

have life to respond; he did not have a will to respond. He was dead, but he came forth when Jesus called him. That is a picture of salvation.

When we start to call on the name of the Lord, God is already drawing us, if, indeed, we are calling from our heart. The Bible says in Jeremiah 29:13:

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

We come to that point only if God is beginning to save us. He has to do all the work. If He is going to save someone, He will complete that person's salvation just as when He called Lazarus, Lazarus came to physical life. God calls us by the command of the Bible to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, for instance, we read in I John 3:23:

And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

We are commanded to confess our sins, repent of our sins, be baptized, that is, have our sins washed away. These are all equivalent to Jesus saying, "Lazarus, come forth." Lazarus in himself could not respond in any way when Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth."

When God commands us to believe on Him, repent of our sins, have our sins washed away, or when He commands us to do anything, we cannot respond of ourselves any more than Lazarus could respond. Yet, here and there are those who do respond, and they do become saved, just as Lazarus did respond but not of himself. Christ had to qualify him; there is no doubt about that. God has to qualify us if He is going to save us. Only He can give us repentance and faith to trust in the Lord Jesus. He has to make us born again, and He has to give us eternal life if we are to be saved. He does all the work; we make no contribution of any kind.

Caller: Will you comment on Acts 2:38?

Mr. C.: In the New Testament, after Christ went to the cross and ascended into heaven, God was going to explode the Gospel into the world. He began in Jerusalem in A.D. 33, when about 3,000 people were saved in one afternoon. In the process, Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was telling them of their need for salvation, and he said to that congregation, and we read in Acts 2:38:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Many pastors read this and say there are two things we have to do in order to get right with God. They say we have to turn away from whatever sins we find in our life, and we have to go to a church and have someone baptize us with some water, and then God will give us the gift of salvation. That is not what is being taught here.

The word “baptized” here means “to be washed.” Thus, God is saying that in order to be right with God, that is, to be saved, we are to repent of our sins, and we are to have our sins washed away. There is only one way that any of this can happen.

We might turn away from this sin or that sin, and we might know that we have been sinning because we have been living in adultery, and we can stop living in adultery. We might know that we have been sinning because we have been a drunkard, and we can turn away from alcohol. That is not what God has in mind when He says to repent.

God is telling us that we must turn around entirely and follow Him. God is telling us that our whole life has to be changed.

We cannot change our life. We cannot turn around altogether. So, how can this be? The only way we can truly repent, according to what God says is the evidence of salvation, is when God gives us a new resurrected soul in which we never want to sin again. Then we have repented. That repentance comes to us only because God has done the work in us; He gives us repentance and causes us to repent.

Likewise, we are to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. We cannot get our sins washed away. God is the only one who can do that. He will do that only when He applies the shed blood of Christ, that is, the atoning work of Christ, to our lives. Then, our sins are washed away. That happens only when God saves us.

We could paraphrase this verse this way: “You must become saved.” How do we become saved? God has to save us. We cannot save ourselves. God saves those whom He wants to save. If we are not saved, we can plead with God that we might become saved. We can beg Him for salvation and mercy. We have that open door to the throne of God.

Caller: I think that you are an astute student of the Bible. Can you tell me when or how a person is actually saved?

Mr. C.: In His Word, God explains that scattered amongst the peoples of the world, there are those who were elected by God to become saved. They were predestinated to become saved.

The methodology that God uses, or the way God designed His salvation plan, is that those who are to become saved must be under the hearing of the Word. God has ordained this. We read in Romans Chapter 10, verse 17:

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

In His divine economy, God developed a wonderful plan in which He included all true believers; we are to reach out to those who are to become saved. God did not have to do that; He could save people through angels or by direct contact between the elect and Himself. But in His divine mercy, He included us, the true believers, in His program.

What we believers do is bring the Gospel to others. We can bring the Gospel through tract distribution, radio broadcasts, on the Internet, television, or by personal witnessing. We try to reach as many people as possible with the Gospel message, but we have no idea which people are among God's elect.

God says that as we tell others about the Gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ seeks and saves those who were 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.

When one of God's elect hears the Gospel, in God's own timetable, God will apply His Word to the heart of that individual, and he will become saved.

Therefore, our role is very important. God has given us the role of being the vehicle or the means by which the Gospel is sent into the world. God has not given us the role of getting people saved. God Himself does the saving. We are not salesmen for Christ. We are not to try to make the Word of God a little more palatable or a little more acceptable. We are to faithfully present the whole counsel of God. We are always winners as long as we faithfully bring the true Gospel.

Just think about how wonderful this is! It is so exciting when we read something like Luke Chapter 4, verses 43 and 44:

And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

The Lord Jesus Christ said this, and the Lord Jesus Christ is eternal God. Of course, the prime task of the Lord Jesus Christ was to be the Gospel; He bore the wrath of God for the sins of those He had come to save. In this passage, Christ also indicates that He had been sent to preach the Gospel.

In principle God commands every true believer to walk in the shoes of our savior, that is, in the way of the Lord Jesus (Galatians 5:25, Ephesians 2:10, Ephesians 5:8, Colossians 2:6, I John 2:6). There is no more important task than the task in which the Lord Jesus was involved, namely, to preach (which means “to publish”) the Gospel. Jesus went back to heaven after His resurrection, but He continues to publish the Gospel through the body of Christ, and we believers are the body of Christ (I Corinthians Chapter 12:27).

When we witness to someone, and that person just turns away from the Gospel, we weep. Maybe he was very harsh with us, but that does not mean that he will never become saved. His salvation is up to God. Sometimes an individual will come into the kingdom of God kicking and screaming in that he rebels and rebels, but God can break his will. If someone is elected to salvation, he will become saved because no one can resist the will of God.

We are to be faithful witnesses. We do not coerce people; we do not flatter them, and we do not try to sugar-coat the Gospel. We just say it like it is, as kindly and humbly as we can.

That is what Family Radio is all about. It is the only reason for our existence. We do not go into countries with the Gospel in order to get a lot of names on a list. We have no idea who becomes saved as people listen to our Gospel broadcasts. We do not try to find out how many people are listening, and we do not tell people that they have to do this or that. We just share the Gospel with them.

