

*12<sup>th</sup> Annual*  
**Back To The Bible**  
*Lectures*


Theme:  
**God's Plan of  
Salvation**

September 25-27, 2009

**WEST JEFFERSON CHURCH OF CHRIST**



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**Back To The Bible**  
Lectures

Theme:  
**God's Plan of Salvation**  
September 25-27, 2009

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## FORWARD

In a time when there are literally thousands of different religious groups, each claiming to be followers of the Christ, and each teaching something different concerning the salvation of one's soul, it is easy to understand all the confusion that exists. Such confusion is part of the reason many have turned away from God and His Word. Many have prayed to God thanking Him for all the choices we have in religion. However, such diversity is not from God but Satan. God has commanded all men everywhere to be one (John 17:20-21; I Corinthians 1:10).

God has revealed His mind to mankind concerning salvation (I Corinthians 2:6-13). Without God's revealed Word, we would have no idea what to do to be saved. When God revealed His Will to us, He gave us very simple and specific instructions as to what He expects us to do. Yet we live in a world where there are as many different plans of salvation as there are different religious groups. Many try to justify this by claiming that it is the case that we all cannot see the Bible alike. Yet such is contrary to what the Bible teaches. Not seeing the bible alike results in confusion and God is not the author of such (I Corinthians 14:33).

God has not given us a book that cannot be understood; however, we must be honest with it. The design of this year's lectureship is to examine what God has revealed in His Word concerning salvation and the different aspects of it. It is not our purpose to grind an axe, pick a fight or reflect poorly on the character of any who may disagree with us. We are not looking to make anyone our enemy (Galatians 4:16). It is our earnest prayer that you will honestly approach the Word of God and consider with us, "God's Plan for Salvation."

Tim Canup  
July 26, 2009

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## The Power of the Gospel

R. L. Whiteside

There must be some connection made between power and the thing to be moved. There is great power in a locomotive, but it cannot move the train of cars till proper connection is made with power.

There is sufficient power in the gospel to move every sinner out of sin into the blessings of salvation, but that power moves no one until proper connections are made. Preaching is the means of establishing that connection. It is God's way of bringing the sinner under the influence of his saving power. For that reason, Paul was not ashamed to preach it (**Romans 1:16**).

The gospel exerts no power over the heathen who has never heard it, nor over the infidel who will not hear it, and it exerts but little power over him who looks for the power to come some other way. It exerts a power over us for good to the extent that we place ourselves under the influence of its teaching. The cyclone has no power over the man who is safely hidden away in his storm cellar, but it would be foolish for him to come out after the storm and confidently affirm that there was no power in the cyclone, but no more foolish than for a man who will not heed God's word to affirm that there is no converting power in it.

## Chapter 1

# God's Part in Salvation: Love, Grace & Mercy

Robert Oliver

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## INTRODUCTION

This being the first lesson in this series on "God's Plan for Salvation", it is needful that we note a few facts concerning the salvation of man. The topic should be of number one priority to each and every human on the face of the earth, for we are speaking of the eternal salvation of one's soul.

Sin is a violation of God's law (I John 3:4). Sin was introduced into this world in the Garden of Eden when Eve "...saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:6). The sentence for being found guilty of sin is death. God had told Adam, "...in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Some thirty-five hundred years later the inspired apostle Paul wrote, "For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23).

Coupled with the above truth concerning the destructive nature of sin, is the fact that we are each and

## **Chapter 1: God's Part In Salvation**

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every one weighed in the balances and found wanting. We are all guilty of sin! Paul wrote, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). And, the apostle John wrote, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). Our conclusion, from recognizing these two facts, is that we absolutely must have a plan of salvation.

Since we realize the necessity of a plan, it then behooves us to consider from whence this plan must come. It cannot come from man! The prophet Jeremiah wrote, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). King Solomon, the wisest of all men said, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). God said, through His mouthpiece Isaiah, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9). However, God has designed and instituted such a plan and it is this plan that we wish to consider in this series of lessons.

### **GOD'S PLAN REQUIRES BOTH DIVINE AND HUMAN PARTICIPATION**

Man cannot be redeemed by his own merits. Paul wrote, "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" (Ephesians 2:8-9). To Timothy he wrote, "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" (II Timothy 1:9). And then again to Titus he wrote, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his



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mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:4-5).

Yet, it is not all up to God either. Were it all up to God, all would be saved. "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:3-4). Peter wrote that "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). And note that "...the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). Yet, the Bible clearly teaches that not all will be saved. Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13-14). Thus, according to Jesus, the majority will be lost and the minority will be saved.

Obedience on the part of man is required in order to receive the gift of eternal life. Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). When the Lord returns "...with his mighty angels, In flaming fire...," He will take "...vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 1:7-8). The gift of God is not without conditions.

Man is provided with the free will to obey and have salvation or reject the requirements of God and suffer eternally. Man has always had this same choice to make, to obey God or to reject God. The choice is summed up in the words of Moses, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19). On the day of

Pentecost the Jews were told to, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). "Those that gladly received his word..." (Acts 2:41) were those who chose to meet the conditions of salvation. The remainder of this lesson will specifically deal with the Divine side of the plan of salvation, Love, Mercy and Grace.

### GOD'S LOVE, GRACE AND MERCY FOR MAN IS AS OLD AS MAN

Some seem to have the idea that mercy and especially grace are characteristics of God found only in the New Testament. Usually John 1:17 is cited which says, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The contrast in this verse is between the law of Moses and the gospel of Christ. It does not even insinuate that love, grace and mercy did not exist nor that it was not bestowed upon man by God during the previous ages, neither does it imply that there was no truth prior to Christ. Jacob prayed to God noting that he was "...not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shown unto thy servant..." (Genesis 32:10). Thus existed and bestowed upon man was both truth and mercy. One does not read far from the opening verse of the Bible before he reads where "...Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). In fact, the grace we enjoy now through Jesus Christ had its beginning before the creation. Paul wrote, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a 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" (II Timothy 1:9). God's statement to the children of Israel concerning the reason they were chosen serves well to illustrate God's love in the Old Testament. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you..." Deuteronomy 7:7-8).

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**WE ARE SAVED BY THE LOVE OF GOD**

Man may well ask the same question asked by David, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4). The answer to that question is found in the first chapter of the Bible. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). Of all this world's occupants, man is the only one that is a spirit being. When man dies, that spirit returns to the God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7). God is concerned for even the smallest creatures of this earth. Luke wrote, "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God" (Luke 12:6)? Yet, God said that man was "of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:31). God indeed loves His greatest earthly creation.

In fact, God is the very source of love. John, the apostle of love wrote, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love", and, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him" (I John 4:7-8, 16).

The love of God for man is the very source or origin of God's mercy and grace toward man. This is seen in the description of love that Paul wrote: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth" (I Corinthians 13:4-6).

Thus God's love provides longsuffering, kindness and compassion on man. Only one verse needs to be referenced to show the degree of love that God has for man. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

### MAN IS SAVED BY THE MERCY OF GOD

Paul wrote to Titus and said, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:4-5). Mercy is a derivative of love and compassion. It is the showing of kindness toward those under one's power and those who are suffering. God's mercy is unlimited and far reaching. Paul says that God is "...rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us" (Ephesians 2:4). James said that "the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11). Peter said that it was "according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter 1:3).

Possibly a few examples of mercy bestowed or denied may serve to illustrate what is done by way of mercy. First, consider the account of the "Good Samaritan" in Luke 10:30-35. A certain man was left half dead on the road and desperately in need of help. A priest came by but exhibited no mercy for the suffering man. Next, a Levite came by, but still no mercy was bestowed upon the man. Finally, a Samaritan came by and had "compassion" on him. This man, due to his compassion, bestowed mercy. He cared for the needs of the man to the best of his ability.

Then, consider the case of the rich man and Lazarus found in Luke 16:19-31. The rich man was in torment. He begged, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me" (verse 24). What he desired was some relief from his suffering. A drop of water on his tongue would be mercy. Mercy was withheld, for he had his chance while on earth and rejected it.

In Luke 18:35-42 we read of a blind beggar who, when he heard that Jesus was passing by, "cried, saying,

Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me" (verse 38). This continued until Jesus asked the man what he would have Jesus do. His answer was, "Lord, that I may receive my sight" (verse 41). He desired relief from his physical handicap and that mercy was bestowed upon him by Jesus. This is the same mercy by which we are saved.

### **WE ARE SAVED BY THE GRACE OF GOD**

Paul wrote to Christians who were in Ephesus saying, "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" (Ephesians 2:8-9). There can be no doubt that man is saved by grace. But, what is grace and what is included in being saved by grace?

Grace is favor. In the case of God's grace bestowed upon man, it is "unmerited" favor. We do not deserve it; we deserve justice. We cannot earn it. No amount of works will result in God owing us salvation. But, does this mean then that we have nothing to do? Is the grace of God and works of obedience mutually exclusive? The answer to this is seen in these very Ephesian Christians to whom Paul wrote. He avowed that they were saved by grace. But what did they do in order to be saved by grace? First, we note that they heard the gospel preached. Paul said, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth..." (Ephesians 1:13). Next, they believed, "...in whom also after that ye believed..." (Ephesians 1:13). When the elders of the church in Ephesus met with Paul at Miletus (Acts 20:17-18), he reminded them of "...how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:20-21).

Thus far we have seen that these "grace-saved" Ephesians heard the gospel, believed and repented. Now consider that when Paul personally preached to the

Ephesians, "...many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds" (Acts 19:18). Finally, note that these, "grace-saved" Ephesian brethren, were baptized in the name of Christ. "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5). They were saved by grace, but grace did not alleviate the meeting of the conditions that God had placed upon salvation.

### MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD'S LOVE, MERCY AND GRACE

#### HE SACRIFICED HIS SON

The most evident manifestation of these characteristics of God, and the easiest for the average person to grasp is the providing of the blood offering that would finally redeem man from his sins. As already noted, man is lost in sin without some way of reconciliation. Paul wrote, "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation...For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:18-19, 21). God sent His only begotten Son to die upon the cross in the place of sinful man. Was this done by love? Most certainly! "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). John wrote, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (I John 3:16). Was this sacrifice offered by God through His grace upon man? Most certainly! "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). To the Romans Paul wrote, "Being justified

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freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24).

Under the old Law of Moses a blood offering was made each year by the high priest for himself and the people (Hebrews 9:7). However, this blood that was offered did not provide forgiveness of sins. "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:3-4). "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:11-12).

This manifestation of the love, mercy and grace of God benefited those under the old law as well as the new. "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Hebrews 9:15). It also benefited the Greek as well as the Jew. Those Ephesian brethren who had been saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9) were Gentiles, not Greeks. Paul said to them, "That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Ephesians 3:6). Paul also wrote, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

Indeed, this love, mercy and grace of God are available to any and all today as it was in the first century. Peter said, "...Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

"And the Spirit and the 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" (Revelation 22:17). God has paid the price through His love, mercy and grace.

### HE REVEALED HIS WORD

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12). One might notice that the first word in verse twelve is the word "teaching." God teaches His will to man. God has always provided man with the knowledge of what was expected of them. In the Garden of Eden, God told Adam, "...Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16-17). In that Patriarchal age, God spoke to the heads of the houses and they in turn instructed their family. In the Mosaic age, God spoke to the nation of Israel through the law given to Moses on Mount Sinai and then through the prophets. In this Christian age, God has spoken to us through the words of His dear Son, Jesus Christ. The Hebrew writer states, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1-2). This was spoken of by Moses early in the life of the nation of Israel. Peter quoted him saying, "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be



destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:22-23). The Father Himself made it quite clear when, on the Mount of transfiguration, He spoke from heaven. Moses was present to represent the law. Elijah was present to represent the prophets and the only begotten Son of God was present as well. God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5).

No matter the age, one cannot possibly know what God desires of them unless God reveals it to them. Paul wrote, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God...Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Corinthians 2:9-10, 13). The night before our Lord was crucified, He promised His chosen apostles that He would send the Holy Spirit upon them, that they might know all truth. Jesus said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13). On the first day of Pentecost following the Lord's ascension into heaven, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon these apostles as was promised (Acts 2:1-4). Thus God provided revelation of His will for man in this age through the pens of the inspired penmen of the New Testament and Paul was able to write, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:16-17). God has indeed blessed us with a trustworthy way to know His will.

### HIS EARS ARE OPEN TO OUR PRAYERS

Prayer is for those who are in the proper relationship with God! First, one must be a child of God. When the apostles sought instruction from Jesus on how to pray, He instructed them to pray, "...Our Father which art in heaven..." (Matthew 6:9). God is not our father until we become His children. Those who receive Jesus, "...to them have he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). John later wrote, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...Beloved, now are we the sons of God..." (I John 3:1-2). As His children we have the right to come to Him in prayer. The Hebrew writer said, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

As faithful children of God, we can pray knowing that the gracious God of heaven will hear our prayers and answer them. Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:...If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him" (Matthew 7:7, 11)

However, sin will close the Lord's ears to our prayers. The prophet Isaiah told the children of Israel, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2). The apostle Peter said it this way, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (I Peter 3:12). Indeed, we are blessed to be able to call upon the all powerful God of heaven in prayer.

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## HE PAINTED THE PICTURE OF SALVATION FOR US IN TYPES

It has often been said that one cannot truly understand the New Testament without a good understanding of the Old. It is true that one can learn what to do to be saved and to live a faithful Christian life without knowing the Old Testament, but it is also true that a good knowledge of the Old Testament makes the New Testament come alive. Whole books could be written concerning the "types" and "antitypes" of the Bible. Space would not allow a full discussion, but let us note enough to see the beautiful picture. One might recall that Paul said that, "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). There is more than one sense in which the "law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). The book of Hebrews provides most of our explanation concerning the "types and antitypes". Notice a few of the words and terms found in the book of Hebrews. "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:5). "Which was a figure for the time then present" (Hebrews 9:9). "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things" (Hebrews 10:1).

The Hebrew writer paints a picture of the tabernacle and the worship therein. He specifically emphasizes the job of the high priest to enter into the most holy place once each year to offer a sacrifice for himself and for all the people (Hebrews 9:7). But, as noted, this was just a shadow, a figure of the very image. Jesus was the very image. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priest, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's..."

## Chapter 1: God's Part In Salvation

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(Hebrews 7:26-27). "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). We have a better high priest, Jesus the Son of God. We have a better tabernacle, the church. We have a better covenant, the New Testament. We have a better sacrifice, the blood of Christ that washes away our sins. It is a beautiful picture and God has revealed it to us.

### CONCLUSION

If not for the love, mercy and grace of God, we would be nothing. God has given us an eternal soul. He has revealed to us the means by which we can have eternal life rather than eternal damnation. He has provided the redemption price for our sins. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:18-19). He listens when we pray, and with love He will provide for us that which is best. Thank God for the mercy and grace He bestows upon us because of His love for us.

When the Day of Judgment comes, and we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, the one thing we will not cry for is justice. The rich man of Luke 16:24 didn't cry for justice, but for mercy. He was already receiving justice. It will be mercy and grace that we will depend upon in order that we might hear Him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34). Such mercy and grace is dependent upon our continued obedience to His beloved Son, Jesus Christ.



## Chapter 2

**Man's Part in Salvation: Love, Faith, Works & Obedience**

Roby Ellis

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Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you. (Galatians 5:1-8)

It should go without saying that, apart from God's visitation of man, he would be without any means of saving himself, void of any hope in this world. Because all have

sinned (Romans 3:23), we all stand in need of the manifold grace of God, which He manifested in the sending of His Son Jesus. Were it not for the longsuffering of God, we would not have lived long enough to obey the gospel. Were it not for God's great love and concern for us, we never would have been recipients of the grace that He has bestowed upon us in so many ways.

There are many people, however, who appear to have considerable difficulty in understanding that man also has a part in his salvation. The apostle Paul told the saints in Philippi, "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" (Philippians 2:12). While Paul declared that "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 2:16), he also stated in the same epistle that this faith is one that "worketh by love" (5:6). While it is true that there is no system of works that can justify a man--not even the one given by God Himself in the Old Testament (Galatians 3:21)--the Scriptures reveal that God counts faithfulness for righteousness (Romans 4:5).

To what extent then is salvation an act of God, and to what extent is salvation a work of man? This is a question for which only God's inspired Word can give a satisfactory and reliable answer.

### ABRAHAM'S JUSTIFICATION: BY WORKS OR BY FAITH?

When we consider the justification of Abraham, we can see that faith and works do not necessarily exclude one another; as a matter of fact, they complement one another. Abraham is one of the greatest characters in Bible history. He was indeed a great man and one of only a very few individuals described in the Scriptures as a "friend of God" (James 2:23, cf. 2 Chronicles 20:7). Just like the rest of us, however, Abraham had a problem: he had sinned (Romans

3:23), and, as a result, he was in desperate need of justification.

Paul says that Abraham was justified by his faith, not by works (Romans 4:1–13). Paul first points to the Scripture which says that “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (verse 3, cf. Genesis 15:6). He then points out that, if Abraham’s justification were the result of any works he had performed, then his reward would have been earned (verse 4)—an impossibility considering that God needs no services from man. Abraham was justified, not because of his own righteousness (Isaiah 64:6) or merit, but because God counted his faithfulness for righteousness (verse 5). Paul strengthens his argument further by calling attention to the fact that Abraham was justified apart from the works of the Mosaic Law (verses 9–13), thus demonstrating that it is not the commandment itself that saves us, but rather the faith that motivates us to obey any command that God gives.

