

Election/Predestination

Caller: What is “predestination”?

Mr. C.: “Predestination” is not just a theological word. Theologians coin or develop words for something, sometimes very big words, but “predestination” is a Biblical word. The word “predestination” was not designed by theologians; it was designed by God.

We read in Ephesians Chapter 1, verses 4 to 6:

According as he [the Father] hath chosen us in him [in Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

This is God speaking to us. In this passage, God is teaching that before He began the creation of this world, He predestined certain individuals to become saved.

God knows the end from the beginning. He knows every human being who ever has or will come into existence.

He knew that mankind would rebel against Him. Yet, He decided that out of the miserable mass of humanity, during the 13,000 years or so of the earth’s existence, He would save this one and that one. They were chosen or elected to salvation. Therefore, He “*predestinated*” them, and He made their destination heaven.

He designed His whole program before He created this world. At some point in the life of those who are predestined to salvation, God obligated Himself to save them.

Caller: Where in the Bible does it say that only some people will be saved?

Mr. C.: In Romans 9, God uses the twin sons of Rebekah and Isaac as examples. We read in Romans 9:11-16:

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

In His sovereign good pleasure, God insists that He decided to save Jacob and not Esau. We read in Ephesians 1:3-9:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that [not because] we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.

This is very plain language. It states that God made the decision from before the foundation of the world as to who would be saved.

Caller: If we are chosen by God, does that mean we do not have to work on our salvation? Instead, we can just ignore it and do what we want to do?

Mr. C.: Some people do have the idea that, “if I am elect of God, then God obligated Himself to save me at some point in my life. Thus, whether I am interested in the Gospel or not, God will save me. So, I can fatalistically go about my life, and when God decides to save me, and He has to save me if I am elect, then at that point, I will begin to serve the Lord.”

God does not work that way. God gives us commands. He

commands mankind to believe. He commands us to repent of our sins even though we are dead in our sins and cannot obey the command.

God can save someone who knew nothing about salvation just an hour before he is saved. For example, the thief on the cross was reviling Jesus. Then, an hour or two before he died, he said to Jesus, and we read Luke 23:42-43:

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

What happened? Obviously, he had been chosen by God. God had obligated Himself to save him. In the last hour or so of this man's life, evidence of salvation is seen in that he implored Christ for mercy. God picked that particular time to save this individual.

God has given us His commandments, and if we are chosen of God, at some point in our life, we will begin to be tremendously interested in His Word, the Gospel.

The Bible commands us to believe on Him and turn from our sins. Thus, if we know of the Biblical doctrine of election, and we think, "Well, I do not have to worry about salvation. God will save me if He wants to save me," then we are not listening to the Bible. This indicates that we have no interest in the Word of God.

On the other hand, if we are elect of God, when we hear the Word of God, eventually, there will be a response as God draws us. God says 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.

This is not talking about a precondition for salvation. We read in Philippians 2:13:

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

The period of God drawing us might be five seconds long or five years long, but when God saves us, the evidence of salvation is locked into our life. There will be evidence that we have become a child of God.

Let me say it another way. I know that the business of salvation is important. I know I am not saved. I know that only the elect are saved, and it is God's business as to who is elect. As I read the Bible, I know that hell is real and that I have no protection from death.

I could die tonight or next week; people die every day, and it could be me. I know that if I die without Christ, I will spend eternity in hell. So, in my misery and fear, what can I do? I can begin to beg God for His mercy. I can pray, “O, God, have mercy on me a sinner.” This will not get me saved, but it might be the way God works in me, and He might save me at some point, if that is His good pleasure.

If I am indifferent, and I do not care about salvation, and I say fatalistically, “Well, I will just wait and see what God does,” then I am not reading the Bible with any intelligence at all. That is rebellion against God, but God can still save me. He will save those whom He wishes to save. God says in Jeremiah 29:13:

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Caller: Why would God create all of us and save only a few of us? That does not seem right to me in my heart.

Mr. C.: It might not seem right to us in our heart because we are all part of the sin problem. By nature, we are all under the wrath of God. We are not able to understand the perfect justice of God. We must remember that no one will go to hell because God viciously wants people to go to hell. People are under the wrath of God and will go to hell because they are in rebellion against God. God did not create man to destroy him in hell; God created man in His image, to love and obey Him, and to have the highest good from Him.

God warned mankind, beginning with our first parents Adam and Eve, that in the day mankind rebelled, that is, if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would surely die.

In the face of this warning, and the fact that mankind was created perfect, and the fact that God was perfectly loving toward them, they rebelled. Therefore, the perfect justice and perfect righteousness of God came into play, and God had no alternative but to send mankind to hell. By rights, the whole human race ought to end up in hell.

