

future; He was not created. Christ endured the wrath of God for all those whom He came to save. The wrath of God means that He experienced the second death, which is the equivalent of eternal damnation, on behalf of all believers.

The fact that someone believes on Him is not what makes him saved. The fact that anyone believes on Him and has hung his life on Him is something that God has done, and that will be true only of someone whom God is saving or has already saved. Our salvation is based on the faith of Christ not on our faith.

This verse is not saying that the fact that you believe gets you saved; that is not possible because faith or believing is a work that we do, and we cannot work for our salvation. Faith or belief is the evidence that God is working in us to save us or has saved us, and therefore, by the faith of Christ we are saved and are given eternal life. We may die physically, but spiritually, we do not die, that is, we will not experience the second death, eternal damnation. We will live in the highest bliss with Christ forevermore in the new heavens and the new earth.

“*Not perish*” means that we will not be sent to hell. It does not mean that those who do not believe on Him are annihilated and thus cease to exist. Perish means that the unsaved are to be cast into hell where they will suffer the wrath of God forevermore.

The promise of John 3:16 is glorious. God has given the Lord Jesus Christ as a gift to those who become saved.

Caller: Does the Bible say anything about deliverance from past sin?

Mr. C.: The ultimate deliverance is deliverance from the guilt of our sin. There is nothing we can do about getting that deliverance. The Bible says in Ephesians Chapter 2, verse 1:

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.

Ephesians Chapter 2, verses 4 and 5 tell us:

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved).

We are spiritually a corpse. We are dead in our sins. Our works cannot save us. God discloses to us how we are to be saved in Galatians Chapter 2, verse 16:

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

In all kinds of gospel messages, people say, “You have to do this or that, or pray these words, and so on, and then you are going to be saved.” However, when we think we are saved by something we do, then we are trying to be saved by keeping the law.

“*Justified*” means to be delivered from the guilt of our sins. This includes our past, present and future sins. It means that we have been made “just” before God; we no longer stand guilty of any sin we have ever committed. II Corinthians Chapter 5, verse 21 says:

For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Only God can deliver us. What can we do? Nothing. We are sinners, and we deserve the wrath of God. We have the privilege of crying to God for mercy, but it does not guarantee that we will be saved. God gives us the illustration of a publican in Luke Chapter 18. The Jews considered the publicans to be especially revolting sinners. God says in Luke Chapter 18, verse 13:

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

The publican was broken before God. He acknowledged the fact that he was a sinner and deserved the wrath of God, but he prayed for mercy because God is a merciful God. Then Jesus says in verse 14:

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

If God works in us to the point that we are broken before Him, and we cry for mercy, that could mean that God is drawing us. The Bible says in Romans Chapter 10, verse 17:

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

If I were not sure of my salvation, or if I knew I was not saved, I would read the Bible to learn all I can about God's salvation. Reading the Bible will not save me, but I know that God works through His Word. At the same time, I would beseech God, "O, God, have mercy on me. I know I do not deserve it, but have mercy on me and make me your child."

Caller: I am trying to understand salvation. What comes first, being born again or believing with all my heart? It seems to me that I have to be born again before I can do anything, as far as God is concerned.

Mr. C.: Believing is a gift of God that comes with salvation. If we have not become saved, we are still under the wrath of God.

God can begin to give us trust in Him, and we can begin to believe, but the trust and belief that begins to show up in our life is a good work that we do. God can begin to incline our hearts to read the Bible. God can begin to incline our hearts to beseech Him for salvation. God can begin to incline our hearts to turn away from our sin.

None of these things in themselves will assist us in becoming saved. They might show that God is drawing us and working in our life, but they are not conditions for salvation. We receive our salvation altogether from God, apart from any good work that we do, apart from faith, apart from believing, apart from prayer, apart from reading the Bible.

When we become saved, these good works (faith, belief, prayer, delighting in God's Word), are locked in to our life, and from that point on, we will always trust in Christ, our Savior and Lord. From that point on, we will always delight in the Word of God because that is the nature of our new resurrected soul. We will always be troubled by sin in our life because in our new resurrected soul, we never want to sin.

Caller: Does Ezekiel 37:11-14 parallel the teaching that we are all spiritually dead?

Mr. C.: Yes. Ezekiel 37 tells us of the vision of dry bones, and bones indicate the fact of being physically dead and also being spiritually dead. We read in Ezekiel 37:11-14:

Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.

Before we are saved, we are like corpses in a grave. Remember the dramatic picture of Lazarus being raised from the dead which we read about in John 11. He was a stinking corpse, and Jesus said in John 11:43, “*Lazarus, come forth.*” He had no life within him and no ability to hear the command, and yet, he came out of the tomb. In other words, Christ gave Lazarus physical life so that he could obey.

Spiritually, God commands us to repent and believe on Christ, but we cannot do these things unless God qualifies us, and He will qualify those whom He plans to save. We are spiritually dead, but God can raise us with Christ and give us eternal life.

Caller: Is it true that God saves some people right after they hear the Gospel and other people just have to wait upon the Lord to be saved?

Mr. C.: Absolutely. People can be saved the instant they first hear the Gospel, and people can be saved while they are still very young, even as a baby. Others can hear the Gospel for most of their life and still not be saved, but it might be God’s plan to save them in time.

Let us think about what salvation is. Salvation means we have received a brand-new resurrected soul. Salvation is a tremendous miracle that takes place in our life, and only God can do that.

