

Born of Water and of the Spirit

Part Two

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"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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," JOH 3:14-16.

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The theme we will focus on for this message will be the word "that". Or the purpose for which God took on human form and came to earth to save us from sin.

God, the Father, in His love took upon Himself a human body of flesh and bones and came to earth to suffer, bleed, and die as a propitiation for our sins "that...." That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." God's name is Jesus .and there is only one God not three gods as some believe. Isaiah 9:6 (KJV) For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. This verse tells us that the child born, the son given, was called the The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, therefore, Jesus is God.

Notice in JOH 3::14,15 that as Moses lifted up the serpent, so the Son of Man had to be lifted up. Why? "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Do you see the emphasis placed on the word that? Do you see how much has been done to put reconciliation in place and that it is all from the Lord's side?

The negative implication of our text can be found in our Saviour's words in MAR 16:16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Do you see the importance that we believe? Those who believe not shall be damned. All the preparation of salvation was made "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life," but that is only one side of the situation.

The blessings obtained in the atonement are limited. The atonement is not limited; carefully note the difference. It is only the blessings obtained in the atonement which are limited unto those who believe.

Salvation is limited to those who believe. It brings the responsibility home that all those who are damned will be damned because they believed not; that puts all the responsibility squarely on our account. It is not because the atonement was limited.

The only limitation found in the gospel is&mdashthe blessings of the atonement are limited to those who believe. The Lord has been lifted up on the cross "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Since the blessings obtained in the atonement are limited to those who believe, it is very urgent to rightly understand what it is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Can you think of anything that is more important than to rightly understand what it means to believe? Our eternal salvation or damnation depends upon it!

A mere intellectual belief is not saving! I can have a historical knowledge of the crucifixion of Christ, and truly believe it to be true, but that is not saving. There is often much feeling associated with an intellectual belief.

As a little child I became very emotional about the story of the crucifixion, to think that those terrible people did all this to Jesus! There was no salvation in those emotions and feelings of sympathy.

We need to understand that it is merely an intellectual belief, even though we may have great feelings and emotions connected with it.

The emotions may become very deeply stirred like a morning cloud that passes away. Why? The next morning those emotions are gone; nothing in the heart has been altered. All those emotions and feelings are not connected to believing the historical fact of the event. Something is missing.

MAT 13:20-21 says, "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it [there was joy while they heard, and they believed it]; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

What was missing? The washing of regeneration of the Holy Spirit was missing; the new attitude and desires were missing. A right attitude towards sin was missing.

When "persecution ariseth" for the Word, i.e., when one must give up things that please the flesh to obey the Word of God, one who is not saved falls by the wayside. Then he gives up the Word instead of the sins that are cleaving to him.

Do you see the error? All the feelings and emotion, joy and believing intellectually, had no salvation in them; he was still not saved from his sin.

These truths are fearfully solemn! Today there are so many who do not endure unto the end. They believe; they even have joy in believing, but when persecution arises for the sake of the Word, they become offended. They cannot endure to have everything of the flesh cut off and crucified; they cannot endure the washing of regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

As we read in MAR 6:20-27, Herod heard John the Baptist "gladly," but see what was wrong. He had joy in hearing John the Baptist; his emotions were effected, but when the dancing of the daughter of Herodias pleased the king, he went against his own conscience.

The king came to a crossroads; he had to decide where his values lay. Would it be his honor before those whom he made such a foolish oath? Or would it be his feelings? Now see what he did&hellip

MAR 6:26-27 says, "And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her: And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison."

These are solemn truths; this is where the true believer is sorted out. Do we stand to the authority of the Word? Do we understand the washing of regeneration by the Holy Spirit that we can have everything of the flesh cut off for the purifying of our souls? That is true believing.

Our attitude and actions may gauge whether or not we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ a lot more safely than buy our knowledge, emotions, or certain experiences. These are deceiving.

Our gauge must be our attitude and our actions that are renewed by God's grace. Do we understand what it is to be renewed in the spirit of the mind? The washing of water by the Word changes us, and that is a much better and safer gauge.

