

# **The Scriptural Doctrine of Regeneration, (Eternal Justification and Sanctification)**

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### **PROLEGOMENON**

A cogent evaluation of the Doctrine of Regeneration exemplifies the fact that the Holy Spirit sovereignly regenerated the elect in the eternal sphere. Spiritual Regeneration militates against all concepts of synergism whereby man cooperates with God in salvation and also testifies against the initiation of either its full or partial conferment in the sphere of time. Eternal placement identifies regeneration as the work of God alone through the Holy Spirit in the unbridled spectrum wherein no one else existed. This leads to the correct analysis of the Scriptures, which is in stark contrast to what most denominational doctrines foist in their propagation of various sacramental concepts of what they believe to be the actual process of regeneration. In these variations of doctrinal concepts, the contentions do not mainly focus on whether God works directly through the Holy Spirit in effectuating such but as to what operands are the catalysts in its process, i.e., what are the indispensable ingredients of enactments generating to the reaction of its recipients entering into it. In other words, what distinguishes its illumination by the Word of God as regeneration by the Holy Spirit verses erroneous perception of sinners “seeking” God by “divine means” as a preparatory step of its process in the sphere of time.

**The majority of orthodox teaching** purports that it was the original purpose of God that all men were created primarily to exalt or glorify God the Creator. With this mindset, most view the entrance of sin into the world as an undetermined or even an unexpected occurrence; precipitating the fall of Adam and through it the cessation of mankind’s ability and desire solely to magnify God. It is further taught that in order to regain that ability and to correct the awful course of sin in creation in general and men’s souls particularly; God had in eternity purposed a contingency plan of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ because He either foreknew (by looking down into time) that such could possibly happen or He expeditiously devised His master plan of redemption subsequent to Adam’s transgression. In continuation of this cogitative pattern, it is assessed that in the sphere of time, through the course of redeeming us, God has exalted His love, grace, power and justice to new heights of beauty; wherein even though He did not previously plan it that way, He has excelled and gained the victory with His master plan of restoring mankind back either to the pre-sin status and relationship of Adam or to the image of Christ; depending upon ones acceptance of God’s redemptive plan. It is strictly in this sense that they view Regeneration as the work of God’s Holy Spirit in the soul of humans, thus enabling them to see their sinfulness and peril and to behold the beauty of the Savior so that they can receive salvation and then truly praise and worship Him again.

Within this analogy, many construe the work of regeneration in various forums as it is viewed and described differently by them in the Scriptures. Within the extents of this spectrum, certain Old Testament Scriptures speak of regeneration in terms of its recipients exhibiting circumcision and its function of softening otherwise unholy and hardened hearts (Deuteronomy 30:6; Ezekiel 36:26). In the spectrum of the Kingdom Prophecy and Gospel, regeneration is portrayed as: 1). the act of God writing His Law upon its recipients' hearts (Proverbs 3:3; 7:3; Jeremiah 31:33), 2). being born again (John 3:3) and 3). being called out of darkness into God's wonderful light (I Peter 2:9). In the eternal and spiritual spectrum of the Grace Gospel, the revelation of the Mystery's viewpoint of regeneration is represented by its recipients: 1). having become new creations in Christ (in eternity) (II Corinthians 5:17), 2) abode in the Body of Christ (Galatians 3:36-29) and 3). being brought (manifestation-wise) from death to life (Romans 6:13). In the testimonial acts of regeneration in manifestation, there is the depiction of God changing the nature of the person regenerated. In this limited view, the same soul exists but differently in terms of its recipient's relation to God; with the same body physically but with a new spiritual mindset.

Here one experiences an altogether new taste for the loveliness of spiritual things, especially as they are taught in God's Word and personified by Jesus. But even in this physical view, it must be understood that when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he (Lazarus) was passive, not active, in the process. He was simply an object that Jesus manifestly resurrected by his almighty power but not in the sense of true or spiritual regenerated form; as this is not that which is referenced in the eternal sense of the Mystery's revelation in I Corinthians 15:51-57. In the Spiritual view of when God "regenerated" His elect in eternity, these recipients were also passive, but in the sense that this occurred before they existed, as they were son-positioned (adopted) in the Body of Christ. This is in essence the explication wherein God performed this glorious work in His beloved when these subjects were deemed as being spiritually dead and brought to life in their placement in Christ; as this was all actualized by His decree before the creation of the world, even before they physically existed. The scriptural revelation of regeneration in this view extends far beyond the depiction of it as the work of God's Spirit by which He takes away one's heart of stone and renews one's will by His almighty power.

When the correct concept of regeneration is comprehended, it encompasses the glorious eternal spiritual blessings that exude justification, election, sanctification and glorification. These were in fact all simultaneously actualized in God's Decree, which is in essence their conferment upon His elect in eternity. Some purport that ones faith follows regeneration and is separate from it but this is not true in the sense that the proponents of this statement assert it to be. The chief problem with this proposition as it is stated; is that it places the actuation of regeneration in time. The phrase "born again," as expressed in John 3:7 and I Peter 1:23, is often utilized in association and identification of what regeneration signifies. Similarly, the term "conversion of the soul" is depicted as someone who has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit though their act of initiating a relationship with God. In this sense, the traditional religious process is foisted in the following manner: "conversion follows regeneration and is different from it in the following ways: "regeneration is God's act; conversion is ours." In this view, regeneration is the implantation and exercise of God's gracious principle that has been enacted by the process of consciousness. The AIM of this

dissertation is to document that Regeneration is an eternal single act complete within itself, which means that it is never to be repeated. "Conversion" (being born again), when properly evaluated, is at its best only the commencement of its recipients' identification of eternal and endless existence that was actualized by God's Decree in eternity.

In focusing on the Doctrine of Regeneration, there are certain principles imbedded in dispensing this truth that are critical to comprehending and fully appreciating this glorious and eternal blessing. But misunderstanding and subsequent misapplications of them effectively uproot their stabilizing impact upon the mindset of their recipients. Systematic epistemology of the Scriptures engenders four criteria of qualifying ones interpretation of them as constituting the undeniable truth. The adequacy, rationality, reliability and suitability of Scriptures can be evaluated or validated on the basis of four examinations. The failure of an exegesis in any one of these criteria indicates its weakness and likelihood that further evaluation and reconstruction of their historical, grammatical and contextual applications are necessary and demanded for their veracity. The four criteria of evaluating whether interpretation coincides with scriptural truth are:

1. **Consistency.** The assertions and hypotheses expressed must be free from contradiction.
2. **Coherence.** The assertions and hypotheses must be related in a unified manner.
3. **Comprehensiveness.** The assertions and hypotheses must be applicable to all evidence.
4. **Congruity.** The assertions and hypotheses must align and be accurate, adequate and precise in disseminating all data. In other words, the whole must equal the sum of its parts. If one part of the whole is out of sync with the whole then the whole must be revised to include this part without throwing the other parts out of sync, as the interpretation must be reflective of all conveyances.

Another integral part of scriptural evaluation is "ingression," which simply means that some claims or hypotheses might be more deeply embedded or more crucially interconnected than others. This "depth of ingression" does not imbue preconceived doctrinal opinions that are not substantial, as they are upon close inspection proven erroneous and need to be relinquished. However, scriptural perceptions are truly deep ingressions and supplementary dependent on consistency in the context, as is the context on their alignment. The testing of these matters is thus more contextually crucial and must be conducted carefully with a great deal of evidence, in that no accommodating changes are justified. In Dispensation teaching, separation between Israel and the Church is deeply ingressive in applying divers' covenant connotations. If one were to eliminate this separation, confusion would immediately develop regarding variances in Paul's writings as opposed to conveyances in other Scriptures.

Likewise, the Doctrines of Total Depravity and Regeneration are deeply ingressive, and when collectively misperceived and misapplied, in fact, function in distorting the true Scriptural view of regeneration, even to the extent of serving as the most crucial point of the debate between those teaching either "Dispensational Division of the Scriptures" or "the Sovereign Grace of God in Election to Salvation." In essence, the truths in both these doctrines are reconcilable in recognizing that the revelation of the Mystery to the Apostle

Paul engenders the actualization of all God's workings in the eternal sphere; with all their manifestations in the sphere of time. The "Sovereign Grace" camp's view of regeneration is skewed but only in the perception that its actuation occurs in time. Unfortunately, those who embrace "Dispensational Division of the Scriptures" simultaneously reject the teaching of mankind's "Total Depravity," which inevitably leads them into "synergism." But this is also rectified by recognizing that the revelation of the Mystery to the Apostle Paul engenders the actualization of all God's workings in the eternal sphere..... with all their manifestations allocated in the sphere of time.

The acceptance of all God's eternal workings in every aspect of them as having been fully accomplished before creation; would first of all effectively eliminate the debate as to a typical order of salvation, i.e., whether regeneration precedes faith. One's acknowledgement that all the works of salvation (as well as everything else) were actualized in (and by) God's decree; renders unnecessary the argument that mankind "has no part at all in the salvation process because a completely fallen person is incapable of doing anything to help effectuate his own salvation," but this is more in the sense that salvation occurred before it was possible for anyone to do so. This would also establish the distinct and superior knowledge of this revelation given to Paul, as heretofore the hidden message reserved for the Church, the Body of Christ. Such comprehension of this truth would alleviate some contentions of these factions in eliminating many aspects of both their assertive teaching of salvation by works in corresponding active and passive modes.