God gives us salvation in His own time frame, whenever He wishes to do so, if it is His good pleasure to save us. Not one of us deserves salvation. We all deserve hell for our sins. There are those whom God intends to save, and in His own timetable, He will save them.

Caller: I understand that I cannot do anything to get myself saved. Therefore, if I am destined to be saved, why not just wait upon the Lord?

Mr. C.: The problem with that kind of thinking is that God has commanded the human race to believe on the Lord Jesus (Acts 16:31, I John 3:23). If we simply lay back and say, “I do not know whether I am

elect or not, and so, I am not going to pay any attention to the Bible,” then we are disobeying God’s command.

When we bring the Gospel to people, it is the Gospel call to believe on the Lord Jesus.

Everyone, in their own way, wants to get right with God. Everyone understands, deep in their heart, that they have a relationship with the God of the universe. They do not know how intimate the relationship might be, but they know that somehow, they are going to have to answer to God for the way they live their life. So, they want to come to some kind of an arrangement with God; that is the nature of man.

The only people who will seek God on God’s terms are those whom God draws to Himself. God enters into their life and qualifies them by giving them the will to respond to the Gospel, and He gives them eternal life. If you are one of God’s elect, you will hear the Gospel call, and before long, you will have an earnest desire to do the will of God. You will cry out to God for mercy, and you will want to be obedient to the Word of God.

Accepting/Receiving Christ

Caller: My friend says that he knows he will go to heaven when he dies because he “accepted” Christ. Is that being a little over confident?

Mr. C.: There are people who say that they know they are saved because they are part of what I call a “do-it-yourself” gospel. In this kind of gospel, it is taught that Christ has done everything to pay for the sins of the whole human race (which is not true) and then they “accept” Christ or “invite” Jesus into their heart, and therefore, they believe they are saved. Their confidence is based on what they have done. That is not the salvation plan of the Bible.

We do not get ourselves saved. God is the only one who can save us, and God saves only those people whose sins were covered by Christ on the cross. We read in Matthew 1:21:

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Someone might believe that Christ came to save only the elect, and they might say they love the Lord. So, they believe they must be saved, and so they have confidence. The Bible teaches that you can have that confidence. We read in Romans 8:16:

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

When we are saved, God's Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are sons of God. How does God's Spirit witness to us? The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, the Bible. If we are a child of God, if we have truly become saved, we will find in our life an on-going delight in the Word of God. We will want to be as faithful as possible in doctrine (the teaching of the Bible) and in practice.

To say it another way, when we read the Bible (and we are delighted when we can read the Bible), or hear the Bible, if we are told something from the Word of God that is contrary to the way we live or believe, then we are glad to make changes, if we are truly saved. We want to be more and more faithful to the Word of God.

We can have assurance, we can know that we are saved. In the Old Testament, Job said, and we read Job 19:25:

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

This is a testimony of his faith. We, too, can have that testimony as we spend time in the Word of God.

One thing we have to guard against is "spiritual arrogance" or spiritual pride. If we say, "Oh, I know I am a child of God, and I feel so secure in Christ," well, actually, we should say, "By nature, I am a sinner, and I do not deserve salvation. And yet, by the grace of God, I believe God has saved me. I do not understand why He saved me, but as I read the Bible, I find I have a desire to do the will of God, which translates into a life in which more and more I do the will of God. I know that He saved me only by the mercy of God. I am thankful to Him even though I am so undeserving."

If we believe we are saved because we "accepted" Christ or had some experience, we might be confident that we are saved, but if we do not have an earnest and on-going and consistent desire to do the will of God, then we are not saved. We are deceiving ourselves.

Caller: I think there is a verse in the Bible that says no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit. So, how can people be in a false gospel and do works of Satan, and yet profess Jesus and speak of the Holy Spirit?

Mr. C.: Are you thinking of I Corinthians 12:3? We read there:

Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

The devils believed God, and they professed Him. They said to Jesus, “*thou art the Holy One of God.*” We read in Luke 4:33-35:

And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

The devils gave a solid profession that Jesus is the Christ, but they were devils. So, what does it mean to confess Christ? If I say, “I confess Christ as my Savior,” and then turn around and despise His Word by adding to His Word, that is, thinking there is more to divine truth than the Bible alone and in its entirety, then I do not believe Christ is my Savior. That indicates that I believe Christ is my Savior on my own terms. I have my own gospel, and that is not confessing Christ.

Many people have the naive notion that all we have to do is believe that, “Christ came for sinners, and He died, and rose again, and I am a sinner, but I receive Christ, and so everything is fine. All is well.” But, the devils believe God. The devils confess Christ in the sense that they recognize He is the Holy One of God. They trembled; they knew a lot about the Gospel, but they were not saved. They were not of the same mind with Christ. If we are of the same mind with Christ, and we read that we are not to add to the words of the prophecy of this book, then we will be obedient to that command.

Caller: I thought I was a Christian from the time I was five years old, when I accepted Christ. I went through a very difficult marriage, and we were divorced, and I have re-married. Now I wonder if I am saved. Could I have done this and be saved? Am I living in adultery?

Mr. C.: Many people, even as young as five years, or ten years, or as a teenager, say they “accepted” Christ, and then they are told by their pastor and their family, “you are a child of God.” So, for a little while, they feel great, and they think, “I am a child of God.”