On the other hand, James indicates that Abraham was saved by works, not by faith alone (James 2:14–26). He points out that Abraham’s offering of his son Isaac was a work (verse 21), and indeed it was. To be sure, there was much work involved in this action (Genesis 22:1–6). Consider first of all that Abraham had to get up early in the morning to begin his long journey to Moriah (verse 3). He saw the need to take two servants along with him and his son (verse 3). He had to cut wood for the burnt offering that he was to sacrifice on that distant mountain (verse 3). The journey itself took three agonizing days (verse 4). Would anyone suggest, however, that his work was sufficient to allow Abraham to stake unequivocal claim to righteousness by his own merit, or does anyone intimate that Abraham was trying to earn his salvation from God in this action? In the first place, there was nothing inherently good about Abraham’s mission to sacrifice his son to God; in fact,

without the order from God, this errand would have been an abomination (cf. 2 Kings 3:27, Jeremiah 32:35). It was what led him to do this that justified him--his extraordinary faith in God, which was manifested through his obedience (verses 7-8, cf. Hebrews 11:17-19).

James adds that it was by Abraham's works that his faith was perfected in the sight of God, because faith needs law in order to express itself (verse 22). In making this point, James uses the same Scripture that Paul used to confirm his point about the necessity of faith: "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness" (verse 23). James shows us that, while works do not make us perfect, they do perfect our faith, and it is this perfected faith that God counts for righteousness.

We are indeed "justified by faith" (Romans 5:1), but only by a living faith, not by a dead faith which is void of works (James 2:26).

### GENUINE FAITH AND WORKS OF OBEDIENCE

In the modern religious world, there seems to be much confusion relative to the relationship between faith and works. The Scriptures teach us repeatedly that genuine faith *always* produces works of obedience.

To understand this, we must first understand the source of true faith. Paul tells us that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). It is appropriate, therefore, that whenever we find an example of belief in the New Testament, it is always preceded by the hearing of God's Word. Those that "believed" at Pentecost (Acts 2:44) had all heard the preaching of Peter and of the eleven in their respective languages (verse 8). Luke records that later "many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand" (Acts 4:4). The first people to believe and to be baptized in the region of Samaria had listened to the preaching of Philip



(Acts 8:12-13). When Paul preached in Corinth, the Bible says that "Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). The conclusion that we must reach is that one cannot get true faith through a dream or by inheritance, for true faith only comes by hearing God's Word. It should also be noted, however, that God's Word does not produce faith in every heart when it is preached (Acts 24:25, 26:28, 28:24), but only in the hearts that offer fertile ground in which the seed may take root and grow (Matthew 13:23).

While the masses will reject the counsel of God (Matthew 7:13-14), the faithful are obedient to God's Word when they hear it. We have an abundance of examples of this principle in the Scriptures, along with an extensive collection of them in Hebrews 11. Let us briefly consider a few of these examples to learn about the behavior of faith.

1. *"By faith Noah...prepared an ark"* (verse 7).  
In this example, God gave Noah an order along with a set of very specific instructions (Genesis 6:14-21), and Noah obeyed in every respect: "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (verse 22).
2. *"By faith Abraham...obeyed; and he went out"* (verse 8).  
Again we find that God gave the order (Genesis 12:1-3) and that His faithful servant obeyed Him (verses 4-5).
3. *"By faith Abraham...offered up Isaac"* (verse 17).  
God gave the order (Genesis 22:1-2), and Abraham obeyed (verses 3-10).
4. *"By faith Moses...kept the Passover"* (verses 24-28).  
In this case God gave the commandment (Exodus 12:1-20), and Moses obeyed both immediately (verses 21-28) and repeatedly (Numbers 9:1-4).

Never do the Scriptures define or portray faith as belief apart from works; much to the contrary, the Scriptures show conclusively that obedience is an integral part of genuine faith.

If we are faithful, we will obey God's commandments as well. While it is true that we have not been commanded to offer our sons as sacrifices, to build a great sea-going vessel, or to observe the Passover feast, God has not left us without instructions. The Lord has instructed us to confess our faith in Him before men (Matthew 10:32), to repent of our sins (Luke 13:3), and to be baptized for the remission of our sins (Acts 2:38). Furthermore, He has instructed us to worship Him "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24), giving us five distinct avenues which are outlined in the inspired writings of the New Testament (Acts 20:7, Ephesians 5:19, Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2). He has instructed us to love one another (John 13:35), to care for those who are in need (James 1:27), to pray for all men (1 Timothy 2:1), and to teach the gospel to others (Matthew. 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:2). If you have heard these instructions and have not been following them, can you honestly say that you have been faithful to God?

A man may show his love for his wife by keeping the vows that he made to her on the day of their wedding, and we demonstrate our faith and love for God by keeping the covenant that we made with Him when we became His children.

### **LOVE: THE MOTIVATION FOR GOOD WORKS**

Many of the precepts contained in God's Word defy human will. What is it that compels us to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5:39), to go the extra mile (Matthew 5:41), and to pray for those who hate us (Matthew 5:44)? The answer to all of these is love.

It is love that motivates us to serve God. Paul, who suffered greatly for the cause of Christ, wrote that the love of Christ was his motivation: "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Corinthians 5:14). Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). We do not keep ourselves from ungodly living only because we fear hell or covet the luxuries of heaven; we do so because of the love of Christ within us!

Love is also what motivates us to serve one another. Paul wrote, "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." (Galatians 5:13). Jesus demonstrated His love through service. John writes that when Jesus "knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). In this context of John's gospel, we are told of how Jesus performed a humble act of service in order to demonstrate His love for His disciples. He then instructed them to serve one another (verses 14-15) and to love one another (verses 34-35). When we realize that the Master came to this world to serve (Matthew 20:28, Philippians. 2:7), should we not be motivated to serve others in the same spirit of love?

Seeing that we are all brethren born of incorruptible seed, Peter urges us to have a love for one another that is "unfeigned" (1 Peter 1:22-23). The word translated "unfeigned" is ἀνυπόκριτος (*anupokritos*), literally "unhypocritical," that is, sincere or genuine. An unfeigned love compels us to serve one another and to help one another whenever an opportunity presents itself. If members of the community see us "bite and devour one another" (Galatians 5:15), how will this affect their response to our message? If, on the other hand, we possess a spirit of genuine love, it will be noticed. The staff members of

hospitals, nursing homes, and funeral homes are sure to notice our faithfulness to one another, and when they do, they see the love of Christ within us.

Love is what motivates us to teach others. Paul tells us that we are to speak the truth "in love" (Ephesians 4:15). Jesus did not come to this world to condemn the world, but to save it, because He loves the world (John 3:16-17). While our message does convict men of sin (Titus 1:9) and condemn the erring (Hebrews 11:7, John 12:48), it is not our purpose in evangelism to condemn, but rather to seek and to save them that are lost (Matthew 20:28, 28:18-20). If love is our motivation for evangelism, we will do more evangelism, and our love will be seen by those that we teach.

When we witness the love of God in every blessing that we have received from His gracious hand--even when we were sinners (Romans 5:8)--His love compels us to love others, even our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48). This love is what compels us to obey God, to serve one another, and to teach the gospel to the lost.

### CONCLUSION

Paul wrote, "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" (Ephesians 2:8-9). We must never overlook the grace of God, without which our salvation could never be possible, and we should thank God daily for His saving grace. At the same time, we must not forget that we can only access God's saving grace through faith (Romans 5:1-2). Paul tells us that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men" (Titus 2:11), and yet Jesus reveals that this grace will only be accessed by a few (Matthew 7:14), that is, by those who do the will of the Father (Matthew 7:21). Please do not make the mistake of thinking that God requires nothing of you,

because the Scriptures teach us that works of obedience are always present where there is genuine faith in God. God counts faithfulness for righteousness. Do your works declare that you been faithful to Him?

No words could sum up these thoughts better than the words with which we began: "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6).

*Roby Ellis*

Chapter 3  
**Reconciliation**  
Tim Canup

Tim Canup was born in Galax, VA and is the youngest of five children of Jimmy and Mary Canup. His father and two brothers are also ministers of the Gospel. He is a 2001 graduate of the West Virginia School of Preaching. He has done local work with churches in Elizabethton, TN, Statesville and West Jefferson, NC, where he is currently laboring. He is the speaker on the weekly, *Back To The Bible* Radio Program and writes a bi-weekly newspaper article. He has directed the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Annual *Back To The Bible* Lectureship.

Tim has been married to his wife, Cindy, for 9 years. They have 2 sons, Andrew (2 ½ years old) and Nathan (6 months old).

**INTRODUCTION**

The apostle Paul wrote:

Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (II Corinthians 5:17-21 - New King James Version used unless otherwise noted)

The word "reconciliation" can be broken down as: "re," again and "conciliation," to make friends. Therefore the word "reconciliation" has the idea to make friends again (cf. Hardeman, *Hardeman's Tabernacle Sermons*, Vol. 1, 233). The word could be defined as: "To restore to favor, or to bring back into favor or to a right relationship; to make right again." To say that something or someone needs to be reconciled implies: 1.) at one point or time, the two things or people were united, and 2.) that a separation or departure has occurred (cf. Hardeman).

We can understand the concept of reconciliation with the illustration of our checkbook. For the purpose of this illustration, we will assume the bank had not made any mistakes. We reconcile our checkbook based on a statement sent to us by the bank. If the balance on the bank statement does not equal what is recorded in our registers, then we must find the mistake and correct it, based on what is given in the bank statement. Thus we reconcile our checkbooks; or we bring the balance back into a right standing with the bank.

The late brother N. B. Hardeman illustrated it this way:

I want to try to illustrate that thought by two men who, perhaps, have formerly been friends and neighbors, who have walked together harmoniously along the pathway of life; but in the course of time something or other has come to pass, and the friendship no longer exists, such as hitherto bound them together. They have been broken asunder, and they have become enemies and march in different directions the one from the other. Maybe the two gentlemen thus presented are of equal standing with reference to their intellect, social relationships, and other

conditions; or it may be that one of them is quite superior of the other; or it is possible that one of them is absolutely innocent of any wrong and the other is wholly guilty. Now, instead of going into the courts and having a long-drawn-out lawsuit, sometimes men have coolness enough to decide upon the arbitration of their differences and the settling of the matter outside of the court by means of a mediator, or some one to act as a middleman, unto whom their respective cases may be told and his judgment and decision in the matter be made final. (Hardeman, 234)

He then went on to say concerning the qualification of the one serving as the mediator:

But you have...requirements [of the one serving as mediator-TAC]—first, that he is not a party to the conflict or difference; second, he can approach both parties; third, he is equally related to both of them. There is another thing absolutely necessary for him to have, and that is, he must become acquainted with all of the facts and details that led up to the separation and alienation; for unless a man know about those things, he is unprepared to render a verdict and give a decision characterized by anything like justice or fairness. (Hardeman, Vol. 1, 235)

There is only one Man who can serve as mediator between man, who is the guilty party, and God, who is sinless and perfect: God who became man, Jesus Christ (compare Philippians 2:5-9; I Timothy 2:5). God, knowing man would sin and separate himself from his Creator, devised a plan to



reconcile man unto Himself. Notice some things with me about God's Plan for Reconciliation.

### MAN'S NEED FOR RECONCILIATION:

When God created man in the Garden of Eden, man had no sin. Man lived on a "plane of justification." In other words, man was in a right relationship with God; he was worthy to be in the presence of God. But something happened. Man became separated from God. What caused this separation? SIN! Isaiah wrote: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But **your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear**" (Isaiah 59:1-2). When man sins against God, he creates a gap in the plane of justification on which man once stood. When man sins, man falls.

What is sin? John defines it as: "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." There are two ways in which a person can sin: 1.) sin of omission (that is, failing to do what God commanded in His Word) and 2.) sin of commission (that is, doing what God forbids in His Word). When man sins against God, man must be aware of the results: Sin destroys! Paul wrote: "For the wages of sin *is* death..." (Romans 6:23). A wage is what we earn. When we sin (violate God's law), we deserve death (spiritual). James wrote:

Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. (James 1:13-15).

When it comes to sin, no one is innocent: “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world [not that man inherits sin-TAC], and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12). It is because of man’s sins he is separated from God and in need of being reconciled unto God.

#### GOD’S PROVISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Man has put himself in the position of being separated from God; He did not do it to us. However, because of His marvelous love and grace, God provided the cure. It must be understood that God was not the One who moved: man is. Leon Morris wrote:

The chief difficulty to be solved in the New Testament use of reconcile, reconciliation, etc., is whether, in the process of reconciliation, God can be said to be reconciled to man, or whether the process is one in which man only is reconciled. As we have seen the Old Testament says little in set terms about the manner (though it often speaks of the wrath of God and of its removal, and this is nothing else than the reconciliation of God). ... The New Testament must be allowed to speak for itself, and when it does so we are immediately struck by the fact that God is never said in so many words to be reconciled to man. Almost always He is the subject of the verb and is said to reconcile man to Himself” (Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 192)

Therefore, Paul wrote:

Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away;

behold, all things have become new. Now all things *are* of God, who has **reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ**, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation [preaching of the Gospel-TAC], that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing [or accounting-TAC] their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation [gospel, the power of God unto Salvation-TAC]. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, **be reconciled to God**. For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin [or sin-bearer-TAC] for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (II Corinthians 5:17-21)

The gap caused by sin must be bridged. Man, in and of himself, cannot bridge the gap caused by sin. God alone can and has done it by the death of His perfect and innocent Son, Jesus Christ. Man needed the sacrifice of the perfect Son of God in order to be made right again. Man's sins demand the cross. Paul said, "For the **message of the cross** is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are **being saved it is the power of God**" (I Corinthians 1:18). In the latter part of I Corinthians 1:21, Paul wrote, "...it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe." That is why Paul preached "...Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2). In Hebrews, we read:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, **might taste death for everyone**. For it was fitting for Him, for

whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ... Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make **propitiation for the sins of the people.** (Hebrews 2:9-10, 17)

In Romans, Paul wrote:

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were **reconciled to God through the death of His Son** [His blood-TAC], much more, **having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.** And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation ["atonement" in the King James Version-TAC]. (Romans 5:6-11)

Because of sin and separation, man needs the gap bridged back to God (reconciliation). Notice the greatest bridge ever built:

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: **But now in Christ Jesus** ye who sometimes were **far off** are **made nigh by the blood of Christ**. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the *enmity, even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that **he might reconcile** both unto God in one body **by the cross**, having slain the enmity thereby. (Ephesians 2:12-16)

That is why Paul could say that the "Gospel is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). The Gospel is based on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (cf. I Corinthians 15:1-4). Those are the facts of the Gospel. Facts cannot be obeyed. However, they must be believed, and we must "obey from the heart that form of doctrine" (Romans 6:17). Jesus Christ is the foundation of the Gospel. It is because of His great love for man (John 3:16) and by His mercy, God has provided a plan (The Gospel) for the reconciliation of man back unto Himself. However, there are...

### CONDITIONS OF RECONCILIATION

It is the case that salvation is a free, unmerited gift from God. It should be noted, just because it is a free gift does not mean that there are not conditions attached. It is clear from Hebrews 5:9 that Jesus "...became the author of eternal salvation to all who **obey Him**." God demands obedience to the commands He has given to us. Notice the commands given to obtain the forgiveness of our past sins (salvation):

First, a person must hear the Gospel. No one can obey that which they have not heard. Christianity is a taught

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religion; not a better felt than told one. Jesus said, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be **taught** by ["of" in the King James Version-TAC] God." Therefore everyone who has **heard and learned** from the Father comes to Me" (John 6:44-45). We are not speaking of simply taking in of audible sounds; rather, the understanding of what God would have us to do.

Hearing produces faith. Paul wrote, "So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). The second step in being reconciled to God is faith in Jesus the Christ. Jesus clearly taught the necessity of faith: "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24). John closed his Gospel account out by saying, "And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; **but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name**" (John 20:30-31). The Hebrews' writer pointed out that faith is an absolute necessity by saying, "But without faith *it is impossible* to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

Unlike what is so popularly taught in the religious world, the Bible teaches that belief alone is **NOT** enough! In the days of Jesus, there were some who believed on Him, but were not willing to act on that faith by confessing Him. John recorded, "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many **believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him**, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43). James clearly taught that faith without works (of obedience) is a dead faith. He

wrote: "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead" (James 2:17) and "You see then that a man is justified by works, **and not by faith only**" (James 2:24). James mentioned the demons who believe (verse 19), but they do not have salvation!

The Hebrews writer, encouraging Christians not to give up on the Christ and salvation, told them, "Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that **after you have done the will of God** [obeyed the commands God has given-TAC], you may receive the promise [the promise of rest spoken of in Chapters 3 and 4]" (Hebrews 10:35-36). In Chapter 11, the writer listed numerous examples of people who, by their faith, obeyed the commands given to them by God, and received the promised blessing given to them. For example, in 11:30, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down **after they were encircled for seven days.**" Faith is absolutely necessary, but it is NOT the only element or aspect that brings about salvation. Our faith **MOTIVATES** us to move forward in obedience to the commands given to us by our Lord.

Imagine with me if you will, a man standing on the edge of a sheer cliff. The plane on which he is standing represents the state of man who has reached the age of accountability and has transgressed the Will of God; he has sinned. The chasm before him is the division between himself and God, which is caused by sin. His desire is to be back in a right relationship with God: to be reconciled or obtain salvation. The only thing that can save is the Gospel (Romans 1:16). The only way man can cross that gap caused by sin is for a bridge to be constructed. Man **CANNOT** construct this bridge himself; in and of himself, he is hopeless (Romans 3:10; Ephesians 2:12). Only God can construct the bridge needed for man to be brought back into a right relationship again. The foundation of the bridge is

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the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4). Jesus is the foundation of that bridge (I Corinthians 3:11). God has put in place stepping stones (so to speak) upon which man is to cross. You see, it is faith that motivates man to take these steps (obedience to the commands given by God) to salvation (or reconciliation). Notice these commands which have been given by Jesus Himself.