It is perceived by some that the Scriptural priority of regeneration rests upon the doctrine of total depravity or moral inability. While these are indeed very important elements in defining this spiritual blessing, their impact abide in deference to the fact that they are mitigated by their irrelevancy in the eternal sphere. Such should not be considered as valid points of debate because fallen man is neither physically nor morally manifested in eternity. In this sense, regeneration in eternity is not a logical locale for mankind's faith to occur. When one gives audience to contentions of whether faith precedes regeneration, it automatically signals one's consent to the premise that such (unregenerate people either have or have not the moral ability to exercise faith) is plausible at all; by agreeing that these operations can possibly occur in time. In order to follow and ascertain the enlighten knowledge of this glorious blessing, one must be committed to the fact that the entire gamut of it was actualized (planned, implement and culminated) in eternity. This effectively mitigates every combative assertion regarding it including the role of justification, sanctification, etc., as there can be no sequencing of such in the eternal realm. Eternal Regeneration is the only adduce to all such inquiries into the functional role of its operation.

## THE SCRIPTURAL DEFINITION OF REGENERATION

The Greek words *παλιγγενεσία* (**pahl•eey•yehn•ehs•ee•ah**) as spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 19:28 and *παλιγγενεσίας* (**pahl•eey•yehn•ehs•ee•ahs**) as scripted by the Apostle Paul in Titus 3:5; are both rendered "regeneration," as it appears twice in the scriptural manuscripts. Thus the scriptural meaning of the English word "regeneration" is derived from the combining of *πάλιν* (**pahl•een**) rendered "again" and *γενέσεις* (**yehn•neh•see**) rendered "birth." Hence, it literally means "again birth"

from which has evolved the expressions: a new birth, a new beginning and a new order. In the Kingdom Gospel, our Lord used the word when stating to His disciples, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the "regeneration" when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28). Here the Lord used the word in the sense of the manifested placement of His earthly elect, referring to His coming kingdom on earth. This is expressive of the time of the earth's regeneration in its new order of which the prophets wrote, when Jehovah will set His "King upon His Holy hill of Zion," as conveyed in Psalm 2:6, as coupled with the prophesies: "and He shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3). Thus Jesus' reference in this passage is the coming kingdom of Christ on earth, which is the days of the earth's regeneration or "the times of restitution and restoration of all things" (**Acts 3:21**).

This re-order of the earth in the coming Millennial Age will also fulfill God's covenant with Abraham concerning his descendants, as Israel will experience a new beginning at that time (Ezekiel 37). These are all physical and social expressions, as Israel's spiritual eternal embodiment will be manifested subsequent to the great battle (). The kingdom of Christ on earth will be a time of world-wide subjection to the authority of Christ when sin, sorrow, sickness, suffering and strife will not touch earth's inhabitants. In that day God shall manifestly demonstrate control over His creation: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6), and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9). In summing up "regeneration (re-order) of the earth," it is that future time when Christ shall rule on the throne of David (II Samuel 7; Luke 1:32-33; 2:11), Satan will be incarcerated (Revelation 20:2), Israel will be spiritually united in Christ (Isaiah 66:8; Ezekiel 37; Matthew 24:8; Romans 11:1, 2, 26), and peace, prosperity, social justice and equality will prevail (Isaiah 42:1-4; Micah 4:1-7). This will be the golden age..... the utopia when mankind on earth will truly experience God's great society, the "Theocracy" in the earth. Accordingly, while there are absolutely many spiritual connotations in these proceeding, much more of it is focused on God's transitional workings in the physical sphere.

It is strictly in the spiritual sphere and eternal realm of God's placement of His elect in the Body of Christ wherein the Apostle Paul scripts the word "regeneration." Titus 3:5 states, "Not out of works of righteousness which we ourselves have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Ghost." Note that the difference between our Lord's use of the word in the Kingdom Gospel and Paul's use of it in the Gospel of Grace is obviously expressive of contrasting spheres. Our Lord Jesus used it in its earthly sense of the restoration of all things at His second advent to the earth, while Paul used it in referring to the regeneration (again birth) of those individuals previously elected and placed in Christ, i.e., the Body of Christ and Commonwealth of Israel. Here "regeneration" is expressive of God's first order before the creation of the world, which supersedes His new order of the earth in the

historical manifestations of time. This first (again or before birth) order is the Church, the Body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23), exclusively in the spiritual realm.

In the eternal sphere before creation and time, no participative efforts on mankind's part are applicable in bringing him into God's first order, which certifies this impossibility, hence it is "not out of works of righteousness which we ourselves have done" (Titus 3:5) and "not out of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9). The above induction then compels that "Regeneration" may be defined as an act of God in eternity whereby He bestowed upon His elect His own life, which was inclusive of the imparting of His own nature through son positioning of such ones in Christ. God Himself is the Source and Bestowal of His life, wherein those who are caused to believe convey testimonies such as, "created in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:10), "a new creation" (II Corinthians 5:17), "born of God" (John 1:13), "born again" (John 3:3, 7) and "partakers of the Divine nature" (II Peter 1:4).

## **REGENERATION AND THE SCRIPTURAL TERMS OF SALVATION**

When salvation is strictly viewed from the doctrinal position of it being actualized in the sphere of time, the understanding of the ontological effectuation of regeneration is limited to its manifestation only. Within the extents of this view, the boundaries of the doctrines related to the work of Christ is confined to truth no more far-reaching in its implications than the message that salvation is secured only by the human responsibility of believing on Christ as Savior. Hence this one requirement cascades into other obligations, which as they are added; exert other requisites of human induced volitions to the Scriptures; resulting in total disruption of the essential doctrine of salvation by grace ALONE. Only ignorance or reprehensible inattention to the structure of the scriptural perception of Soteriology will attempt to intrude any form of human works with its supposed merit into that which, can not be done at all, as it must constitute the very nature of righteousness. But this can only be wrought by God alone and only on the principle of His Sovereign Grace. But few, indeed seem ever to fully comprehend the essence of the doctrine of sovereign grace; that its total charitable disposition is the vital issue involved. The scriptures unequivocally document that the eternal glories which are wrought in sovereign grace are not conditioned on the human side by the exercise of mankind's expressed faith in Christ in time, but by Christ's faithfulness in eternity alone.

The scriptural bearing of this truth must of necessity extract drastic proclamations from those whom God has blessed to internalize it, in that it militates against the qualifying influence of most so-called "soul-winning" methods employed by much of Christendom. Informed ones will do well to bring their message and methods into complete agreement with the workings of divine grace, rather than to attempt to conform this unalterable truth to human ideals. Salvation by Christ's faithfulness began with God's eternal and mighty Decree. This is this actual transformation which constitutes a new creation as to what one is in Christ. It is this eternal regeneration alone that guarantees the safe-keeping of God's elect to manifestly bring such ones home to heaven conformed to the image of Christ. Those who are blessed to trace through these limitless realities immediately ascertains that this is the only adduce, which can preserve them from being made to

depend to any degree upon human responsibility. The recipients of this scriptural truth are those truly exuding what the Apostle Paul references as "a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:6).

Thus, one's exegetical attention to the eternal transforming and divine undertakings, which entered into salvation of the lost, evinces realization that every feature involved in its enactment presents a task, which transcends all human activity. Therefore, if it is accomplishable at all, it must be by God alone. Such a discovery will establish one's cogitation for the reception of this truth that the only relation mankind can proffer in this great undertaking is one's dependence on the fact that God has already accomplished every aspect of it. That is the essence of what Christ's faithfulness exudes. However, in consideration of the manifestation of the sinful depraved nature of mankind, this also encompasses all moral issues involved which have been divinely solved by Christ in His vicarious death. Truly He is the only Savior in the sense that perfect faithfulness was required to effectuate salvation, which must of necessity evolve exclusively from Him. Accordingly, when our Lord Jesus spoke of "those believing in Him," His declaration was such "shall not perish but have everlasting life," in reference to His elect's status. When the perfection characterization of salvation is recognized, it is unencumbered by human responsibility with its varied complications and thus renders the entire effectual undertaking of it to the Grace of God in every degree. All antithetical assertions to this truth lead naturally to a detailed consideration of the more common features of human responsibility, which are too often erroneously added to the only requirement of salvation, i.e., the faithfulness of Jesus Christ in eternity!