Even though the whole human race deserves to go to hell because they have violated the law of God, and the law declares that there must be punishment, God decided that He would have a people for Himself. Just think of what was required for Jesus to have a people for Himself. God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, had to humble Himself and take on a human nature so that He would be one of us, and God put on Him every dirty, rotten, miserable sin that those He planned to save had committed; thus, He stood guilty before God with all of our sins. He then

was under the wrath of God, and the only way He could get back into God's holy heaven was to pay the penalty demanded by the law of God. That is what God did for those of us whom He saved. What an enormous love — that He would go through all of that for me! I did not deserve it. It is all by God's sovereign decision. I have no idea why He chose me or anyone else.

God's justice cannot be violated in any way. As a matter of fact, those who do not become saved are not envious at all of those who do become saved. No one wants God's salvation. The only reason anybody becomes truly saved is because God turns him around, breaks his will, and inclines his heart. God makes anyone who becomes saved a new creature and gives him a brand-new resurrected soul. Otherwise, no one would want to go to God on His terms.

Caller: Does Acts 13:48 mean that God chose only certain people?

Mr. C.: Exactly. We read in that verse:

And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

As the Gospel is preached, those who were predestinated to believe, will become saved. Those who are not elected to salvation will not believe; they will have no interest in the true Gospel, but they might have interest in a gospel or some kind of religion of their own or someone else's design. No one wants to get right with God on God's terms until God opens their spiritual eyes and ears. We read 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.

Only those who are ordained to believe want salvation on God's terms. We read in Romans 9:11-18:

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

When God talks about hardening the heart, you must remember that man by nature, is totally in rebellion against God; he is totally wicked. You might ask: “Why do we not see man’s total wickedness everywhere we turn?” The reason is because God restrains sin. If God did not restrain sin, mankind would destroy themselves. God can withhold His hand of restraint, and that person’s heart will be hardened.

Caller: How can you explain election in view of Deuteronomy 22:26-28?

Mr. C.: We read in Deuteronomy 22:26-28:

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

Put this passage in the setting of 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.

This is God’s statement concerning the whole human race. God

comes to the rebellious human race, none of whom will seek Him, none will do any righteousness, and He says if you will obey me, it will go well with you, and you will have my blessing, and if you disobey, you are under the curse of God. What is man going to do? Well, every man is under the curse of God, which is why we read in Ephesians 2:2-5:

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).

The only reason that anyone begins to do the will of God and begins to respond to the Gospel is because God is drawing him. We read in Philippians 2:13:

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

If we begin to cry to God or call upon His name, that is not the means through which we are saved; it is simply the evidence that God is drawing us. The work of salvation is totally independent of our cry to God. We are saved by grace though faith but whose faith? My faith? No. My faith is a work that I do, and we are not saved by works. We read in Ephesians 2:8-9:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves [that is, not of your faith]: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

We are saved by grace through the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ or through Christ Himself who is the very essence of faith.

Caller: The Bible says in Matthew 22:14: “For many are called, but few are chosen.” What happened to all these people who were called but not chosen?

Mr. C.: The Gospel call is to go out to the whole world. God says in Mark 16:15:

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

God does not say that we are to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the elect of God, that is, those whom He has chosen. We have no idea who the elect are. We are to bring the Gospel to as many people as we are able to reach. We are to bring the Gospel as intensively and as extensively as possible. As the Gospel goes out, it is the Gospel call to the whole human race, God is commanding all people to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Each one is commanded to believe on Him.

No one will respond to that command because everyone is spiritually dead in their sins. But, here and there, someone does respond. We hear about this one or that one who has become saved. What happened to them? What happened is that God had chosen them to salvation, and at some point in their life, they heard the call, and God applied the Word of God to their life, and they became saved.

It is known only to God whom He will save. We can know that we are one of God's chosen only if we do, indeed, become saved. Then we recognize the fact that we became saved only by the mercy of God. We know we were not saved by any virtue of our own or any good thing that we have done, and we know that we do not deserve salvation.

Caller: Can you explain why God would hate anyone?

Mr. C.: When mankind rebelled against God, they came under the fury of God's wrath. They came under the hatred of God. God says in Hebrews Chapter 1, verse 9, that He hates sin. He hates the sinner (Romans 9:13). God says in Psalm 11:5:

The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

Sin is anarchy; sin is rebellion against God. We all deserve the hatred of God, but God says in John Chapter 3, verse 16:

For God so loved [For God in this way loved] the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God's wonderful love is seen in the fact that He saves some people. His love is seen in the fact that He has provided for the salvation of those He chose to save from before the foundation of the earth.

God's hatred is upon those who remain unsaved. The Bible says in Hebrews Chapter 12, verse 29,

... our God is a consuming fire.

The unsaved will be eternally in hell under the wrath of God.

Caller: Will you comment on Matthew 20:16?

Mr. C.: God says in Matthew 20:16:

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

In this setting, first of all, God is giving us an example of ancient Israel. They were the first to hear the Gospel. For 2100 years, from the time of the circumcision of Abraham, which marked the beginning of the nation of Israel, until the time when Christ was on the cross, the Israelites heard the Gospel, and they had the blessings of the Gospel. God used Jewish people to write the Bible, and yet they became last when the Gospel began to explode all over the world after Christ went back to heaven. After the cross, Gentiles became saved; Gentiles were the last to hear the Gospel, and they became first.