We must repent of our past sins. Jesus commanded in Luke 13:3 and 5, "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." Paul preached, "'Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead'" (Acts 17:30-31). Repentance is a turning from a life of sin. It involves: 1.) a godly sorrow (II Corinthians 7:9-10), 2.) a change of heart (Romans 6:17) and 3.) a change of Action (Acts 26:20).

Next, Jesus has commanded all men everywhere to confess Him as the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Jesus taught in Matt 10:32-33, that if we are willing to confess Him before others, He will confess us before His Father; however, if we deny Him before others, then He will deny us before the Father. John wrote, "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God" (I John 4:15). The Ethiopian Eunuch is an example of one who confessed (Acts 8:37).

Many in the religious world stop here at Jesus' command to confess. They deny that baptism is necessary to the salvation of our souls. They often refer to Romans 10:9-10, where Paul wrote, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth



confession is made unto salvation.” This passage does not teach salvation separate and apart from baptism. In fact, if studied carefully, it confirms that there is something more than faith and confession. Notice Paul said in verse 10 that “one believes **UNTO** righteousness [being in a right relationship with God, i.e., salvation-TAC]” and “confession is made **UNTO** salvation.” The word “unto” describes movement. It shows that something or someone is moving toward or in the direction of something. The willingness of a person to have faith in Christ and to confess Him means they are moving in the direction of righteousness or salvation. They are not there yet, there is one more step. What is it?

Jesus Christ Himself commanded all men everywhere to be baptized. In Mark 16:16, Jesus clearly commanded: “He who **believes and is baptized will be saved**; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” This should be easy for us to understand. Many have incorrectly argued that since Jesus did not say at the end of the verse, “...but he who does not believe **and is not baptized** shall be condemned” that baptism is not necessary. Consider a couple of examples to show why Jesus did not, nor did He need to say such. If I were to say, “He who buys a ticket and boards the bus, shall travel to Charlotte, NC; but he who does not buy a ticket will not travel to Charlotte, NC.” You see, unless a person buys a ticket, they are not going to board the bus. Consider another example. If I were to say, “He who eats and digests food shall live, but he who does not eat, will die.” It is unnecessary to say that the person who does not eat and does not digest will die because one who does not eat has nothing to digest! The same is true about Jesus’ statement about baptism. A person who does not have faith that Jesus is the Christ, will not seek to obey His command to be baptized! In Acts 2:38 Peter preached the same message as did Jesus: “...**Repent, and be baptized**

every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for** [in order to obtain; never "because of"-TAC] the remission of sins..." Jesus has commanded baptism, and He never gave a non-essential command.

Many have accused faithful Gospel preachers of teaching water salvation. God did put water in the plan, but friend, it is the Blood of Christ that saves a person from their sins! John said, "...Jesus Christ...who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Revelation 1:5b). Jesus shed His blood in His death (John 19:34) and we contact His Blood in obedience to His command to be baptized. Paul wrote, "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were **baptized into His death**? Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4).

#### CONCLUSION:

If you have reached the age of accountability; the age when you know the difference between right and wrong, then the fact is you have been stained by sin. With that sin in your life, you are separated from God. That means you are outside of Christ and in that condition you have no hope of eternal salvation. If you were to die today, in that condition, then you would be lost for all eternity. However, by the love and grace of our Almighty God, He has provided a means by which you can be reconciled back to Him. You can obtain the forgiveness of all your past sins and by living a faithful life you then can obtain eternal salvation in heaven.

Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? Based on that faith, are you willing to repent of your sins? Are you willing to confess Him as the Christ and then allow someone to baptize you into His death where you will

contact the Blood of Jesus which will remove the stain of sin? If not, then there is no hope of salvation! Why not obey Jesus Christ today?

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In Appreciation To  41  
Faithful Service! Prov 3:3-7

Chapter 4  
**Redemption**  
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I am thankful to the church in West Jefferson for the invitation to participate in the Back to the Bible Lectures for 2009. "God's Plan of Salvation" is a tremendous and ever relevant theme. And the subject of "redemption" is one which both motivates and brings joy to the hearts of those who diligently seek to understand it.

**REDEMPTION DEFINED**

What is redemption? The words "redeem" and "redemption" are used in a variety of ways in the English language. A standard dictionary defines the word redeem as:

1. to buy or pay off; clear by payment; *to redeem a mortgage* ...
2. to buy back.
3. to recover (something pledged or mortgaged) by payment or other satisfaction; *to redeem a pawned watch* ...
8. To obtain the release or restoration of, as from captivity, by paying a ransom."
9. *Theology.* to deliver from sin and its consequences by means of a sacrifice offered for the sinner. (Dictionary.com)

This last definition is a good summary of how the word “redeem” is used in reference to God’s plan for man’s salvation from sin.

The “word ‘redemption’ throughout the Old Testament is used in the general sense of deliverance. God is the Redeemer of Israel in the sense that He is the Deliverer of Israel (Deuteronomy 8:26; 2 Samuel 7:23; 1 Chronicles 17:21; Isaiah 52:3)” (Connell). The word “redeem” is first used in our English translations of the Bible in Exodus 6:6 in reference to God redeeming His people from the bondage of Egypt. “Therefore say to the children of Israel: ‘I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments’” (Exodus 6:6 NKJV). The Hebrew word translated “redeem” in this passage is *padah* (paw-daw’) which means “to sever, i.e. ransom; to release, preserve” (JAMES STRONG). From this definition it is obvious that redemption involves bondage, a ransom or payment and a release. In the case of the redemption of Israel from bondage, the ransom paid was the “great judgments” (plagues) of God upon the Egyptians which resulted in the release of God’s people from the tyranny and burdens heaped upon them by their oppressors.

The word “redeem” is also used in the Bible in the sense of buying something back. For example, Leviticus 25:29 reads, “If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may **redeem** it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year he may **redeem** it.” Similar statements are made concerning land that belonged to Naomi’s family (Ruth 4:1ff) and a poor man who had sold himself as a servant to a stranger being bought back by his family (Leviticus 25:47-50). Brother Kevin Cauley describes this view of redemption in the following statement:

When conquerors overthrew your nation the individuals became slaves to that nation. Everyone became a slave: men, women, and children. Many nations would then give them an opportunity to be redeemed. This was done by giving the conquering king or general money and literally buying one's self out of slavery. Having done this, you were then redeemed, bought back. (Cauley)

The book of Job is the first place in the Bible where there is a specific reference to the redemption of man's soul. One of Job's friends named Elihu is quoted as saying, "He will **redeem** his soul from going down to the Pit, and his life shall see the light" (Job 33:28 NKJV). While this statement suggests in its context that the word soul is used here by Elihu in reference to the preservation of Job's physical life based upon the condition of Job's repentance from sin, the word "redeem" speaks to the idea of the Lord's involvement. The "He" in Elihu's comment refers to God. The Psalmist penned a similar statement, "But God will **redeem** my soul from the power of the grave, For He shall receive me" (Psalm 49:15, NKJV). The latter phrase of this verse, as well as the context, suggests that the Psalmist is writing about what will occur after death. Coffman quotes Adam Clarke as writing, "Here the Psalmist makes one of the few Old Testament confessions of faith in a meaningful afterlife. Others are Psalm 16:10; 73:24; Job 19:25-27; Daniel 12:2-3; and Isaiah 26:19" (Coffman).

The Old Testament speaks of redemption from trouble (Psalm 25:22), redemption from oppression and violence (Psalm 72:14; 119:34), redemption from the "grip of the terrible" (Jeremiah 15:21), redemption from the hand of enemies (Micah 4:10) and redemption from iniquity (Psalm 130:8).

Eighteen times in the Old Testament God is referred to by the term **Redeemer**. Job declared, "For I know that my **Redeemer lives**, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God" (Job 19:25-26 NKJV). The book of Isaiah contains most of the references to God as **Redeemer**. The book refers to God as "your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 41:14; 43:14). It also speaks of the **Redeemer of Zion** - a prophetic reference to Jesus Christ (Isaiah 59:15-20). The **Redeemer** of His people is said to be "mighty" (Proverbs 23:11; Isaiah 49:26) and "strong" (Jeremiah 50:34). The **Redeemer** teaches and leads (Isaiah 48:17). The **Redeemer** possesses "everlasting kindness" and "mercy" (Isaiah 54:8). The **Redeemer** is "from everlasting" (Isaiah 63:16). These tremendous attributes of the **Redeemer** emphasize not only the character of our Redeemer but also His power and ability to redeem.

### THE SLAVERY OF SIN AND THE NEED OF REDEMPTION

All men and women who are accountable to God are in need of redemption. The reason is clearly stated in the words, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Sin is the transgression of the spiritual law of God as revealed in Scripture (1 John 3:4). Literally the Greek word translated sin (hamartia) means "a failing to hit the mark" (Thayer). One who either violates the teaching of scripture (commission) or fails to obey what God has commanded (omission) has sinned. The inspired John wrote that "All unrighteousness is sin..." (1 John 5:17). Unrighteousness is "a deed violating law and justice...." (Thayer).

Those who commit acts of sin are subject to paying the penalty for their sins. The penalty for sin is separation from God. "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So

that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2 NKJV). This separation produced by one's participation in sin is described in the Bible as spiritual death. The prophet Ezekiel wrote, "The soul that sinneth it shall die..." (Ezekiel 18:20 KJV). The book of Romans declares, "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23 KJV). Unforgiven sin will ultimately result in eternal separation from God in the punishment of hell. In picturing the final destination of sinners Jesus declared, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:46 NKJV).

Those who commit sin sell themselves into slavery to sin. In John chapter eight, Jesus is confronted by the Pharisees. He speaks to them concerning His deity, His upcoming death and the fact that the Father had not left Him alone. Verse thirty reads, "As He spoke these words, many believed in Him." Jesus addressed these believers with the words, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth and **the truth shall make you free**" (verses 31-32). The Jews answered that they were Abraham's descendants and had never been in bondage to anyone (verse 33). They did not understand the kind of bondage of which Jesus was speaking. Actually they were in two different types of bondage at that time. They were in political bondage to Rome, even though they did not willingly consent to it, and they were in spiritual bondage to sin. Notice in verse thirty-four the answer Jesus gives to their question of, "How can You say, 'You will be made free?'" "Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a **slave of sin.**" The last phrase of this passage indicates the fact that sin enslaves those who choose to participate in it.

Consider the following characteristics of those who are enslaved by sin. First, those enslaved by sin are under the ownership and complete control of a cruel and demanding master. This is true not because one becomes the



slave of sin against his will but because he has chosen to yield his will to sin as his master. "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?" (Romans 6:16 NKJV). Willing obedience to the horrible master of sin is characteristic of the sinner. Participation in sin begins with temptation. Temptation to commit sin occurs when one is "drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death" (James 1:14-15). Desire gives birth to sin! The sinner, because of his evil desires, willingly places himself under the complete control of the cruel master of sin.

Second, those enslaved by sin are under bondage. Bondage indicates "a state of subjugation or captivity often involving burdensome and degrading labor." (Dictionary.com) The Hebrew writer pictures sin as a "weight...which so easily ensnares us..." (Hebrews 12:1 NKJV). Jesus invites all those who "labor and are heavy laden" under the common burden of sin to come to Him so that He can give them rest (Matthew 11:28). David wrote, "For my iniquities have gone over my head; Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Psalms 38:4 NKJV). Sin has consequences both present and future. Participation in sin leads to physical and emotional as well as spiritual bondage. The alcoholic and drug abuser are in bondage to their drug of choice. Such bondage is referred to as an addiction. But it isn't just a physical addiction. It is an addiction to sin. Many become so enslaved to these addictions that they find it almost impossible to escape. Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for the addict to bear. The liar bears the burden of his sin building lie upon lie until the press of their weight crushes the trust of his fellows and destroys his reputation. Like a heavy burden they are

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too heavy for the liar to bear. The sexual sins of fornication, adultery, pornography, homosexuality, etc., produce heavy burdens - consequences that result in sexual diseases, destroyed homes, emotional upheaval, and, in the case of pornography, destructive compulsive behavior. These are burdens too heavy to bear. We could go on but the fact is that the sinner is in bondage and suffers a heavy burden too heavy for him or her to bear. Sin has the power to burden the sinner and bring him into bondage, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Third, those enslaved by sin are deceived. The Hebrews' writer speaks to the deceptive nature of sin in the words of Hebrews 3:13, "but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the **deceitfulness of sin**" (NKJV). Sin puts on a mask to cover its true ugliness. It appears to produce happiness but actually produces extreme sorrow. It appears to be pleasurable but it results in the greatest displeasures known to men. The inspired Paul penned the words of Romans 7:11, "For **sin**, taking occasion by the commandment, **deceived me**, and by it **killed me**" (NKJV). Whiteside wrote regarding this passage:

Concerning the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, God said to Adam and Eve, 'Thou shalt not eat of it.' By his lying speech, Satan deceived Eve. He did not deceive her by means of the commandment; but he took the commandment as an occasion to approach her, and deceive her into believing that it would be greatly to her advantage to eat the fruit. Death was the penalty for that disobedience. Hence, the devil seized the occasion, or the opportunity, presented by the command, and by his artful speech

deceived her, and by the command slew her.

(Whiteside)

The devil is still at work using the very same process by which he initially deceived Eve. That his efforts have been successful is seen in the common idea that the commands of God are too restrictive and stifle man's free self expression. Some, as a result of believing Satan's lies, have suggested that the New Testament does not contain any "rules and regulations" and is nothing more than a "love letter from Christ." Others have practiced what has been called a "buffet" type of religion, picking and choosing what they want on their religious plate, and rejecting what they do not want to believe or practice. Sadly many false religious systems have originated upon this basis alone. The devil loves all of this for he knows that those enslaved by sin are deceived.

It cannot be denied by any thinking person that slavery to sin is the worst possible condition in which one may exist. It separates man from God and leaves him under the complete control of a cruel and demanding master. Man needs to be redeemed from the enslavement of sin but how? Is it possible for man to redeem himself? Can you and I pay the price for our own sins and buy our spiritual freedom so that we will never be burdened by sin again? Can we escape the cords of sin that bind us by our own efforts apart from the Word of God? The answer to all of these questions is a resounding NO! The prophet Jeremiah declared, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23 KJV). The Bible clearly states the undone condition of man enslaved in sin: "As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one" (Romans 3:10-12 NKJV).

### THE REDEMPTION PRICE

The inadequacy of man to redeem himself necessitated another means of redemption. Someone had to pay the price for sin but whom? Who had the ability and the necessary qualifications? Who was perfect and without sin? The blood of animal sacrifices offered under the Law of Moses was completely inadequate for the task. The Hebrew writer makes this truth clear in the words, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4 NKJV). Certainly no mere man met the necessary criteria. Even the High Priests who served under the Law and offered sacrifices for the sins of the people were also required to offer the same sacrifices for themselves for they too were subject to human weakness (Hebrews 5:1-5). Not even among the angels could one be found who could serve as an adequate sacrifice for sins (Hebrews 1:5-14).

Only one was truly qualified to pay the price for man's redemption from sin.

But **Christ** came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but **with His own blood** He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained **eternal redemption**.  
(Hebrews 9:11-13 NKJV)

Notice the writer affirms that "Christ came...." In order to effect redemption, Jesus had to leave the glory of heaven to be made flesh, to live and then to shed His precious blood.

Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and **coming in the likeness of men**. And being found in **appearance as a man**, He humbled Himself

and became obedient to the point of death,  
even **the death of the cross.**" (Philippians 2:6-  
8 NKJV)

Contrary to the view of the premillennialists, who mistakenly believe that Jesus came into this world in order to establish an earthly kingdom in which he supposedly failed, these passages and others clearly teach that Jesus came the first time into this world for the express purpose of dying on the cross to make redemption possible for those enslaved in sin.

It is only by His shed blood that one may obtain **eternal redemption**. He is therefore the perfect **Redeemer**. He is the perfect **Redeemer** for He "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). He is the perfect **Redeemer** because the power of His blood to cleanse sin and "purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God" is exclusive (Hebrews 9:13-14). He is the perfect **Redeemer** because His blood is incorruptible and invaluable (1 Peter 1:18-19). He is the perfect **Redeemer** because "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12 KJV). He is the perfect **Redeemer** because He is "the way, the truth, and the life" and no one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6 NKJV). He is the perfect **Redeemer** because "...through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:42-43 NKJV). He is the perfect **Redeemer** because, "...no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). He is the perfect **Redeemer** "for there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a **ransom** for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Timothy 2:5-6 NKJV). Jesus is the **Redeemer** of ALL who will properly respond to His gracious offer of pardon. The ransom paid by Jesus is not reserved for a particular race or

nationality. The ransom was not paid just for the wealthy or just for the poor. The ransom price was paid for all because God is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9). That is why Jesus invites all who labor under the burden of sin to come to Him for rest (Matthew 11:28-30). That invitation is extended to you, dear reader, and to your family and loved ones and to every person who is accountable before God. But it is not extended unconditionally. God expects man to make a specific response to His offer of redemption through Jesus Christ.

### HOW TO BE REDEEMED

Jesus shed His precious blood for the purpose of providing the means of redemption. He has paid the price for sin, completing His part in God's plan for man's salvation, and now He wants every lost soul to receive the benefit of the redemption His sacrifice has made available.

Let us return to the first Bible example of redemption - the release of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. God sent Moses to Egypt to lead His people from bondage. Through Moses and Aaron, God brought ten plagues upon the Egyptians. Before each plague Moses and Aaron would plead with Pharaoh to "let my people go." But when the plague was over Pharaoh would harden his heart and refuse to comply. The last plague brought upon the Egyptians which secured their final release from bondage was the death of the first born. In preparing God's people for this event specific instructions were given to the Israelites.