See how the Pharisees rejoiced in the light of a man, but only for a season. It is dangerous to have our emotions tied up in a certain man because he had a calling or a gift in preaching. Many people get carried away to the point of worshipping the preacher instead of Christ. Many are deceived in this area.

John the Baptist had a true calling; he was prophesied as the forerunner of Christ. John the Baptist indeed was a mighty, powerful preacher of the gospel. He preached it without any flinching of the truth. Are we to worship John the Baptist because of his call and dedication?

Look at JOH 5:35, "He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." Do you see the missing link? They were rejoicing in his light, in the wonderful, powerful preacher rather than rejoicing in the true light, which is Christ and the Word. They were not rejoicing in the truth that was being preached. The power and credentials of the man were their focus. There is no salvation in this type of emotion.

We may hear some gospel preacher, and greatly rejoice "in his light." Oh, that was a wonderful sermon or message, and yet we can be totally devoid of the new birth because the rejoicing is in the man and his light. This is very dangerous.

We may delight to come to the light of some preacher who has a powerful call such as John the Baptist, and yet flee from the true light which reveals our bosom sins.

Let's look at the context in which we find our text to see how urgently important this is. The Lord Jesus is giving the definition of those who believe and those who believe not.

JOH 3:18 says, "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." Now He goes on to show that condemnation in V:19. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

There are multitudes that sincerely believe they are saved who have never rightly believed in Jesus Christ. They have not understood how the light of the Word is the condemnation of the unbeliever.

See in the next verse the total contrast in those who believe not, and those that believe. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God," JOH 3:20-21.

Now we need to consider MAT 7:13. "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."

Take notice of the strait gate; that word strait means a place where it is difficult to stand. Let's go back to V:12 to see what Jesus is talking about when He refers to the strait gate. MAT 7:12 says, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

Jesus tells us to do to others whatever we would like to have them do to us; then He comes right after it to tell us how difficult it is to stand, "for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."

In other words, those who do not stand the test of the obedience of faith and don't practice that law of love are condemned. They have not learned to understand what it is to love their God with all their heart, soul, and mind and love their neighbor as themselves.

These "many" that Scripture speaks about ("and many there be which go in thereat.") are not the open infidels who make no profession of believing in Christ. Do you know who they are? They are the professed believers in Christ who are on the broad road spoken of in MAT 7:22. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"

This is the same parable, the same "many" as we found in the above paragraph. They will come in the Day of Judgment having died believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation. They did not believe with a true gospel belief.

Look at the next verse. MAT 7:23 says, "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Why?

The washing of regeneration by the Holy Spirit had never washed them; they had never been cleansed from their sins. They continued in the broad road where they didn't have to stand.

They could have a little grudge, a little hate, a little spite, and a little nag, and a little of the sins and pleasures they cherished. They thought it was all washed in the blood of Christ, but they never had a renewing of the affections of the heart. They never rightly believed, and they perished eternally.

It is one thing to believe that sin is the awful thing it is, and quite another thing to have a holy hatred for sin in the very soul. Sadly, we can truly believe sin is a terrible thing, a damning thing, and yet still have secret sins which we love, that we won't give up—cherishing those sweetheart sins. A true fear of God hates all iniquity.

Look at PRO 8:13, "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." It is to hate sin. Why?

If we stop cherishing sin, we will start turning from sin. As long as we cherish a sin and love that sin in our heart, we will continue to sin. Read PRO 8:13 again to see the mark of a true believer. The hatred we have for sin is where we can begin to divide the sheep from the goats. Sin becomes a loathsome thing and exceedingly sinful.

No person who cherishes sin in his heart can truly say he loves the truth. Can you truly say that you love the truth while you hide a lie in your heart, and cherish it? NO.

We must search our souls, examining our own hearts, and that brings us before the Lord to ask Him to examine and try our heart. See what David said in PSA 26:2, "Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart." Our desire must be to know if there is an evil way within us, that we might repent of it and turn from it.

The spirit of the antichrist enters the heart, "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," 2TH 2:10.

Do you see how important it is that we learn to love the truth and hate sin? Do you now understand the new birth? It is to be renewed in the spirit of your mind. True believing cannot be separated from the work of regeneration; the heart is cleansed so it cannot wilfully continue in sin.