Ancient Israel was "called." When we send out the Gospel, there is the Gospel "call." Only those who were chosen, from before the foundation of the world, will become saved.

Faith

Caller: Will you comment Luke 7:50 where Christ says, "*Thy faith hath save thee.*" He does not say "my faith."

Mr. C.: In Luke 7:50, we read about a woman who had washed Jesus' feet with a very precious ointment. Jesus said to her in Luke 7:48:

And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

When Jesus said this to her, at that moment, she had become saved.

The only way anyone's sins can be forgiven is if Christ has paid for those sins and applied His salvation to the life of that individual. In the original Greek language of the New Testament, Luke 7:50 says:

And he said to the woman, The faith of thee having saved thee; go in peace.

If we isolate this verse from the rest of the Bible, we can get the impression that her faith saved her, and faith is work. The Bible is very clear about the fact that if we want to do the work of God, we must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. We read this in John 6, and other passages also say that faith is a work.

Jesus is apparently saying, "Because you have done the right work, the work of faith, you have become saved." But, we know He cannot mean that because it would be contrary to the fact that our salvation is not of works. The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8-9:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

We read in Galatians 2:16:

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.

The faith that saved this woman (in Luke 7) had become her faith, but it originally was Christ's faith. Christ saved her. Christ's work is now counted for her. She of herself could never do anything to become saved. She was saved by the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. She became identified with Christ, and so God uses language like, "*Thy faith having saved thee.*" Christ is the very essence of faith. We read in Revelation 19 that His name is faithful.

We could paraphrase Luke 7:50 to say, "Thy Christ having saved thee." Christ is "thine" or "yours" now because He has saved you. You were spiritually dead, and Christ has saved you by His faith. You were not saved by your faith apart from Christ.

Caller: Romans 3:28 seems to say that our faith saves us. God makes a distinction between faith and the law; the law is works.

Mr. C.: We read in Romans 3:28:

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

We have to remember, as we learned from Galatians 2, that the faith by which we are justified is the faith of Christ. God says very plainly that it is not our faith.

In fact, this is so unacceptable to most theologians that virtually every translation of the Bible has changed a similar verse from the original Greek. They have made Galatians 2:16 to declare:

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith in 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.

This parallels what you are trying to say, but that is not what this verse says. Galatians 2:16 says:

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.

The Bible clearly teaches that faith is a work. For example, we read in James 2:17-26:

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend

of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

In other words, faith is a work. The work that saved Abraham, the work that saved Rahab, the work that saves any of us, is the work that Christ did. Christ's work, Christ's faithfulness, was counted for righteousness. Abraham's faith was not counted for righteousness, God's faithfulness was counted for righteousness.

God has accomplished the fact that we become saved. We have to understand this or we run the terrible risk of having a works-grace gospel in which we say, "Yes, salvation is through the grace of God but my faith was somehow an instrument through which God saved me." If you say that faith is not a work, then you have not read the Bible carefully. Read John 6. Read Hebrews 11:1, where God says:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Faith has substance, and that means there is work or energy that has been expended. Faith is evidence of things not seen. Faith is not just a smoky or cloudy idea with no substance. Faith is a very substantive activity, and the Bible says in I Thessalonians 1:3-4:

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

The faith of Christ saves us, and so we are absolutely secure because He did all the work of saving us.

Caller: It seems to me that faith comes to rational people. I would like to have your opinion on that.

Mr. C.: The trouble is that "rational people" are spiritually dead; before we are saved, we are corpses. God says in Romans Chapter 3, verses 10 to 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.

This passage gives us a Biblical definition of rational people. We are spiritually dead. How are we going to have eternal life? How are we going to be saved? It certainly cannot be from any action we perform because we are dead.

The only way we can be saved is if God saves us. It is entirely God's action. We read 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.

We are saved by the faith of Christ. Christ was faithful. Before the foundation of the world, God named those whom He planned to save, and He obligated Himself to save them. God works through the Gospel, as it goes out into the world, to seek and to save the lost. We read in Luke Chapter 19, verse 10:

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Salvation requires the miracle of life, and the only giver of life is God. We cannot make ourselves live. We had nothing to do with our first birth; we did not make a decision to be born, and we do not make a decision about our rebirth. When we become saved, God has done everything to save us.

Caller: Can an unsaved person acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the Great God and Savior?

Mr. C.: Absolutely. They can even believe on Him. The Bible says that the devils believe on Him, and they tremble. We read in James 2:19:

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

When Jesus cast out devils from someone, we read that the devils acknowledged Him and said to Him in Mark 1:24:

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.

The devils have total understanding that Christ is God, and they even trust some of the things of the Bible, but it is not something that has been given to them by God.

We all live by faith. We go to bed at night, and we trust that tomorrow will be another day; we have no guarantee of it, but we trust that it will be another day. If the last two days were warm, and the sun begins to shine in the morning, we trust that today will be warm. Every action we take is founded on faith, but that faith is something that comes out of our own inner being.