We know that God will do whatever work He wants to do in their hearts. We leave all that in the hands of the Lord. In the meantime, those of us who join together in this kind of ministry are, as it were, walking in the shoes of our blessed Lord.

There is nothing more wonderful than that.

Caller: When people call you and ask how can they know they are saved, you tell them to pray to God for mercy, and read their Bible. Then, you say that only the elect will be saved. To me, it sounds like you are contradicting yourself.

Mr. C.: The fact is that we cannot get ourselves saved. But God, in His mysterious providence, allows us to cry to God for mercy.

Let me use the illustration of someone in a dungeon. He is there with all kinds of other people who have rebelled against the king. The law of the land says that he will be in that dungeon for the rest of his life.

Then he hears a rumor that occasionally the king forgives certain individuals, but he does not know why or how the king forgives anyone. So, he tries to get a message to the king, “O, king, have mercy on me. The next time you forgive someone, could it be me? I know that I deserve to be in this dungeon, and I know that I have rebelled, but will you have mercy on me?”

This does not mean that he can cause the king to have mercy on him. It does not mean that he has taken a step upward to get out of that dungeon. The king is sovereign. He might listen and he might not listen. That is the privilege of the unsaved; they can cry to God for His mercy. We are not saved because we cry to God; He does not have mercy on us because we ask for mercy. But if we are truly crying to God from our heart, so that in our whole being, we are pleading with God, it is only because God Himself is already working in us. If God draws us to Himself, He is not setting up a condition for our salvation, but it can be a prelude to salvation, and at some point, God might save us.

There are those who become saved who have never pleaded to God for mercy. At the moment they first heard the Gospel, God saved them. God does not require any preconditions of any kind, but He saves His people in the presence of the Word of God.

The Bible tells us in Romans 10:17:

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

If I do not know whether I am saved or not, and I do not know if I am one of God’s elect, but I read the Bible, and I begin to get more and more frightened about the prospect of eternal damnation, and I begin to realize that I need Christ as my Savior, what can I do? I cannot do anything to guarantee my salvation. There is nothing I can do to get myself saved.

But I read in the Bible that when God saves someone, the person is under the hearing of the Word. I have been under the hearing of the Word, and I know that the wages of sin is death, that is, eternal damnation. So, I have learned certain things from the Bible, but I want to know more. I want to know: Is there anything I can do? As I study the Bible I learn there is nothing I can do; salvation is by the sovereign grace of God. Only God can save me.

I learn that I can plead with God. I can beg God to have mercy on

me. I can pray, “Bring me not into trial on the last day. Deliver me from the evil of my sins.” If am doing these things intellectually or emotionally, then it does not mean a thing. It just comes out of my own desire; it does not indicate that God is working in my heart.

If I begin to pray for mercy from the depths of my heart, from the very essence of my being, it will be happening only because God is drawing me. 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.

Again, this is not a precondition for salvation. This means that God is beginning to deal with me, and at some point, He will save me, if that is His will. From that point on, I will trust in the Lord Jesus. I will have an ongoing desire to do the will of God because at the moment I truly became saved, the marvelous miracle occurred: I was given a brand-new resurrected soul. Nothing I did made me deserve to be saved.

The only thing I deserve is eternal damnation because I am a sinner by nature.

Our prayer is not a condition for salvation. When we become saved, we know that our prayers are a result of the fact that God had been drawing us.

God commands us to believe on the Lord Jesus, but we cannot believe because we are spiritually dead. God also commands us to pray; He commands us to read His Word, and so at least, we can start praying and reading His word. If God plans to save us, it will be through the Word of God.

Caller: I was raised in a Baptist church, and I am a little concerned by some of the things you say. I would like to know the truth of the Bible, and I was wondering if you could interpret Romans 10:8-13?

Mr. C.: We read in Romans 10:8-13:

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For

there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Faith is a synonym for the Lord Jesus Christ; He is the very essence of faith. His name is Faithful. To “confess” means that we are not just acknowledging Him, but we have come to the point where we agree on who the Lord Jesus is and we have become of the same mind with Him. That can happen only after we are saved.

To “believe in thine heart” means to have faith, and Christ has to give us that faith. It is not a condition for our salvation. Faith is a good work that we do and that shows up in our life, and can be the evidence that we have become saved.

Effectively, God is saying that these are the evidences of salvation; we “confess Him,” we are of the same mind with Him, and we have come to faith in Him. These are gifts that God gives us as He works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. 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, without the activity of God in our life, we are spiritually dead; we would never confess Him. Before we are saved, we are not able to have a definite trust in Him for evermore.

“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” sounds a little bit like the believing and the confessing are instruments through which God works to save us. But, since believing and having faith are works that we do, and we know that we are not saved by any work that we do, therefore, we know that these are evidences that will be seen in our life when we become saved. Salvation, and confession with our mouth, and believing in our heart, are all of the same cloth; they all identify with what happens when we have become saved.

“Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” identifies with other statements in the Bible in which God declares that He is not a respecter of persons. Whether we are Jew or Greek, male or female, bond or slave or free, king or pauper, it makes absolutely no difference; whoever gives evidence of having trusted in the Lord shall not be ashamed.

To be “ashamed” is a way that God talks about judgment day; those who do not become saved will have to stand at the judgment throne

on the last day, and God indicates that they will be shamed as all of their sins are paraded out. They will then come under the wrath of God because of their sins. If we have become saved, the evidence being that we have come to trust in the Lord Jesus, then we will not be ashamed; we will not come into judgment.

God again indicates that He is not a respecter of persons by saying, *“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* Of course, no one will call upon Him unless God Himself is drawing him. If God does not work in our life to do His will, then we will never have an interest in coming to Christ on His terms.

Caller: Does God command us to come to Him boldly and cry for mercy?

Mr. C.: Yes. We must remember that God is in charge of every aspect of salvation. For example, a powerful illustration is that of the raising of Lazarus, which we read about in John 11.

Lazarus had been dead for four days; he was a stinking corpse. There was no activity going on in Lazarus, and he had no desire to be physically alive.