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb. 22 And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the

door of his house until morning. 23 For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you." (Exodus 12:21-24 NKJV)

The salvation of the firstborn in the houses of the Israelites was conditioned upon their compliance with these instructions. Without the blood on the door there was no salvation for the firstborn. With the completion of the tenth plague the Israelites were redeemed from Egypt.

The Passover became an annual celebration for the nation of Israel. It commemorated the Lord's passing over and sparing the Children of Israel while He killed the firstborn of the Egyptians. One of the requirements was the offering of a lamb. In his monumental work *The Scheme of Redemption*, Robert Milligan offers the following ways in which the "Paschal Lamb" was typical of Christ:

- (1) It was without blemish, and so was he. 1 Peter 1:19.
- (2) It was killed between the two evenings, and so was he. Matthew 27:45-50.
- (3) Its blood procured salvation and deliverance, and so did his. 1 Peter 1:18-19.
- (4) It was eaten without leaven; and just so we are all required to partake of Christ, without the leaven of malice and hypocrisy. 1 Corinthians 5:7-8. (Milligan 100)

The redemption provided by the blood of Christ is no less conditional than was the salvation provided by the blood of the lamb of the Passover. The blood of Jesus must be applied to the soul as the blood of the Passover lamb was applied to the doors. What separated those saved from the destroyer from those who were not was the application of the blood. What separates the saved from the lost today is

the application of the blood of Jesus. Forgiveness of sin and thus redemption from sin is provided only through the blood of Jesus. Salvation for the Israelites was in the houses with the blood on the doors. Forgiveness of sins is found only in a certain spiritual location which the Bible describes as "in Christ". The inspired Paul penned the words, "In Him [Christ, JH] we have **redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins**, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7 NKJV). This truth begs the question of how does the sinner reach the blood of Christ over 2,000 years after it was shed? Obviously, it is impossible to physically reach the literal blood of Jesus. However, it is still possible for the sinner to reach His blood spiritually. The sinner reaches the blood of Christ when he/she complies with the means God has commanded which puts him into Christ - into that spiritual location where the blood is applied. Since salvation and redemption are "in Christ" I want to be "in Christ"! How about you?

Many have accepted the view that one gets into Christ the moment he believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God that is by "faith only." If that is the case then where is the Bible passage that says so? We challenge our readers who hold to this view to find even one instance in which the Bible teaches one gets "into Christ" and the blood of Jesus is applied at the point of faith alone. The Bible commands all men everywhere to repent of sin (Acts 17:30). Is this the point in man's response to God in which he gets "into Christ" and where the blood is applied? The very definition of repentance would deny it. Repentance is a change of mind which results in turning from sin toward God. Repentance changes ones spiritual direction but it does not change ones spiritual location. There is no Bible passage that says one repents "into Christ." However, there is a Bible passage that clearly teaches the point in man's response to God's offer of redemption as to when one gets "into Christ.



Consider it carefully! "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27 NKJV). The blood of Jesus is applied to the souls of those who, as penitent, confessing (Romans 10:10) believers, are **baptized [immersed] into Christ**. When Jesus sent His apostles into all the world to preach the gospel He instructed them, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16 NKJV). Consider the following parallel:

Galatians 3:26-27	Mark 16:16
You are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus...	He who believes...
For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ...	And is baptized...
Have put on Christ	Will be saved.

Redemption is "in Christ Jesus." To get into Christ requires ones submission to the Lord's command to be baptized. The Bible further substantiates this truth when it declares, "Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?** 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4 NKJV). Consider the following argument: Jesus shed His blood in His death (John 19:33-34). One is baptized into the death of Jesus (Romans 6:3). Therefore, the blood of Jesus is applied to the soul when one is baptized. It is only AFTER baptism that one walks "in newness of life." One can only walk in newness of life if the old man of sin has been "crucified with Christ" and "the body of sin" has been done away (forgiven) (Romans 6:6). According to Romans 6, that occurs in water baptism.

The redeemed constitute the church of Christ. The Lord adds the redeemed to His spiritual body, the church, over which He rules as Head (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 1:22-23). The very fact that Jesus paid the price of redemption is set forth in the New Testament as a motivation to personal holiness for the redeemed. 1 Corinthians 6:20 reads, "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (NKJV - See also 1 Peter 1:13-19).

### ETERNAL REDEMPTION IN HEAVEN

The eternal dwelling place of the redeemed is not on this earth but in heaven. This is the hope of every redeemed person. It is a hope that serves as "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast" (Hebrews 6:19 NKJV). It is a hope for "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:4-5). Revelation chapter fourteen sets forth a symbolic picture of those who are in the presence of God's throne in heaven. Among those mentioned are the "redeemed from the earth." How wonderful and glorious it will be to among the redeemed from the earth, to stand in the presence of God before His throne and to sing a new song that only the redeemed may learn. Whatever these symbols represent we know that it is a tremendously exciting prospect that lies before those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Sweet is the song I am singing today; I'm redeemed, I'm redeemed! Trouble and sorrow have vanished away; I have been redeemed. Great is my joy now as onward I go; I'm redeemed! I'm redeemed! All the way homeward my praises shall flow; I have been redeemed. Precious indeed is my Savior to

me; "I'm redeemed! I'm redeemed! Happy in glory someday I shall be; I have been redeemed! I'm redeemed by love divine; glory, glory, Christ is mine. All to him I now resign; I have been redeemed! (Rowe)

Would to God that all who read these words could truthfully proclaim "I have been redeemed!"

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## Chapter 5 Propitiation & Atonement

Tracy Dugger

Tracy Dugger was born in Bethesda, Maryland in 1963. He graduated from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture (1985), and a Master's Degree in Agriculture Education and Extension, and Tennessee Bible College in Cookeville with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Bible (1991). He has worked in the graduate program at the Memphis School of Preaching and Austin graduate School of Theology. He and his wife, Julie, have three daughters and one son. His great-grandfather came out of denominationalism to become a Christian and endeavored to preach the gospel. Tracy has been preaching in since 1989 and has preached for congregations in Tennessee, Virginia, Arkansas, and Texas. He presently preaches for the Crandall church of Christ in Shady Valley, Tennessee and teaches high school agriculture in Mountain City, Tennessee.

### INTRODUCTION

Consider the overwhelming multitude of problems and obstacles man has overcome since his existence:

1. **Problems of transportation.** Think of how long it used to take to travel sixty miles by foot or horseback. Inventions of the train, automobile, and airplane have changed dramatically our transportation views. The Concorde can exceed the speed of sound (sound travels about one mile/second). The people of ancient times would not be able to even ponder traveling to the moon or some space station. Compared to ancient times, very few limitations to travel exist today on earth.

2. **Inventions** of electricity, computers, telephones and other such communication devices, and labor saving devices and machines have greatly changed our world and helped solve many problems.

3. What has **medical technology** done in solving problems? It has treated, relieved and prevented many life-threatening diseases and plagues. For example, before 1400 B.C., Polio was responsible for crippling and killing millions of children. In the mid-twentieth century, Jonas Salk developed a vaccine against polio, virtually ending this disease. Doctors can now perform astounding feats of surgery because of technological advances. Medical technology in the last couple of centuries has doubled the life-span of a person living in an industrialized country.

These things and many more have been accomplished by man (although I do not deny God's indirect aid). These things have caused many to boast, *"Look how great we are; look how far man has come; look at what we have accomplished, look what great problems we have overcome. There is nothing man cannot accomplish."* This is the doctrine of humanism.

However, there is one problem man has been unable to solve; one obstacle he cannot hurdle over alone. It is the greatest problem he has ever faced. It has been a problem for the first man and will be a problem for the last. We could organize a summit with the greatest minds in the world, spending billions of dollars, and still it could not be solved. Only one man triumphed over it - Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:15). **The problem is, what do to with sin? How do we obtain forgiveness?**

The reason it is so serious is because of its eternal consequences. Polio, AIDS, and other such devastating diseases do not compare with sin. The reason sin is so difficult to solve is because we cannot rid ourselves of this loathsome plague on our own. We cannot do it without God. If there is one thing we need never forget it is this. Efforts to solve the sin problem without God is like securing our financial savings inside *"a bag with holes"* (Haggai 1:6).

## THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Early in Paul's epistle to Rome, he shows in chapter one that the Gentiles are guilty of sin. In chapter two, he proves that the Jews are likewise guilty of sin. He combines both groups in chapter three to demonstrate that all are guilty of sin. In fact, in Romans 3:10-18, Paul quotes the Jew's own Scriptures to prove that even Jews are guilty of sin and in need of salvation. In Romans 3:19, he explains that these Scriptures applied to the Jews. And since they already saw the truth that the Gentile is guilty then they would see all are guilty of sin - both Jew and Gentile. By saying, "*that every mouth may be stopped,*" he meant that no defense could be offered against the conclusion that all have sinned.

In the next verse (verse 20), Paul states an extremely important principle: "*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.*" Here, Paul teaches that pure law could not save by itself - it condemns but does not justify. Law brings condemnation rather than justification. There are only two ways a man could be justified by law - never violate it (sinless perfection) or once violated, pay the penalty in full. The penalty of sin is eternal death, thus, no one could pay the penalty and live. The Law did serve a valuable service - it gave knowledge of sin (verse 20b).

Is there a way in which sin can be dealt with and yet the guilty party not suffer its ultimate consequence? Romans 3:21-31 is God's answer to the sin problem. It informs us what God has done to provide that pardon of justification for man's sin. Since a system of pure law cannot atone for sin (because it is without provision of forgiveness), what can? The answer is found in the remainder of Romans chapter three. In dealing with the assigned subject matter (Salvation by Propitiation and Atonement), we will consider Paul's divine discussion of redemption in this chapter.

### GOD DEALS WITH SIN APART FROM THE LAW OF MOSES

In Romans 3:21, Paul stated, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." Here Paul explains that the righteousness of God is revealed. The passage corresponds to Romans 1:16-17. How then will God make men righteous without the Law? By the gospel. The Law knows nothing but condemnation once violated. It has no provision for pardon. But the gospel offers salvation by Christ's atonement - the debt of sin we owe was paid by His life.

How is God going to deal with the sin problem and save men? How can men be righteous? By the Gospel of Christ Jesus! That way is called in Romans 3:22, "*the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ..*"

Paul further explains that God's plan to save was foreseen, foreshadowed and foretold by the Old Testament (Genesis 3:15; 12:1-3; Isaiah 53; Luke 24:25-26, 44-48). This idea holds true to the message of the Old Testament which says that redemption is coming. The message of the New Testament is: Redemption has come. That redemption is the means by which man is made righteous - brought into a right relationship with God.

### GOD WILL DEAL WITH SIN BY JESUS CHRIST

In Romans 3:22, Paul tells us, "*Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.*" Again, the way of salvation is here stated by Paul as "*the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ..*" It is called God's righteousness because He is the author; He is the one which makes the way of righteousness for man. It is made possible for us "*by faith.*" What does Paul mean? The system of faith. And we must believe that system. Justification is revealed to all but not all will benefit - only those who accept the



faith. In verse 22, "*faith*" is a noun and "*believe*" is a verb. We learn that the kind of faith that saves is the faith that obeys (Romans 1:5; 16:26; James 2:19-24; Hebrews 5:9; 11). Again, what is God's way of saving? The righteousness of God by faith of Christ.

### WHY THIS WAY?

Paul lists eight reasons why this is the way God will solve the problem of sin and save man.

1. **This way is for all; it is universal.** This is why Paul says in verse 22c, "*for there is no difference.*" We take this to mean that all men are on equal footing; there is no distinction (Acts 10:34; 15:9). Why is there no difference? Verse 23 answers, "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" All have sinned, thus failing to honor God. God is then right in treating us alike. When Paul stated, "*and come short of the glory of God,*" he meant that we simply fail to glorify God. How do we glorify God? By being what we were created to be; we fall short of our purpose; fail to give God what He is due. This point answers one of the main questions of life - What is my purpose? Our purpose on this earth is to glorify God (Matthew 5:16).

2. **This way is free by God's grace.** Paul explains in the next verse, "*Being justified freely by his grace...*" Grace is a gift without merit. It is receiving what we do not deserve. God was under no obligation to save us. Thus, any plan to save must be free. He would call it a free gift in Ephesians 2:8-9.

God's grace being free does not warrant the conclusion that there are no conditions attached to it. Many believe that because salvation is a free gift, all conditions are nullified and obedience is made unnecessary. This is false. While I was in school a man who decided to retire from preaching full-time told me he would give me what

remained of his library. He would not bring them to my house but required me to drive over to his and load them onto my truck. I did not deserve them; I had not done anything to merit them; I did not even know him prior to this invitation. However, he was willing to give them to me free if I would come and get them. My coming to get them did not change the fact that they were free.

In Acts 27:24, God told Paul that all the lives on the boat had been *“given”* to him. But verse 31 stipulates a condition - abiding in the ship. They had been given to Paul, but were conditional. And so, all are lost because of sin, but all can be made free by accepting God's free gift of grace.

3. **This way is a way of redemption.** Again, we allude to Romans 3:24, *“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”* The word *“redemption”* has to do with rescuing, redeeming, liberating, or ransoming a man or a thing from a hostile power. It expresses the idea of redeeming a man from a power or a situation which has him in his grip which he is unable to save himself from. The word is used in Luke 21:28 to describe deliverance from the Roman army. It is used to describe the bondage of sin under the Old Covenant in Hebrews 9:15, *“And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.”*

In buying a house, I have to borrow money from a financial institution (bank, lender). Every month I am required to make a payment to the mortgage company, hoping one day that it will be paid in full. This will free me from the obligation. One single sin places you in debt to God. When you violate His law you have taken a mortgage out on your soul and do not have it in your power to pay

that mortgage back. You stand in need of a redeemer - someone to pay that mortgage.

The word is not used in Matthew 18:21-35, but described well. Our national debt was several trillion dollars. Could I myself have made that payment? Never. This is the idea of our sin debt.

Another important fact in verse 24 about redemption is the identification of where it is located? Redemption is in Christ. How does one get in Christ? Simple, by being immersed in the watery grave of baptism (Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3-5).

4. **This way is a way of propitiation.** In verses 25-26, Paul provides us with some very foundational spiritual truths about Jesus' atonement when he writes:

*Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

The original word translated "propitiation" was often used in that time to refer to an appeasement of God's wrath. Not that God is a wrathful being void of mercy, grace, and love, ready to swoop down at any sign of weakness. God is not a being who desires and loves to punish. The idea here is the satisfaction of justice and thus a covering of sin.

All the sins of the previous religious system ("*past*" - Patriarchal, Mosaical), were not paid during that time frame. How then could God retain His justice while at the same time not deal with sin? What could hold back His wrath? Was His wrath held back because of an injustice of God? No - God forbid! His wrath could be sustained for a time (He could *forbear*) because of what Christ would do in the future. In the Old Testament, redemption through the blood of Christ (which is the only redemption for sin) was in *promise* rather than fact. Forgiveness to them was as sure as

God's promises. The meaning seems to be that God did actually forgive those Old Testament saints. Then how could He be justified in forgiveness without proper payment for their sin? After all, the blood of animals cannot atone (Hebrews 9-10). How? By the assurance of Christ coming in the future. Christ's sacrifice justified God's forbearance during Old Testament times.

It is similar in principle to an occasion when I purchased a van. I remember writing a check for a large amount of money when I did not have it in the bank and asked them to hold it for five days until the money would be deposited. In like manner, a check was written on behalf of those Old Testament saints until Christ actually died in the first century and deposited the payment into their account.

When Paul stated, *"To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus,"* in Romans 3:26, he is wanting us to understand that God is justified by not sending us to hell and we are justified both by the same thing - Christ.

Romans 3:24-26 is really the biblical doctrine of the atonement which is the doctrine of an exchange of life for life. The word atonement can be best remembered by the simple division of the word itself - "at-one-ment." Through the vicarious death of Jesus Christ and our compliance with His will we who were once separated from God are now brought back to Him (reconciled). We are at one with God. Paul would use that word in Romans 5:11 when he stated, *"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."*

5. This way is a way that excludes the boasting of men. Paul puts it this way in verse 27, *"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith."* Because of the great and wonderful plan God has devised to save us, there is no room for man's bragging. God alone is responsible for the basis of our

salvation. This is why Paul explained in Ephesians 2:8-9, *"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."*

The basis of our salvation is Jesus Christ but this does not exclude the conditions man must meet. This is why Paul calls the New Covenant a "law," *"the law of faith."* The way of justification for man is not a pure law system.

6. **This way is a way that excludes merely law-keeping as a means of salvation.** Many Jews believed that law-keeping alone would save. Paul wrote contrary to that idea, *"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."*

Man is brought into a right relationship with God on the basis of the system of faith rather than a pure system of law which made no *ultimate* provision for sin. Yes, they had their animal sacrifices, but these could not ultimately take sin away (Hebrews 10:1-4).

Martin Luther added the word "only" to this text. But the Holy Spirit did not inspire Paul to write *"faith only."*

Again, the reason we cannot be justified by a system of law alone is because no one can keep it perfectly. Once you violate it you stand condemned without provision; without a payment that you can *live* with. The Gospel (law of faith, God's righteousness) has payment - in the form of Christ's atonement for sin.

7. **This way is a way that is inclusive of all men.** In Romans 3:29-30, Paul writes, *"Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith."* Paul asks a rhetorical question demanding a negative reply - God is not just a tribal God, a God of the Jews. He is also God of the Gentiles. And so, He is God of all men.