Aside from the spiritual comprehensions of what the implications of salvation actually engenders, varied religious dogmas and denominational doctrines have inundated the preaching and teaching spectrum with terminologies that are foisted as prescriptions or sequential steps to achieve forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. These are the clichés that have dominated Christendom in the latter centuries of evangelical ministering; engendering the necessity of the recipient's cooperation or as least one's consent in the reception and effectuation of deliverance from the curse and penalty of the sinful humanly depraved nature of mankind:

## **1. Repent and Believe**

It is of note that in most ministering circles; repentance and believing are conceived of as volitional acts by humans that are almost universally accepted as requirements for salvation. Here, consideration of the scriptural meaning and dispensational importation of repentance is essential. This consideration is addressed as follows:

- ◆ the meaning of repentance
- ◆ the relation of repentance to believing
- ◆ the relation of repentance in covenants

- ◆ dispensational inclusion and absence of demand for repentance from salvation in the Scriptures
- ◆ significance of repentance in specific passages of scripture

The word *μετανοεω* (**meht•ahn•o•eh•o**) as conveyed in the Greek, is in every instance translated “repentance,” which simply means a “change of mind or heart.” The common practice of reading into this word the thought of sorrow and heart-anguish is responsible for much confusion in the field of Soteriology. In many instances, sorrow does accompany repentance and does in fact leads to repentance but the sorrow, within itself is not repentance. II Corinthians 7:10, when properly exegeted, states “for the grief according to God produces repentance unto salvation, not to be regretted, but the grief of the world produces death.” Here the text of the verse as well as the context of the passage emphatically iterate the sorrow or grief imposed by God upon His elect by design; produces repentance (a change of mind or heart) but such sorrow should not be mistaken for the change of mind itself, which it may serve to produce. The son cited by Christ as recorded in Matthew 21:28-29 at first said “I will not go,” but then afterward repented (changed his mind) and went, which is a true example of the precise meaning of the word. In the Kingdom Gospel and New Covenant, the call to repentance is precisely an urge for self-condemnation and to a change of mind. This promotes a change in the course being pursued, as Israel and Judah are required to do under the conditional stipulation of their new contract, which is the call to reject the Old (Mosaic Law) and embrace Christ for their acceptance to God. There will be little or no progress can be made in a right induction of the eternal workings of God on until the true and accurate meaning of the word is reconciled and defended against its scriptural misuse.

Such unscriptural misuse also erroneously foists the relation of repentance to believing as it is asserted that it is to be added to belief as a requirement for salvation. Unfortunately, this is assumed so much that the claim has been set up as dogmatically stated as language could declare; that repentance is essential to salvation and none can be saved apart from its concomitancy with believing, as inseparable requisites. This thinking has cascaded to the problem of so-called identifying those who have received salvation. Hence this practice has evolved in some ministries as the plumb-line for supposedly delineating regenerate from unregenerate persons. Here it is safe to say that few errors have caused so much confusion regarding the salvation of God’s elect than the practice of demanding an anguish of soul as one’s enactment of exercising faith in Christ. Such emotions have been orchestrated to be produced at will as the way of salvation has thus been made impossible for all who do not experience this required ritual. This error results in another serious misdirection of the message of salvation, namely, one in which such ones are encouraged to look inward at themselves and not outwardly to Christ as Savior. In this view, salvation is conditioned on some expression of their exercise of faith and the intensity of anguish which preceded or accompanied it, but not on the faithfulness of Christ. It is in this manner that their expressed sorrow of



heart and verbal or mental consent become mainly subtle forms of meritorious work and to that extent a gross contradiction of God's Grace as the only adduce for salvation.

Underlying all the suppositions that tears, anguish and human expressions of faith are necessary is the most serious notion that the blood of Christ that was shed in eternity was not entirely propitious but that God must also be softened to pity and appeased by induced penitent grief and volitional input of faith in the sphere of time. This cogitation militates against the fact that the Scriptures document that God is exclusively propitious because of Christ's death for the very sinful nature that is the source of human sorrow. There is no occasion to melt or temper the heart of God, as His attitude toward sin and the sinner is a matter of revelation in His eternal purpose. This implication as it is so generally accepted, assumes that God must be mollified by human agony, which is a desperate form of unbelief. The belief of the gospel has been assigned to His elect, who are manifested as unsaved, which certainly is not the mere notion that God must be coaxed into a saving attitude of mind. It is in eternity that Christ has died and grace was extended from the One who is propitious to the point of infinity.

The Synergistic mindset is prone to imagine that there is some form of atonement for sin through men expressing sorry for it. Whatever may be the place of sorrow for sin in the restoration of the elect's transgression, it has been predetermined for both Jew and Gentile and there is no occasion to propitiate God or to provide any form of satisfaction by the expression of misery or distress of ones soul. It is glaringly inconsistent for one to assert that the unsaved must experience mental suffering and consent to change before they can be saved. The majority of Christendom has failed to inform their hearers that such implied burden upon the elect is unscriptural. It should be restated that the reception of salvation does not engender God's consideration of ones grief of mind, as it cannot be genuinely produced at ones will because the humanly depraved nature is void of the demand of a self-produced affliction of mind. In this sense, it is irrelevant to debate whether regeneration shall precede salvation by ones faith. When salvation is presented on the basis of human imputation, it becomes a form of fatalism and is responsible for the doubt, fear, confusion, despair and insecurity that are so prevalent among countless multitudes of God's people. It is this synergistic point of view that advances the supposed merit of human repentance in the salvation process but this should be excluded from the terms on which a soul may be saved.

As before stated, repentance, which is simply a change of mind, is the resulting effects of believing, which is all caused by God. In the manifestation of salvation, no individual can turn to Christ based on their owned induced confidence in God and change of mind. Here it should be noted that repentance in the sphere of time is not something that a spiritually dead individual could ever effectuate, as it was the work of the Holy Spirit in eternity. This must foremost be considered by those who are amenable to the Word of God that the essential preparation of heart which the Holy Spirit accomplished in the elect to manifest in them a spiritually intelligent and non-voluntary acceptance of Christ as Savior occurred not as the results of sorrow for their sinful nature. The unsaved that come to Christ in manifestation, do so by God's divine influence as they are illuminated and given a clear understanding concerning their sinful nature. Those who are caused

to believe on Christ, regardless of its perceived act of securing salvation, does not engender turning from something to something but rather turning to something from something. This terminology may seem like a mere play on words but a spiritually analytical investigation of the sphere of the actual enactment of salvation exudes this vital distinction. For depraved humanity to turn from evil, is not a possible act within itself nor can such action be determinant at that point.

One's turn to Christ was a pre-determined act in eternity, thus the joining of these two separate acts.....repentance and faith in the sphere of time..... can't in any way be requisites for salvation. On the other hand, manifestly speaking..... turning to Christ from all other confidences does exude the act of repentance, which is a change of mind. Note how the Apostle Paul stresses this distinction in accurate terms when he states to the Thessalonians, "you did turn unto God from the idols, to serve the living and true God "(I Thessalonians 1:9). Upon close scrutiny, this text provides no comfort for those who contend that recipients of grace must first, in real contrition, renounce all wicked things, terminating from such at that point and afterwards, as a second and separate act, turn to God. The text recognizes but one act, i.e., "You did turn unto God from idols," which is an act that resulted from their gift of faith alone.

Those who stress the requirements of repentance and believing, inadvertently disclose that in their conception, the problem of personal sins is all that enters into salvation. It is in fact the sin nature that caused the enmity and separation yet neither are legitimate subjects of repentance or believing. Salvation contemplates many vast issues and the consideration of the issue of personal sin, though included, is but a small portion of the whole. Many are confused when they attempt to amalgamate the Kingdom and Grace messages; by inducing Acts 26:18 as drafted proof of their idea that the recipient of salvation must do various things in order to be saved. From their erroneous exegesis of this verse's dispensational applications, they enumerate various things which they purport to be manifestly wrought in the believer by the saving power of God.

In focusing in on the relation of repentance to covenants, it is of note that the term covenant is broad in its implicational inferences. Israel is under Jehovah's unalterable contract in the Old (Mosaic Law) and New Covenants (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matt 26:28) and yet the Body of Christ is the object of another, as the Grace Church, composed of all believers of the present age, who are also now the objects of the Grace Covenant made in Christ's blood (I Corinthians 11:25). A covenant implies relationship because it secures a right relation to God in matters belonging within the bounds of the covenant. A covenant that is unconditional, as the above-named latter two covenants are, is not affected by any human elements nor is it changeable even by God Himself. However, the stipulations of a covenant and the experience of its blessings are different things. In the case of Israel, it is possible to be under the provisions of an unconditional covenant and to fail for the time being to enjoy its blessings due to the manifested workings of God's eternal purpose (Romans chapter 11). In this instant, Israel's separation, which cause by divinely imposed blindness; has cast a limitation upon the enjoyment of their covenant. But the covenant, being unchangeable, still abides, as the issue becomes, not the remaking of the covenant but the confirmations of the relationship (Romans

11:26). In the case of elect Jews and Gentiles son-positioned in the Body of Christ, the Grace covenant is unencumbered in its unconditional application, now that it has been revealed in the present Grace Dispensation.

It therefore follows that for those covered in respective covenants, there is automatically instituted within them divine dealings with specific provisions evincing the manifestation of repentance and belief. Even in the relationship of the Mosaic Covenant, repentance is expressed by confession to God. Note that having confessed his sin, David did not pray for his salvation to be restored but he rather prayed for the restoration of "the joy" of his salvation (Psalms 51:12). In like manner in the New Covenant, it is joy and fellowship which confession restores for the believer (I John 1:3-9). When Christ came offering Himself to Israel as their Messiah and announcing their kingdom as at hand, He, with John and the Kingdom Apostles, called on their people to repent (to change their minds) in preparation for the proffered kingdom. There was no appeal concerning salvation induced by the formation of covenants but it was restoration of the people by a change of mind, which would lead them to forsake their sins by the acknowledgement of their Messiah in lieu of dependence upon compliance with the Law for righteousness (Matt 10:6; Romans 10:3).