Likewise, there are those who trust in Christ as their Savior, that is, they believe that He came from heaven and that He has forgiven their sins. But then the time comes when they fall away, which indicates that they were never saved; thus, the faith that was in their life was not faith that was given to them by God. If they fall away and go back to their sins, that is clear evidence that God was not working in their life.

Faith that is related to salvation is a work that we do; faith is a good work. Faith is given only to those whom God is drawing and planning to save and who do become saved. Faith in itself is not a vehicle, an instrument, a condition, or a means through which God saves us. Our salvation is entirely God's action.

Caller: Romans 1:16 seems to imply that if we believe, then we know that Christ died for us, and we know that we are saved.

Mr. C.: We read in Romans 1:16:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

The question is: What does it mean to believe? The Bible says even the devils believe; it is exactly the same word. We read about the sower who went out to sow, and some seed fell on rocky soil. This is talking about those who hear the Word, and they believe for a while, and when the cares of the world come along, they fall away.

So, the word “believe” can run the whole gamut. A devil believes a whole lot of things about Christ but is not saved. Those who are portrayed as the rocky soil believe a lot of things about themselves and about Christ, but they were not saved.

The only people who come to a belief that is the evidence of salvation are those whom God has saved. He does not save them because they believe; they believe because they have become saved or God might be drawing them. Believing is a work that we do; it is not something that gets us saved. We can do some good works before we are saved if God is drawing us, but God saves us completely independently of our believing. When we do become saved, we will be a believer. We will want to do God’s will from then on.

Caller: Will you explain Romans 10:9?

Mr. C.: We read in Romans Chapter 10, verse 9:

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

“Confess” means that we acknowledge Christ and that we are of the same mind with Christ. We are not of the same mind with God unless we have been saved.

“Believe in thine heart” means that God has saved us. We will not believe in our heart with saving faith unless God has saved us. God gives us saving faith. Faith is a work, and good works will be seen in our life after we become saved.

Caller: Does the phrase in James, “faith without works is dead,” apply to Jesus in that mankind was created for Him so He could work?

Mr. C.: The Book of James, particularly Chapter 2, has been a real puzzler to a lot of people. Some theologians have wondered, “How could this be in the Bible?” We read in James 2:17:

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:20 says:

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

The Bible says in James 2:24:

Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

How can this be? Faith is a work just as all good works are work. We know the Biblical principle is that we are not saved because of our works, and salvation means we have been justified, that is, we have become right before God.

When the Bible says that a man is justified by works and not by faith only, whose faith and whose works can it be? It can be only the work that Christ did and the faith of Christ. That agrees perfectly with Galatians 2:16, where God says:

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith [a work that Christ did] of Jesus Christ, even we have believed [that is, we have come to faith in Christ] 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 James 2, God gives us an illustration of Abraham and an illustration of Rahab the harlot. When God talks about the works and faith that saved them, He cannot be talking about the faith or work of Abraham or the faith and work of Rahab. He is talking about the faith of Christ. We read in James 2:21:

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

Whose “works”? Christ’s works, that is, the work that Christ did to save him.

The fact that Abraham had become saved is proven by his obedience in following through with what God commanded him to do. Only a true believer would have done that. It is the evidence that He had been saved by the work of Christ. James 2:22 says:

Seest thou how faith [the faith of Christ] wrought with his works [Christ’s works], and by works was faith made perfect?

Faith without works is impossible because faith is a work, and faith produces works. One is the handmaiden of the other. If someone thought

he had faith and there were no works, then he would not have faith because faith is a work.

Caller: I believe that the Bible teaches that faith is the means by which a person is brought to salvation through the Lord Jesus.

Mr. C.: That is commonly taught, but if our faith is the means or the instrument by which we are saved, that means there is some work being done other than what Christ has done. Christ has to do the work. There are no other means or instruments by which we can be saved except through Christ; Christ is the Savior. There are no pre-conditions for salvation. When we have faith in Him, we have that faith only because God has given us that faith. The same thing is true if we have a desire to do His will; God gives us the desire to do His will.

This is dramatized by the raising of Lazarus. Lazarus was a stinking, dead corpse. He was physically dead, and Jesus said to him, and we read John 11:43-44:

And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

What means or instruments of Lazarus did Jesus depend upon to raise Lazarus from physical death? There were none; Lazarus was a dead, stinking corpse, and yet Lazarus came forth. This means that when Christ said, "Lazarus, come forth," Christ had to give Lazarus physical life, physical strength, physical desire, and physical obedience. Everything had to be given to Lazarus; nothing was in Lazarus that was used as a means through which Christ called him to life.