Christ stood outside of that tomb, and said, *“Lazarus, come forth.”* Christ commanded that dead man, that stinking corpse, to come out of that tomb. Lazarus could not raise a finger or turn a hair to answer that command; it was impossible. Yet, Lazarus did come forth, and the only way it could happen is that Christ did everything. Christ gave Lazarus life; He gave him the will to respond, the desire to respond, and ears to hear. It was all the work of Christ.

When Christ commands us to seek Him, when He commands us to turn away from our sins and repent, when He commands us to believe on Him, of ourselves, we cannot do any of these things. We are a dead corpse.

If we begin to do any of these things, and it is truly spiritual activity of the right sort, it means that God is qualifying us. God is doing this within us. He does not require any of these things as a pre-condition for salvation; He can save us from the moment we hear a verse of the Bible. He can instantly save us or He might have us seek Him for a long, long time, and then He will save us.

God is in charge, and He saves people in a thousand different ways. All we know is that we have to look to Christ as our Savior. We cannot get ourselves saved in any way.

We have the great and wonderful privilege of crying to God, “O, God, have mercy, have mercy.” As we see our sin, we begin to turn away, but that is not what is going to get us saved. This is what happens as we become more honest with ourselves and with God.

If we are truly seeking him with all our heart, then at some point, we will become saved. We will only seek Him with all our heart if God has provided all the motivation and desire.

Caller: I understand that God saves us, and even the desire to be saved is from God because there is nothing we can do of ourselves. However, I have heard you say that we can beg God for mercy. If I am not of the elect, and I beg God for mercy, will that change His mind?

Mr. C.: The Bible says if we seek Him with all our heart, we will surely find Him. However, a lot of people seek Him intellectually. They read the Bible, and they understand that they must have the right relationship with God, and they understand that they can plead with God, but deep in the essence of their being, they do not want to give up their old life. They like their life too much to give it up. Thus, they are not seeking Him with all their heart.

There are those who become very emotional and very frightened because of the likelihood of hell closing in on them, and so they cry out to God for mercy. But again, they are not crying for mercy from the depths of their heart. They are crying out because of an emotional fear. Again, they are not seeking God with all their heart and soul and strength and mind.

On the other hand, there is the individual whom God intends to save. Now remember, there are no pre-conditions for salvation. God does not require that anything happens in our life except that we come under the hearing of the Word because God works through His Word. There is no activity that we can do that is a pre-condition for salvation, but God might be drawing an individual. Jesus says in John 6:65:

And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

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.

When God is drawing someone, He begins to give that person faith and an earnest longing for salvation. God begins to give that person a

heart-felt desire for God to have mercy on him. As a result, that person will begin to pray from the depths of his heart. Again, this is not a condition to become saved; it is one of the ways God draws 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.

If God is drawing us, if He is working in our heart, then we will become saved. When we become saved, it is not in any way because of anything we did. The fact that we were pleading with God is simply evidence that God was working within us. He might work within us for some time, but at some point, God is the only one who can save us. The work of salvation is 100% God's work and none of ours.

No one who is not one of God's elect will seek God with all his heart. Someone might seek Him intellectually or emotionally, and do all the things that he thinks he is supposed to do, but if God is not working within him, it has no meaning at all; his heart is still in total rebellion against God. He is simply trying to make a deal with God, or he is trying to bargain with God, or he is trying to earn salvation out of the works of his own flesh, and that has nothing to do with God drawing him.

When we finally discover an on-going desire to do the will of God, and we delight in the Word of God, and we eagerly learn all we can from the Bible, and we change anything that we do or believe that we find is contrary to the Word of God, then we ask ourselves: "How did I come to this?" We have to answer that it had nothing to do with any of our work. This is the evidence that God has done a work of grace in our life. It is evidence that God has saved us, and we are to give Him all the praise and all the glory. Apart from His work in our life, we would never come to terms with God and the Bible.

Caller: I have been trying to turn my life over to Christ, but sometimes I feel like I have no hope. I do not know if God is drawing me or I am just trying to be saved on my own. It almost seems like a lottery system to me.

Mr. C.: No one knows whether they are chosen or not; that is God's business. Only after we know we have become saved, do we realize, "I cannot take any credit. Obviously, God chose me or I would never have become saved."

Thus, when you are still unsaved, the matter of election and being chosen is not the important issue. The important thing is that God comes

to you with the illustration of Luke 18, where we read about the publican who smote his breast and dared not look up. 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.

We are to come to God in our sins, admitting our sins, admitting that we do not deserve anything from God except His wrath, and we recognize that only God can save us. We plead with God, “O, God, have mercy, have mercy.”

God promises that if we seek Him with all our heart, we will surely find Him. We read in Jeremiah 29:13:

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

We will not seek Him with all our heart until God has broken us, and we come to the point where we recognize the fact that we desperately need God and His salvation. Only God can bring us to that point.

Caller: I have heard you say that we have the privilege of begging and pleading with God for salvation. Is it a work to beg and plead with God for mercy and salvation?

Mr. C.: The fact is that to beg God and plead with God for salvation is not a precondition for salvation. Jesus said to a woman in Luke 7:48,

Thy sins are forgiven.

She was not asking for salvation; she was not begging for salvation. Jesus simply forgave her sins, and there are other examples of this in the Bible.

God does not require anything from us to save us. He can save a baby in the womb. A baby in the womb does not know anything about salvation, but that baby can become saved if it is God’s good pleasure to save him.

On the other hand, if I am not saved, and I read the Bible, and I begin to understand the awful penalty that I must face, and I begin to realize that the judge of all the earth, the Lord Jesus Christ, has made provision for the salvation of some people, can I address God?

It is like we are in a dungeon, and we deserve to be there because we have rebelled against the king. We learn that somehow we can get a message to the king, and so we scribble a message on a little piece of paper, “O, king, my name is so and so, have mercy on me.”

We do not deserve any mercy, but we are glad that we can get a message to the king. That is exactly what we can do. We can plead with God that He might have mercy on us.

The key is that the Bible says if we seek Him with all our heart, we will surely find Him. A lot of people intellectually or emotionally plead with God. They know that they are in deep trouble with God, and they desire that God will have mercy, but nothing happens. They continue in their unbelief, and there is no change.