Of course, that kind of action does not make us saved. We do not get ourselves saved; we do not dictate to God. The great miracle of salvation, when we receive a new resurrected soul, is something that God does.

After we think we are saved because we “accepted” Christ, and then we go through serious difficulties, and we wonder, “Am I really saved?” The likelihood is that you were never saved.

Now the question is: you are divorced and remarried, so what do you do?

We know that the second marriage, or the third, or the fourth, is adulterous. At the same time, we also know that there is not to be divorce. God recognizes the second, third, or fourth marriage, or wherever you might be at that point.

If we have become saved, every dirty, rotten sin we have ever committed or ever will commit in our life, was paid for by the Lord Jesus Christ. All the sin connected with your divorce and your remarriage is covered by Christ when you become saved. Now you cannot divorce, and you are to continue to live in your present relationship and never think about divorce. This is the only way the Bible allows you to go on; you go on as if it were your first marriage. You are to stay with this husband; you cannot go back to your first husband.

Ahead of that is the big question: “Am I really a child of God?” We read in I John Chapter 2:3-5:

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

If we say we know Him, we will keep His commandments. Psalm 119 talks about the mind-set of the believer; he delights in the Word of God. We read in Psalm 119:35:

Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

Psalm 119:77 tells us:

Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.

Psalm 119:174:

I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight.

The believer is happiest when he is learning from the Bible. If we have to make correction in a doctrine we hold or a practice that we follow, so be it. We are delighted to do that because God has placed in us the desire to do His will. We have been given a new resurrected soul; we have been born from above. Jesus says in John 3:3:

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

To use other language of the Bible, you have to become a new creature in Christ.

Caller: When someone asks you if we have to “accept” Christ, why not tell them to read John 15:16?

Mr. C.: We read in John Chapter 15, verse 16:

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Thank you for sharing that verse with us.

Caller: Does I Timothy 4:16 mean that we have to accept Christ?

Mr. C.: We read in I Timothy 4:16:

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

This verse is talking about those who have become saved. If we isolate this verse from the rest of the Bible, it sounds like we can do something to keep ourselves saved. It sounds like we can keep ourselves saved if we are faithful. This is parallel to Matthew Chapter 24, where God says in verse 13:

But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

We could read this verse and say, “I have to make sure that I endure and remain faithful or I will lose my salvation.” That conclusion will not square or agree with the Bible. The Bible says that nothing can separate us from the love of God when we are saved. We read in Romans 8:38-39:

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God says in John 10:28-29:

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

In Hebrews 12:2, the Bible says that God is the author and finisher of our faith. You cannot just pretend that these verses are not in the Bible, and hasten on to some other verse that is more appealing to you. These are God's words.

The “free will” gospel seems more rational, appealing, and lovely than the true Gospel. Why? It is more appealing because it puts the individual in charge. He can say, “If I follow the free will gospel, I can get saved when I want to get saved. When I want to be saved, I can just reach out and be saved, and so I am in charge of my salvation. I do not have to trust God except to believe the doctrine,” which is not true either, “that He paid for the sins of every human being.”

It is not a happy idea when I think of the countless people who trust in what they have done to get themselves saved. They “accepted” Christ. They were baptized in water, or they did this or that, and they are utterly convinced that they are saved. They live out their life with the idea that they are right with God, but they will wake up at the judgment throne and find out that they were not saved.

The salvation plan of the Bible is that we trust God all the way, not just part of the way. God does all the work to save us. God did all the work to give physical life to Lazarus, who had been dead for four days and was

a stinking corpse. God does all the work to give life to a valley of dry bones.

Caller: Will you explain “received” in John 1:12-13?

Mr. C.: We read in John 1:12-13:

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

There are two ways that we can receive something. We can receive something passively or actively. Let me illustrate. Suppose I am sitting on a chair in a big room, and across the room, there is a table loaded with gifts. I can walk over, pick up a gift, and receive my gift by actively going over there and doing something; that is one way to receive that gift.

The other way is that I am sitting there, taking no action of any kind, and someone comes into the room, picks up a gift, walks across the room, and puts the gift in my lap. I am passive in that I have done nothing, and that is the way we receive Christ. We are passive; we do not take any action because we are dead. We are spiritually dead. Jesus explains this in John 3:27:

A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

The gift of salvation is given to us by God Himself. He puts it in our lap, so to speak; He puts the gift of salvation in our heart. So, we receive salvation completely from the action of God, not through an action on our part.

John 1:13 explains John 1:12. When we are born again, that is, saved, we are “*born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*” In other words, when we become saved, it has nothing to do with our will. We are born of God.

This ties in perfectly with Romans 9:16, where God is talking about salvation:

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

It is not our will that makes us receive Christ. God is the merciful

God, and He has to do the whole transaction. When we come to true faith, we recognize that God has done the entire work of salvation.

Caller: A Sunday School teacher said that the Bible talks about the “elect,” but we make ourselves the elect when we “accept” Him as Savior.

Mr. C.: That is commonly taught. There are people who want to believe with all their heart in the doctrine of free will. We read in Romans 8:29-30:

For whom he [that is, God] 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.