This is a picture of believers; Jesus is the resurrection and the life. We read in John 11:25-26, where Jesus is talking about raising Lazarus:

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

Why did Christ say, "though he were dead, yet shall he live" while standing outside of the tomb of Lazarus? The reason is that He uses the raising of Lazarus as a dramatic picture of our salvation. Christ did

the whole action, and He did not need a means or instrument. He commands us to be saved, and He causes us to become saved. The result is that we come to faith, and then good works will be found in our life. He gives us repentance and an earnest desire to do the will of God. He gives us an implicit trust in God as our Savior, but these are not instruments or means that He used; these are all the result of the fact that He has saved us.

Caller: I have heard you say that only the elect of God will be saved, but Acts 16:30 and Revelation 3:20 seem to say that we have to do something to be saved.

Mr. C.: We read a very interesting statement in Acts 16:30. The jailer asked, “*what must I do to be saved?*” In other words, “what work can I do?” Paul answered him and said in Acts 16:31:

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

That is, if you have faith in the Lord Jesus, then you will be saved. But the fact is that faith is a work. The Bible says we are not saved by works. We read in Ephesians 2:8-9:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Our work cannot enter into our salvation. We know that faith is work. We read in I Thessalonians 1:3

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.

II Thessalonians 1:11 tells us:

Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.

In other words, the jailer asked, “What work must I do?” Paul said, “Here is some work you can do. You have to have faith in the Lord Jesus

and you will become saved,” but that is an impossibility for two reasons. First of all, before we are saved, we are spiritually dead; we are a corpse. There is nothing we can do to become saved.

Secondly, the Bible warns that we are not saved by works, lest any man should boast, we are saved strictly by the work that Christ did, the faith that He did. The Bible says in Revelation 3:20:

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

What people do not hear in this statement is, “*if any man hear my voice, and open the door.*” What is inside? What is behind that door? A corpse. The Bible says we are spiritually dead. We are spiritually without life, and so, no one can hear His voice, and no one can do any work to get himself saved.

When Jesus says, “*if any man hear my voice,*” He is saying, “I have to give you ears to hear and a will to respond. I do all the work of salvation.”

Let us tie Acts 16:30-31 with Galatians 2:16, where God says very plainly:

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.

The Lord Jesus Christ has done all the work to save us. We can plead with God for mercy, and if God brings His Word to us, He will save us in accordance with His good pleasure.

Free Will

Caller: What does “free will” mean?

Mr. C.: The term “free will” is used frequently in religious circles. The theological meaning of “free will” is that mankind was designed in such a way that in and of his own will, if he wants to turn to God, he is free to turn to God. It means that of himself, with no outside help, there is

nothing to keep him from turning to God.

The fact is that mankind does not have that kind of free will. We have a free will to decide, with no outside help, what color of shoes to wear in the morning, and what time to get up out of bed, and what time to eat supper, and things of that nature. When it comes to a relationship with God, the Bible says that before we are saved, we are enemies of God. We read in Romans Chapter 5, verse 10:

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

The Bible says that before we are saved, we are in rebellion against God. God says in Psalm 107, verses 10 and 11:

Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High.

We will never turn to God of ourselves. We do not have free will. Our will has been sold out to sin and to Satan, but a great many theologians and Bible teachers do not want to admit that this is true.

Many people like the idea that, “I can turn to God when I want to turn to God. My will is free. I am not in bondage to sin to the degree that I cannot turn to God.” That might be a neat salvation program, if it were true, because, “it would put me in charge of when I would be saved, and I would not have to depend 100% upon God. God has to do some of the work, but I will finish the work when I turn to Him.”

The Bible prohibits that idea. We are not saved by any work that we do. We read in Romans Chapter 3, verses 10 to 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.

We are spiritually dead; we are a spiritual corpse. There is no way that we can turn to God. Only in spiritual blindness do people say they have free will.

Caller: Does II Peter 3:9 contradict the idea that God does everything

to save us?

Mr. C.: We read in II Peter Chapter 3, verse 9:

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The key word in this verse is “all,” which we might stumble on. The only people who will come to repentance are those who have been elected to salvation, and they will repent only when they are given a new resurrected soul. They will be turned from wanting to serve self and sin to wanting to serve God. They will have an earnest and ongoing desire to serve Christ, and it all will be the work of God.

In this context, God is discussing the end of the world. God is not going to bring the end of the world until every one elected to salvation has become saved. God desires that all those He plans to save should come to repentance.

Caller: I wonder if you would comment on I Timothy 2:3-4?

Mr. C.: This is a very interesting passage. God says in I Timothy 2:3-4:

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

In one sense, we can think of this as the whole human race. God says in Ezekiel 33:11:

Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

God commands mankind to turn from their wicked ways because God has no pleasure in the fact that He has to send the unsaved to hell. We are under the wrath of God because of our sins, and we are His creation, but He has no pleasure in sending anyone to hell. He commands the whole human race to turn from their wicked ways, and He uses the house of Israel as an illustration of His command and man’s rebellion. No one, not one individual, will turn from his wicked ways. 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.

In spite of man's rebellion and total lack of desire to turn to God, God decided that He would save a people for Himself. We read in John 6:37-38:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

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.