But here and there, there are those who plead with God with all their heart. They do not even realize that in their whole being, they are broken before God. They know, “I deserve the wrath of God, but if only God would have mercy on me.” The next thing is that they find they are saved. Pleading with all their heart was not a precondition, but it was an indicator that God was drawing them. 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.

The Father can draw us for a split second, and we are saved, or He can draw us over a period of many months or years, and we will trust more and more in God, but at that point, we are not saved. Whether He draws us for a split second or for many months or years, our salvation has no preconditions. God does the whole work. We were spiritually dead, we were under the wrath of God, and then suddenly, we are a child of God. We have a new resurrected soul, and we have been given eternal life.

How to Know That You are Saved

Caller: How do we know that we were saved?

Mr. C.: The big question, and the most important question any human being will have to face in this life is: “Am I truly a child of God?”

Everything hangs on that because if we are not saved and we die, or if the end of the world would come before we die, then it is absolutely guaranteed that we will spend eternity under the wrath of God.

To say it the other way, if we truly have become saved, we have

been given eternal life, and we are eternally secure. When we die, in our soul existence, we go to be with Christ, and when the end of the world comes, as a whole personality, we will be with Him for evermore. We will never again be subject to God's wrath; we will never again be subject to sin.

Basically, we are made up of two parts, body and soul. We are a totally integrated person. The soul cannot live separate from the body, and the body cannot live separate from the soul. At the moment of death, the soul leaves the body, and all that is seen is a corpse, just the body. Yet, the soul is just as much a part of our personality as the body, and our body is just as important a part of our personality as our soul.

Before we are saved, we are infected by sin in our whole personality, in our body and in our soul. We love sin, and we are in rebellion against God. We might talk about the Bible, and we might talk about the Lord Jesus, but we are not about to knuckle under to the salvation plan that God provides. We think we know more than God about how to get right with God, and so we design our own salvation plan. That is what is happening in a tremendous number of churches today. We might live completely apart from the Bible, but in body and soul, we have our own ideas of how we are to live, and our ideas do not glorify God.

Then comes that wonderful moment of salvation, which is entirely God's action. God's salvation is not conditional. There are no preconditions to be saved. We might have had an interest in the Word of God for a long time, and we might have been trying to live the way God wants us to live, and we might have accepted the idea that Jesus is the Savior, but until God gives us a new resurrected soul, we are not saved. At the moment we receive a new resurrected soul (and remember, our soul is just as important a part of our personality as our body), we never want to sin again in our soul existence. The reason is that in our soul, we are given eternal life. The Bible says in I John 3:9:

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.

In our soul, we have been born of God. That is the reason why when we die, and we read in II Corinthians 5:8:

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. When we become saved, we receive a brand-new resurrected soul in which we never want to sin and in which we have eternal life. Therefore, when we die, we are in the presence of Christ Himself, and we will come with Him on the last day and receive our resurrected body. When we became saved, there was no change in our body.

Now, suppose I have just become saved. I do not know how God did it, but He did save me. I have a new resurrected soul, but how will I know that?

Before I was saved, if I started to drift into sin, it was rather easy to do so because in body and in soul, I loved sin. It was easy to go deeper into sin. Sometimes I was a little troubled by sin, particularly if I were trying to get right with God by doing good things and being a good person, but I was not really very troubled by it. Basically, I was going my own way.

When I receive a new resurrected soul, in my new soul, I delight in the Word of God. Why? The reason is that the Bible is the rule book of the kingdom of God which I have entered into. God has placed within my new resurrected soul an on-going and earnest desire to do the will of God. I am happiest when I do the will of God.

It is true that I still live in a body that has not become saved. Thus, my body is dragging on me, and every time I take my eyes off Christ, I can begin to drift back into sin because I begin to follow the lusts of my body. But, it will not be long before I am troubled because in my new resurrected soul, I do not want to sin. The Bible says in Romans 8:16:

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

Our new resurrected soul is our spirit essence. God the Holy Spirit witnesses with our spirit. How does He do that? He witnesses with our spirit through the Word of God. As we read the Bible, we find an increasing delight in doing the will of God.

If we find that we hold an incorrect doctrine, we gladly change that doctrine. If we find that we are engaging in an unbiblical practice, we are happy to change that practice. We are being directed by God, who has given us a new resurrected soul, and God Himself indwells us in the person of the Holy Spirit. We read in I John 2:3-4:

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.

This means we will have an on-going and earnest desire to do the will of God. Why? Because we have been given a new resurrected soul in which we never want to sin again. The desire to do God's will is not in us before we are saved.

When we are saved, the moment we begin to fall away and follow after the body, which still lusts after sin, we are deeply troubled. When we are saved, our lifestyle will change very substantially.

If someone says he knows Him, that is, he says he "accepted" Christ or did this or did that, and "keepeth not his commandments," he is a liar, and the truth is not in him. The truth is the Lord Jesus Christ.

If someone is a "liar," he is still of Satan. If he persistently violates God's rules, and does things that are contrary to the Word of God, that is evidence that he is not a child of God. He is deceiving himself. God says in I John 2, verses 5-6:

But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Who is "he"? The Lord Jesus. When we are saved, we want our lifestyle to conform to the way Jesus walked. Of course, Jesus was the perfect man in Himself; He was without sin. When He lived on the face of this earth, in Himself He never committed a sin. He is the supreme example of how we are to live.

We have to read the Bible, which is God's commandments, and ask the Lord to strengthen us to walk according to His commandments. Then we walk the way Christ walked.

Caller: The question on the minds of a lot of people is: "Am I really saved?" Would you expound on how we can really know that we are saved?

Mr. C.: This question is repeatedly asked because it is the Big Question. We read in I John Chapter 2, verse 3:

And hereby we do know that we know him [that is, we know we are saved], if we keep his commandments.

What are His commandments? The whole Bible. The Bible is the Word of God and the Bible is the commandments of God. The Bible is the declaration and record of God's will for mankind.

If you are saved, you will be obedient to the Word of God. God says in I John Chapter 2, verses 4 to 6:

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 [the whole Word of God, the Bible], in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

When we read this passage in the light of the rest of the Bible, for example, Romans Chapter 7, we learn that in our mind we have an earnest desire to do the will of God, but we still find sin in our members. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 7, verses 24 and 25:

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

In our new resurrected soul, which we receive when we become saved, we never want to sin again. I John Chapter 3, verse 9 tells us:

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.