2TH 2:10 teaches that those who perish are those people who love not the truth that they might be saved. The great multitudes whom Jesus says are on the broad road to destruction have received a strong delusion to believe they are saved! This is the many that Jesus referred to in

MAT 7:22.

The multitudes have received a strong delusion from God because they loved not the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. We read in 2TH 2:11-12, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

When we can have pleasure in sin and enjoy it, then we may not claim that we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Seeing the solemn reality of God Himself sending strong delusion that we should believe a lie, how important it is to examine our own hearts whether we pass the test set forth! Do we love the truth? Or is it our condemnation? Is the truth our greatest delight or does it condemn us? Do we hide from the truth?

JOH 3:20-21 says, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light [See where this comes back to our attitudes and actions], neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

Our actions and our attitudes clearly reveal whether or not we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Go back and read those verses again and see the contrast between the unbelievers and the believers. Do you see the attitudes and actions? The light is not a condemnation to those who do the truth. Why? It is the heart's desire to know and do what is right.

Those who have received the washing of regeneration, go to the light to be sure their deeds are wrought in God. It is the proof of the washing of regeneration of the Holy Spirit. Going to the light is for the purpose of having the heart examined in the light of His Word; thereby knowing the washing of regeneration has taken place.

As we see these solemn truths of our text, keeping them in context, let us examine what Jesus is saying in JOH 3:14-16. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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."

Jesus is not saying that whosoever covers his sin, or those who love only a few sins will not perish. Rather it is "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

So what is it to believe? First, let us take a look at what history teaches about Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness.

Look at NUM 21:8-9, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

As with the beginning of miracles, as they obeyed, the miracle was performed, "...when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." Without obedience the miracle would not have happened.

If you and I sit obstinately waiting for this to be given while living in sin, we are on the broad road to hell. As our attitude begins to alter, we begin to obey; the miracle is performed.

Look at this principle carefully; everyone who had been bitten by a serpent lived if they looked upon the serpent of brass. The miracle depended upon obedience of faith; those who refused to look were not healed. V:9 says, "when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." When the person obeyed, turning his eyes to the serpent and looked, as he saw the serpent of brass, he lived. The miracle was performed as he obeyed.

Does this mean we can earn salvation by our works? No. Turn with me to ROM 4:1-2, "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God."

Do you see the word "by"? Do you know what it means? Sometimes these small words hold a key to rightly understanding the Scriptures.

The word by is a preposition that means on the account of, the foundation of, the basis of. Abraham was not justified on the basis of his works; there was no merit in his works. We must be so careful; Satan loves to twist and turn a Scripture to lead us astray. Satan would have us believe that since we can't be saved by works, what we do makes no difference. That is a satanic lie.

Let's turn to JAM 2:21, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" Why isn't that a contradiction? The word by comes from a totally different word in the original. It means "instrumentality" in this case. Abraham was not justified by meriting salvation by works; but works was the instrument by which salvation was conveyed to him. His works was the vehicle whereby he received salvation.

Looking unto Jesus is not meritorious; however, it is the instrument, the vehicle, whereby the miracle is performed. These are beautiful truths which we must learn to understand.

I do not teach you that you will merit salvation by doing something, but salvation is conveyed to us through the obedience of faith. Fatalistically sitting back waiting for God to work because it must be given leaves a person on the broad road to hell.

There is no salvation based upon works, but neither is there any salvation without works. Faith without works is as dead as a body without a soul. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also," JAM 2:26.

Obedience of faith is the instrument whereby salvation is conveyed to us. It is as we obey and look unto Christ that we live.

Our text says, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

That serpent was lifted up, that whosoever believed and obeyed by looking unto it might live; it was as they obeyed, they lived. If they had refused to obey, not lifting their eyes up to that brazen serpent, which typifies the blessed Redeemer, they would not have lived. It is by the obedience of faith that the miracle is performed.

As we look unto Jesus by faith, by the quickening of the Spirit the washing of regeneration takes place by the washing of water by the Word, cf., EPH 5:26-27.

As our eyes are fixed upon Christ, sin becomes exceedingly sinful. Look at JOH 6:63, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you,

they are spirit, and they are life."