8. This is a way that establishes the Law of Moses. In the last verse, Paul says, "*Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law*" (verse 31). When one becomes righteous in Christ by the gospel, he does not nullify the Law. He confirms its purpose. He has reached the end to which it was designed to bring him - the righteousness of God without the Law. See also Galatians 3:19-27 and Matthew 5:17-18.

Because of the Bible's teaching on the need for propitiation and atonement, the great, compelling, and urgent word of the Bible is "NOW!" In another inspired book, Paul would plead by stating, "*For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Much Success in the  
Kingdom.

Tracy Dwyer

Chapter 6  
**Adoption, Election & Predestination**  
 Tony Hoss

Tony is the son of Hubert and Peggy Hoss. He was born in 1960, and obeyed the Gospel when he was 12 years old. He is married to Melissa and they have two sons who are both currently in School. AJ, the eldest son is studying to be a special education teacher and Gary, the youngest son is attending the Tri Cities School of Preaching and Christian Development. Tony is a (2008) graduate of the three year program at the Tri-Cities School of Preaching and Christian Development, in Elizabethton, Tennessee. He has been greatly involved in the local work of the church since 1985, working with congregations in North East Tennessee. He also has served as song leader since the age of 16. He served as the Youth Director for the Cherokee Church of Christ in Johnson City Tennessee for five years. He served as the interim minister for the Blountville Church of Christ in Blountville, Tennessee on two different occasions. Presently, he is serving as an Elder and the full-time minister for the Valley Church of Christ in Kingsport, Tennessee, and as an instructor for the TCSOP&CD. He teaches the Synoptic Gospels, Parables, 1&2 Thessalonians and Philemon. He is the speaker for the "Know your Bible Radio Program", which is aired in the Kingsport area.

### INTRODUCTION

The Lord commanded the Children of Israel in **Deuteronomy 11:1** to love God, keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments and His commandments. The very last word in this important verse is "always," and it carries with it the idea of all that God has taught them concerning these things. It also indicates that there was never a time when the children of Israel should ever become negligent in their execution of these important commands from God. Regretfully, the children of God did become negligent in their observance of these commands. In **Joshua 24:14-15**, we see that the Children of God had come full circle and had left the precepts of God. A new generation of Israelites then arose desiring to serve God. They like their fathers before

them were warned not to follow after false idols, but rather to serve God in sincerity with every fiber of their being having their whole heart engaged in their worship and in truth according to the divine direction that God had given them.

New Testament Christians are given similar instructions concerning our worship to God. In His discussion with the woman at Jacob's Well, Jesus informed her that God sought true worshippers. Jesus said that God being a spirit seeks worshippers that will worship Him in truth and in spirit, the same instruction as is given in the book of Joshua. The time had come for true worshippers to seek and follow Jesus. According to **John 1:17**, Jesus is the truth; therefore, our worship to God must center on Him and His commandments.

In a similar fashion, our modern religious society has reverted to the times of the Children of Israel; because many no longer desire to seek God and worship Him in spirit and in truth. Our world is teeming with religious division and controversy. Mankind tends to rely on himself rather than on God. Man has not totally forgotten God, but has minimized the deity of God. We are looking to ourselves more and more for the answers of life and are following our own rules for the design of worship, which has devolved into entertainment for the participants, not true worship to God. Thus mankind's desires for a self-centered lifestyle and self-centered worship have resulted in loss of the knowledge of the Word of God. More specifically it is a lack of a common knowledge and understanding of the biblical terms and related doctrines like "election, foreknowledge, predestination and adoption."

The theories associated with these terms have caused a great amount of confusion among theologians and believers for many years. Due to a lack of knowledge of God's Word or a lack of desire to serve God sincerely, many



have used these concepts to teach the false doctrine that God had predestined some people to go the Hell, leaving them with absolutely no choice in the matter. As a result, many others have been left disillusioned and have completely rejected religion. They feel that they can never know if they are one of the elect and an adopted Child of God; therefore, they logically ask, "Why bother?"

As good stewards of God's Word, we have an obligation to know the Word of God and to spread the soul-saving message to a lost and dying world. Our understanding of the doctrines of foreknowledge, election, predestination and adoption affect what we think of God, and ultimately our understanding of these doctrines determines whether we will obey God. Peter said, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15). The man of God must enclose the Word of God in his heart, keeping it there always and must be humble enough to respect and obey the Word, fearing the justice of God. Guy N. Woods remarked on sanctification;

To sanctify is to set apart: and to sanctify in one's heart Christ the Lord is to regard Him with that reverence and awe befitting the Lord of Glory. ... This done, you may be sure that nothing can disturb you. (*A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles*, 97)

In 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul instructed Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Ultimately, Jesus said in the Great Commission, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto

the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20). As a result of these and other edifications, our duty to God and man is clearly seen. Therefore, the doctrines taught in the Word of God surrounding these terms, must be understood in order to protect people from making false assumptions, arriving at false conclusion and teaching the resulting false doctrines.

### DOCTRINES SURROUNDING FORKNOWLEDGE, ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION

Many times Christians shudder when they hear these words, having knowledge that these words are often associated with those who advocate false doctrine. As a result many have separated themselves from a proper study of these terms and have forbidden themselves to learn the proper use of them and the doctrines surrounding them. These terms do have biblical foundations, but it is the misapplication of these terms and the false doctrines associated with them that make people suspicious.

*First*, the doctrine of UNLIMITED ATONEMENT offers God's love and His salvation to any person who will accept and obey Him. The Apostle Paul said, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). According to 2 Timothy 2:6, Christ was a "...ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The apostle John makes it clear that Jesus died for all men. "And he is the propitiation [atonement to God-WAH] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). Jesus' death did not center solely on the sins of saved men, but according to John, Jesus, His death, and His blood were for the sins of the whole world. A beautiful verse which describes the love of God for the world and God's desire for the entire world to be saved is

**John 3:16**, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Word of God throughout its pages bears record that these words of Jesus are true and accurate. God loved the inhabitants of the whole world not just some select group within the world.

*Second*, the doctrine that UNIVERSAL SALVATION IS AVAILABLE TO ALL MEN. **John 3:15-17** teaches that "whosoever believes" are those that should not perish. Jesus explained His purpose for coming into the world was to save the world; that is the inhabitants of the world (mankind). Since the actions on Calvary's tree were for all men, then all men have a responsibility to act according to the dictates found within the Word. Paul said, "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all **them that believe**: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (**Romans 3:22-23**). David Lipscomb said:

For all, Jews and Gentiles, have sinned against the law, hence cannot be justified by it... This glory of God not only manifests, but communicates, itself, being reflect in such of His creatures as are capable of knowing and loving and growing like Him. Paul, therefore, calls man "the image and glory of God" (1Corinthians 11:7), because he is capable of receiving and reflecting God's glory. (*A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles*, 75)

It is apparent that God wants all men to be saved; the qualifier is that mankind must believe. Peter said, "...that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." While there are some who teach that God offers salvation to only a few, the Word of God bears record that God offers salvation to all men throughout the whole world.

*Third*, the doctrine of the IMPARTIALITY OF GOD is described by the writer of Job. He records God's impartial feelings toward mankind. "How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? For they all are the work of his hands" (Job 34:19). The following references assert God's impartiality toward mankind: 1) *Romans 2:11* "...no respect of persons..." 2) *Ephesians 6:9* "...neither is there respect of persons with Him," 3) *Colossians 3:5* "...there is no respect of persons," and 4) *Galatians 2:6* "...God accepteth no man's person..." James sums it up best when he said, "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced [convicted through wrong doings-WAH] of the law of transgressors" (James 2:9). If a doctrine demands that God is partial, then we make God a sinner. The doctrine of impartiality as taught throughout the Word of God demands that God reward and punish by His perfect standard; a standard that all men have an opportunity to seek and obey. If God is perfect, His Word is without flaw as well. If this is true, then there cannot be any contradictions that arise from the understanding of the terms or related doctrines found within the pages of God's Word. The concepts of foreknowledge, election, adoption, and predestination must be understood individually. Understanding them will help us determine how they relate to one another and other doctrines found in the scriptures, with the result of being able to correctly obey the Word of God.

### TERMINOLOGY OF THE WORDS IN QUESTION

#### FOREKNOWLEDGE:

While there may not be a specific term for "foreknowledge" in the Old Testament, it is a concept that is clearly advocated by God and understood by His children. In *Deuteronomy 31:14-21*, we learn that God had

foreknowledge of the death of Moses as well as the straying of the Children of Israel. God also had foreknowledge that Moses as a result of his sinful actions would not enter into the Promised Land. God had foreknowledge that Pharaoh's heart would be hardened against the Hebrews as well as Himself (**Genesis 15 -- Exodus 11**). God said that He knew the beginning of all things to the end of all things (**Isaiah 46:10**). God also warned the Children of Israel of their indiscretions long before they occurred (**Isaiah 48:5**). In **Isaiah 65:24**, the prophet indicated that God hears the voice of His children before the words are uttered or even before the thoughts of their words are formed in their minds. God foretold that Jeremiah would be a prophet before he was born, but more astonishing, before he was conceived in the womb of his mother (**Jeremiah 1:5**).

The word "foreknowledge" is used in the Greek New Testament in which the word meant: 1) to have knowledge before hand; 2) to foreknow; 2a) of those whom God elected to salvation; 3) to predestinate. According to Thayer's Greek Dictionary, the feminine noun form of the word carries with it the idea of foreknowledge, forethought or pre-arrangement. Thus, God has foreknowledge of all events that have occurred or will occur in the future. However, no scripture teaches that God by His foreknowledge forces any man desiring to know Him to do so, nor does He prevent a person from knowing Him.

#### **ELECTION:**

The word "election" is found several times throughout the Old and New Testaments. According to Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Definitions, the noun form of "election" means: 1) chosen, choice one, elect (of God). Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionary, states that the verb form of the word "elect" means: 1) to try or to examine something; 2) to prove something and then to choose or elect something after the examination. It can also refer to the

chosen ones or the elect ones. Thayer's Greek Dictionary defines the feminine noun form of the word as: 1) the act of picking out, choosing; 2) a thing or person chosen; 2a) of persons: God's elect. The adjective form of the word refers to the choosing or selecting the best of a kind; for example the selection of Christ as the Savior of the world or the selection of Christians to be His elect.

### PREDESTINATION:

The term predestination is defined in Thayer's Greek Dictionary as a verb which means: 1) to predetermine, decide beforehand; 2) in the NT of God decreeing from eternity; 3) to foreordain, appoint beforehand. Strong's Greek Dictionary states that this word means to limit in advance, that is, (figuratively) predetermine: - determine before, ordain, predestinate.

"Predestination" is a biblical term. Many claim that God has predestined some souls to eternal security and others to eternal condemnation. The Bible in no way advocates this doctrine. Many Christians misunderstand, and have a lack of knowledge of the term "predestination." "Predestination" or forms of the word occur several times in the scriptures; therefore we must have a correct understanding of this term to insure that we teach the doctrine of predestination properly.

## DISCUSSION OF THE TERMS FOREKNOWLEDGE, ELECTION PREDESTINATION, AND ADOPTION

### FOREKNOWLEDGE:

The foreknowledge of God is one aspect of His omniscience. God through the prophet Isaiah said, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not *yet* done..." (Isaiah 46:10). God knows and has always known all things. God does not need to acquire knowledge or information because He already

possesses all knowledge. Acts 2:22-23 teaches that God knew beforehand that Jesus would be crucified. Peter stated that Jesus was "...delivered by the determinate counsel and the foreknowledge of God..." This is the realm of the actual. God even knows the realm of the possible. Jesus identified this attribute of God when he mentioned the cities of Sidon and Tyre in Matthew 11:21-24. According to the scriptures, the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida should have repented due to the influence of Jesus, but they did not. Christ informs them that Tyre and Sidon would have repented if they had witnessed the occurrences that Chorazin and Bethsaida had witnessed. God said, "I have declared the former things from the beginning... I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee... I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb" (Isaiah 48:3, 5, 8). By means of God's foreknowledge, He has always known who would be receptive of Him and desire a relationship with Him. God also knows who would reject Him and an everlasting home in heaven with Him. Therefore, God has always known who would and who would not believe and obey the Gospel of Christ. Yet with all His foreknowledge, God has never forced any man into a situation that man did not want to go.

God's foreknowledge is neither the cause nor the affect of men's actions. Consider the following example: If a person were standing upon a tall mountain and could see two cars traveling in the same lane toward one another he then would have foreknowledge of the impending dangers as they continued their approach. However, the outcome is out of the watcher's control. More specifically, if a person saw a driver traveling down the road at a great rate of speed and he knew that the bridge had been washed out by a flood, he would have foreknowledge of the danger the driver was racing toward. This knowledge causes a person

to give chase to stop the inevitable action and the dangers that lay ahead.

When the driver disregards warnings about the flooded-out bridge, he falls into a gaping hole in the roadway and drowns. The person who knew about the washed out bridge did not cause his death, but certainly had knowledge of the dangers and good intentions in warning him. The driver was not responsive to the warnings and died as a result. In like manner, God has given man a roadmap in form of the Holy Bible, a roadmap designed to guide man away from sin and destruction and to direct man toward God and eternal salvation. Mankind's rejection or acceptance of the Bible's instructions does not mean that God forced him to obey or to disobey the Word. The foreknowledge of God does not contribute to the certainty of anything that any man has ever done; God's foreknowledge only anticipates action which will one day occur. God has the knowledge of the universe, past, present and future at His fingertips (Isaiah 43:12), and thus God was able and did conceive a perfect plan to save mankind, a plan that had no possibility of failure. God's foreknowledge preceded all things in the plan for mankind's salvation. Because God's plan includes the concept of election, He could and did set all the conditions of man's election or selection. Knowing all these things He was able to predestine a plan to save man and then call those obedient to that plan His "elect," even before the actions of the elect were ever conceived in their minds (Romans 8:28-29; 1Peter 1:2).

### **ELECTION:**

The question is how and whom does God choose? Many teach that God chooses individuals independently based on His desire to save or condemn. God has desire for all men to be saved (2 Peter 3:9), and the Bible reveals that God does not choose an individual but accepts a class or



group individuals who respond positively to His commands. In **John 3:16**, Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." According to the words of Jesus, God loves the entire world. God's great love is further seen in the fact that He sent His only Son to save the world. Jesus said in (**John 17:23**), "...that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovest them, even as thou lovest me."

It is God's great love for and understanding of His creation that prompted the actions of God to save us from our sins. His foreknowledge saw that man would sin and separate himself from God. (**Isaiah 59:2; Romans 3:23**) According to God "...I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion. So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that **showeth mercy**" (**Romans 9:15-16**). Again this verse does not state that God chooses some and rejects others based upon His impulse. To whom does God show mercy?

Paul gives the answer, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, **by the washing of regeneration**, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (**Titus 3:4-5**). Paul gives an example of such a group of people in **1Corinthians 6:11**, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Contrary to the teaching of many, God will show His mercy to those who accept His will, those who accept regeneration (baptism), and those who have a good and sincere heart. Jesus supports this doctrine in His Sermon on the Mount. In **Matthew 7:7**, He said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." We must then read

from the Word of God how to please God and how to worship Him. Then we continue in His word asking for help from God in our daily prayers.

Many, who advocate that God chooses only some, refer to **Acts 13:48**. Paul said, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." In verse 46, many of the Jews had rejected the Word of God, therefore God ordains, chooses, only those who do not reject His Word. This is not a single person, but rather a class or group of individuals who are rejecting God. According to **2 Peter 3:9** God does not want any to perish, but that all should come to repentance. The fate of those who perish is in their own hands as they reject God. God's "elect" are those individuals who choose to obey Him. The individuals whose fate is eternal destruction will meet their fate because they have disregarded God and His commands. Consider **2 Thessalonians 1:8**, "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ..." and **Matthew 7:21**, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

God is no respecter of persons. It is simply against the nature of God to choose and reject men arbitrarily. Our God is a God of love as well as a God of JUSTICE. God's justice demands that He provide us with the information we need in order to escape eternal destruction. God has fulfilled His part. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (**John 12:48**). God's requirement for man's salvation stated that only the blood of His Son could atone for the sins of man. God predestined His plan to save those that accept His plan before the foundation of the world. Those who obey God's Word are

God's elect. Therefore, Paul encouraged the Ephesians to walk worthy of their calling, their vocation in **Ephesians 4:1**. In **Romans 8:33**, Paul refers to God's people as the elect that God will justify, the same ones for whom Christ will make intercession (**Hebrews 7:25**).

### PREDESTINATION/ADOPTION:

"Predestination" is biblical with its correct meaning understood and applied. The relationship between the infinite mind [God] and the finite mind [man] was planned by God (**Job 38:4**). The Bible in no way states that God has predestined or preordained that any man will be saved or lost separate and apart from God's divine plan of salvation. As stated earlier, **Romans 3:23** points out mankind's problem, the sin in his life. God's plan removes sin and works to keep us close to God.

Many Calvinistic teachers and scholars point to **Ephesians 1:4-7** as their proof text that God does predestine individuals to Heaven or Hell. In like manner many will refer to **Romans 8:29-31** as their proof that God has taken choice out of man's hand. Paul wrote:

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: Having predestinated us unto the **adoption** of children by **Jesus Christ** to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted **in the beloved**. In whom we have redemption **through his blood**, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. (**Ephesians 1:4-7**)

The explanations of the verses are found within the verses themselves. Consider **Ephesians 1:4**, for there is no doubt that God chose some; the question is who He chose.