In our new resurrected soul, we are “*born of God*,” we are born from above. Therefore, sin is not going to be found in our soul, but we are living in a body that is still sinful and tends towards sin, and so there is a struggle going on. As we grow in grace and in God’s wonderful salvation, more and more, we keep our eyes fixed on Christ, and we want to do the things that our body desires less and less.

Our salvation is completed, that is, judicially, the penalty for all of our sins has been paid, at the moment God applies His salvation to our life. When we are saved, we are happy and delighted when we can correct our wrong doctrines and wrong practices, and this is the evidence that we have become saved.

If we have not received a new resurrected soul, we are not saved, but sometimes we might think we want to obey God’s commandments, and sometimes we think it is too difficult, and sometimes we get tired, and backslide, and fall away. It is tough work to try to be a Christian when in body and soul, we still want our own way.

I sometimes meet people who say, “I am trying to live for God, but it is tough.” Well, it is tough if you are not saved because you are trying to force a body and soul, that are in complete harmony with each other, into a mold where they do not want to go. By nature, we do not want to obey God.

I would like to give a personal testimony, which I usually do not do. I would like to tell you about an incident that happened one summer during the heart of the Great Depression in the United States, when I was nine years old (I was the second from the oldest of five sons).

My Dad would pop some popcorn, put the popcorn in bags, and give each of us (five sons) a basket full of bags of popcorn. We would take the basket and go from store to store in Glendale, California, and try to sell the popcorn. This was when it was safe to do; we would not do it in our day.

I remember very vividly that I walked into a paint store and asked the proprietor, “Would you like to buy a bag of popcorn for 10 cents?” He was standing behind the counter, and he said, “Yes, sonny. I’ll take a bag. But let me ask you a question.” I said, “What question?” He said, “Is Jesus your Savior?”

No one had ever before asked me that question. I had a God-fearing mother, who dearly loved the Lord, and I had been brought up with the Bible, but no one had asked me that question until that moment. I remember stuttering, “Uh, well, Uh, yes, I think so.”

That question made a profound impact on me. I remember that I walked out of that store, and for the next week, at every opportunity, I would think and pray, “Is Jesus my Savior?” I did not know much theology, but after a week or so, in my little 9-year-old mind, I finally came to the conclusion, “I know that I want to do the will of God. I know that I am happiest when I do the will of God. Therefore, I know that I must be saved.”

After that, if anyone asked me, “Is Jesus your Savior?,” I have been ready to answer, “Yes. By God’s mercy, I believe I am a child of God.” I have never doubted my salvation since that time.

As I matured, I found I still had a desire to do God’s will. God had to chastise me at times to straighten out my thinking in certain areas, but I have always had confidence that I am saved because I know that I am most happy when I am doing the will of God.

Caller: How do I know if my life is showing evidence that I have been saved, given the fact that the sins of my past are all so evident to those who are against me? People keep throwing the sins of my past in my face.

Mr. C.: We do carry the baggage of the results of our sin. We cannot get rid of that; it just follows us, and we have to live with it. But, we do not have to continue sinning. We can stop the sinning and begin to do it God's way more and more, and that is where you want to focus.

However, you want to make sure that you are a child of God. If you are a child of God, then God has given you a brand-new resurrected soul in which you never want to sin again. Thus, sin will be more abhorrent to you and more difficult for you than ever before.

If you are not a child of God, if you have not been saved, if you do not have a new resurrected soul, then you will continue to struggle very hard with sin. You are going to lose again and again because in your whole personality, you still want that sin.

Make sure that you are saved. Cry to God for mercy that you might become saved. Then examine your life in the light of the Bible. Do you have real on-going desire to do the will of God? That is the character of the child of God.

Do not worry about people. You do not answer to people. You answer to God. You know that there might be people who are envious of you, or people who are trying to trap you in some way, but do not pay any attention to that.

You just have an on-going relationship with God, and pray each day that you might be more obedient to the Word of God. Listen to the Word of God. And remember, every time you read the Bible or someone reads the Bible to you, it is the Word of God. It is very important language. Pray, "O, Lord, help me to listen carefully. Give me ears to hear so that I will want to be obedient to your Word."

You just persist in that. Stubbornly desire to do the will of God as you hear it from the Word of God. Then, you will probably see some changes in your life.

Caller: Is there any way to know if we are saved?

Mr. C.: Yes. Romans 8:16-17 tells us:

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

How does the Spirit operate? The Spirit is God Himself. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. If we are truly saved, we will read the Bible, and we will be under the increasing conviction that we are a child

of God because we delight in the Word of God. That identifies with I John 2:3-6, where we read:

And hereby we do know that we know him [that is, we claim to be a child of God], 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. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

When we are truly saved, we will understand these passages because we will understand what happened when we became saved. It is not some kind of ethereal or ephemeral or hazy thing that happened, but a very tremendous thing happened when we became saved. We were given a new resurrected soul; God did that, and we had nothing to do with it.

In our new resurrected soul, we never want to sin again. There will be an on-going and earnest desire to do the will of God, which is why the true believer delights in the Word of God. He will not do the will of God perfectly because he still has a body that has not been saved, and so there will be conflict within his personality, but he will have a constant desire to do God's will. And more and more, we will do the will of God. Believing is part of the will of God. To believe means to have faith.

Reading the Bible, sharing the Gospel, and obeying the law of God is work that we do. These are guaranteed to show up in the life of the true believer.

Impact of Salvation

Caller: Will you comment on Luke 5:36-39?

Mr. C.: We read in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 5, verses 36 through 39:

And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will

burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

This addresses the question: “What happens when someone becomes saved?” We all have a lot of sins; we all have a lot of rebellion in our heart against God.

When we become saved, does God just patch us up here and there? Does He just help us to get rid of a bad idea and help us to stay away from a bad practice? Is our life just a little more wholesome, and so we slowly grow into a new creature who is fit for the Master’s use?