The applications of these appeals are made to covenant Jews concerning adjustments to the Old Covenants. When this is confused with the covenant applications of Grace to individual elect Gentiles, who are "strangers from those covenants" (Ephesians 2:12), it is a serious error indeed. The reference made to repentance in II Corinthians 7:8-10 is conveyed as a separate act having nothing to do with the acquisition of salvation. The conclusion of the matter is that while God's covenant people are appointed to national or personal relationships to God by manifestations of repentance as a separate act, there is no basis either in reason or revelation for the demand to be made that those who are manifestly called in this age must exhibit repentance and exercise of their faith in order to be saved. The absence of demand for repentance for Salvation is without question evidenced in the Grace Contract. Note that there are a plethora of New Covenant passages that condition salvation on its recipient's testimony of their belief and exercise of faith, which should pointedly enshrine the contrasting stipulations in the covenants (New and Grace), as it does indeed distinguish their usages. In this sense, the latter words in these uses of it in the Grace Contract are misconstrued as an exact synonym of the former uses in the New Contract. These portions of Scripture in the New Covenant include all that it declares on the matter of the human responsibility in salvation as it is viewed strictly from the earthly vantage-point; yet each one of these texts omits any reference to repentance as a separate act inciting the conferment of salvation.

This fact, which is easily verified, cannot but bear enormous weight with any candid minded student of God's Word. For instance, the Gospel of John, which is written to present Christ as the object of faith unto eternal life, does not once employ the word repentance. More forcefully, Paul's epistle to the Romans, which is a complete analysis of all that enters into the whole plan of salvation by grace, does not use the word repentance in connection with the saving of a soul. Here some will readily quote or

actually misquote Romans 2:4 where they assert that repentance is equivalent to salvation itself. When Romans chapter two is properly contextualized, it becomes apparent that those being addressed were the ones formerly under the auspices of the Law. In this view, none had or even could initiate a change of heart or mind. When the Apostle Paul's and Silas' reply to the jailer is properly analyzed, the question really was, "Sirs, what must I do -- that I may be (having been) saved?" Thus concerning what he should do in manifestation of being saved, they said, "you must (having) believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will (manifestly) be saved ----- you and your house" (Acts 16:31). This reply evidently mitigates the necessity of induced repentance and belief.

Hence from this overwhelming mass of irrefutable evidence, it is clear that the Scriptures do not impose repentance upon the elect as a condition of salvation; neither from the Gospel of John with its direct words from the lips of Christ nor in the epistle to the Romans with its exhaustive treatment of this question nor in the entire array of passages, which are the total of divine instructions. Regeneration is incomplete, misleading and will always remain so if repentance must be accorded concomitantly with believing for its enactment. No scripturally informed person would attempt to defend such a notion against such odds and those who have thus undertaken this task doubtless have done so without weighing the evidence or considering the untenable position which they assume.

Finally, we explicate the significance of the exhibit of ones repentance and exercise of faith in specific passages of the Scriptures. When entering upon this phrase, as it is so often expressed, it is first necessary to dispensationally qualify all portions, which introduce the word repentance in its relation to each respective covenant. Also it is necessary to mitigate the misconstruing in other passages that employ the word repentance as a synonym of believing (Acts 17:30; Romans 2:4; II Timothy 2:25; II Peter 3:9). There are passages which refer to a change of mind (Acts 8:22; 11:18; Hebrews 6:1, 6; 12:17; Revelations 9:20) yet, again, consideration must be accorded three passages, as they are related to their respective constituents which are often misapplied (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31). There are references to John's baptism, which was unto repentance that are conveyed outside the Synoptic Gospels (Acts 13:24; 19:4). Another passage deserves more extended consideration, namely: Luke 24:47, "And that repentance and remission of sins to be (having been) preached in His name among all nations, having begun at Jerusalem."

Here it should be seen that repentance is not in itself equivalent to believing or faith, though, being included in believing, is construed here as a synonym of the word believe. Likewise, it is to be recognized that "remission of sins" is not all that is proffered in salvation, though the phrase may serve that purpose in this instance. Above all, actually none of the passages require human obligations with respect to salvation. From certain historical passages in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, some purport that repentance coupled with believing leads to remission of sin. Here it is of the utmost importance to correctly apportion historical and contextual conveyances in charting the transitional accounts of the Kingdom Gospel that was preached in the former portion of Acts, as it transmuted to the ultimate emergence of the Gospel of Grace. From varied

accounts, repentance is linked with believing and in certain instances serves as a synonym for the word belief. In some accounts prior to Paul's specific message of salvation to the Gentiles in chapter 13, certain Gentiles had received the same message as Israel, i.e., "repentance and belief," which engenders the Kingdom Gospel's all-important and essential change of mind. Thus it is also true that such passages do prescribe these two things as necessary to salvation, e.g., Acts chapter 17 and more specifically Acts 20:21, which states, "testifying fully both to Jews and Greeks, toward God repentance and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

The conveyance in this passage should not be construed as a condition and must not be distinguished from the "no-conditions" character of the Gospel of Grace. It is also important to note that in the Grace Message, Jews are placed on the same level with Gentiles, as both are objects of God's Divine grace. The Jews with their pre-Grace Covenant background or the Gentiles with their heathen ignorance, each are caused to experience a change of mind respecting their relation to God. Manifestation of this entails their awareness of God's gracious purpose; as there can be no reception or revelation without an impartment of the gift of faith, which is the sole reason that it is possible to recognize God's purpose and acknowledge Christ as Savior. In other words, repentance (a change of mind) toward God could not itself constitute the equivalent of "gifted faith" but is a testimony of that faith. The introduction of who God is..... is significant, as Christ is the sole source and object of faith, which is most vital to mitigate those who would insist that there are human obligations unto salvation. Hence repentance and the exercise of one's faith as a twofold requirement are omitted in the Gospel of Grace.

Thus the latter chapters of Acts, strictly depicting Paul's Grace Message, are void of any implication of human obligations or input. Acts 26:20 actually states, "But to those in Damascus first and to those in Jerusalem, to all the region also of Judea and to the nations, I was preaching to repent and to turn back unto God, doing works worthy of repentance." Again, both Jews and Gentiles are addressed as on the same footing before God. Here neither repentance nor anything else is being addressed as an obligation in order to secure the spiritual results of those "repenting and turning to God." This passage does not sustain the synergist's view of repentance, as they assert it as one's sorrow for sin but gives it its correct meaning, namely, a change of mind! There is no difficulty in the scriptural induction of a change of mind as testimony of when one manifestly turns to God. This passage is even more certified by the conveyance of I Thessalonians 1:9, which states, "for they themselves concerning us do declare what entrance we had unto you and how you did turn unto God from the idols, to serve a living and true God."

Accordingly, the foregoing does demonstrate that the Scriptural Doctrine of Repentance offers no objection to the truth that salvation is by grace through the faithfulness of Christ apart from any suggestions of human works or merit. Thus recorded testimonies of repentance enter of necessity into the manifestation of believing on Christ since there can be no revelation of one turning to Christ from other objects of confidence without "a change of mind." There are a plethora of textual conveyances in the Kingdom Gospel

implying Repentance and Faith, as it is presented in the New Covenant's intimation of expressing Christ's role in assuming the human responsibility of salvation for believing and exercising faith. However, no such implicational requirements are present in the Gospel of Grace and its Covenant, as the revelation of God's eternal workings renders such to be irrelevant.

Exegetical analyses of certain passages of Scriptures below are properly assessed in their respective conveyance in their correct application of the term REPENTANCE:

<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Application of the term REPENTANCE</b>
Romans 2:4	Obviously addressed to Jews with a prior relationship to God, thus the appeal is to change from their estranged relationship from God.
Romans 7:8-10	Speaking to those in the Grace Church who were already saved so the reference is to a change of their conduct or actions.
Romans 11:4	Speaking of God's un-changeability.
II Corinthians 12:21	Speaking to those in the Grace Church who were already saved so the reference is to those who had not changed their conduct.
II Timothy 2:25	The context clearly shows the "one opposing," referencing the likes of Hymenaeus and Philetus (II Timothy 2:17). In II Timothy 2:18, Paul states that reasoning with such could possibly lead to their change of mind from the erroneous teaching that the resurrection had already passed; to a perfect knowledge in alignment of what had been revealed in the Mystery.
Hebrews 6: 1, 6	Obviously referencing the Doctrine of Repentance in the New Covenant.
Hebrews 12:17	Referring to Esau as rejected by God before he was born and thus void of the possibility of a change toward God.