The answer is those **in Him**, those **in Christ**. God did not choose one person over another, but He chose a class or group of individuals, believers. In **Ephesians 1:5** Paul states that God predestined us to the adoption of children. How did this adoption take place? It takes place **by Jesus**, for those Paul refers to as **us**. Although Paul is writing to Christians in Ephesus, they, along with Paul, and all obedient men are included in this adoption. The means of adoption is **by Christ**. Thus one must be in Christ to receive this state of predestined adoption. This is the plan of God; to predestine that man through Christ would be reconciled to God. In **Ephesians 1:6**, Paul stated that, "...He hath made us accepted in the beloved." The elect, according to Paul are accepted, the question is how this acceptance would occur. Since God is no respecter of persons the class of individuals who are accepted, are those that are in the beloved, Christ. In **Ephesians 1:3**, Christ Jesus blessed the elect. This blessing is based on our acceptance of God's plan and our remaining faithful to Him. In **Ephesians 1:7**, we read that the blessed have "...redemption through His blood..." The elect, chosen, or predestined ones have whatever blessings they have through the power of the blood of Christ. To say otherwise minimizes or negates the power of the blood of Christ. Christ said He came into the world to save the world not just a minimal number based on the Father's arbitrary respect of some individual. This statement of Jesus is totally in agreement with Paul's statement in **Ephesians 1:7**, and these individuals have "...forgiveness of sins..." In **Ephesians 1:11-13**, were Paul said:

In whom also we have **obtained an inheritance**, being **predestinated according to the purpose** of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will... who first **trusted in Christ**. In whom ye also **trusted**, after that ye heard the word of truth, the

**gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed...**

Those who have forgiveness of sins are synonymous with the predestined ones who trust in Christ, who have heard the Word of truth through their hearing or reading Gospel of their salvation and becoming obedient to it.

According to Paul:

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**. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? **Romans 8:28-31**

Paul refers to those who are called according to His (God's) purpose, that the world be saved.

Jesus said, "For God sent **not** his Son into the world to **condemn the world**; but that the **world through him might be saved**. He that **believeth** on him is **not** condemned: but he that **believeth not** is **condemned already**, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (**John 3:17-18**). God performs His purpose on earth through earthen vessels, preachers, according to Paul in **2 Corinthians 2:4-7**. All Christians are to participate in presenting the Word of God to all men. This is the purpose of the Great Commission as described in **Matthew 28:18-19**; **Mark 16:15-16**; **Luke 24:47-48**. To question God's desire for all men to hear the saving message of the gospel is to question the reasoning of God in

presenting us with such a message. The great commission, if heard and obeyed by all, would be useless if God had already decreed that most would be eternally lost regardless of their actions. Paul also stated that we have "...forgiveness of sins, **according to the riches of his grace....**" David Lipscomb also describes it in this way:

The word of Grace ...touches the sentiment of all of Paul's teaching on the redemption of sinful men...It has the particular sense of free gift, undeserved bounty and is used specially of the goodness of God which bestows favor on those who have no claim or merit in themselves. That our redemption cost so great a price --- the blood of Christ --- is the supreme evidence of the riches of the divine grace. And the measure of what God does for us is nothing less than the limitless wealth of His living favor. (*A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles*, 21)

Regardless of the actions of man, he, by himself cannot accomplish the deed of self salvation. This great accomplishment is only achieved through the grace of God, and afforded to the elect, chosen, and predestined class of men who accept the predetermined plan of God found within the pages of God's Holy Word.

Redemption for all men in Christ has always been the plan of God for mankind. This is why Paul can say in Colossians 1:15, Jesus was the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature. Jesus was, is, and always will be the pre-eminent one. He was the first to be resurrected, never to die again. His resurrection overcame death for all men. Luke recorded, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (**Acts 4:12**).

John Calvin's doctrine of predestination is described in the following quotation:

For all, he maintains, are not created in like condition; but eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal condemnation for others. Calvin confesses that this is a 'horrible decree...' (*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, 2436)

Calvin confesses that this is a "horrible decree" and is the reason many theologians have come to recognize that Calvin's views are not compatible with Scripture. God did foreknow and continues to foreknow His children. God elects and knows who will be His children and does predestine some, those who obey, to the adoption of sons.

#### CONCLUSION:

God has always required man to love Him, keep His Charge and His statutes, His judgment and His commandments. When God gave this commandment to His children in **Deuteronomy 11:1**, He stated this was for always. We must remember our responsibility to fully execute the will of God. The proper execution of this commandment demands we have a good knowledge of His Word. Therefore, we are admonished by Paul in **2 Timothy 2:15**, to study the Word to show ourselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the Word of truth. Knowing the terms and the doctrines surrounding foreknowledge, election, predestination and adoption is our responsibility.

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Many of the thoughts and illustrations contained in this writing were gained from individual contacts and acquaintances of whom I am forever grateful.

Micheal  
I thank God for you and your  
strength in Christ.

Tony Boss



## Chapter 7

**Buried with Christ in Baptism**

Adam Horn

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When one begins to study the Bible, immediately he has to be impressed with the various and special themes that this wonderful book addresses. For example, one has to be awestruck at the love and patience of God toward His creation. God created man in His image and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life only to see man turn his back on his Creator through the commission of sin (Genesis 2-3). Rather than destroying man for his disobedience, God chose to save him by showing his mercy and patience. How would He save man? God would save him through the greatest sacrifice that could ever be made—the death of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16).

Now, saying that proposes a thought—by saying that God sent His Son to die for man's sins does not mean that man is absolved of any and all responsibility. Certainly, God's love is forever demonstrated for man through the sending of Jesus, but that does not mean that man has no role to play in his salvation. That does not mean that man can save himself or that he could potentially earn salvation from sin and hope of eternal life only that man must respond to his God. Notice the words of the Apostle Peter as he spoke them to the Jewish audience that was gathered for the Pentecost feast: "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). One must understand

that the sacrifice of Jesus was made to provide man with the opportunity to be saved from the consequences of sin, not to guarantee universal salvation without man's response. Consider the words of the Hebrew's writer: "Though He were a son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:8-9). Notice that Jesus is the provider of eternal salvation only to those who obey him. Man has a role to play in his salvation.

If the above is true, then it begs the question: "What must I do to be saved?" That is, if Christ died to give us the opportunity to be saved from sin and we must obey Him in order to access that salvation, what must we do then to obtain it? Without doubt, this is the most important question that man could ever ask. No question has had or will have a greater impact on the souls of mankind. Therefore, we must ensure that we receive the correct answer.

When the question "What must I do to be saved?" is asked in today's religious climate, there are a number of answers that one could potentially receive. Perhaps the most common answer is that all one must do is to say the sinner's prayer, and he will then be saved. There is a problem with this particular answer, however. The problem is that nowhere in the New Testament is one saved in such a fashion. We must remember the words of the Apostle Paul when he wrote: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). The point is made that the Lord has revealed His message to us in order that we can know how to be saved. If this is the case, and it is, then one must derive the plan of salvation only from the Scriptures, not from men: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name

of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17). When men say that all one must do is say the sinner's prayer—and there is no Biblical authority for such a statement, then such an answer must be dismissed.

Another answer that some would supply is to just have faith alone in Jesus Christ. Certainly, where it is true that one must believe (Hebrews 11:6), it is incorrect and inconsistent with the Scriptures to say that faith ALONE saves. The inspired penman James wrote: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). Again, with no Biblical authority to substantiate such a claim, it must then be dismissed.

Hopefully, these comments have impressed upon our minds to go to the word of God—and it alone—for the answer to our question. It is God who has supplied the answer and not men: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). So, if this is the case, what does God tell us in His word? What is God's plan to save?

When one searches the New Testament for this plan, he immediately finds that it is not just one command that one must obey; rather, there are five steps in God's plan to save man. It begins with hearing the words of the Gospel: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Nowhere in the New Testament will one ever find a conversion to Christ without the Gospel being proclaimed and heard. As Paul implies in the above passage, when one hears the Gospel, faith is produced. As we mentioned, it is not faith alone that saves; however, faith is still imperative to one's salvation: "But 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" (Hebrews 11:6). Once true faith has been produced, it should lead one to repentance (literally, a

turning away from sin): "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Once repentance has taken place, one must then be willing to confess this faith; but in order to be saved and to remain saved: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33). There is still one step remaining in this plan to save. One must be baptized in water for the remission of his sins. We mentioned previously the sermon that the Apostle Peter preached on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2, it was also in that sermon that Peter specifically mentioned baptism and its purpose: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

It is here that many in the modern religious world would raise their voices in objection. That is, there are few that would be willing to acknowledge that one must be baptized in order to be saved. Yet, we must remember that we are concerned only with what God has revealed, not what men may say on a given subject. It is not the words of men that will save us, but only our obedience to the revealed will of God. Even so, the idea of the necessity of baptism is still hard for some to swallow. To many, this is contrary to what they have heard their entire lives. So, with that in mind, let us give ourselves to a study of this topic so that we can better understand it.

### CONFUSION OVER BAPTISM

It is interesting to find that though the majority of the religious world denies the essentiality of water baptism, it is interesting that the majority still practice it. Indeed,

there are very few in the denominational world that do not practice water baptism. One may ask, why? If baptism is not essential, then why do it?

In answer to these questions, there are a few answers that some may give. For example, some would say that one is being baptized in order to show or demonstrate the salvation that he has already received. As it is commonly stated: "it is an outward sign of an inward grace." Again, though, we are faced with a dilemma. In order to accept something as being true, there must be some type of Biblical authority behind it. Yet, when we analyze this statement in light of the Scriptures, we find that there is never a case of such an action. Certainly, there are some passages that some will go to in an attempt to prove their point, such as the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch as recorded in Acts, Chapter 8. In this account we are told of how a man named Philip meets this man and subsequently begins to proclaim the Gospel to him. After teaching him the things concerning Christ, this question is asked by the eunuch: "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). Obviously, somewhere along the way Philip taught this man about water baptism in order for him to ask the question. In response Philip said: "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37). It is here that those who object to the essentiality of water baptism would contend that this man was saved. Since he confessed his faith in the Christ, they would conclude that he was a saved man. There are problems with their argument, however. Consider what we discussed earlier. It is not faith alone that produces salvation (James 2:24). In addition, it is common among many in the denominational world to wait a number of weeks to baptize those who have supposedly been saved. Consider a

statement made by a local Baptist minister on the topic of baptism: "we usually will have a class and then baptize them later" (quote taken from a research project conducted by the author). Again, where is the Biblical authority? In this very context we are told: "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8:48). If baptism is not essential to one's salvation, it begs the question as to the urgency with which the eunuch was baptized. If this man were saved at the point of faith, why stop the chariot and go down into the water immediately? Why not wait until he arrived at his destination and have a class and then be baptized? Certainly, to the honest mind these questions demand answers. We would contend that the urgency with which the eunuch was baptized is evidence of his understanding that it must be obeyed in order to be saved.

Another aspect of this discussion is the confusion over the mode of baptism. Is sprinkling sufficient? What about pouring? The answer to these questions can be answered rather easily by considering these words of Paul: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12). One will notice that Paul described baptism as a burial. Would one consider a treasure chest with a little dirt sprinkled over it buried? No. What if we were to pour some dirt over it, would it then be buried? No. What if we were to completely submerge the chest? Would it then be considered buried? Yes. If we take that illustration and apply it to Paul's words, why would we accept sprinkling or pouring as an acceptable mode of baptism when Paul clearly describes it as a burial? Remember, in order for something to be true, there has to be some type of Biblical authority for it. Going further, consider this in light of the case of the Ethiopian eunuch. We

are told that “. . . they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him” (Acts 8:38). If sprinkling and pouring are acceptable modes of baptism, why was it necessary for both of them to go “into” the water? Again, if the only Biblical example we have is a burial, why would we conclude anything else?

There are other misconceptions of baptism in the religious world, but these are the most common. We mentioned in the outset of this section that a common view is that baptism is to show that one has already been saved. Let us now continue to show that is false by considering the true purpose of baptism.

### THE TRUE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

At the end of our Lord’s time here on the earth, Jesus issued what we commonly refer to as the Great Commission. This is the time that Jesus was commissioning His apostles to go out into the world and preach the Gospel. In essence, He was sending them out to do the work that He had been preparing them for throughout His three-year earthly ministry. The words of the Great Commission are recorded by Matthew: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19-20). We notice here that two actions are involved in this commission – to teach and also to baptize. If we were to stop with Matthew’s account, we would be left to wonder why baptism would be a key part of their teaching. However, as we continue to study the New Testament, we see that the other Gospel writers, in particular Mark, also record these events and give us additional information. Consider Mark’s account: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). As we mentioned, here Mark adds to what Matthew recorded by showing the reason why baptism would play a key role in the Great Commission. Mark records Jesus as saying "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." Clearly, the purpose of baptism, then, is to save.

Going further, as we mentioned, Acts, Chapter 2, records the events that mark the official beginning point of the Great Commission (that is, when the apostles began to fulfill what they were commanded to do). If the purpose of baptism is to save (as Jesus said), then one would logically think that it would be a part of their preaching. Peter's sermon is recorded for us in that he discussed four essential aspects of Christianity. He discussed the life of Jesus (Acts 2:22); the death of Jesus (Acts 2:23); the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2:24); and the ascension of Jesus (Acts 2:33). After making these important points Peter then concludes his sermon with these words: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). These powerful words were designed to bring the weight of these people's actions when they demanded the Lord's death about 50 days earlier. The account continues the audience's response to Peter's words: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Those present were asking the most important question that mankind could ever ask—"What must we do to be saved?" Now, if the views of many in the religious world are true (the sinner's prayer; just have faith only), then we should expect Peter to respond in that way; however, the New Testament records Peter as responding this way: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ



for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). One will pay close attention that Peter (by inspiration) said that one must be baptized "for the remission of sins." It is here that the purpose of baptism under the Great Commission (or the New Testament era) is revealed. It is not to show one has already been saved or for an "outward sign of inward grace," but rather to have one's sins washed away.

Another example would be the conversion of the Apostle Paul. Sometimes the most compelling evidence in any case is eye-witness testimony. Acts, Chapter 22, records the words of Paul as he recounted his own conversion to the Lord. Paul discusses how he was on the road to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 22:5), and while he was traveling, a bright light shone from heaven and he heard a voice saying: ". . .Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me?" Some would have Paul saved on the road to Damascus, but such a view violates what the inspired Apostle testified. According to Paul he was told: ". . . And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do" (Acts 22:10). As Paul continued to discuss his conversion, he went to mention how a man named Ananias came and revealed to him the purpose that the Lord had for him: ". . .to be His witness unto all men of what he had seen and heard" (Acts 22:15). In order for Paul to be this witness, however, it demanded that he first obey the message that he would be proclaiming. This explains these words of Ananias: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Again, notice that Paul (by his own admission) was baptized in order to have his sins washed away. What else should we conclude by the statements of Peter and Paul in these texts? How could we conclude anything other than the fact that baptism must be performed in order to have one's sins

## Chapter 7: Buried with Christ in Baptism

washed away (or remitted)? It is no coincidence that every conversion in the New Testament (specifically the book of Acts, which is the book of conversions) verifies that baptism is specifically mentioned, including that of the Ethiopian eunuch whom we previously discussed (see Acts 2:36-38; 8:5-12; 8:36-38; 16:32-33; 22:10-16, as well as others). When baptism is specified as being necessary in order to be saved (Mark 16:16), for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and in order to have one's sins washed away (Acts 22:16), there is no other conclusion that we should draw.

Now that the true purpose of baptism has been explained, let us move to a discussion of its design.

### THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM

After hearing the things we just discussed, many again will raise their voices in objection to say that water does not and cannot wash away sins. We would wholly agree with such a statement. There is no way that water can wash away sin. Someone may ask then: "how then can you say that water baptism is essentially to man's salvation?" The answer to this question is found in how God has designed baptism. As we shall see, it is not the water, but what we contact in the action that washes away sin.

I would like to call to your remembrance the fact that obedience is required of man: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9). Man is bound to obey God's commands regardless of what they may be. In each command God has given to man, there is a design and baptism is no exception.

Romans, Chapter 6, is a key passage as it relates to the design of water baptism. It is in this text that Paul records an aspect of baptism that often goes overlooked, but it is a key to understanding its design. Notice Paul's words carefully:

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:1-4)

The key verse for this aspect of our discussion is Verse 3. One will notice that Paul refers to our being baptized into the Lord's death. What does this mean? What is the significance of this statement? The answer is found when we parallel this statement to the events of our Lord's death on the cross:

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." (John 19:30-34)

The key to understanding the point that we are showing here is to notice that it was in our Lord's death on the cross that He shed His precious blood, and it is that blood that

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washes away our sins. Now, if it was in His death that He shed His blood and through baptism we contact the Lord's death (as recorded in Romans 6), then by contacting His death, we are then contacting the blood and thereby to having our sins washed away. To simplify that point, God has designed baptism to be the place where we contact the death of our Lord (the place where His blood was shed), and in that action the blood is applied to our souls; thus, washing us clean of our sins. It is not the water, but the action and what God does for us in the action that forgives sin. This explains the statement found in Verse 4 of Romans 6: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." How can we walk in newness of life after baptism (not before)? Because it is in the action that we contact the blood, and it is the blood that cleanses us of our sins: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21).

### CONCLUSION

Certainly, there is much disagreement in the religious world concerning water baptism, but when we analyze the Scriptures, we find that this disagreement is unwarranted for the matter is very simple to understand. Baptism is absolutely essential to one's salvation, for it is a God given command. In order to be in Christ, I must obey God's commands to that end: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). Let us lay aside the doctrines and practices of men and appeal to the Scriptures alone for our authority.