God disabuses us of that idea, that is, He sets aside that idea, by the use of an illustration of a garment. If you sew new material into an old, worn garment, to try to patch the holes and worn spots in that old garment, you still have the old, tattered garment. Apparently, it is wearable, but when you have it washed, the new pieces tear away from the old.

God says that is not how we are saved. We become a new creature. We receive a brand-new resurrected soul. It is a fantastically marvelous miracle when we become saved! God performs the miracle of salvation in our life.

In our new resurrected soul, we will never die; we have eternal life. We still have to live in a body that has not yet been saved, but in our soul, which has been saved, we are brand-new. On the last day, our salvation will be complete because at that time, we will receive our brand-new resurrected body.

God uses the same idea with wine. If you put new wine into an old bottle, the wine can ferment and break the bottle because the glass or wine skin is tired and worn. It is better to put new wine into new bottles or new wine skins. And so, when God the Holy Spirit brings salvation to our life, we become a new person in our soul existence.

Caller: You seem to teach that when we are saved, we never sin. Do we still have the desire to sin after we are saved?

Mr. C.: When we are saved, in our soul existence we never want to sin again. The Bible says that which is born of God does not sin. We read in I John 3:9:

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 yet been saved; in our body, we still lust after sin. So, when we take our eyes off Christ, our body tries to drag us back into sin. The moment that begins to happen, enormous conflict develops in our personality. In our soul, we do not want that sin, and we begin to feel depressed and insecure, and we wonder, “Am I really a child of God?”

That can mess up our happiness and joy in the Lord. Then, finally, we begin to pray, “O, Lord, have mercy on me. Help me to turn away from this sin.”

Caller: My fiancee and I broke up because even though he says he is a Christian, he does many of the things the unbelievers do, like curse and so on. He says that Christ does not expect us to be perfect. How can I explain to him that his behavior and lifestyle are not Christian?

Mr. C.: Salvation is not just a state of mind. Salvation is not just an acknowledgment of Christ or even a change in the way we think. Salvation means that we have received a brand-new resurrected soul.

Our soul is an integral part of our personality, and it is just as important as our body. This is proven by the fact that when we die, if we have become saved, we go to live and reign with Christ in heaven.

Before we are saved, both in body and soul, we love sin, and it is easy for us to go deeper into sin. Within our whole personality, we are in agreement: we like sin. As long as we are not beaten up, or shot, or get into trouble with the law of the land, it is easy to go deeper into sin.

When we become saved, we are given a new resurrected soul in which we never want to sin again. This will make a terrific impact upon the way we live. When we are saved, the moment we begin to drift toward sin, which our body still desires because our body has not yet been saved, there is violation in our new soul. In our soul, we do not want to sin, and we will be troubled and feel miserable. When we are saved, we are happiest when we live according to God’s Word.

That is the nature of the child of God; he will want to do the will of God. This does not exist in the life of the unsaved.

There are people who are not saved, but they desperately try to live like a believer. They try to do God’s will, but it is an uphill grind. They would be a lot happier if they could just go on with their sin. After a while, they get tired of trying, and they fall away; they are called “backsliders,” but they were never saved.

Salvation is not a philosophy. Salvation is not just something we put on, and it is not something with which we can simply identify ourselves by going to church. Salvation involves our entire being. When we are

saved, first, we have a new resurrected soul in which we want to do God's will with a passion. Second, when we are saved, God Himself in the person of God the Holy Spirit comes to indwell us. That has a great impact upon our life. Thus, there is a big difference between the saved and the unsaved.

Caller: What does "absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" mean? How does that fit in with "the dead in Christ shall rise first"?

Mr. C.: We must remember that we are a two-part personality. We are a body and a soul or a body and a spirit essence. As we talk together, we are complete personalities. I cannot see your soul; you cannot see my soul. When we die, there is a separation of soul and body.

If we are a believer, at the moment of salvation, we were given a new resurrected soul in which we never want to sin again, which is why the Bible speaks of us as having been born again or born from above. The Bible says we are a new creature in Christ. There is no change in our body. No one can look at us and see a difference, but in our spirit essence, which is as real as our body, we have become a brand-new resurrected soul. In our new resurrected soul, not in our body but in our new soul, we were given eternal life. At the moment of physical death, our new resurrected soul leaves the body, and because it is eternally alive, we go instantly into God's holy presence in heaven, and we live and reign with Him in heaven. Our body goes into the grave and returns to dust.

Then, on the last day, Christ will come with those of us who are in heaven in our new resurrected soul, and at that moment, our bodies will be resurrected as glorified spiritual bodies and caught up to be with Christ. Then we will be with Christ as whole personalities again.

On the other hand, when the unsaved person dies, he cannot go to heaven in his soul because in his soul he is still spiritually dead. So, when he dies, his body returns to the dust just like the body of the believer, his soul leaves his body just like the soul of the believer leaves the body, but the soul of the unsaved cannot go into heaven; it goes to a place of silence where there is no conscious existence.

When the unsaved person dies, he cannot be thrown into hell yet because he has not been judged officially. On the last day, as a whole personality, that is, body and soul, he will be resurrected, and, together with all the unsaved of the world who have not died, one by one, they will be officially tried before the judgment throne of God. They will be found guilty, the sentence of eternal damnation will be passed, and they will be cast into hell forever. As a whole personality, they will endure the wrath of God forever in hell.

Caller: Will you explain Matthew 12:43-45?

Mr. C.: We read in Matthew 12:43-45:

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Casting out a demon from a man does not mean that he has become saved. We have to start with the fact that by nature, every human being is a slave of Satan. Satan can only be in one place at one time; he is a fallen angel. Of course, there are a great number of other fallen angels who have rebelled against God; we could call them Satan's helpers because they do the work of Satan. So, sometimes it looks like Satan is in a whole lot of places at one time.

Satan or one of the other fallen angels, or maybe several evil spirits or fallen angels, might actually indwell a person. Every person who is unsaved is not necessarily indwelt by an evil spirit, but from time to time, Satan does indwell a person.

If a demon or evil spirit is cast out of a person, that in itself does not make that person saved. For a little while, Jesus and the apostles cast out evil spirits to show that God rules over Satan. Unless a person is born again and becomes a new creature in Christ, he is still in the kingdom of Satan and subject to the wishes of Satan.