The Bible clearly teaches that we are “elect” of God. But these dear people, who teach free will, say, “Yes, God knows the end from the beginning, and He looks down the avenue of time and sees the whole human race, and He sees those who will respond to the Gospel, and thus, He has foreknown that they would accept the Gospel, and therefore, He elected them to salvation, and He predestinated them to become saved.” However, the fallacy of that doctrine is that the Bible says in Romans 3:10-12:

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

When God foreknew us, the whole human race, and He foreknew every human being who would ever come into existence, did He know anyone who would turn to the Lord Jesus? No. The Bible says He saw that not one individual would turn to Him; “*there is none that seeketh after God.*” That is God’s statement about the human race.

Thus, “*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate,*” means that God, in His sovereign good pleasure, as He looked down the avenues of time, saw the miserable mass of humanity, and said He would save this one and that one, and He named each one whom He planned

to save, and He put them in the Lamb's Book of Life. He wrote them in His will so that they would become inheritors of the kingdom of God. The rest, He simply bypassed; He did not name them. The elect were named in the Lamb's Book of Life not because they would do something, they were as rebellious as anyone else, but it was God's good pleasure to save them.

The idea that, "Yes, we believe in election because God knew who would decide to become saved," is contrary to the Word of God.

We have to be very patient in this matter. Those who hold the "free will" position, that is, that man has a free will to make the decision and accept Christ, cling to that idea because it gives them their own guarantee. They believe they can be saved whenever they want to become saved, and if that idea is taken away from them, then suddenly, they have no control as to whether or not they will become saved. They must trust God implicitly and totally for salvation, and they are not ready to do that. They want some kind of control.

We must trust God for our salvation; that is what salvation is. We have no control because we trust God. Faith means that we hang our whole life on Him, and that will happen only when God saves us. He saves us with no pre-conditions. Once we have heard the Word of God, He applies it to the heart of those He plans to save. Nothing has to be going on in our life ahead of that.

Atonement

Caller: What Scriptures say that God's wrath was poured out on Christ? I have a friend who says God did not pour out His wrath on the Lord Jesus, but His wrath meant only that Jesus died.

Mr. C.: We read in Isaiah 53:4-5:

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

The rest of the chapter also speaks of Him bearing God's wrath for believers. For example, we read in Isaiah 53, verse 7:

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Then we read in verse 8:

He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

This passage is crystal clear that God poured out His wrath upon the Lord Jesus. We read further in verses 9-10:

And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

The wrath of God is not physical death. Christ has paid for all the sins of the believers; thus, there is no penalty for the believers to pay for their sins, and yet, believers die. If physical death were a penalty for sin, then God would be lying to us. Why do we die? Physical death is merely evidence that the saved person had been under the wrath of God. Physical death for the unsaved is evidence that he is still under the wrath of God.

Caller: I was taught that Christ paid for the sins of everyone. So, if we keep trying, we have a chance to go to heaven.

Mr. C.: The idea that Christ paid for the sins of every human being is a very popular idea. It is taught by many preachers, pastors, and Bible students, but they have not thought it out. What is the implication of that idea? What does it mean that Christ died for an individual? If Christ died for an individual, then that means that Christ has paid for that person's sins.

The business of the cross, which we read about in the Bible, has to do with the fact that Christ paid the penalty, demanded by God's law, for

the sins of human beings. If the penalty for sin has been paid, then there is no longer any guilt that comes against anyone. If the penalty has been paid, there is no further penalty to be paid.

Thus, if Christ paid for the sins of every human being, then no one could go to hell. God would be obligated to save every human being because Christ would have paid for their sins. We know that does not follow because the Bible is crystal-clear that hell will be very heavily populated. In Matthew 7:13-14, we read that Jesus says:

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.

In Revelation 20, the Bible talks about the dead standing before Christ the Judge; they are judged by what is written in the books, and they are thrown into hell. The Bible says in Matthew 1:21:

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

In John 6, God explains who his people are. We read in John 6:37:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

In Romans 9, before the twin sons of Isaac and Rebecca were born, God says in verse 13:

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

He hated Esau because Esau remained under the wrath of God. Christ had not paid for Esau's sins. His love for Jacob meant that Christ had to pay for his sins. This idea is expressed throughout the Bible. Theologians, Bible teachers, and Bible students do not like the fact that Christ died for the sins of His people and not for all people. They like a gospel in which they can believe that somehow Christ has paid for our sins, but salvation cannot be applied to our life until we do something. So they teach, "I have to reach out. I have to accept Christ, or I have to be baptized in water."

They teach, "I have to do something before there can be salvation for me." That is a wonderful idea to them, because it puts them in the

driver's seat. They can make a decision at any time they wish to become saved. They can be their own guarantor of their salvation, but it is not based on Biblical truth. It is concocted out of the minds of men and women who want their kind of salvation rather than God's salvation, in which we have to lean back and trust in God altogether. We cannot take any action to get ourselves saved.

Caller: Jesus suffered spiritually when He was separated from the Father, and He suffered physical affliction, for instance, as described in Isaiah 53. What part did the physical affliction play in the payment for the sins of the elect?

Mr. C.: Let us read what God says in Isaiah 53. We read in verses 3-12:

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil

with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

In the New Testament, we read that He came unto His own, and His own did not want Him. Mankind by nature does not want Jesus as their Savior. He is despised by the world.

What are the griefs and sorrows that we bear? The grief and sorrow we bear is that we are in trouble with God. We are sinners, and because of our sins, we are headed for the judgment throne of God on the last day, where we will be found guilty and then cast into hell for evermore. He took upon Himself all the sins of those whom He had come to save, and He took the punishment that was due for those sins.