## II. Believe and Confess Christ

The ambition of ministries to secure apparent results and demonstrate the sincerity of those supposedly “desiring to make decisions for Christ,” very definitely have prompted the majority of protestant Christendom, in their general appeals, to insist upon a public confession of Christ on the part of those deemed by them to receive salvation. To those so inclined, this practice evinces practical purposes in the majority of instances where confessions from the respondents are proof of salvation in the minds of all witnessing such display of saving faith. In the majority of instances, this is viewed as being of equal importance as such ones exhibit the “exercise of their faith.” Unfortunately, this demand is foisted exclusively, not only as ones entrance into the local assembly but also the Body of Christ! Of course nowhere in the Scriptures is this practice of liturgical induction justified but it has evolved from the traditions of the masses’ misinterpretation of certain Scriptures. In focusing in on this practice, two texts of Scriptures are herein considered:

### 1. Scriptural Applications of Confession of Christ

Matthew 10:32-33 states, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven." These verses are in the Kingdom Gospel and New Covenant and were stated in the midst of Christ's kingdom teachings and as a part of His instructions to His disciples whom He was sending forth with a restricted message to Israel (Matthew 10:5-7), which was to be accompanied by divers miracles (Matthew 10:8). Here it must be thoroughly understood that such is not concomitant and is not committed for ministering in the present Grace age. These instructions applied primarily to the disciples themselves in respect to the faithful delivery of the kingdom commission in proclamation of that which was extended in its appeal only to the Israelites to whom they were sent. It is carelessness but mostly ignorance of the distinction of the Kingdom and Grace Gospels, which assumes that these Scriptures present conditions of salvation for Jews and Gentiles in the present dispensation.

Romans 10:9-10 states (Greek Text), "Because if you might confess with your mouth Lord Jesus and might believe in your heart that God raised Him out from the dead, you shall be saved; for the heart believes unto righteousness, and the mouth confesses unto salvation." Here one must observe that as correctly conveyed, misuse of these verses is deplorable indeed, as this message falls within the specific teachings of the Apostle Paul, which belong primarily to the way of salvation by grace and is worthy of more consideration than just a cursory perusal. A careful analysis of verse nine denotes that it opens with the subordinating conjunction *ὅτι* (**ot-ee**) rendered “because” or “on account of”. Here it is used to introduce a cause or a reason based on an evidential fact. In the previous verse (Romans 10:8), it is established that the word of faith (message which Paul preached) was and is near. So the Apostle Paul now states, “If you might confess with your mouth Lord Jesus you shall be saved”. Now because some theologians use this verse in an attempt to deflect or dilute or even refute the principle of God's sovereign election to salvation; the Greek grammar is utilized in its exegesis.

In this regard, the literally reading of Romans 10:9 from the Greek manuscripts is, *ὅτι ἂν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ·* (**Ot-ee eh-ahn om-ol-oy-ees-ees ehn to stom-ah-tee soo keer-ee-on ee-ee-soon keh peest-tehv-sees ehn tee kahr-thee-ah soo ot-ee o Theh-os ahf-ton eey-ee-rehn ehk nehk-ron so-thee-see**) rendered “Because if you might confess with your mouth Lord Jesus and might believe in your heart that God raised Him out from the dead, you shall be saved.” Now note that the Greek verb *ὁμολογήσῃς* (**om-ol-oy-ees-ees**) translated “confess,” is in the subjunctive mood and aorist tense signifying a past completed probability. Thus, the statement should read “If you might confess (having confessed)” or “say (having said) the same thing” or “affirm (having confirmed) what God has said,” as established in the Decree of Jesus Christ in eternity. The next phrase is *ἐν τῷ στόματι* (**ehn to stom-ah-tee**) rendered “with your mouth,” which is merely testimony that such one has been compelled by God’s eternal Decree to manifestly admit that Jesus Christ is the only remedy for sin. Hence, designated ones will be caused to openly acknowledge Him, i.e., those who have been designated to do so will manifestly accept and confess Him.

In further exegesis of Romans 10:9, note that the Greek phrase *πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου* (**peest-ehvs-ees ehn tee kahr-thee-ah**) is properly translated “and might believe (having believed) in your heart,” according to its subjunctive mood and aorist tense connotations. Now some point to the “iffy” or probability aspect of the subjective mood to espouse a concept of “conditional salvation.” It is a fact that confessions of faith and belief are testimonies of salvation for manifestation purposes but they are not conditions or initiatives are to salvation. When viewed strictly from the vantage-point of time, the statements “if you might confess” and “if you might believe,” are manifestly expressing probabilities but they are mitigated by the fact that depraved mankind is unable within himself to manifestly confess or believe. Actually, belief and confessions were initiated, motivated and ontologize (actualized) by God alone in the eternal realm when they are viewed strictly from the vantage-point of eternity. Hence salvation as required was also supplied or provided in eternity, as such were fulfilled by His provisions supplied. Some Greek scholars will cite a grammar rule and state that the aorist tense in this structure does not address the time of these actions as completed in the past but it does in fact produce certification of the pre-choice of God of His elect in eternity. God ontologize (actualize), through the faithfulness of Christ in eternity, all provisional requirements and thus causes designated ones to manifestly express in time, belief in testimony according to the enactment of His Decree of their salvation. In this sense, manifestation is strictly held captive to God’s Eternal Decree.

This is corroborated by the statements of Jesus: “.....no one does come unto the Father, if not through me” (John 14:6), which is the only condition of salvation and “no one is able to come (having come) unto me, if the Father who sent me may not draw (having drawn) him” (John 6:44), as expressed by the subjunctive-aorist connotations therein and that is the only condition, which leads to salvation. So this is all consistent with God’s election and call to salvation, which began and was actualized in eternity (Ephesians 1:4). In the scheme of God’s process of the manifestation of His salvation, there is no doubt that if you are God’s elect, you will confess with your mouth and you



will believe in your heart because God has decreed that you do and as a result of God's call and election, you (some) will testify of your salvation! But it is all God's doing and not man's. It is exclusively through the determinant counsel of God's plan, will and purpose that His elect are placed into a saved and everlasting relationship with the Eternal God of glory. Remember, it is all by grace and not by any semblance of works or jesters (Ephesians 2:8-9). Notice as has been observed in this verse (Romans 10:9), the message that Paul preached was also in their hearts, which was pre-assigned in the rational and emotional center of their beings. In summarizing what is being conveyed, the message of faith, which Paul preached was very near, both in their mouth and heart. This message entailed saying the same thing about Christ that God Himself said and believing in His resurrection, which confirmed His deity that He is truly the Son of God (Romans 1:4). This confession and faith are directed toward God and they are all aspects of a single transaction in eternity, namely, the faithfulness of Jesus Christ as set forth by God.

The reading from the Greek manuscripts of Romans 10:10 is, *καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογείται εἰς σωτηρίαν* (**kahr-thee-ah gahr peest-ehv-eh-teh ees theek-eh-os-ee-neen stom-ah-tee theh om-ol-oy-ee-teh ees so-tee-ree-ahn**), which is rendered "For the heart does believe unto righteousness and the mouth does confesse unto salvation." Note in this verse, the inverted order of the verbs *πιστεύεται* (**peest-tehv-eh-teh**) rendered "does believe," and *ὁμολογείται* (**om-ol-oy-ee-teh**) rendered "does confess." In the preceding verse (Romans 10:9), the order was confession first and then believing. Here this verse focuses on the operation of the heart in conjunction with the spirit, manifestly exercising divine faith that has been deposited by God, the author or originator unto the end of righteousness. Now as a result of the belief that has been deposited in the believer, the mouth confesses to God. i.e., it says the same thing God has decreed unto the end of salvation. Notice that this focus is squarely in alignment with faith righteousness, albeit the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, which is the only faithfulness that can be counted for righteousness. Hence designated one are identified with His faithfulness, as He alone is the righteousness of God (I Corinthians 1:30).

So the mouth confesses unto the testimony of receiving salvation. This means that the mouth says the same thing back to God, i.e., He has acquired salvation for His elect in eternity. The mouth also agrees with God in depicting the gospel of salvation, in that He causes ones exercise of divine faith in it. Here the internalization of ones faith in the message, in reflection of the faithfulness of Christ, testifies to His righteousness being the exclusive source of salvation. Note again the grammatical characteristics of the Greek verbs *πιστεύεται* (**peest-tehv-eh-teh**) rendered "does believe" and *ὁμολογείται* (**om-ol-oy-ee-teh**) rendered "does confess," as they are in the indicative mood (factual), present tense (continuous), the passive voice, (acted upon by an outside agent) and third person singular (initiated outside of human flesh). So manifestly, the elect hearts (minds) are programmed or directed to believe and elect mouths are caused to confess, according to the eternal actualization of God's sovereign call and election unto salvation in eternity. This cannot be emphasized enough! God has only one sphere in which He actualized the saving of His people and it is eternal. This is the way of its ontologism: by

God's Eternal Decree, the elect were justified; their sins were pardoned or done away with as they were introduced or baptized into the body of Christ before the creation of the world. Now the moment or instant one believes or is caused to believe, exudes the depiction of God's process of revealing that such one belongs to Him but this is strictly all in manifestation of identifying with what He eternally accomplished in His elect.

Therefore all of the elect were completely saved in eternity, in that the Grace Covenant distinctly identifies the total redemptive work of salvation as being eternal, including propitiation, justification, sanctification, imputation, regeneration, adoption, etc. In this light, no activity in the sphere of time, i.e., mourner's bench, sinner's prayer, tarrying rooms nor even the plain simple expression of the exercising of one's faith in the finished work of Jesus' sacrificial death upon Calvary; constitute the actuation or actualization of ones salvation. Now no one can be justified or accepted unto God except through the merit of Jesus Christ, for this was and is God's only acceptable plan for salvation and there is no departure from this fact. Some vehemently disagree with this because of the traditional teachings of denominations and legalistic organizations but the truth is confirmed by the Word of God, not the doctrines of humans who seek to be honored and glorified. The truth does not flow according to the traditions of mankind but as the Scripture states, "let God be true and every man a liar" (Romans 3:3-4).