In Matthew 12:43-45, we read about a man who had an evil spirit cast out from him. It looked like he had come to a great and wonderful condition because he was no longer beset by an evil spirit, but he did not become saved. Therefore, he was still vulnerable to Satan, or seven evil spirits, which indicates that many more devils can occupy that man, and so he was worse off at the end than at the beginning.

It is not enough just to be freed from the tyranny of Satan. It is necessary that we receive a brand-new resurrected soul, that is, we must be born from above. When we truly become saved, that is what happens. If that has not happened to us, no matter what else has happened, we are still not saved.

Caller: Will you comment on Matthew 6:24, particularly the words "hate," "love," and "despise"?

Mr. C.: We read in Matthew 6:24:

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

In this verse, God indicates that every man has a master. The master of the unsaved is the world, but ultimately, it is Satan. They do not know it, but their master is the world, the pursuit of pleasure, money, fame, or a desire for material things.

On the other hand, the true believers have God as their master. God is the King of the true believers, and the Lord Jesus Christ is their Lord. The true believers always want to do the will of God.

We spoke earlier about those people, some preachers call them “carnal Christians,” who want the world and they want Christ. They want Christ because it means they are saved and all is well between them and God. At the same time, they love the world, and just like their unsaved neighbor, they want the things of the world. Thus, they are desperately trying to serve two masters; they are trying to serve Christ, and they are trying to serve the world.

In Matthew 6:24, God is saying you cannot do that. You are deceiving yourself. The fact is that if you love the world, you do not love Christ. When God says you, “*will hate the one, and love the other,*” it means that if you love the world at the same time that you are trying to love Christ, the real truth is that you love the world and you hate Christ. If you love Christ, you will not love the world. If you love Christ, you know that He is everything in your life.

If you love the world and you are trying to love Christ, you are lying to yourself. You think that you love Christ, but in actuality, you hate Him because you want to go your own way.

By the same token, you “*hold to the one* [the world], *and despise the other.*” You really want the world, and you “despise” your relationship with Christ, that is, you could not care less about your relationship with Christ. You are paying lip service to the idea that you love Christ and want to do His will, and at times, you like to think that it is true in your life. But your lifestyle and your actions indicate that you love world, and hold to the world, and you despise Christ; you are saying, “Christ is unimportant. I do not have to pay much attention to Him.”

Caller: I know I am saved, and I want the promises of God, for instance, He says He will give me prosperity, His grace is sufficient for me, and I know that God will complete the good work He has started in me, but I struggle with sin.

Mr. C.: We must be careful. We can intellectually have done certain things, for example, some people have said, “I accept the Lord Jesus” or they may trust an emotional experience they had, and their friends and pastor say, “Now you are saved.” And they therefore are very happy, and they say, “I do not want to be a homosexual any more,” or whatever besetting sin they might have. They say, “I am a child of God,” and they try desperately to live like a child of God.

If you are trusting in something you have done, then you do not have the salvation of the Bible; that is a man-made salvation that eventually will overtake you because you have not become a new creature in Christ. When you become saved, and this is not just conversation or philosophy or a philosophical approach of some kind, this is absolutely real, you receive a brand-new resurrected soul in which you never want to sin again. That is the nature of a child of God.

Salvation is something only God can give us. Salvation is not based upon “accepting” the Lord Jesus Christ, nor “inviting” the Lord Jesus Christ into our heart, nor responding to an altar call, nor sitting on the sinners’ bench. If we trust even the slightest bit in any of these things, that means we have a works-grace gospel and that is not the salvation of the Bible. Eventually we will fall away. Sin will overtake us again. We might work desperately to prove we are saved, but we have not really become saved.

When God saves us, we do not put our trust in anything that we have done. We know that through the mercy of God, He has given us a brand-new resurrected soul in which we never want to sin. We look at the Bible entirely differently. We delight in the Bible. It is not a big heavy struggle; we are happiest when we are doing the will of God.

We have to face ourselves very honestly. We like to believe we have become saved, and we like to believe we have turned away from adultery or homosexuality or whatever besetting sin we have, and we go to church, and so we say, “I know I am saved because everybody tells me I am, and because I do all these things.” That is not the basis of salvation. Man has concocted that idea of salvation but it will never get anyone into heaven. The basis of salvation is a work that God does. When He does the work, then we are broken before God, and we find in our life an earnest and on-going desire to do the will of God. We will be deeply troubled when we sin. When we sin, we will cry out as did the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:22-25:

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law

of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Caller: Can you explain the first part of Luke 11:4?

Mr. C.: God says in the first part of Luke 11:4:

And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.

God frequently wrote this way, as though God's action is dependent on our action. It seems to be saying that God will forgive our sins provided we forgive those who have sinned against us. We know that conclusion is not in harmony with what the rest of the Bible teaches.

Before we are saved, we are under the wrath of God, and we are not about to forgive anybody. We do not want to do things God's way. The only people who will forgive those who have sinned against them, and forgive them gladly and consistently, are the people who have had their sins forgiven by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ultimately, we have to read this passage and understand that we forgive those who have sinned against us because Christ has forgiven our sins. This is parallel to Matthew 24:13, where we read:

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

This implies that if we are truly saved, we will endure to the end; we cannot fall away. We know that our salvation is not dependent upon our endurance; our salvation depends upon the grace and mercy of God. When we become saved, we will endure to the end because we have been given eternal life. When we have eternal life, we will never fall away.

Nature of Salvation

Caller: Where in the Bible does God say that when we are saved, we are given a "brand-new resurrected soul"?

Mr. C.: That is an excellent question. The Bible does not use quite that language, that we are given a “brand-new resurrected soul.” When we study the Bible to learn what salvation is, we see that this language is a way to sum up what God teaches.

God indicates that we are essentially soul and body. We read in Matthew Chapter 10, verse 28:

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The Bible indicates that when a true believer dies, he leaves his body, which is put into the ground to return to the dust, and in his soul, he goes to be with Christ in heaven. So, at that time, there is a separation of soul and body. In Colossians 3:1, we read:

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

What does God mean by “risen with Christ”? Is this just a spiritual concept or do we really experience a resurrection? We read in Ephesians 2, verses 5-6:

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened [made alive] us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

When Christ arose from the grave, it was a very literal resurrection. Is it also true that in some part of my life, there is a very literal resurrection?