Michael,  
Thanks so much for all your hard work for the  
Kingdom! I appreciate you and your wonderful family  
greatly!  
In Christian love,  
Adam Horn

Chapter 8  
**Blood in God's Plan for Salvation**  
Steve Canup

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**INTRODUCTION**

In Hebrews 9:22 we read, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." Under Old Testament law everything defiled was to be purified by blood, as blood is essential to atonement. From the very beginning it was in God's plan for mankind to be redeemed by blood. Because of this, the accusation has been made that Christianity is a bloody religion, nevertheless there are references made to blood throughout the entire Bible. The word blood is used twelve times in the ninth chapter of Hebrews alone, and this should demonstrate to us the importance and significance of blood to atone. The idea has been asserted that all of the blood shed in animal sacrifices, under the Old Testament system, would have filled the Jordan River and kept it continually flowing for years. An example of such is found in First Kings Chapter eight on the occasion when King Solomon dedicated the temple. During this one event alone there were twenty two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep sacrificed.

### THE ASSURANCE OF OUR SALVATION

There is a contrast in the ninth chapter of Hebrews between the blood of Christ, under the new covenant, and the blood of animals under the Old Testament law. Clearly seen is that both covenants were dedicated and sealed with blood. Note:

Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. (Hebrews 9:18-22)

This speaks of the original establishment of the covenant with the children of Israel at Sinai. The Hebrews' writer then makes the following contrast of the new covenant with the blood of Christ:

It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others. (Hebrews 9:23-25)

Why did God require the shedding of blood under the Old Covenant? In the first place there is life in the blood. Leviticus 17:11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement

for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." We should all realize from this passage that blood signifies life in the body, without it we would die. If you sever a nerve in the body, you would lose the use of that particular member of your body, yet you would continue to live. Yet, if you were to cut an artery and leave it unattended you would quickly and inevitably bleed to death. The conclusion we must come to is that God took the one thing most precious to mankind and required him to offer it to make atonement for the soul.

Secondly, under the Old Testament law, God required the shedding of blood for atonement according to the judicial law that He put into place. The demand made by God was for the shedding of blood as a means of meeting life for life, and an example of this is found in the law God gave at Mount Sinai. In Exodus 21:24 we read, "And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life." In the context of this particular verse, this was God's instructions for the unfortunate occasion that two men would engage in a fight and injure a woman who was with child. If in the ensuing fight, or as a later result, the woman loses the child, the penalty would be "a life for a life." In the second giving of the law, we again read, "And thine eye shall not pity: but life shall go for life" (Deuteronomy 19:21). God is a God of love and mercy, but under the old covenant He also was a God of justice and righteousness. He had put into place a holy, judicial law for His people. Note again in Leviticus 24:20-21, "Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again. And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death." It is plainly obvious that under God's judicial law a man must suffer according to the injury he had committed. As such a man must make restitution accordingly, even up to the point of giving his life if he had taken a life.

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We now understand the importance of blood from the standpoint of God's judicial law given to His people. We must also understand that the blood of animals, although an important requirement, could not take away sins under God's spiritual law given at Sinai. When offered, it could only roll back sins yearly, as the Hebrews writer reminds us, "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:3-4). Therefore it required something better, a perfect life, a perfect sacrifice, to make atonement for the sins of those living and abiding under the first covenant. Christ was that something better, He was that perfect sacrifice. The Hebrews' writer reminds us of that fact, "And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Hebrews 9:15). Because we cannot live a perfect sinless life, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), we needed the blood of Christ, through His perfect sacrifice on the cross, to atone. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:8-9). Jesus Christ came to earth, lived as a man, endured all that we endure as humanity, yet was made perfect in that He was sinless. As such He, and He only, has the right to be the author, or cause, of our salvation. He was the perfect sacrifice for all mankind, for all time. Unlike imperfect animal sacrifices under the old covenant, requiring the continual yearly sacrifice, Christ, in His perfection, needed only to be sacrificed once. "Not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood *He entered in once* (emphasis mine, src) into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). Paul states such in Ephesians 1:7, when



he states how the forgiveness of sins is acquired, "In Whom we have redemption **through His blood**, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (emphasis mine, src). The Old Testament covenant required a constant sacrifice, made yearly, which could not remove sin. A sacrifice that had to be made over and over and over again yet was not sufficient. However the new and better covenant required only one perfect sacrifice.

### THE ASSERTION OF OUR SALVATION

Since we have established that we can be saved only through the blood of Christ, we need to examine what the Bible teaches concerning that salvation. Found within the pages of the Old Testament are lessons with New Testament application. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning..." (Romans 15:4). There are two examples within the Old Testament that we can examine that teach the principles that emphasize the principles of this lesson.

In the book of Exodus Chapter twelve, we find the children of Israel still in Egyptian bondage. This bondage is often pointed to as a type for the sin which ensnares and enslaves mankind. God is about to free the children of Israel from this bondage and in this chapter He institutes the feast of the Passover. Through Moses, He instructs the people concerning the proper preparation for the Passover and it is imperative for us to note the particulars of God's commandments on this occasion. Note beginning in verse three, "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house." When you read down to verse five note the details given by God, "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats." God was specific in His instruction concerning the animal as they were to take from the best of

## **Chapter 8: Blood in God's Plan for Salvation**

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the flock, an animal without blemish, a male less than a year old. No other animal, in any other condition, would have been acceptable to God. In verse seven, God continues in His directive, "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it." Once more God was very specific in His commandment concerning the placement of the blood. Now, what if the thinking of some of the Israelites were like many in the religious world today? "Well, I think I will just place this blood across my front door and it will be alright. After all, I have killed the lamb and the blood is right out there where God can see it, and I think that will be sufficient." Or if someone said, "I can't quite reach the top post of that door, and it's just too much trouble to get the ladder; I'm sure God will understand and it will be adequate." Note carefully again where God stated the blood was to be placed, "...and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses..." Do you think God would have been so specific in His instructions if it did not matter? And should we suppose that God would pass over those houses "...and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:13), if they had not completely followed God's commandments on this matter? God was specific as to where the blood was to be placed and as such, any other location would not have been acceptable. Let us note the final directive given by God in verse twenty-two, "...and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning." Here we find God's final and most important instruction for their safety; in essence He is stating "stay in the house." The animal has been sacrificed, the blood has been applied, and going out of the house would have certainly meant death. They were to stay in the house for the salvation of their lives!

Let us now fast forward to the book of Joshua to find another incidence that displays this same principle. In the

book of Joshua, the nation of Israel is about to undertake the military campaign to overtake the land of Canaan, the Promised Land. In Joshua 2:1 we read that "Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there." We should be familiar with the story of how Rahab the harlot hid the two spies from the king of Jericho. Verse nine Rahab said unto the men, "I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you." From verse ten we can understand that the inhabitants of the land have heard of the might of the God of the Israelites, and the great miracles of deliverance He wrought for the nation of Israel. Rahab is very aware God is with the children of Israel, and has given unto them the land. Because of this the occupants of the land are terrified; there is an evident fear of God and of Israel.

Note the covenant entered into between Rahab and the Israelite spies:

Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death. And the men answered her, our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. (Joshua 2:12-14)

Here we see the Old Testament principle of "a life for a life" a representation of God's judicial law. But what is that covenant agreed upon by Rahab and the spies? Note the instructions given to Rahab by the spies:

Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. (Joshua 2:18-19)

Again specific instructions are given which are to be followed for their salvation. Rahab was to place a scarlet thread in the window by which she had let the spies down. No other color of thread was to be used and no other location was to be acceptable. Can we suppose that Rahab and her family would have been spared if yellow thread had been placed at the front door? Or green thread or blue thread? What if Rahab had taken liberties with the placement of the thread and placed it somewhere else altogether? We can also watch the instruction given, "...and it shall be, that *whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street*, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him" (emphasis mine, src). The principle of "staying in the house" is again used or given in this situation. Death would have surely come to those who went outside of the house. We can clearly distinguish that there was safety in staying in the house!

#### **THE AFFIRMATION OF OUR SALVATION**

Who is our Pascal lamb today? Note John's statement in John 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away

the sin of the world." John recognized Jesus for what He was and the next day, John again made the same declaration. "And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God" John 1:36. Jesus is our perfect lamb without spot or blemish and it is through His blood that the sins of the world are taken away. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Christ redeemed us, bought us back, and paid the ransom for our sins, but not with the corruptible, perishing things of this world. Christ redeemed us through the most important thing possible, His precious blood.

We have therefore noted that Christ redeemed us from our sins through the shedding of His blood, yet where did Jesus shed His blood? Where was the blood placed under the New Covenant? John 19:34 answers the question for us, "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." Christ shed His blood in His death upon the cross, that we can have remission of our sins.

How do we contact the blood, which Christ shed upon the cross, which can take away our sins? Paul succinctly informs us that we figuratively contact our Savior's blood when we humbly submit to the literal act of baptism. Note:

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.

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Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (Romans 6:3-6)

We are to imitate the very act that Christ endured and underwent to bring about the forgiveness of our sins! Our action mimics Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. As Paul instructs us we are "baptized into His death," "buried with Him by baptism into death" and as such our old man of sin "is crucified with Him." We must take note that God is specific about where we contact the blood. So many in the religious world today talk about the blood of Christ, yet never fully realize that they **must** contact that blood in order to have their sins remitted. God gave His only begotten Son to the death on the cross, to shed His blood for the redemption of all mankind. This was God's pledge of all that He was willing to give. We in turn make the pledge of obedience to God when we humble ourselves to the act of baptism. It is in that action, of baptism, that we come in contact with the cleansing blood of Christ. Christ's death becomes our death, our pledge to the covenant, into which we choose to enter. No other act is acceptable to God for the remission of sin. Just as God was specific concerning where the blood was to be placed in Exodus chapter 12, and no other place was acceptable, God is specific concerning the placement of the blood of the Lamb under the New Covenant and how we are to contact that blood.

We also contact the blood in the church for which Christ died. When Paul called the Ephesian elders to meet with him at Miletus, he exhorts them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). Here the apostle Paul indicates that Jesus Christ paid the ultimate price one could pay for something, that is, the giving of His life and the shedding of His blood. Later Paul

would instruct husbands to love their wives with the same sacrificial, giving love that Christ had for the church. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). But for which church did Christ die? All of them? For all of the denominations that exist in the world today? NO! Christ told Peter, "And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). Many today fail to realize that Jesus said "MY" church indicating that it belongs to Jesus Christ and no one else. The personal pronoun would evidently indicate ownership and as such it is to wear no other name but the name of Christ. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The Scriptures are undeniably clear about which church for which Jesus Christ died. Yet the religious world today does not connect the dots concerning this all important fact. Paul wrote, "There is **one body**, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith [not many, src] one baptism" (Ephesians 4:4-5).

When we become members of the Lord's church, note what Paul says: "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). We, as Christians, are bought with a price, the supreme sacrifice of Christ's death upon the cross. We are to continually glorify God in our bodies with our manner of life, as it is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

We also contact the blood in the Lord's Supper. It is a continual and constant reminder to Christians of the supreme sacrifice made on our behalf. It is a reminder of the precious blood of Christ which He freely shed upon

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Calvary's cross. It is a reminder that we cannot be saved without His sacrifice. This memorial was divinely ordained by Christ Himself. "And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, this is My body, which is given for you, this do in remembrance of Me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19-22). Paul, recounting the very words of Christ in 1 Corinthians 11:25, wrote, "This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me." Again, we must note that God is specific in the observance of the Lord's Supper, the emblems that we are to partake of as well as the day of the week. John 4:24, Jesus instructs, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." As a part of our "worshipping in truth" is the partaking of the fruit of the vine and the unleavened bread. We find recorded by inspiration the example of the frequency of this act. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread..." (Acts 20:7). The word "the" in the phrase "of the week" indicates to us that the partaking was something that was done every week. If the action occurred infrequently the phrase would have been stated "upon the first day of a week."

The blood gives us daily cleansing from sin, 1 John 1:7, "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." As humankind, we cannot and do not live a sinless life, it is impossible, as we sin every day. John tells us, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9). Here is a simple analysis of what John is telling us; "If we walk" is the condition and the matter of our conduct. "In the light" is the sphere or parameter of our walk. "As He is



in the light" is the example of our conduct. "We have fellowship one with another" is the anticipated blessing we receive from walking in the light. "And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" is the agent, the action contemplated, and the subject under consideration. We certainly can have the blessed assurance that we receive the daily cleansing from sin through the blood of Christ. However, we must meet the all important criteria specifically put forth, "if we walk in the light." Thus to walk in the light is to walk in harmony with God's will, and the result for the faithful child of God is that the blood cleanses. The cleansing power literally characteristic of water is figuratively transferred to blood, because our Lord died in our stead, accomplishing atonement in our behalf. Note that the action in 1 John 1:7 is present tense, indicating that this is not a one time action, but is ever-present and on-going. If we continue walking in the light, the blood continues to cleanse us from our sins. The force of the statement is that the blood of Christ keeps on cleansing.

### THE ASSAULT UPON OUR SALVATION

Have you every thought of where Satan is centering his greatest attacks in the religious world today? Contrary to what many believe and say, Satan is alive and active today. We must note the many warnings and admonitions found within God's Word concerning the evil one. As the apostle Paul warned the Christians at Corinth, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his Subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3). Later in the same chapter Paul gave this warning, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:13-14).

Satan makes his assault upon baptism and has led many to believe that such is not essential to their salvation.

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Many simply ignore or even disregard the clear and plain teachings of the Bible concerning baptism. The sinner's prayer, pouring, and sprinkling have become acceptable substitutes. Countless multitudes close their eyes to such passages as Acts 2:38, where Peter by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit commanded, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." Or the statement Annanias made to the sinner, Saul of Tarsus, in Damascus, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). And consider the relationship the apostle Peter made between the salvation Noah received from God and the salvation we now receive under His covenant given today:

Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 3:20-21)

Satan has led the world to believe that church membership is optional, not necessary, or that one church is as good as another. "Attend the church of your choice" has the mentality of the religious world for decades. Many go so far as to permeate the belief that the church does not have anything to do with your salvation. Note what occurred when those on the day of Pentecost obeyed the Gospel and were baptized, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Looking once more at the correlation that Paul made in the book of Ephesians between the institution of marriage and membership in the church:

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish...For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Ephesians 5:25-27, 30).

Again Paul states, "And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence" (Colossians 1:18). How can we have salvation from our sins, through the blood of Christ, and yet not belong to His body? In Galatians 3:27 Paul states, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." If we have been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of our sins, and Paul tells us that we have "put on Christ" when baptized, then we must rightly conclude that we belong to His body, which is the church. You cannot have one without the other.

Another area that is under attack by Satan and the world is the Lord's Supper. Many erroneously believe that the Lord's Supper only needs to be observed yearly or on special occasions. They would maintain that it is not necessary to partake of the Lord's Supper every week, and that in doing so, because of the repetition and frequency, it loses some of its meaning. Some state that there is no significance attached to it, or that it has lost its importance! We must ask ourselves, does the evening meal that we partake of every day, lose its meaning or importance for us due to the frequency? Does this make it any less important, as without this meal, we might survive, yet we would become physically weak? Of course it has significant nutritional value to us as human beings and is typically a

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meal that we almost always anticipate. In the same way the Lord's Supper also has significant spiritual value to us.

As already noted, we have a specific example in the New Testament that presents to us the obligation and necessity of partaking every week. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread" (Acts 20:7). The death of our Lord and Savior on the cross is the most important aspect of our faith! To commemorate the greatest sacrifice made for all mankind. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8).

Satan continually attacks us in our daily living. He has enticed so many in the Lord's church to "go outside the house" and spiritual death awaits those who do so. We are to live clean and pure lives in God's sight. Worldliness is one of Satan's greatest tools of today and we are warned, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15ff). Apathy and ambivalence within the Lord's church has caused many Christians to lay down their "armor" and to let down their guard. Peter warned, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Satan is certainly consuming many in the world today, through humanism, atheism, ignorance and apathy. As James exhorts, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

### CONCLUSION

God has given us the greatest gift anyone could give. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not

perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). It is through, and only through, the blood that Jesus Christ shed upon the cross that we can have the assurance of eternal life. God has specifically placed that blood in the act of baptism; in the church, for which Christ died; in the Lord's Supper, as a reminder of that great sacrifice; and in daily living, as we have daily cleansing when we "walk in the light." If you have not contacted that blood, you cannot properly avail yourself of the cleansing available. Neither can you have the "blessed assurance" given to those who have submitted to the perfect will of God. As Paul reminds us, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (2 Timothy 2:5-6). "And 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). Christ loved the world enough to shed His blood for the sins of mankind, will you love Him enough to give obedience to His commandments?

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arthur L. King". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "A".

Chapter 9

**The Church in God's Plan for Salvation**

Buddy Morefield

Buddy Morefield was reared in Butler, TN. He is twenty three years old and is married to Emily. Buddy is a 2006 graduate of the Memphis School of Preaching. Upon graduating, he worked along side Bill Haywood at the Abingdon church of Christ. Buddy has been preaching at the Appalachian church of Christ in Mountain City, TN since January 2008. He is also currently enrolled at East Tennessee State University, where he plans to continue his education.

I appreciate the opportunity granted to me to write and speak on this occasion by the West Jefferson Church of Christ and the almighty God. May this section and lecture cause you to open up your heart to God's inspired word.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Bible begins with, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1), and ends with "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (Revelation 22:21). What a marvelous, God-given revelation between these two verses. If one could come to a summation of all the pages concealed within the Old Testament and the New Testament, it would be the word redemption. How can man be righteous in the sight of God? How can we be sure that when we stand before Christ in judgment (2 Corinthians 5:10) we will be saved? The answers to questions such as these are found within the pages of the God breathed book, the Bible. Jesus said "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

As stated before, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Everything that God created was very good (Genesis 1:31). God also created man,

but he was different than any other thing God had created. He was made in God's very image.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. (Genesis 1:26, 27)

Man's very existence is a testimony of God's character of goodness and love (1 John 4:8).