We just read, "*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*" This does not refer to the nails that were driven into His hands, nor the fact that He died of crucifixion, it means that He was punished by God for our sins. He was under the wrath of God for our sins. He was wounded with the second death, the most terrible punishment imaginable, which is something that we cannot see. We get some evidence of it in that He threw Himself to the ground with loud cries while the sweat poured off His body like great drops of blood to the ground.

Remember at this point, no man had laid a hand on Him. No one had driven a nail into His hand. No one had touched Him, and yet already, in the Garden of Gethsemane, He was showing that something terrible was happening. God was wounding and bruising Him for our transgressions. He hung on the cross to emphasize the fact that He had become a curse for us.

Throughout the atonement, the physical pain He endured when they drove nails into His hands did not pay for our sins. If the physical pain had played a part in the atonement, then what about the two thieves who were also crucified at that time? They experienced exactly the same physical wounds. They had the same kind of nails driven into their hands and feet. In all likelihood, they were beaten before they were put on the cross. In fact, their leg bones were broken in order to make them die with greater physical punishment, and yet that did not pay for any of their sins in any way.

When Christ hung on the cross, while He was still alive, and the blood was still in His body, He said, "It is finished." What was finished? The penalty had been paid. Right after that we read in Luke 23:46:

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

In His soul existence or spirit essence, He left His body, and His body was taken off the cross and put in the tomb, where it did not decay in any way; no work of any kind was done there. It was the last seventh day Sabbath, and no work could be done, but His body lay in the tomb as evidence that He had suffered the second death. It was proof that the judgment had been completed; the final proof or final evidence is that on Sunday morning, He arose from the grave.

If any of Christ's physical pain, the same pain that the thieves next to Him endured, was part of the atonement, that would mean that those kinds of pain could not be endured by the elect because what He endured for our sins, we will not endure for our sins. Physically, we believers can be crucified, we can die with great pain, but that does not mean that we are not a child of God.

The wrath of God, the wounding, the bruising, the oppressing, the affliction, and so on, point to the enormous punishment that Christ endured when God poured out His wrath on Him. We read in Mark 15:34 that He cried out:

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

We will never know how that punishment was put upon Him.

Caller: If everyone is a sinner and needs Jesus to be saved, what happened to all the people who lived before Jesus came?

Mr. C.: Those who lived and died before the Lord Jesus came were saved exactly as we are saved. The Bible teaches that Christ was the Lamb of God that was slain from before the foundation of the earth. Because Christ is eternal God, the great I AM, the ever-present one, the washing power of His salvation plan was available from the very moment that Adam and Eve sinned, at the beginning of time. Before Christ came, they looked forward to the time when Christ would pay for their sins, and we look back on the time when He paid for our sins.

Caller: Will you explain "world" as it is used in I John 2:2 and 15-17?

Mr. C.: We read in I John 2:2:

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

In the whole world, there is no one else who can cover or atone for our sins; Christ is the only one. Acts 4:12 says the same thing:

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Christ paid for the sins of those who have already heard the Gospel as well as those throughout history who were to be saved; Christ is the only one who could atone for our sins. He is the one and only Redeemer. This does not mean that the sins of everyone in the world are covered by Christ, because if that were true, then no one would be threatened by hell. If our sins are paid for, then we do not have to stand before the judgment throne of God to answer for our sins.

Then in I John 2:15-17, God says:

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. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

We are not to love anything in the world the way we love Christ. Christ has to be number one in the life of the believers. God tells us what things are particularly pernicious, and which we are to guard against: the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. When you go to town, read the newspaper, or watch television, you see the world in action, and a great amount of it is designed to cater to the sensual desires of men, that includes fancy food, fancy toys, fancy clothes, anything to appeal to the desires of men, women, and children.

The world tries to captivate and stimulate the lusts of the flesh. The focus of the Christian is not to be on the world nor on the things of the world. Our focus and our love has to be on Christ and the Gospel. We are here on earth for only a few years, and while here we prepare for where we will be in eternity. What we have on earth is unimportant as

long as we have Christ, and if we do not have Christ, then we have nothing even if we have all that this world can provide.

Caller: I am confused about the “act” of believing. My church teaches that the “act” of believing on Christ is up to us.

Mr. C.: My guess is that you attend a church where it is also taught that Christ paid for the sins of everyone in the world. Is that correct?

Caller: Yes. That is correct.

Mr. C.: They have a salvation plan that is different from the salvation plan of the Bible. In their salvation plan, they teach that Christ paid for the sins of every human being, but the payment does not apply to anyone’s life unless that person, of his own free will, takes action and takes hold of the Gospel. In other words, they believe that God has done His part to save anyone, and now it is up to the individual to complete the transaction. That salvation plan is not found in the Bible; it is not Biblical at all.

Christ did not pay for the sins of every human being. We read in Matthew 1:21:

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

His people are all that the Father gave to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus says in John 6:37:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

God obligated Himself to save all those people who were chosen by God to salvation. We are spiritually dead; we are a corpse. We are spiritually dead as Lazarus was physically dead, which we read about in John 11. When Jesus commanded Lazarus to come forth out of the tomb, Lazarus came forth. Where did Lazarus get the strength to come forth? Where did his life come from? Where did his hearing ears come from? God had to provide everything for Lazarus to come forth from death to life.