Before we are saved, we are spiritually dead. We are a corpse. When we are saved, we are given eternal life in our soul existence, not in our body, which is still spiritually dead and returns to the dust at physical death. When true believers die physically, in our soul existence, we go to live and reign with Christ in heaven. This means that when we are saved, we are resurrected in our soul; in our soul, we become a new person. The Bible says in II Corinthians 5:17:

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

The Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says in Romans Chapter 7, verses 22-23:

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man [that is, in his soul existence, where he has become a new creature]: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members [his body]. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

His body was not changed, but there was a definite change in his soul.

When we are saved, we delight in the law of God because we have experienced the resurrection of our soul. The Bible speaks about the old man and the new man. The old man refers to the way we were before we were saved, and the new man means we are a new creature in that we have a new resurrected soul. When Jesus talked to Nicodemus, we read in John Chapter 3, verse 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.

Nicodemus understood that this was a literal birth of some kind, because he said, and we read John 3:4:

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

We read Jesus' answer in John 3:5-6:

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

In what part of our life are we born of the Holy Spirit? It is not in our body; there is no change in our body. We are born of the Holy Spirit in our soul.

The character of a child of God is that in his soul existence, he has become born from above. That is why at the moment of his death, in his soul existence, he can go to be with the Lord.

Death can come one minute after salvation, but that person will go immediately into God's holy presence. God does not have to develop an individual's new resurrected soul. God gives him a new resurrected soul at the moment of salvation. II Corinthians 5:8 tells us:

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

There will be a substantial difference between the way we live when we are saved and how we live if we are not saved. The reason is that when we are saved, we have a new soul existence in which we do not want to sin. God says in I John 3:9:

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 are born of God in our soul existence. However, we have to live in a body that still lusts after sin, so there is a conflict. Nevertheless, our lifestyle will change very substantially when we become saved. I John 2:3-4 declares:

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.

If we know Him, that is, if we have become saved, we will keep His commandments. Because we have a new resurrected soul, and because God the Holy Spirit indwells us, we will have an ongoing and earnest desire to do the will of God.

Caller: Why do you teach that someone can pray, read the Bible, ask Jesus into his heart, and try to be good, and still not be saved?

Mr. C.: Jesus gave the parable of the sower who went forth to sow, and some of the seed fell on rocky soil and sprung up, but because there was no root, the plant withered.

Christ explains that the rocky soil is like the heart of people who hear the Gospel and appear to believe (God even uses the word “believe”), but because there is no root, after a time, when difficulties arise, they fall away. This indicates that their faith was what they had developed intellectually or emotionally; they did not have the faith that God gives to those who are saved. 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.

John 6:44 tells us:

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.

Then, we compare that with Philippians 2:13:

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

God can begin to work in us before we are saved, as He did in the life of Cornelius the centurion, which we read about in Acts 10. The Bible is crystal clear that when we become saved, we always want to trust God. God gives us good works, which are characteristic of a new resurrected soul.

We are to obey God’s commands. God says in Romans 10:17:

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

The Word of God is the Bible and it is also a reference to Christ Himself. Christ is the only one who can save us. There is nothing we can do to frustrate God’s plan to save anyone whom God plans to save. On the one hand, we can go through a lot of intellectual activity or be emotionally frightened, and do many things, like trying to turn from our sins and trying to trust in Christ, and yet unless God has saved us, we do not have our will surrendered to Christ. Deep in our soul, we have reservations because we do not really trust in Christ. We are still spiritually dead.

On the other hand, God can instantly save a baby in the womb, or a baby born without a mind, or anyone. There are no preconditions or pre-requirements that have to be in evidence before God can save someone.

The best passage to study to understand salvation is John 11:43, where Jesus said to Lazarus, who had been dead for four days:

Lazarus, come forth.

What did Lazarus contribute? Nothing, and yet Lazarus came forth. In this setting, Jesus says in John 11:25-26:

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?

Jesus said this while standing outside of the tomb of Lazarus. He is talking about salvation. God used this physical miracle of the raising of Lazarus to illustrate or give a beautiful portrait of spiritual salvation. Before we are saved, we are spiritually dead just as Lazarus was physically dead.

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.

Jesus trusted that He would be able to pay for our sins, and He was faithful to God's command to be our mediator. Therefore, the sins of the believers have been washed away, and we have become justified. Our salvation has nothing to do with any work that we do. The Bible is very clear, and says in a number of passages, that faith is a work.

Christ's faith was a work that He did; He did all the work to save us. Our faith does not enter into God's salvation plan at all; our faith is a result of salvation. Faith might be in evidence, to some degree, before we are saved, but our faith is not a vehicle or instrument that God uses to get someone saved.

Caller: What is a "carnal Christian"?

Mr. C.: The word "carnal" applies to someone who is concerned about the things of this world, the lusts of the flesh.

In Romans 7, the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, uses himself as an illustration, and says in verse 14:

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

The Apostle Paul was a believer. Using this verse, we might conclude that there is such a thing as a carnal Christian, but Paul explains that he is carnal in the sense that he has a body that has not yet been saved. He says in Romans 7:18:

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Finally, Paul says in verses 24-25:

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

In his soul or spiritual essence, he serves the law of God. He has an intense desire to do the will of God.

In Romans 8, again, God speaks of those who are carnal. In this passage, God is talking about those who are carnal in their whole personality, not just in their body. In their whole personality they desire the lusts of the flesh. We read in I Corinthians 3:1-3:

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

There are Bible teachers and pastors who read a passage like I Corinthians 3, for example, which talks about some of the members of the church at Corinth, and these pastors and Bible teachers say, "There is the spiritual man, which is the ideal, and there is the unsaved man, and in between, there is the man who is saved but he is a carnal Christian or a babe in Christ."

They are excusing and making an alibi for the members of their church who are in the congregation on Sunday, and sing hymns, and carry their Bibles, and appear to be very spiritual, but through the week, they