. The sinner is to gain hope of an interest

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in the blood of Christ by turning to God in faith and cleaving to Christ, pleading that blood for his standing in righteousness. A hope given him in a universal atonement is likely to leave him in his sins expecting that atonement to save him in spite of his unrepentance. It is true that John wrote: "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for [the sins of] the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

But of what world is John speaking? Surely not the terrestrial earth of Acts 17:24 or John 13:1. Surely not the world system of John 12:31 . Not the world of John 17:9 for which Jesus refused to pray. Perhaps the world of Romans 1 1 :15. "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world " It surely refers to those of all the world who shall repent and believe unto salvation.

We have abundance of scripture to give assurance to the repentant sinner that Christ died for him, but none to give the unrepentant. He needs none. He has no complaint coming over the fact that Christ did not die for him. He never sought Him or had any desire to turn from his sins. Why then should he object that Christ never died for him since he never intends to trust Him? The blood of Christ is sufficient to save all who come to Him. We need say no more.

Nor is it necessary to preach that Christ died for the sins of all men. The sinner stumbles enough in his vain imaginations and reasoning about "What shall this man do?" The sooner he is wrenched from his false refuge in debating about everyone else and brought face to face with his sins and his responsibility before a holy and sovereign God, the better. After all is said and done, that is what he must reckon with.

Regeneration and Conversion

It is a sad fact that the great bulk of the evangelical world will think I am presenting a new doctrine when I make a distinction between regeneration and conversion. It is a testimony to our ignorance not only of the scriptures, but of

the history of Christian truth. It is not a new doctrine but an

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old one that has been buried beneath an avalanche of easy-believism and manmade theology.

True, Godly men have not always agreed about it, and it is not a truth that necessarily is set forth obviously in preaching; but it is a foundational truth upon which the gospel message is built. Regeneration speaks of bringing to life, and conversion speaks of a response of that life in intelligent volition. Since intelligent volition rises from life, it cannot rise until that life exists, and it cannot bring that life into existence.

Prior to being quickened by God, the sinner is dead in trespasses and sins. We have already said that he is not dead physically but spiritually. We must go further and say that although he is dead spiritually, his spirituality is not dead. He is still a man and an immortal soul. But he is dead toward his spirit. The spirit is the seat of God and is that which gravitates toward God and all that is good and holy. But the man is dead toward that.

Life is communication and response. We lived in Adam thousands of years before we were born. In the biological sense we have been alive in Adam since his creation. But in the sense in which we understand life in the terms of communication and response, we did not live until we were born. If I am alienated from a person by enmity, misunderstanding, or distance, for all practical purposes we are dead toward each other. There are no communication and response between us.

So it is with fallen man. He is dead toward his spirit and dead toward God or anything Godly and good. The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit restores that communication and response and makes the man quickened toward God.

Some help may be afforded the seeker for truth by pointing out that it is not necessary to equate the "born from above" of John 3:3 with the "newborn" babes of I Peter 2:2. The former speaks of being regenerated or made to live again

from above and is the work of God the Holy Spirit alone. The

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wind bloweth where it listeth. The latter speaks of the total work of regeneration and conversion, and involves repentance and faith from man's side. As in Matthew 18:3 " Except ye be conuened, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." One speaks of the restoring of life and the other speaks of becoming a new creature through the restoration of that life.

The word regenerate means to re-create or to make to live again. But "if any man [be] in Christ. [he is] a new Creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). He is not just restored to something he once was. He has become something he never was before. He has not been simply regenerated. He has been made a new creature and possesses that which he never had before.

We are not to command men to be born again. They cannot do that. But we are to command them to repent and believe the gospel. And we are to warn them that unless they become new creatures, newborn babes, little children of God they have no hope of eternal life.