When the elect received the love of God, they concomitantly received His life and nature, which expresses itself in them according to His will, as this is what constitutes confession. How else can one abide except through the exclusive eternal workings of God? A confession of Christ Jesus as Lord is only the testimony of the new life of God that was eternally enacted but manifestly received by its recipients in the sphere of time. Having received this love, we become aware that we are born of God and being born of God, we cry "Abba, Father," which is the first word of a new-born soul, born of God, knowing God, and out of a like nature with God speak in the language of His children. The two manifested expressions (believing and confessing) in these verses are each expanded with respect to their meaning in the immediate context which follows. Of believing it states "For the scripture says, everyone believing on Him will not be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same One is Lord of all, being rich unto all those calling upon Him" (Romans 10: 11-12). Thus salvation was given to both Jew and Greek without any conditions of them initiating belief and such indeed shall not be disappointed. It should not go unobserved that the confession of Romans 10:9-10 is declared to be a calling on the name of the Lord. In other words, this confession is that unavoidable acknowledgment to God on the part of the one who is manifestly testifying concerning His saving grace; as such one is merely a responsive believing recipient of salvation through Christ's faithfulness.

## 2. Two Conclusive Reasons

Hence there are two compelling reasons why the Scriptures under consideration do not present these two expressions as human responsibilities in relation to salvation by grace.

a. To claim in the Grace Covenant that a public confession of Christ as Savior in tandem with believing in Christ is required..... is to contend that a plethora of passages in which testimonies of believing appear, are traceable to some external physical jester, renders that such was incomplete and to some extent is dependent upon human actions, which is actually misleading. The Synergistic mindset however seems to construct all of gifted faith's confidence on this erroneous interpretation of passages that have guised as volitional acts of humans. Contrariwise, the factual conveyances of the overwhelming body of Grace Scriptures definitively state that these manifestations of the enactment of salvation are not in any sense influenced by human participation.

b. To actually require a public confession of Christ as a prerequisite to salvation by grace in the present dispensation is to discredit the eternal enactment of salvation to an innumerable company of God's elect who were saved under circumstances which precluded all actions in the sphere of time, public or private.

The Belief and Confession of Christ is germane to testimony for manifestation purposes in salvation only. Ones privilege in testimony should not be construed as a duty that must be undertaken to activate the moment one is saved. Such actions would then constitute conditions of salvation, which would counter the eternal doctrines of grace in favor of perceived works of merit ..... intruding where only the Eternal Decree of God can possibly ontologize salvation.

### **III. Believe and Be Baptized (Baptismal Regeneration)**

It is of the utmost important to distinctly assess the scriptural application of the Greek word *βαπτίζω* (*vahp·tee·zo*). Thus, it must be recognized that this term is used to represent two different things in the scriptures; one spiritual and the other, physical. The former is referenced in the Grace Covenant, as baptism by the Spirit of God in which God's elect was joined in union to Christ and was thereof positioned and is in Christ. In stark contrast, the latter is referenced in the Old and New Covenants as ritual baptisms with water wherein the recipients are identified as subjects of the Commonwealth of Israel. In Matthew 3:11, John distinguished these baptisms when he stated, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Though this word sustains divers' meanings, it conveys closely related ideas all referencing the identification of God's placement plans for His elect. Hence the same identical word is used for both spiritual and ritual (physical) baptisms, which suggests that the affiliation between the two ideas is identification of ones placement or positional relationship in God.

This is the underlined reasoning why the Apostle Paul declares in Ephesians 4:5 that there is only one baptism in the Grace Covenant. The contemplation of distinguishing divers' facts concerning this word is essential to a scriptural understanding of the theme and purpose of Baptism. Hence certain questions naturally arise when it is asserted that one must believe and be baptized: as to 1). What baptism is in view and 2). What is this

term affixed to, Spiritual or ritual (physical)? In consideration of responding to these questions, three passages demand scrutinized exegetical attention:

Mark 16:15-16

To properly evaluate the contents of these verses, it is necessary to examine their literal Greek Manuscript readings: *καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς σωθήσεται ὁ δὲ ἀπιστήσας κατακριθήσεται* (**keh eep•ehn ahf•tees por•ehf•thehn•dehs ees ton kos•mon ah•pah•dah kee•rehf•xah•teh to ehv•ahy•yehl•ee•on pahs•ee tee ktees•ee o peest•ehv•sahs keh vahp•tees•thees sothee•seh•teh o theh ahp•ees•tee•sahs kaht•ahk•ree•thee•seh•teh**) rendered “and he said to them, having gone to all the world, proclaimed the good news to all the creation; he who has believed and has been baptized, shall be saved; and he who has not believed, shall be condemned.” Here attention must be focused on the evidence, which serves as proof that the reference made in this text is according to what had previously transpired in the addressees’ ministering; including the baptism which accompanied administration of the New Covenant and Kingdom Gospel. It should be noted that baptism by the Spirit couldn’t possibly be characterized in the interpretation of this passage since it was not yet fully revealed at this point historically. Hence, this evidence should at least be weighed according to all that it establishes.

Strict exegetical examination of Mark 16:15-16 shows that its language should be interpreted strictly in alignment with the grammatical structure of its Greek conveyance. In this sense, the Greek participle *πορευθέντες* (**por•ehf•thehn•dehs**) rendered “gone” and the verb *κηρύξατε* (**kee•rehf•xah•teh**) rendered “proclaimed” are in the imperative mood and aorist tense; both certifying completed commanding actions that were assigned to the disciples’ previous ministering directives from the Lord (Matthew 10:5-15). This proves upon close examination that the reference made in the context is to ritual (water) baptism for identification purposes; not by the Spirit. Thus, any construing of this as a regenerating baptism should be immediately dismissed as a vital issue of extended argument in assessing it as such. Further verification of this is gleaned from the Greek verbs *πιστεύσας* (**peest•ehv•sahs**), which is rendered “has believed” and *βαπτισθεὶς* (**vahp•tees•thees**), which is rendered “has been baptized,” in that these are actions associated with those caused to receive the Kingdom message. This promise in the Kingdom Gospel and New Covenant is that all induced respondents to such *σωθήσεται* (**sothee•seh•teh**) rendered “shall be saved,” as confirmed in God’s Eternal Decree.

Hence the interpretation of the language is indicating a ritual baptism, in examining the questions: 1). is this baptism by the Holy Spirit or with water and 2). what distinctions are there in them?" Unfortunately, this vital issue has been assumed without a proper investigation and determination of the divers’ baptisms. Such assumption is neither grounded in necessity nor in the warrant of Scripture but only regarded in its traditional teachings based upon what has been misconstrued from this particular as well as other similar passages. It is obvious that the baptism of this passage is of necessity limited to

a rite because the Scriptures historically depict it by water with its sign as a ritualistic symbol. But there is no warrant in any of the Scriptural teachings for identifying rites as the actual catalyst for receiving salvation nor should any such warrant be assumed in this particular passage, which only signifies baptism as their identification with salvation. In this instance, the evidence on the face of the passage shows that this baptism is ritual with water, rather than by the Spirit. Hence these points must be admitted: 1). this passage infers water baptism by its New Covenant association, 2). this passage inferences no statements involving anything other than ritual (water) baptism, 3). Historically, these particular Kingdom Gospel Scriptures present only a ritual in the exigencies of such a literarily stated baptism and 4). this passage infers baptism, which meets its dispensationally defined requirements conveyed by such limited language.

In general, perceptions of ritual baptisms should be rejected in the Grace Dispensation. Contrariwise, this passage as well as all others that are kingdom focused, conveys salvation in conditional doctrines of belief and physical baptisms. Of a surety, the majority of today's ministries' doctrinal assessment of baptism is ritualistically propagated in the same breath with belief, as a condition of salvation. However, no informed student would feel compelled to introduce these exceptions for which no provision is made in the terms of this passage but will acknowledge that its conveyance is irrelevant in the Grace Church age. The misapplication of this passage is derived at by not rightly dividing the Scriptures in their appropriate dispensations and covenants, which exudes commingling of baptisms. It is a fact that the sole baptism directly contemplated by this passage is ritual (of water), as it meets in the most absolute and unlimited manner, its condition of salvation. In an obvious requirement on the face of the passage, baptism has been given in the same breadth with belief and was in that era, universally present in every case of salvation. This was the unquestioned and accepted view in particular in the Kingdom Doctrine, which makes use of "baptized" harmoniously with the associate terms, "believed" and "saved." The use of these terms, as well as "baptized" is in general, elliptical (having a part omitted and thus relieved of otherwise revealed explication), when assessed strictly from within the confines of the New Covenant.