As our eyes are fixed by faith upon the blessed Redeemer (the Lord Jesus Christ) by the obedience of faith the quickening power of the Spirit regenerates the soul by the Word.

JAM 1:18 says, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

We are born by the Word of truth; it is as our eyes are fixed upon the precious Saviour as set forth in the Word of God that miracle is performed "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Once we are born by the Word of truth, sin becomes exceedingly sinful. As we learn to see the sinfulness of sin, we will learn to hate sin. Thus, the miracle of grace is performed through the instrument of the obedience of faith.

As we "behold" that blessed sacrifice of Christ by faith, which is symbolized by the "the serpent of brass," we begin to "live." We come to true gospel repentance.

We will begin to have a true repenting change of mind as our hearts are fastened upon the blessed sacrifice of Christ. We must obey and look by faith unto Christ, as He is lifted up our hearts are removed from the things of this life.

Sinful things which please the flesh loose their attraction and our affections are set on things above, they will turn to the Lord Jesus Christ. As He becomes precious, the things of this life lose their value.

When our eyes are fixed on Christ, He is lifted up. God has exalted Him, and He becomes exalted in our hearts and minds. Then sin loses its power, and we look to the Saviour for repentance and forgiveness.

ACT 5:30-32 says, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

Do you long for the Lord to give you the Holy Spirit? As we obey the command to look unto Jesus whom God has lifted up this miracle is performed. He has given the Holy Spirit unto those who obey Him.

How must we obey Him? When we feel the bite of sin, that serpent's venom of sin in our veins, we obey Him by looking unto the blessed Redeemer and the precious love of the Father.

We are to look at the bleeding, dying Son of God who pleaded with His Father in the Garden of Gethsemane saying, "...O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt," MAT 26:39.

As we behold that precious love of God, sin loses its power. Those who obey Him and fix their eye of faith upon Christ, they will receive the Holy Ghost.

As we obey this command to look away from ourselves unto Jesus, we begin to live by faith, which is the gift of God. EPH 2:8 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

As we look away from ourselves unto Jesus, we receive a right understanding of the true character of God. This is so important.

The goodness of God is what leads us to repentance, Cf., ROM 2:4. Now look at 1JO 5:20, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

Believing is to be measured by our attitudes and our actions. Now see the effect on Apostle Paul's attitude and action when he received but a single look at the Lord Jesus.

1CO 15:10 says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

Were his actions effected? Yes. He no longer persecuted the church. Was his attitude altered? OH, YES! Now he was serving under the Kingship of the same Redeemer whom he had persecuted previously.

There was a total change that was brought about by one glimpse of Christ. He looked, he saw, and he labored to bring those outside into the gospel he'd persecuted.

True believing is faith unto salvation; there is the washing of regeneration that prepares the heart for heaven. It is to be washed from sin.

As we look out of ourselves unto Jesus Christ, He produces the fruits of the Spirit in our hearts. I've explained this before, but perhaps it is a good time to review.

A serpent has the power of fascination, and Satan chose a serpent in the Garden of Eden. If the victim looks a serpent in the eye, he has no power to resist. Such is the power of fascination.

The serpent can swallow his victim alive by merely catching his eye, and as long as his gaze is upon the serpent, he has no power to flee.

So it is with the power of sin. So long as the eye is fixed upon sin and Satan, we have absolutely no power to resist it.

Now think about the Lord Jesus Christ. JOH 12:31-33 says, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."

What does this teach us? Jesus was lifted up as the brazen serpent; He also has that drawing power. As long as our eyes are fixed upon Him, Satan and sin lose their power. What death did Jesus die? He died unto sin, Cf., ROM 6:10. As we look unto Jesus and

away from ourselves, He produces the fruits of the Spirit in our hearts.

HOS 14:8-9 says, "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein."

The fruit of the Holy Spirit comes from the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you see where the walk of life is found? We must walk in the fruit of the Spirit.

As we obey the command to look away from self unto the Lord Jesus Christ, we find the truth of Jesus' words, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." We are commanded to look unto Christ as those who were bitten by the serpent were commanded to look unto the brazen serpent. We learn to die unto self and sin by looking unto the blessed obedience of Jesus and see the death He died.