Who are His people? All those who were given to Christ by the Father. They were elected out of the miserable mass of humankind, and they were chosen to become saved. God says in Ephesians 1:3-5:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

These are the "all" for whom Christ gave Himself as a ransom. He did not give Himself a ransom for every human being because if He had done that, then no one would be under the wrath of God any longer. The "all" means "all" those who have been given to Christ by the Father. These are all those which we read about in John 6, that is, it includes all those whom He came to save. It is all those whom we read about in Matthew 1. All of these, with no exceptions, will become saved. Jesus says in John 6:39:

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

In John 17, Jesus is praying, and He says in verse 9:

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

Jesus describes “them” in verse 2 of John 17:

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

Out of the whole human race, God chose those whom He planned to save, and He gave His life a ransom for all that He planned to save. He did not give His life for the whole human race because if He had, there would no longer be any judgment against anyone.

Caller: How can you say we do not have free will? The Bible says in Isaiah 55:6,

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.

Mr. C.: This is parallel to Jesus standing outside of Lazarus’ tomb and saying, “Lazarus, come forth.” This was a command. Jesus was speaking to a physically dead corpse, a stinking corpse. There was no way in the world that Lazarus could hear or obey, and yet Christ commanded him.

Likewise, God commands us to seek Him. God commands us to believe on Him. God commands us to repent of our sins. God commands all these things, and there is no human being who can respond to God’s commands because the Bible says we are spiritually dead. We are as spiritually dead as Lazarus was physically dead.

Among the people, there will be some who will begin to respond even as Lazarus responded by coming out of that tomb. How was Lazarus able to respond? The answer is Christ commanded him and qualified him. So, anyone who begins to seek the Lord on God’s terms, anyone who begins to believe on Him, anyone who begins to turn away from his sins, does so because God is qualifying him. This does not mean that he has become saved at that point, but if anything is done in

obedience to the will of God, God has to make the qualification.

If God saves that person, early on or much later, then it is locked in; God will give that person an on-going desire to do the will of God.

Caller: Will you comment on Romans 10:13? This verse seems to indicate that we can become saved if we call upon the Lord.

Mr. C.: We read in Romans 10:13:

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

The Bible says that before we are saved, we are dead. We are a corpse. The Bible says there is none that seeketh after Him, no, not one. So, while the principle holds, that if anyone will call upon Him, he will be saved, no one, of himself, will call upon Him. The Bible is very clear about that, therefore, no one would become saved, and yet, people do become saved. How does that happen?

People become saved because God has saved them. The consequence or result of God working in people's heart and giving them salvation is that they begin to call on the name of the Lord, and they begin to trust God.

Caller: Will you explain Mark 10:25?

Mr. C.: We read in Mark 10:25:

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

It is absolutely impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. The eye of a needle is a tiny little hole, maybe an eighth of an inch in size. By the same token, it is impossible for anyone of himself to enter into the kingdom of God.

God does not use the term "rich man" necessarily to mean someone who has a lot of money. God is speaking of the one who before he is saved, is trusting in his spiritual riches. He might be the poorest man on earth insofar as physical things are concerned, but he could trust a false gospel or a religion that is not true and faithful to the Word of God, and so it is impossible for him to enter the kingdom of God.

But with God, all things are possible. If God saves a person, and only God can save us, then that person is no longer rich in that he trusts a false

gospel or in this world's goods. When a person becomes saved, he will be broken before God and walk very humbly. He will recognize the fact that he owes all his blessings to the God of the Bible. He will know that the God of the Bible has paid for all of his sins.

Caller: Can you explain Mark 9:24, where we read,

Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief

Mr. C.: Our faith can be very weak. When we are a child of God, we have been given faith by God, so that we trust Him, but there are times when our trust is weak. We take our eyes off Jesus more than we should, and then we wonder whether we are a child of God or not.

If we are really a child of God, we are not going to fall away. We are not going to backslide. We are not going to go back into our old sins again because we are a new creature in Christ. We can be very weak at times because we live in a body that still lusts after sin. We can have great difficulty in our soul existence if we pay too much attention to the desires of our flesh. It will not be long before there is great conflict within us because in our new soul, we want to be obedient to God.

Caller: I do not understand how God can command us to do something that we cannot do.

Mr. C.: How can it be that God would command us to do something that we cannot do? Some theologians puzzle over this, and ask: "How can God's offer of salvation be a well-meant offer of salvation if man is totally incapable of turning to Christ? Is God mocking us?"

The reason why God can command us to be converted and turn to Christ is because He looks upon us as those who were created in His image. That is the reason why, on the last day, those who stand for judgment cannot say, "God, I am spiritually dead. How can you have expected me to obey you? How can a just God send me to hell?"

The reason why God can send the unsaved to hell is because He created mankind without sin. Mankind is totally responsible for turning against God; he is entirely accountable to God.

God comes to the spiritually dead human race, and He says you are to believe on Him. However, no one can because we are spiritually dead, and therefore, God has His plan of election.