The terminology "believe" in these Scriptures emits dual usage; depicting both the limited action of the intellect, i.e., "the devils believe and tremble" (James 2:19) while the other embraces and controls affections of the heart, i.e., "for John came unto you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him and the tax-gatherers and the harlots did believe him, and you, having seen, repented not at last .....to believe him" (Matthew 21:32). The terminology "saved," in these Scriptures also emits dual usage; depicting the human body, i.e., "all hope was taken away of our being saved" (Acts 27:20) and the soul, "He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Hence it is the identification forum of "belief" and "saved" that is being referenced, as it is this forum of salvation that is documented in the passage. Thus "baptized" is used, as applied in identification of placement in the Commonwealth of Israel, i.e., "I indeed baptize you with water" (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:26). According to ones comprehension of the terms and conditions of the New Covenant, just reasoning can be assessed to the sense that "believed," "saved" and "baptized" are inferred in the

passage. The scriptural view objects to the widespread diversities of interpretations of this passage, as being without its correct dispensational and covenant's support. The only tenable supply to this elliptical passage engenders input of knowledge beyond the limited base of what was historically revealed and understood at the point when the Lord uttered the conveyance in it.

Accordingly, the proper exegetical conveyance of Mark 16:15-17 engenders its induced respondents: "having believed (with the heart upon Jesus Christ) and having been baptized (by water in identification with Jesus Christ)." It follows that such ones "shall be saved" (by God's Eternal Decree of redemption in Christ). This grammatical construction allows and its exegeted case requires a relation of dependence and unity between "believed" and "baptized," which subsist in the New Covenant. Hence, there is evidently some link binding these words and the ideas which they represent together. The truth of this pattern is that these terms and/or conditions are distinctly stipulated in the Kingdom Gospel, as the sense would imply that those who believed, were baptized and shall manifestly be saved, which is indicative of the readings in the Greek Manuscripts. The stipulations of the New Covenant insist on the fulfillment of both conditions in all manifested Kingdom recipients. While this is true; it is not all the truth, for there were even further revelations that historically followed, i.e., the messages that were delivered in John and the early chapters of Acts. This expressed faith and baptism must not be conjoined by being assigned to all of God's elect but strictly to the applicable recipients that were therein addressed. Also they must not be conjoined by being assigned universally but to their specific covenantal spheres, wherein the one is spiritual and the others physical. When they are conjoined, they are together only in specific truths, which require them to be recognized as distinct things that exist harmoniously together as specific requirements in the New Covenant; but not bearing to each other the intimate and essential relation of the cause and effect of salvation itself. That is ..... that water baptism is a Kingdom doctrinal consequence proceeding from ones eternally assigned belief of the Kingdom Gospel.

Believing has influence over the soul through the power of God in accordance with His promise in the gospel of bringing the one who has been manifestly caused to believe into the estate of salvation with all its values, which were received from Christ. On the one hand, this new relationship of Christ being in such designated ones is through identification of water baptism and can not be absent in the manifested case of any true Kingdom constituent. On the other hand, all those having been saved; were saved quite apart from ritual baptism. The form of speech, which this text presents, is common in the non-Pauline Scriptures; hence they are void of the eternally revealed Grace Doctrines of salvation; engendering only the limited knowledge of the other dispensational features belonging to their respective covenants. For example, Luke 1:20 states, "Thou shall be dumb and not able to speak." Here the word dumb is amplified by the phrase "not able to speak." In the text in question, the word "believed" is corroborated by the phrase "and was baptized," with reference to water baptism, which is an integral part of the identification of salvation in the New Covenant.

## Acts 2:38

The generally accepted translation is "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 you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The literally reading of Acts 2:38 from the Greek manuscripts is: *Πέτρος δὲ πρὸς αὐτούς, Μετανοήσατε, [φησὶν,] καὶ βαπτισθήτω ἕκαστος ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὑμῶν καὶ λήψετε τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος.* (**Peht•ros theh pros ahf•tees Meht•ahn•o•ee•sah•teh (phee•seen) keh Vahp•tees•thee•to ehk•ahs•tos ee•mon ehp•ee to on•om•ah•tee Ee•ee•soo Krees•too ees ahph•ehs•een ton ahm•ahr•tee•on ee•mon keh leem•psehs•theh teen tho•reh•ahn too ah•y•ee•oo pnee•mah•tos**) rendered "and Peter said unto them repented and baptized each one of you upon the name of Jesus Christ, into remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Here note that the Greek verbs *Μετανοήσατε* (**Meht•ahn•o•ee•sah•teh**) as well as *βαπτισθήτω* (**Vahp•tees•thee•to**) rendered "repented" and "baptized" respectively, are in the imperative mood and aorist tense; both certifying commanding actions completed and assigned to the responders, as addressed. A very general impression obtained in the text is that the translations of the two prepositions *ἐπὶ* (**ehp•ee**) as "in" and *εἰς* (**ees**) as "for" respectively; are better translated "upon," and "into" respectively. To this may be added the demand that this passage harmonizes with all other Scriptures, that are imperative (II Peter 1:20), in that the remission of sins, as conveyed here is equivalent to their certification of personal salvation, which is independent of their beliefs and baptism, as they are expressed in this passage.

Hence it should be comprehended that the phrase "and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," is applied to the positioning of sons of God (I John 3:2), which is expressive of the prior prophetic phrase, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). By just reasoning then, "believed," and "saved" could be viewed in the spiritual sense but "baptized," as expressed in this grammatical construction is strictly identification in the physical sense. Note that this does not mitigate the fact of what the essence of baptism by the Spirit engenders in this verse and in Acts 2:41. This same premises can be advanced to confer that water baptism in Mark 16:15-16 does not mitigate what the essence of baptism by the Spirit engenders, in that all the elect are ultimately positioned as sons of God (I John 3:1). This exegesis brings particular relief to the struggle of some in defending the idea that the 3,000 people that were physically baptized ritually (by water) were accommodated in no more than a covenantal administration necessity. In this scheme of son positioning, water baptism is reckoned to have identified them with what the essence of baptism by the Holy Spirit engenders, i.e., spiritual placement, which unavoidably enters into the salvation of all God's elect and does not flow as a mere testimony, which encounters no insuperable difficulty whatever.

Most of all, the correct scriptural interpretation rescues all who are blessed to receive understanding of this passage from misinterpretation, which exalts ritual baptism to the point of it being all-but-essential to salvation. It is significant that the Apostle Peter's exhortation in Acts 2:38 follows with a promise respecting the reception of the Holy

Spirit. In the disproportionate emphasis placed on ritual (water) baptism, which is doubtlessly even more stimulated by disagreement on its mode; the eternal undertaking of the Holy Spirit establishes the essence of baptism, i.e., identification of placement. Hence, the only thing that conditions the believer's standing before God is exclusively His sovereignty. The dismissal of this doctrinal misperception engenders the true motive for the elect's nature and service, which has been slanted to the point that many apparently are unaware of what actually constitutes the impetus of their entrance and security in Christ. Such situations are not without precedent. At Ephesus the Apostle Paul found certain men who were resting their confidence in "John's baptism," who confessed "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit" (Acts 19:1-3). In other words, all would do well to note that the truth regarding baptism by (in) the Holy Spirit, is itself more important than what orthodox Christianity, led by sectarian teachers, purports it to be.

### I Corinthians 12:13

The conveyance of this verse, correctly exegeted, is of necessity gleaned from its literal Greek Manuscript reading: *καὶ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἓν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἴτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἴτε Ἕλληνες εἴτε δοῦλοι εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν* (**keh gahr ehn ehn-ee pnehv-mah-tee ee-meess pahn-dehs ees ehn so-mah eh-vahp-tees-thee-mehn ee-teh Ee-oo-thee-ee ee-teh Ehl-lee-nehs thoo-lee ee-teh ehl-ehf-theh-ree keh pahn-dehs ehn pnehv-mah eh-pot-ees-thee-mehn**) rendered "For by one Spirit we all were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free and all into one Spirit were given to drink." Here the opening phrase *ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι* (**ehn ehn-ee pnehv-mah-tee**) prefaces the type of baptism, as it is inferred, may be viewed in the instrumental case and thus rendered "by one Spirit," as well as in the locative case, which translation is "in one Spirit." Hence, it was by means of one Spirit by (in) whom we were all *ἐβαπτίσθημεν* (**eh-vahp-tees-thee-mehn**) rendered "baptized" or placed in unto the end of having been identified and son-positioned in the one Body of Christ. Here the passive voice certifies that no one can genuinely be a member of the Body of Christ, apart from such one having been eternally placed and identified in it by the Holy Spirit.

The phrase, *εἴτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἴτε Ἕλληνες εἴτε δοῦλοι εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι* (**ee-teh Ee-oo-thee-ee ee-teh Ehl-lee-nehs thoo-lee ee-teh ehl-ehf-theh-ree**) is rendered "whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free," which documents that at the present time, i.e., during this Church age, there is no difference between the Jews and Gentiles in the Body of Christ (Romans 10:12), as all have been positioned in Him solely on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ (Acts 16:31; Romans 3:22). Any correlation between the ritual positioning status of men and God's sovereign choice, can only be negative (I Corinthians 1:26-29). The last phrase *καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν* (**keh pahn-dehs ehn pnehv-mah eh-pot-ees-thee-mehn**), is rendered, "and all into one Spirit were given to drink." Note that there is a slight variation between some Greek texts regarding the actual rendering of this phrase but the passive voice clearly indicates that God gave His elect to drink the one Spirit. Therefore, He identified such ones with (in) the Body of Christ, the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23). Hence, the many members were informed and



influenced by one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, and they all drink into one Spirit. Hence, all the elect were made partakers of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, as corroborated by John 7:37, 39: “.....if any one thirsts, let him come unto me and drink.....and this He said of the Spirit, which those believing in Him were about to receive; for not yet was the Holy Spirit because Jesus was not yet glorified....”