In spite of what some may teach, man was created with the freedom of choice (Joshua 24:15). Man's free will is demonstrated in the lives of the first man and first woman.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Genesis 2:16, 17)

The man and woman were created with the ability to choose right or wrong. God gave them a law, and to violate that law would be to transgress the law. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). For the man and the woman to eat the forbidden fruit or to even touch the forbidden fruit would equal their sin; the result of doing so would equal death (Genesis 3:3).

There came a time when the man and woman would have to choose to overcome the lust of the flesh, pride of life, and lust of the eyes (1 John 2:16). They had a choice, and chose sin rather than righteousness. Sin now separated man from God (Isaiah 59:1, 2). Man now owed a tremendous



debt which he could not pay. They were to surely die, but God in His infinite wisdom, grace, love, and mercy already had a plan. God could look forward through time to see the ultimate sacrifice which would take their place. The good news is found in Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." In the fullness of time God would send His Son to deliver a crushing blow to Satan (Galatians 4:4), which would liberate man from the tremendous sin debt which he could never pay, and provide a plan for his salvation. God's eternal plan was to save man by Jesus Christ and through His church (Ephesians 3:8-11).

### THE CHURCH IN GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE

Today, there is much confusion concerning the church. What is the church? What is the kingdom? When we speak of the kingdom and the church, are we talking about two different establishments? What does the church and kingdom have to do with my salvation? Must I be a member of the church to go to heaven? The above questions are soul staking; they must be answered. Filtering through what is true and what is false is sometimes difficult because of outside influences. But, if we will remember that God's word is the final authority in all matters, and allow it to be our ultimate guide, we will come to a conclusion of truth (Matthew 28:18; John 8:32; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17).

As was stated before, God's plan for the church was in His eternal mind. When man sinned in the Garden of Eden, God did not scratch His head and wonder what He would do next. The church is not an afterthought. Paul, being inspired of God wrote:

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable

riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Ephesians 3:8-11)

It is profound to think that the church was in the mind of God even before the world was created. God's plan for saving man was a mystery to many in others ages, but the mystery is now revealed unto us (Ephesians 3:5). God was working everything out on His own time, and in His own way. We, as the apostle Paul, can look back and see the amazing wisdom of God which He purposed in His church. As a matter of fact, because God's plan is a reflection of His wisdom, even the angels desire to look into it (1 Peter 1:12).

When one understands that the church was in God's plan to save man before the beginning, the Bible makes perfect sense. Think about Abraham, who had no idea where he was going, but obeyed God anyway. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11:8). Abraham's trust in God was displayed by his actions. Even at that point in time God was moving everyone into place to prepare for the coming Messiah. Abraham was the "father of many nations" (Genesis 17:5). God said that because Abraham had obeyed Him, He would multiply Abraham's seed as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore (Genesis 22:17, 18). All the nations of the earth would be blessed by Abraham's seed, and his seed was Jesus Christ.

Within God's purpose, over time, the church was in prophecy, in promise, in preparation, and in perfection. Romans 15:4 states, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Indeed, when we look into the Old Testament scriptures, it is not only amazing what we learn, but also enlightening of the hope we have in Christ.

### THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM DEFINED

We must understand that when we read about the kingdom, we are reading about the church. They are the one and the same. The term church comes from a Greek word *ekklesia*, which means "the called out." Concerning Christians, Peter wrote, "But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:" (1 Peter 2:9). Many confuse the church with the physical building in which we worship. According to Acts 2:47, when one is saved he is added to the church. Therefore, the word church identifies those who are saved and not the building. When there was a great persecution against the church of our Lord (Acts 8:1), Saul was "yet breathing out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1). This is a clear indication that the church is the disciples and the disciples are the church. The church is the household of God with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:19, 20). This helps us understand the church in relation to God's family. The church is also called the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18). The church is the body, and the body is the church. We, as saved individuals, make up the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27); Therefore, we are the church of Christ (Romans 16:16).

Not only is the church referred to as the body of Christ, but it is also referred to as the kingdom. A physical kingdom has a king in authority, subjects, territory, and a law. Just as this is true with a physical kingdom, the same is the case for Christ's kingdom. Christians live under the kingship of Jesus, with the New Testament as law. Paul writing to the brethren at Colossae wrote, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:" (Colossians 1:13). We must conclude then, that they were already in the kingdom of Christ. A few words later, Paul refers to the same establishment as the church when he wrote, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:18). John wrote in the book of Revelation, "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9). Could God have stated it any clearer? It is sad to think that those who yet wait for the kingdom to come wait in vain; the kingdom is already in existence; the kingdom is the church.

### THE KINGDOM IN PROPHECY

The many prophecies of the kingdom to come are truly profound. Books could be written concerning the prophecies of the kingdom to come, but I will only discuss a few. When Nathan brought the word of the Lord to David, he said there would come a day, long after David was gone, when God would establish His eternal kingdom:

And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I

will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. (2 Samuel 7:12, 13)

God would bring forth One from the seed of David, who would set up an eternal kingdom, and would rule on the throne forever. God would make David's seed to endure forever and his throne "as the days of heaven" (Psalm 89:29). Jeremiah had much to say about the One who would come from David's seed. Jeremiah wrote:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (Jeremiah 23:5, 6)

This indicates that not only would He come from David's seed line, but He would reign as king and prosper.

Isaiah's prophecy about the kingdom to come is very specific. He writes about a time when all nations would flow into the house of God.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:2, 3)

First of all, he uses the phrase, "last days," indicating that this must be the final dispensation of time. The time was not during the Patriarchal law, after the Mosaic Law,

and after the prophets. Isaiah is discussing the beginning of the Christian dispensation (Acts 2:17; Hebrews 1:2). Isaiah then points out that the Lord's house would be established and all nations would flow into it. The law would come out of Zion, and the word of the Lord would go forth from Jerusalem. All of this is very significant seeing that all was fulfilled at Pentecost in Acts 2. It is also significant that Peter quoted Joel's prophecy of the kingdom to come when he said "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16-21).

As for specifics, Daniel is very specific as to when the kingdom would come into existence. Daniel wrote:

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. (Daniel 2:44)

Daniel speaks of the days when Rome would rule the earth. The fourth kingdom Daniel describes was unlike any man made kingdoms, in that it would stand forever. There would never be a greater kingdom than that of God's kingdom. In fact, when you read Daniel's prophecy in detail, he describes the kingdom as a stone made without hands; it would break in pieces and consume all others. (Daniel 2:31-45)

There is much confusion today about whether or not the kingdom and the throne discussed in the above passages will be set up on earth. Jeremiah, as well as other prophets, indicates that the kingdom and the throne would not be on earth.

*Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth,*

earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah. (Jeremiah 22:29, 30)

Jeremiah says the curse is upon Coniah and his descendants, which is on earth. Since Christ descended from Coniah, the curse is also upon Him as far as His reigning on earth. Coniah had children, but none would rule upon the throne of David in Judah. So then, we must understand that this kingdom would not physically exist on earth. Furthermore, Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi, but of Judah. Therefore, Jesus could not rule as king (Hebrews 7:12-14).

#### THE KINGDOM IN PROMISE AND PREPARATION

For many years the people waited for the One to come and take away their sins. The time was fulfilled; God was ready to send forth His Son through a virgin woman (Galatians 4:4). At the same time God was yet preparing for His son's introduction to the people. He sent John to prepare the way for the Christ.

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (Matthew 1:1-3)

John's purpose was to prepare the way and introduce the long awaited Messiah. John came to prepare the way for the Lamb of God, who would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Notice the message John was preaching: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew

1:2). There was silence from the prophets for years, but the prophet John said it was almost time for the kingdom to come into existence. It was at hand; the kingdom was almost here. There are some who place Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John into the Old Testament, but that is a mistake. Notice Mark 1:1, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;" John's preaching and baptizing were preparatory for what was to come in the church age.

Jesus would now promise and prepare many for the kingdom to come. Jesus stated on one occasion, "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1). This statement is very significant, because either the kingdom came into existence while some of them were yet living, or Jesus was a liar. Which is it? Obviously, the kingdom came into existence. As a matter of fact, it was not long after this event that Jesus said:

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever



thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Matthew 16:13-19)

In spite of what some teach about this passage, Jesus did not say He was building the church upon Peter. This passage teaches us that based upon the fact that Jesus is the Son of God, He will build His church. He will build His church upon that solid rock, and not even Hades will prevent His establishing it. Notice that He also said, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven..." This indicates that He would give them that which would allow one to open and enter the kingdom; this is the Gospel, which includes His plan for man's salvation.

It was not long after Jesus promised to build His church that He would go to the cross and purchase the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). We were without hope in the world, strangers, but Jesus broke down the middle wall of partition (Ephesians 2:12-16); our thanks be unto God. Jesus loved the church so much that He died for her (Ephesians 5:25); He is the head of the church and the Savior of the body (Ephesians 5:23). If Jesus loved the church so much as to die for it, should we not also love the church? We too should love the church and desire to be a part of it. Jesus died for the world (John 3:16), and He made a plan that the world might be saved. That plan includes His church. It is in Christ that we obtain salvation according to 2 Timothy 2:10. If the body is the church and the church is His body, I must therefore conclude that salvation is in the church.

### THE KINGDOM IN PERFECTION

It is interesting that after Jesus died and rose from the grave, He told His disciples to tarry at Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. He also told them

that Jerusalem was where repentance and remission of sins, in Jesus name, would begin. It was not long after Christ ascended to the right hand of the throne of God that the day of Pentecost came (Acts 1, 2). The apostles were dwelling at Jerusalem when they were endued with power from on high, just as Jesus had promised (Acts 2:1-5). They began to speak in other languages "as the spirit gave them utterance." They preached repentance and baptism for the remission of sins just as Jesus had told them to do (Acts 2:38). It was the day for which many had awaited for years. The kingdom had come; it was fulfilled. All who obeyed the Gospel that day were added to the church (Acts 2:41, 47). It was then, during the height of the Roman Empire, that God's eternal kingdom came into existence.

It was not long until the Gentiles would obey the Gospel and would also be added to the church (Acts 10). Paul's letter to the Galatians informs us that all men can be one in Christ Jesus: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26, 27). No matter the gender, nationality, ethnicity, or social status we are all one in the church/kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

### CONCLUSION

It is truly astounding that from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21, God unfolds His mystery and a plan for us to be saved. We were once lost, and without hope, but by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, we are brought back. It is because of God's wisdom in establishing the eternal kingdom that we are saved. Think of all one would reject if he chooses to not be a part of the kingdom, the church. If one merely reads the story from Genesis to Revelation, he

must conclude that God's plan to save man is fulfilled in the church. To enter the kingdom/church one must obey the law of the King who said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

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Chapter 10  
**That Form of Doctrine**  
Michael Jordan

Michael M. Jordan was born in Texarkana, TX; graduated from Sheffield High School in Memphis, TN in 1973; graduated from Memphis School of Preaching in 1975. Went one year to Freed-Hardeman College where he met Jewel Attebury. They were married March 17, 1977. He began preaching in March 1992. They have two children, Debra and William, whom they adopted in 1994 while in MS. Debra is married with two children and is residing in Jackson, MS. William is living at home. Michael served as one of the elders while in NC. He has preached in MS, NC, TN and VA where he is now. He has spoken on lectureships in MS, SC, VA and NC. They have been with the Marion, VA congregation almost three years. He is on the Arise to Truth radio program in Bristol, TN.; a board member with the Carolina Messenger; and part-time instructor at the Tri-Cities School of Preaching and Christian Development. Michael enjoys preservation of lesson from old gospel preachers and doing video work for gospel meetings and lectures for various congregations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tim Canup and the men of the congregation for this invitation to speak at this year's lectureship. I appreciate and love this congregation for the stand that it takes in the defense of the gospel and the light that is shown in this area by the lives that are lived. This congregation has been known in the community for its love and generosity. It has a sound reputation in the brotherhood. I am glad at every opportunity I can to come and visit. It is like coming home. I appreciate this subject because it is a very basic but misunderstood subject in the religious world.

Let us use the Bible so we can understand that form of doctrine that is given in *Romans 6:17-18* - "*But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18* -

*And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."*

### INTRODUCTION:

There is a form of doctrine that will free man from sin. The only way it will do that is if man will follow that form or pattern and the only way he will know is to follow what has been left for him to study and obey. There also is that form of doctrine that will condemn a man's soul to an eternal hell. There are many thousands that are in torment awaiting judgment that are crying for one more chance to hear a gospel sermon so they will have the opportunity to repent but that will never come. That form of doctrine is evident in the account of the Rich Man and Lazarus. We are never told that Lazarus heard that form of doctrine but the implication is there. Neither are we told that the rich man refused to hear and obey that form of doctrine. Remember that God is not a respecter of persons. Many have for a lifetime searched in the wrong places.

But the sad fact still remains that many have refused that form of doctrine. What do we mean by that form of doctrine? Let's understand some words as we begin our study.

**"Form"** - "τυπος (too'-pos)" a die (as struck), i.e. (by implication) a stamp or scar; by analogy, a shape, i.e. a statue, (figuratively) style or resemblance; specifically, a sampler ("type"), i.e. a model (for imitation) or instance (for warning).

**"Doctrine"** - "διδαχνη (did-akh-ay)"; instruction (the act or the matter): KJV - doctrine, hath been taught. (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary)

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Michael  
Great seeing you at  
the lectures. Thanks for  
your hard work recording  
all the lessons.  
Jennie Kuhlman

### **THE FORM THAT CHRIST WENT THROUGH**

Before the beginning of time, Christ knew that He would have to come to earth and set forth that form of doctrine so that man could be redeemed back to Him. This is stated in *Ephesians 3:10-11* - *"to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 - according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,"*

Christ went through death for us: *2 Corinthians 5:14* - *"For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;" Hebrews 5:7-9* - *"who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, 8 - though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 - And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,"*

Paul stated in *1 Corinthians 15:1-4* - *"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 - by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you - unless you believed in vain. 3 - For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 - and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."* If Christ had not gone to the cross, died, was buried, and was raised then our - *"preaching is empty and your faith is also empty"* (*1 Corinthians 15:14*).

Paul states three major facts to show that our faith or preaching will not be in vain if we understand Christ's death by the cross. There were many Old Testament prophecies of Christ's death and all were fulfilled. Paul mentions that Christ was buried. Luke recorded: *"This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 - Then he took it*

down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before" (**Luke 23:52-53**). Then Paul concludes his thought with Christ's resurrection. Luke records: "But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. **3** - Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. **4** - And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. **5** - Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, Why do you seek the living among the dead? **6** - He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee," (**Luke 24:2-6**). When Jesus was resurrected there were times He had to prove that He had risen from the dead. He appeared for forty days, proving Himself and teaching about the kingdom as stated in **Acts 1:3** - "to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

Then Luke records His ascension in **Acts 1:9** - "Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

## THE FORM THAT MAN MUST GO THROUGH

The form that man must go through is that which the Roman Christians as recorded by Paul in **Romans 6:17-18** - "But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. **18** - And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness." This is God's plan to forgive sins even today.

First we must die to sin according to Paul in **Romans 6:2** - "Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?" And Paul also said later in the chapter that "our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin, **7** - For he who has died has been freed from sin." (**Romans 6:6-7**). After death comes the burial. **Romans 6:3** - "Or do you not know



## Chapter 10: That Form of Doctrine

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that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" Jesus said in **Mark 16:16** - "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." Baptism is a burial with Jesus; **Colossians 2:12** - "buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." Paul continues with being risen: **Romans 6:4** - "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Peter also tells what baptism is, in **1 Peter 3:21** - "There is also an antitype which now saves us - baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ"; **1:3** - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"; **1:21** - "who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."

Many people are taught that we have a new life or are saved before baptism. This line of thinking does not fit the form of doctrine. The new man does not come until the old man is dead and buried. As Christians we have a new life. **2 Corinthians 5:17** - "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new"; **Revelation 20:6** - "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years"; **Colossians 3:1-4** - "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **2** - Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. **3** - For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** - When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory"; **Hebrews 6:1-2** - "Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not

laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 - of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." We must grow and work and be faithful until the time we die. **Revelation 2:10** - "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." Peter tells us that as new Christians we must desire the sincere milk of the word and also grow in Christ. **1 Peter 2:2** - "as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby"; **2 Peter 3:18** - "but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Because of the grace of God Paul shows how much God loved us.

[H]aving predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 - to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. 7 - In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 - which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 - having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, 10 - that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth - in Him. 11 - In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 - that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. (**Ephesians 1:5-12**)

Also in **Titus 2:11-12** - "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 - teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,"

If we do this and remain faithful to God, we shall be taken up to be with Christ. **John 14:1-3** - *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 - In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 - And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."* A very comforting passage about our going to be with Christ is found in **1 Thessalonians 4:14-17** - *"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. 15 - For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 - For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 - Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."*

### WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO REJECT THE FORM OF DOCTRINE

Jesus has given the plain and simple form of doctrine which cannot be denied. **Mark 16:16** - *"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."* Peter has two questions to those who will not listen to Jesus. **1 Peter 4:17-18** - *"For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 - Now If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"*

Paul's answer to these questions is: **2 Thessalonians 1:8** - *"in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

### CONCLUSION:

The doctrine of Christ has a specific form that provides a pattern that we must follow. Are we following the form of doctrine or are we making our own form of doctrine. Consider *Matthew 15:8-9* - "*These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 - And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*"

Thank you for your time and patience in this study. Will you not obey that form of doctrine that we have described?

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