God commands us to believe, but the only people who will believe are those whom God qualifies. God gives us spiritual life; He makes us born again so that we are a new creature in Christ. He puts trust in our life; it is totally God’s work.

The Biblical salvation plan means that we have entrusted ourselves entirely to God. There is nothing we can do to guarantee anything, but that is not the faith that mankind wants. Mankind wants a salvation plan in which they can say, “Well, OK, I trust the Bible insofar as God paid for my sins, and I can complete the transaction whenever I want to do so.”

Caller: I heard someone on your station say that because the Lord paid for our sins, we are no longer under the law. Could you explain that to me?

Mr. C.: Whether we lived during Old Testament times or New Testament times, before we are saved, we are under the law. The law declares that the wages of sin is death, and the death that God has in view is eternal damnation in hell. Because we were created in the image of God, every human being is under that law.

We are all sinners, and so we are all guilty under the law. On the last day, there will be a trial, and we will have to stand before the judgment throne of God to discover how guilty we are. We know what the sentence will be: eternal damnation.

However, if we have become saved, it means that we have come to trust in the Lord Jesus, who is eternal God. Jesus came to be our substitute or stand-in and bear the wrath of God in our place.

If I have become saved, it means that Jesus took upon Himself all of my dirty, rotten sins, and there are plenty of them. He was found guilty, and God poured out His wrath upon Him as payment for my sins, which means the law can no longer condemn me because Christ has paid for all my sins. So, I am no longer under the law; the law cannot bring me to trial, and the law cannot find me guilty. The Lord Jesus Christ has taken care of it all.

That is what salvation is all about. We are saved from the wrath of God; we are saved from eternal damnation. The only reason we can be saved is because Christ has paid for all our sins. He has already taken the punishment that we rightly deserve for our sins.

Backsliding

Caller: What is “backsliding”?

Mr. C.: We find the word “backsliding” particularly in the early chapters of the Book of Jeremiah, where God talks about ancient Israel. Again and again, ancient Israel repented and turned to God, and then they would

turn away from God and backslide, and God said they were “backsliders.” In other words, they were brought close to the kingdom of God, but they were not saved because if they were, they would not have fallen away. We read in Jeremiah 3:12:

Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.

In other words, God continually approached them with the Gospel even though they constantly fell away. When we are a true believer, we have been given a new resurrected soul in which we have eternal life, and we absolutely cannot backslide. In our new resurrected soul, we read in I John 3:6-9:

Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

We still live in a body that has not been saved, and so we can still fall into sin, but we will not go deeper into that sin because the moment we start to fall into sin, we are violated in the very essence of our being. In our new soul, we do not want to sin, and it will not be long at all that we will pray, “O, Lord, strengthen me. Give me a hatred for this sin. Help me to live the way God wants me to live.” That is the nature of the child of God.

Caller: Will you explain Hebrews 6:4-8?

Mr. C.: Hebrews 6:4-8 is very scary. We read there:

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance;

seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

This appears to say that a true believer can fall away and get into a situation where it is impossible to return to the Lord. That is very frightening.

A lot of people, at one time or another, felt they had become a child of God, but they fell back into sin and their old life. When they read this passage, they think, “Uh oh. I blew it. There is no way that I can ever become saved.”

First of all, in these verses, God is not talking about someone who had become saved. In the same context, God says in verse 9:

But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

In other words, God is talking about someone who has been brought very close to salvation. For example, he might have been a member of a church for a long time, he might have been brought up in a Christian family, and he might have tried to live like a Christian for a long time, and so he enjoyed a lot of blessings, but he never became saved.

Finally, he got tired of “making like” or “acting like” a Christian because it was uphill work all the time. He got tired of trying to do things God’s way, when in his whole personality, he wanted to go his own way. So, he decided, “I have had it. I do not want this any more.”

The question is: “Has he come to the point that he can never return to the Lord?” That is, “Has he come to the point that he can never repent and cry to God for mercy? Has he committed some kind of unpardonable sin?”

If we had only these verses, we could easily arrive at that conclusion, but we must remember the rule that we always read the Bible in the light of the Bible. We compare Scriptural things with Scriptural things.

In Isaiah 55, God is talking about people like that, who “*have tasted of the heavenly gift.*” For example, ancient Israel was just like that; they had been given every blessing, and they followed God’s commandments for awhile, then they fell away. This happened again and again, and yet

God came to them, and therefore, He comes to any one of us who is in the condition of having fallen away. God says in Isaiah 55:6-7:

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

My, my, that is so wonderful to hear! Even though it looks like we have crossed the line and been disobedient too long, nevertheless, as long as we are alive, there is the possibility of salvation. We can still cry to God for mercy. God's longsuffering, mercy, and patience with us is so wonderful. It is way beyond our human comprehension.

Caller: Would you comment on the phrase "make your calling and election sure"?

Mr. C.: We read in II Peter 1:10:

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

This command is similar to the command, for example, that we are to "examine" ourselves. We read in II Corinthians 13:5:

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

God is telling us: Do not take your salvation for granted. You might have felt very spiritual at some time, or maybe you did this or you did that, or your parents loved the Lord, or you go to church faithfully, or you were baptized, but do not put your trust in any of that. Make sure that you are truly saved.