ROM 6:10 tells us that, "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

Now we can begin to understand ROM 6:11, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Oh, how blessed our Saviour illustrates what it is to truly believe!

First, Jesus directs our eyes unto His sacrifice for sin to teach us how displeased God is with sin, and that the slightest disobedience to God's holy law demanded death as its penalty, V:14. His death paid our penalty.

Second, Jesus directs our attention to the love of the

Third, Jesus tells us why His Father has demonstrated such love to His people, and why He gave Himself a sacrifice for sin. Look at JOH 3:15 to see the responsibility we have to look unto Jesus. He died and rose again; the Father took on human form, "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

After those blessed teachings, and such a powerful call of the gospel to look away from the pleasures of sin unto that blessed service of Christ under the kingdom of heaven, then Jesus teaches that the miracle of the new birth takes place as we begin to obey this gospel command. That is the instrument that the Holy Spirit will use to bring about the new birth.

Next Jesus teaches the contrast between true believers and the deplorable condition of the unbelieving.

The Lord did not send His Son to condemn us by seeing His perfect righteousness and our own monstrous unrighteousness. He sent His Son that we might believe and be saved.

JOH 3:17-21 says, "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. And this is the condemnation [of those who believe not] that light is come into the world [and it reveals what is in the heart], and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. [That is a clear definition of an unbeliever.] For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." Do you see where condemnation lies? It is upon those who have not believed in the name JESUS CHRIST and by nature none of us were believing in that Name. They have not believed in the authority of that Name, and bow to that authority!

We must examine our heart and attitudes. Do we love sin and darkness? That is the broad road to hell. But see this contrast … Oh, what a beautiful definition of those who `believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God,' But he that doeth truth.

Jesus came that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It is those who have been renewed in the spirit of their minds (EPH 4:22-24) who love the light. The light is not his condemnation because he loves the truth. There has been a washing of regeneration of the heart and mind. Sin is hated now.

Oh, how it humbles all our pride when we learn by looking unto Jesus that God cannot be glorified in anything from the flesh.

ISA 26:12 says, "LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." You and I can lay no claim to our salvation on the basis of what we have done. He has wrought all our works in us. The change of attitude, the work of regeneration, is the work of grace.

Outside of the imparted righteousness of Christ, which becomes ours by looking unto Jesus by faith, we find the awful truth about our own righteousness, which we read of in ISA 64:6-8. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. [That is what we are by nature.] But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

We are dependent upon the working of God's grace; but that doesn't mean we sit back claiming inability while waiting for God's grace to be given. God's revealed will teaches that we are commanded to obey, and our lives must be governed by the revealed will of God, not by His secret will.

DEU 29:29 says, "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

Now consider this astounding thought. Man became lost in sin by a look, have you ever thought about that? "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes," GEN 3:6.

What did that look do? It changed Eve's attitude toward God which defiled her heart; she coveted and lusted for the forbidden tree. All by taking one look, and so in like manner the lost sinner is saved by a look—by looking unto that blessed Lord Jesus Christ when He is lifted up before the eye by the obedience of faith.

In ISA 45:22 we read, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Did you ever stop to consider that by looking to Christ, we begin to have a change of attitude; our heart becomes cleansed because sin becomes exceedingly sinful (ROM 7:13).

There is only one way in which we shall proceed in the footsteps of Christ, and that is to continue looking. One glance or one look before going back to sin is not acceptable. It is by continuously looking to Christ and turning from sin that we will find salvation.

HEB 12:1b-2 says, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith [to see His faith, His walk of life]; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

We must see the joy there is in serving Him; He bowed to serve His Father, and for the joy set before Him He endured the cross. That is how we lay aside every weight and every sin that besets us. It is by looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Amen.

Are you willing to keep your eyes on Jesus, to endure to the end, to live pure and holy lives, so that we will see Jesus. Let that be our focus and goal and let us each one obey the Word of God and all that He teaches us in His blessed Holy Scriptures and obey Acts 2:38 the only plan of salvation that is true.

God bless
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