In spite of the fact that not one person of himself will or can obey Him, God says that He will have a people for Himself. He named the individuals He would save, and He took their sins upon Himself. He paid

the penalty for their sins. He obligated Himself, at a convenient time known only to God, to save them, and they then began to obey the command of God to believe on Him. God does the whole action. We are not in charge; we are not in control in any sense whatsoever.

This is repugnant and alien to natural man's pride and self-respect. So we might ask, "Do you mean to say that I am so bad and so rebellious and so spiritually dead that I can do nothing? I can make no contribution to get myself right with God? I cannot accept that."

That is what we might think, but the fact is that we cannot do one thing to get ourselves saved. We are entirely dependent upon the mercy of God.

Caller: Ezekiel 33:17-19 seems to teach that everyone has a choice.

Mr. C.: God says in Ezekiel 33:17-19:

Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

Who is righteous? No one is righteous of himself. 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.

However, at one point in history, two people represented the whole human race, and they were absolutely righteous. When they were created, there was no sin within Adam and Eve. Then they sinned; they ate of fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and they became wicked. They came under the wrath of God. That is the only time in the history of the world when anyone was righteous and then sinned, and thereby proved that if the righteous sin, they will come under the wrath of God.

Can the wicked turn from his wickedness? The Bible says that no one will turn from his wickedness of himself. There is none righteous, no,

not one. There is none that seeketh after God. So, how does it work?

The only reason why anyone turns from his wickedness is that God has given him a brand-new resurrected soul, that is, God has saved him. Otherwise, we will not turn from our wickedness, and we are still under the wrath of God.

Caller: The Bible says in Acts 16:31,

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

Why do you say that we cannot believe?

Mr. C.: Believing in Christ or having faith in Christ is a work that we do, and the Bible makes it very clear that we are not saved by any work that we do. God says in Ephesians Chapter 2, verses 8 and 9:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Our work does not enter into our salvation, and this is true whether or not God gives us the capacity to do the work.

People believe on the Lord Jesus to a certain degree. I recently reviewed a book in which the author said something like, “God did almost everything that is required to get us saved.” That was the first time I had read something in which the writer was so honest and clear about what he believes. The writer continued, “God’s work is not complete unless we believe.”

That is not what faith is. Faith is when we know that God did all the work; He did everything to save us. Since faith is a work, it is not the instrument through which we are saved; faith is a result of salvation. We will come to true faith only if God has done all the work to save us. I know that a lot of folks do not like this because it takes the action away from us. It means that we are entirely dependent upon the sovereign will of God.

God is the only one who can save us, and when He saves us, we will believe on Him. If He does not save us, we will not believe on Him.

Caller: Does God want everyone to be saved?

Mr. C.: God commands everyone to be saved, but nobody, neither I nor anyone else, will become saved unless God intervenes in our life. God

intervenes in the life of only those whom He plans to save. The Bible says in Matthew Chapter 22, verse 14:

For many are called, but few are chosen.

When someone listens to a Bible program like the “Open Forum,” he is receiving the “call” to become saved. No one wants to become saved, and no one will become saved, and no one has the power to become saved, unless God draws him to Himself. We read in John Chapter 6, verse 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.

Caller: I believe that it is God’s initiative to come to us and motivate us, but we need to take the step of faith and choose Him. It is our choice, but God prompts us.

Mr. C.: That is not what the Bible says. The Bible says that He is the author and finisher of our faith. We read 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.

God does not start to draw a person and then leave it up to that individual to get saved; we cannot get ourselves saved.

What happens when we become saved? A great miracle occurs. We become a new creature; we receive a new resurrected soul. How are we going to accomplish that? Christ’s work on the cross, which washes away our sins, has to be applied to our lives. How are we going to do that?

We cannot make any contribution to Christ’s work; God has to do the whole thing. We can try desperately to get some credit or try to guarantee our salvation, and we can say that Christ has done what He could do and now I must complete the work, but the fact is that there is nothing we can do. Christ has to do the whole work of saving us.

Caller: In Hebrews 2:3, why does Paul implore people to accept the gift of salvation if it was not incumbent upon the individual to accept the gift to become saved?

Mr. C.: We read in Hebrews 2:3:

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.

Why do people neglect so great salvation? Because they are spiritually dead. The world is a spiritual cemetery of dry bones. When we share the Gospel, we are speaking in a cemetery of spiritually dead people. How are they going to respond?

I do not read the word “Accept” or the word “implore” in this verse. The fact is that the whole human race by nature neglects salvation. In Romans 3, God says that nobody wants His salvation. God says, “*there is none that seeketh after God . . . no, not one.*”

Yet, certain ones do become saved. How does that happen? Did they become saved because they accepted Christ? No. That is not suggested here at all. We are saved because God did all the work to save us.

Grace

Caller: Is there anything I can do to come into the grace of God?

Mr. C.: There is nothing you can do. You cannot get yourself saved. You do not even know whether God will save you or not. God gives us the privilege of crying to Him for mercy. That is not the basis of our salvation, if we do become saved. But we certainly have the privilege of crying to Him for mercy.