How can I make sure that I am saved? The Bible gives us principles. We read in I John 2:3-5:

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him [that is, says he is saved], and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar,

and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

If we are saved, we will keep His commandments. If we say we are saved, and we do not keep His commandments, we are a liar, and the truth is not in us.

What are His commandments? The whole Bible, the whole Word of God.

If we have truly become saved, we have received a new resurrected soul in which we always want to do God's will, and we will more and more do His will.

The most important question that every human being must face is: "Am I ready to meet God?"

God's law, the Bible, indicates that we were created in the image of God to serve Him. Therefore, God holds us absolutely accountable for the way we live. On the last day, when this world comes to an end, every human being has to be examined by God. All those who lived previously will be resurrected to be tried or examined, and all those who are living at that time will be examined, to see if they have been faithfully serving God.

The infection of sin is in every human being, so everyone standing before the judgment throne of God will be found guilty. The Bible is very clear about the fact that the terrible punishment for sin is eternal damnation.

If we are not saved from the guilt of our sin, we will stand before the judgment throne of God, and it is guaranteed that we will be sentenced to hell forevermore. That is not a very acceptable idea.

Wonderfully, the Bible gives the way of escape. The way of escape is that we hang our whole life on the Lord Jesus. We trust in Him. We trust that He, in His sovereign good pleasure, has taken all the guilt of our sins upon Himself, and He was punished on our behalf, and He fully paid the penalty for our sins.

Therefore, we will never have to answer to God for our sins. Instead, He has given us eternal life, and when the last day comes, we will go to be with Christ for evermore. That is the way of escape.

God says "examine" yourself. This is something we should not hesitate to do. Even if we are convinced that we have been a true believer for a long time, God says that we are to examine ourselves.

It might be that you thought you were a true believer, but you were trusting in something that you did. You might have been following a gospel or a salvation plan that was not the Gospel of the Bible. A lot of

people follow that kind of salvation plan. What a horror story it will be when these dear people wake up at the judgment throne of God and find out that they never had become saved.

If we examine ourselves and think that maybe we are not saved, then what? We might ask, "What if God does not save me?"

The Bible says we can seek Him. That does not guarantee that we will be saved, but we can seek Him. If we seek Him with all our heart, God says we will find Him.

Of course, we will not seek Him with all our heart unless God Himself is drawing us. He is the only one who can do that good work within us.

If we cry to God, "O, God, have mercy on me," this is supplication, and the Bible talks about prayer and supplication. To supplicate before God means to beg for His mercy. God is merciful, and we desire that He might have mercy on us.

We have the wonderful privilege of pleading and begging with God for His mercy. When we become saved, we know that it is nothing we deserve and nothing to which we can contribute. We are saved entirely by the sovereign mercy and grace of God

Blessings of Salvation

Caller: If we are saved, does that mean we have a guarantee that we are going to heaven?

Mr. C.: If I know that I am saved, then I know that when I die, definitely, I will go to heaven.

Have you ever been at the bedside of someone who is about to die, or have you ever counseled with friends who had a loved one who died? If the loved one who is about to die has given evidence that he is a child of God, what a comfort it is to tell that person that he is going to be with Lord. What a comfort it is for him to know that, "When the Lord takes me, I will go to be in glory. I will be with the Lord Jesus."

After that person dies and goes to be with the Lord, it is a comfort to talk to his loved ones, and say, "It is wonderful to know that now your loved is with the Lord in glory." We read in I Thessalonians 4:13-15:

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [that is, those who have died], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no

hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus [those who were saved when they died] will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep.

This is the language that God Himself has given us. We have the comfort of talking together about the fact that our loved one is with the Lord.

If the person who is dying is a child of God, he can have the comfort of knowing that death has lost its sting. We read in I Corinthians 15:54-57:

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the believer, death is simply the marvelous moment when we change residency. When we die, we leave our sin-cursed body and go to live with the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. This is a wonderful comfort for the believers and their loved ones.

Caller: Will you explain Galatians 4:1-5?

Mr. C.: We read in Galatians 4:1-5:

Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

Before we are saved, we are like slaves or servants in a household.

Eventually, we will be an heir of the owner of the house, but at this point, we have not received salvation. In the Old Testament particularly, God gave us a lot of ceremonial laws to indicate the character of salvation. In the New Testament, God gives us the whole Bible to tell us about the character of His salvation. Until God's salvation is applied to our hearts, we are not a son of God. God tells us in Ephesians 2:1-5:

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;).

In other words, before we are saved, there is no difference between those who will be saved and those who will remain unsaved. When God applies Christ's work of salvation to our heart, because Christ paid for our sins, then we are no longer a slave or a servant in that sense; we become sons of God. We are adopted into the family of God; we become joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. The law of God, which had been showing us our sins and our need for the Savior, shows us that our salvation was provided through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Can I Lose My Salvation?

Caller: Can someone lose his salvation?

Mr. C.: Let me ask you this question: What are we saved from?

Caller: We are saved from the wrath of God.

Mr. C.: How is it that we are saved from the wrath of God? What happened that we could be saved from the wrath of God?

Caller: We believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and confess with our mouth that He is the Son of God who died to save us.

Mr. C.: Let us think about it for a moment. What did Christ do to keep us from the wrath of God? God's law declares in Romans 6:23:

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The “*death*” that God has in mind is eternal damnation. The Bible teaches that any sin that we have committed can send us to hell for evermore.