Perseverance

Some will charge that by including perseverance in salvation I am cruelly taking away the security of the believer and leaving him no place to rest. Security cannot be taken away from the believer. He believes. He cannot be shaken. I have preached this truth wherever I have gone and it never does any thing but delight the saints. It disturbs the wicked because it takes away his false hope in a salvation experience. It upsets many preachers because it ruins some of their "sugar-stick" sermons. But it is not in any way discouraging to either newborn babes or mature saints. It takes away the hope of the man who believed once, and repented once, but did not abide in that repentance and faith. And indeed that hope ought to be taken away. I know

of few errors that will lead so many souls down the road to perdition; and can you think of any other that has so filled our
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churches with unconcerned, wicked, unfaithful pretensions of Christianity?

It is a wicked heart that wants assurance without perseverance. He wants to be told that God will ultimately save him in the end no matter what he does so that he can go ahead and do as he pleases. But the saint of God intends to do none other than serve the Lord and cleave to Christ the rest of his life. He has no cause to be alarmed about falling away. He knows that he is not capable of persevering, but that the God Who loved him and gave His Son for him shall not allow death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature to separate him from Himself (Rom. 8:38-39). The believer is not responsible for the power to persevere, but for the will and faith to persevere and these are also the gifts of God. We are kept by the power of God through faith.

Too Complicated

Finally, it will be said that I have made salvation too complicated. Did not Peter simply tell the multitude to repent and be baptized? And did not Paul tell the Philippian jailor to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Then why all the fuss about Election, Fall, Atonement, Regeneration, Conversion.

Perseverance, Eternal Judgment and Adoption

Charles G. Finny, who was insistent that new converts be immediately taken into instruction in truth, was taken to task for his stand. Did not he believe the Holy Spirit was capable of teaching them? Why then should so much care be given to teach them? And why did he spend weeks in preaching before he ever made a proposition to the crowds to repent and trust Christ? Was the gospel all that complicated? How could simple men then receive Christ without knowing all these truths? Finny answered, "It would not be necessary if they had not already been taught so many

lies." And so it is. All this is made necessary not because of the lack of knowledge but because of wrong knowledge. Paul
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never taught sinners about the doctrine of the virgin birth who had not been indoctrinated on Jesus being the bastard son of Joseph and Mary. Lydia was not approached on the verbal inspiration of the scriptures because she had not been subjected to a doctrine that denied that truth.

In the same manner an honest seeking sinner now only needs be told to turn from his sins and lay hold upon the mercy and grace of God provided in Christ Jesus. But the religionist who is entrenched in his error must be ferreted out of his false refuges with a solid barrage of unshakable truth. It is light that dispels darkness and truth that drives out error. We are living in an age when the gospel has been lost. Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people (Isa. 60:2). The gospel must be recovered. It cannot be hoped or expected when these truths are preached that immediate success will follow. For some time it will be just the opposite. Carey labored seven years in India without a single convert. Much is said about the Great Awakening under Jonathan Edwards' ministry but it is seldom told that he preached seven years without a convert and was eventually forced out of his pastorate. Success is not the test of truth. Too long we have labored under the assumption that if it works it is truth. If that is so then all the false cults have the truth for they are enjoying unprecedented success. Nor is failure the test of truth. Simply because you are rejected does not mean you are preaching a truth. The only test of truth is truth. We must let God be true and every man a liar if necessary.

The burden is upon us to save men's souls, not win them. The Holy Spirit is the Person Who wins. When we attempt to win we only succeed in persuading them to make a profession of faith. But when the Holy Spirit wins, He brings them into vital union with Christ. The burden is upon us, I say again, to save them. As Paul we seek to win Christ and to save men (Phil. 3:8, 1 Cor. 9:22). Our responsibility toward them does not cease with their profession of faith, but must continue until they are presented blameless before God. Our means of saving men is the gospel truth. It must be proclaimed. If it does not immediately produce what we

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think it should we may not change it or weaken it in order to produce converts. In doing so we shall only produce Ishmaels. We have been a long time getting into the mess in which we find ourselves. It may take some time to get out. But we cannot expect God to bless lies. He w:7/ bless truth. We must be prepared to preach it until He does. ” though it tarry wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry” (Hab. 2:3b).

Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. (Hos. 6:1-2).

Until Isaac come He is our shield, and our exceeding great reward (Gen. 15:1).