We can pray, “O, God, have mercy on me. I know I am a sinner. I know I deserve hell. I know I do not deserve salvation. I have no idea whether I am one of God’s elect or not. All I know is that I am in trouble. Have mercy on me.”

If we pray this way from the essence of our being, from our heart, we do so only because God Himself is drawing us and working in us. We read in Philippians 2:13:

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

We can pray for mercy, and we can read the Bible. God says in Romans 10:17:

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word

of God.

Read the Bible; it is the law book of the kingdom of God.

On the other hand, God saves people who have never prayed for mercy. There are no pre-conditions required for salvation. A person can hear a verse from the Bible for the first time in his life, and two seconds later, he can be born again. God does not require anything from us. However, God might deal with some people for a long period of time. He might be drawing them for weeks or months or years, and increasingly, they will try to be obedient to God. They will read the Word of God, and still, they are not saved.

When God saves us, His salvation is not based on any pre-conditions. God saves us when He wants to save us. At that moment, we become a new personality, we receive our new resurrected soul, and judicially, Christ's payment for all of our sins is applied to our life so that we will never again be under the wrath of God.

From the moment we become saved, because we have become a new creature in Christ, we will have an on-going and earnest desire to do the will of God. The desire to be obedient to God will be continuous because we do not slip in and out of salvation. In our new resurrected soul, we do not want to sin. If we do sin, we will be greatly troubled until we have victory over that sin. That is the life of the believer.

Caller: Can someone have an interest in the Gospel on his own or does God have to give him an interest in the Gospel?

Mr. C.: God has to give us an interest in the Gospel. Anything we do that is pleasing to God is a result of the fact that God has worked it out in us. We read in Philippians 2:13:

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

Before we are saved, we are spiritually dead; we are a corpse. There is no spiritual life within us. Any true desire, any God-glorifying desire that we have would be there because God has placed it there.

Caller: Are doing good works like exercising the faith that comes through grace?

Mr. C.: Yes. Grace is the gift of salvation, and a consequence of salvation is a deep and abiding trust in God, which is one of the good

works of wanting to do the will of God. We will continually exercise that because that is the way we have now been designed. We have a new resurrected soul in which we will exercise our faith and do the will of God.

How to be Saved

Caller: How can I become born again?

Mr. C.: The Bible says simply in Acts 16:31:

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

How do we believe on Him? It is not our nature to hang our whole life on the Lord Jesus and to trust in Him altogether. Our nature is that we want to take some credit for becoming saved; we want to make a contribution.

The path that God has opened up for us is that we can cry for mercy. We have to face the fact that we are sinners, and we are under the wrath of God; there is no good within us. Of ourselves, we will never seek God, and yet we know that we desperately need salvation, and we know that we deserve hell. We can plead with God, "O, God, have mercy on me a sinner. I know I do not deserve salvation, but have mercy on me and save me." At the same time, we read in the Bible, in Romans 10:17:

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

So we continue to read and listen to the Bible. We pray to the Lord that we will be obedient to what we read in His Word. If we cry to Him with all heart, God will save us. We read in Jeremiah 29:13:

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

If we do become saved, we will discover that the reason why we cried to Him with all our heart is because God was drawing us. We cannot take credit for that either, because it means that God was drawing us and working out His will in our life.

Caller: Some pastors give an altar call, and say that we just have to confess Jesus, believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, and then we

will be saved. Some Bible passages sound like that is all we have to do. Often, pastors say they have led this person and that person to the Lord.

Mr. C.: Some Bible verses might sound like that, if we read them superficially. When we read these verses carefully, in the light of the whole Bible, we know that to “confess” means that we have become of the same mind with God. How can we be of the same mind with God unless God gives us a brand-new resurrected soul? Confession is an evidence of the fact that God has saved us; it is not a cause for God to save us.

Some pastors say that if you say certain words, and do certain things, then you will become saved because they have a salvation that is based upon “what I do.” It starts out with the idea that Christ paid for my sins, but His work cannot be applied to “me” until I do something to complete the transaction. That idea is deadly wrong because the Bible says that if we trust in any of our work to become saved, then we do not have the salvation of the Bible. God has to do the complete work of saving us.

In order to understand this, we will look at John 11, where we read that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus had been dead for four days; he was a stinking corpse, and Jesus said in John 11:25:

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

This ties in with Romans 10 which talks about those who believe in Christ. In John 11, Christ demonstrates how salvation comes to the believer. How does God give us salvation? What action do we take to accomplish our salvation?

How did Jesus raise Lazarus from physical death to physical life? It is a picture of how He raises us from spiritual death to spiritual life. The Bible is very clear in Ephesians 2 and Colossians 3 that we are spiritually dead. Romans 10:13 says:

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

How are they going to call upon the name of the Lord? How could Lazarus call? He was a corpse; he could not call on the name of the Lord. Jesus called Lazarus, and Lazarus came out of the tomb. What contribution did Lazarus make? He did not have ears to hear; he did not