God also teaches that He put all the sins of those whom He planned to save upon the Lord Jesus Christ; He laid upon Him our iniquities. Therefore, every sin of those who become saved (every sin they have done or ever will do) was put upon the Lord Jesus, and Jesus stood before the judgment throne of God; this is the atonement. Jesus was guilty for our sins, and God poured out His wrath upon Him in such a way that it was equivalent to or equal to what the believers deserve, and because of God's justice, we deserve eternal damnation.

Christ paid the penalty, which means He paid for all of my sins and all of the sins of every true believer. Now, what sin could I commit that would cause me to lose my salvation? Christ can forgive me because He paid for all my sins. Is there any sin I could commit that would cause me to lose my salvation? The answer is, no. “There is no sin because He has paid for every sin.” So, of course, I cannot lose my salvation.

The Bible says that when Christ saves us, He gives us eternal life, not just life, but eternal life. John 10:27-28 tells us:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Eternal life means that it never ends. God says that no one can snatch us out of His hand. We are held by the Father; we are held by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible says that Christ is the author and finisher of our faith. God tells us in Hebrews 12:2:

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; 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.

The Bibles gives us a ton of assurance that if we have really become saved, we can never lose our salvation.

Drawing By God

Caller: Sometimes I wonder if I am going to God because He wants me, and sometimes I think I am going to God because I want to go to Him, and so I am not sure I am saved.

Mr. C.: No one of himself will go to God. The Bible says very plainly in Romans 3:10-12:

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Man deceives himself. We tell a lot of lies to our self, and say, “Well, after all, I can go to God any time I want to go to God.” The fact is: No, you will not! We are so spiritually dead in our sins and bound up in our sin and enslavement to Satan, that we will never of our own will go to God. The only way we can go to God is if God draws us. We read in John 6:44:

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

If I would never choose God, and I know that there is a hell, what can I do? I cannot get myself saved, that is for sure, because God has to save me. But, I can pray to Him. God says in Deuteronomy 4:29:

But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

We can beg God for mercy, “O, God have mercy on me a sinner. I know that I deserve hell, but have mercy on me.” We will come to that point only if God draws us. We can pray intellectually because it seems like what we ought to do, and we can become frightened and pray emotionally, but until we pray with our whole being, our heart and soul, God is not listening.

We are to read the Bible because we know that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, and we are to keep praying for

mercy, and it may be that we will be praying with our whole heart and soul.

Caller: Do you think that we do not even want to confess Christ and believe on Him unless God draws us to Him?

Mr. C.: Absolutely. We do not want to confess and believe on God's terms. We have to bear in mind that everyone wants to get right with God. Everyone somehow knows there is a true God because we were created in the image of God, and so they come up with a plan.

Their plan can be completely apart from the Bible. Their plan might be that they do not even acknowledge God, and they try to convince themselves that there is no God. They arrive at these plans because they do not know how to get to God, and so they would rather believe that there is no God.

Their plan might be that they go the Bible, and pick a lot of things from the Bible, and say, "These are nice things to believe; we will just confess and believe," and they design their own salvation plan in which they say they can be saved whenever they want to be saved. That is very common today, but it is not the salvation plan of the Bible.

The salvation plan of the Bible is that we must have 100% trust that Christ did all the work. We will trust Christ 100% only when God Himself gives us faith, and it will be in evidence when we have, indeed, become saved.

Caller: How do you explain election in view of the statement in Luke 18, where a man said, "*God be merciful to me a sinner*"?

Mr. C.: We read in Luke 18:13:

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

If you, or this publican, or anyone, begins to cry from the depths of his heart for mercy because he sees his sin and his desperate need for salvation, it is only because God is drawing you. If you understand that you are going to hell, and you really want to be a child of God, and you pray from the core of your being, "O, God, have mercy on me," the only reason why you would have come to that point in your thinking is that God is drawing you. We read in John 6:44:

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

We read in Philippians 2:13:

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

When we become saved, we know that it was only because God had mercy on us. Of ourselves, we would never seek God and surrender our will to Him.

Caller: Can we be too proud to invite Jesus into our heart? Can we resist Him, even if He draws us, because we are too proud?

Mr. C.: Christ does not come into our heart because we invite Him in. We do not invite Jesus in. We admit we are sinners, and we pray to God for mercy. We pray, "O, God, have mercy on me." God saves us; He does not wait for us to do something. If God is truly drawing us, we will find that our will is broken; our will is surrendered to Him. God inclines our heart; He does all the work within our personality. God is irresistible in His drawing. No man can resist God.

The fact that He draws us brings great joy to our heart. Suppose we have a loved one who is unsaved, and many of us do, and he is a hardened sinner. He has no interest of any kind in the Gospel, but does that mean he is beyond hope? We might look at him and think, "There is no way that he will ever bend the knee to Christ." Of course, of himself, he will not. Can God break him? Of course, God can. If God intends to save that person, you can depend upon the fact that he will be broken spiritually, and God will draw him. No one can resist the will of God. Jesus says in John 6:37:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

That is a tremendous blessing! Our task is simply to be a faithful witness of the Gospel. It is not our job to go out and say, "I am going to get this or that person saved," which I have heard people say.

We do not get anyone saved! We can pray for that individual, and plead with God that he might be saved, but only God can save anyone. If it is God's good pleasure to save him, you can depend upon it, that person will become saved sometime before he dies or before Christ comes again.