Unfortunately, there is a great profusion of various readings of the phrase, “**For by one Spirit were we all baptized...**” with the misunderstanding of water baptism. Here it should be comprehended that the conveyance is definitively not “by water” but “by” or “in” one Spirit” were we all baptized. For those who assign this baptism as a transient act in the sphere of time, it must be understood that baptism by water and by the Spirit are two different things (Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16). Here it must be clearly stated that those baptized in water .....do so only in seeking to identify according to the directives of the Kingdom Gospel and New Covenant, which aren’t applicable in the Dispensation of Grace. Also, in the Grace Covenant and Gospel, water baptism does not incorporate anyone into the Church of Christ; neither into the true and invisible Church, which is the Body of Christ. Hence, this verse is not meant to signify a visible church nor is the elect baptized in or by the Spirit into a visible church. The elect indeed were baptized and received into the church but no ritual (water) baptism put them into it nor made them members of it. Some persons may be baptized in water and yet may not ever be joined to the true church of God. There is indeed no alliance made to water baptism in the Grace Gospel, as it is the grace of the Spirit that worked regeneration and sanctification in the eternal sphere. A limited knowledge of this grace is testified of both in the Old and New Covenants and frequently signified by water, which is alluded to as baptism or “being baptized.” This symbolism of water is because of the plenteous, abundance and superabundance of it then bestowed, as is expressed by floods and rivers and “a well of living water (John 4:11; 7:38);” for this is what qualifies and fits those auspicated under ordinances of water baptism in non-grace dispensations.

All that is wrought by the Spirit of God is owing to His Divine power and energy; not to water baptism, which has no regenerating virtue, in that it decries a carnal regeneration that is not born of the blood of Christ. When water baptism is foisted as sacramental and the child of God’s entrance into God’s acceptance, salvation is then attributable to: 1). the best of men, 2). the will of the flesh and 3). the power of man’s freewill. But spiritual baptism unto salvation is totally of the Holy Spirit, who is the only sanctifier of the sons of men. God’s grace in eternal regeneration is brought into one body: the mystical Body of Christ, the invisible church that is manifestly testified, as the grace of God in election of His choice. It was exclusively God’s choice of His elect in eternity that constituted such ones as sons of God. Hence, it is spiritual baptism that exudes the sanctifying grace, which effectuated those belonging to His body and thus qualified, gave entrance and privileges of which the Spirit of God directed and manifestly brought them to. Whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; it matters not of what state and condition of elected ones; they were regenerated, sanctified, equally positioned in His body and manifestly have equal propriety in all immunities and blessings of God’s beloved (Colossians 3:11; Galatians 3:28).

This is all certified by the phrase, **“and all into one Spirit were given to drink.”** Thus, God’s elect were and are all partakers of the same graces of the Spirit, i.e., faith, hope, love... and daily receive under His guidance, direction and influence out of the same fullness of grace in Christ from whence all drink the same spiritual drink, i.e., the Blood of Christ. His blood is drink indeed, hence there shouldn’t any allusions of assessing an ordinance of water baptism in the Grace Covenant, as the Apostle Paul tersely states that there is only “one baptism” (Ephesians 4:5). Moreover, all were eternally positioned in Christ, have drunk His Spirit and are refreshed and nourished by the words of His faithfulness in sound doctrine through the application of His righteousness. Thus salvation entails the eternal planting of the Spirit, which was watered by His grace under the administration of the Gospel of Grace, wherein all (the elect) became one body under Christ, the Head. Here the Greek verb *ἐποτίσθημεν* (**eh·pot·ees·thee·mehn**) rendered “were given to drink,” establishes that all were made to drink one Spirit or to become one with another, being knit together in love, in the bond of His perfection. Note that some of the oldest Greek manuscripts read, "all were given to drink one Spirit," omitting "into." In this view, some have drawn inference of an indirect allusion, which has evolved into a direct allusion of water baptism in this verse; as it has been linked to the phrase the "Spirit, the water and the blood" (I John 5:8). From this has evolved the very popular expression “outward signs of the inward things signified. Thus, incorrect examinations of these passages have induced the parlance of baptismal regeneration by water, which must be dispelled. In this regard, rightly divided exegeses demonstrate that ritual (water) baptism, however administered, is a condition and therefore not in the Grace Covenant and should not be combined with believing as a necessary step for salvation in the Grace Dispensation.

#### **IV. Believe and Surrender to God**

It is of the utmost importance to scripturally examine and assess the un-scriptural and incorrect applications of certain ritualistic practices that have been orthodoxly adopted in the misconceived regenerating process of conferring salvation. The subtle piousness and/or prideful arrogance of diversified sectors of Christendom have established a confusing intrusion into the Eternal Doctrine of Regeneration by asserting that salvation is conditioned upon ones self-initiated belief in Christ; with the added demand that such ones must dedicate themselves to do God's will in their daily lives in order to be saved. The desirability of the salvation recipient’s dedication to God is obviously stressed in the Scriptures (I Corinthians 4:2; 7:25). But because many are inattentive to the Doctrines of Grace, they are easily led to suppose that their self-imposed dedication is imperative to their positional status in Christ rather than that which is concomitantly annexed to maturity in the growth and development aspects of the child of God’s manifested Earthly walk. This erroneous theme is herein considered in three aspects: (1) the incapacity of human depravity, (2) what is involved and (3) the ministry’s role in conveying scriptural doctrine.

## 1. The Incapacity of Human Depravity

The synergist's notion is that the reception of so-called "common grace" qualifies everyone as competent to accept Christ as Savior if such one freely wills to do so. The perception of this idea further avers that mankind is inherently proffered with this "common grace," which capacitates all to dedicate their lives to God. But contrariwise, there is much written in the Scriptures regarding the overwhelming testimony of the utter inability and spiritual death of depraved mankind (Romans 7:12-25). Hence, both the New and Grace Covenants declare the exclusive message that Christ is Savior but also that no one can "accept Him" aside from being illuminated to that end by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 2:14-16). Saving faith, as viewed by the majority, is not imparted specifically because someone believes but of the results that recipients of God's choice in election to salvation were foreordained to positions of sonship before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:4; 2:8). It follows that the misperceived dispositional requisite of surrendering ones life to God as an enacting condition of salvation is both un-scriptural and practically unreasonable. God's manifested call to His elect is never in the form of an appeal to their capacitated unction to yield unto the Lordship of Christ. In stark contrast, saving grace engendered the reception of God's divine nature through the eternal regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, in which designated ones' understanding and capacity to respond to the authority of Christ were decreed in eternity and manifested in time. Those attending upon such issues as humanly determinant ways must comprehend that all concepts of mankind's self-dedication overwhelms all limits of mankind's ability .....even for the most devout respondent.

The error of imposing ones comprehension and adherence to Christ's Lordship upon the depraved is disastrous; for no one is able, upon being called upon, to dedicate ones lives, in that none has the inherent ability to produce such if demanded. As unintentional as it may be, this type doctrinal dogma is very destructive, in that this blasting error altogether omits the idea of the eternal workings of Christ in behalf of salvation and promotes exclusively the obligation of ones self initiated surrender to God. This then cascades into the proffering of natural incentives as an allurement to incite dedication from God's people. In this sense, carnal substitutes, i.e., consecration in lieu of election, humanly motivated participation in lieu of the faithful motivation of Christ and the accomplishments and/or failures of daily living in lieu of the determinants and essence of eternal life, are the prioritized focus.

Unfortunately, this type of thinking either conscientiously or unconscientiously ignores the accomplishment of Christ's death, i.e., the propitiatory sacrifice, as the ground of regeneration and exclusive basis for the forgiveness of the sin nature. The Scriptures vehemently deny any promotion of the wretched doctrine that respects the Savior-hood of Christ only if ones daily life of dedication is affixed in tandem to Christ's eternal sacrifice. This so-called pseudo self-dedication to God is packaged in a rare bit of religion by which depraved mankind has conjured up such a delusion. Hence, those who embrace it do so at the expense of partially or completely discounting the true faithfulness in Christ's eternal workings as the exclusive impetus of their Salvation. No

more complete example could be found today of "the blind leading the blind" than what this doctrinal system represents.

## 2. What Is Involved

This most subtle, yet self-satisfying form of works usurps the merit of Jesus, as it is found to be an engaging feature in the practice of requiring of God's people, a confirmation ingredient of salvation in their "volitional" annexing of the Lordship of Christ. What could be more disrespectful to the Holiness of God than the assertion that depraved creatures are inherently capacitated by their supposed "free will," to surrender themselves in complete obedient to Him? In such un-scriptural idealism, how can darkened and depraved mindsets of their own accord possibly submit their lives to the guidance of the Supreme Being .....of whom they really know very little about? Such notions depict only human adjustments and resemble in no way the terms of God's Divine Decree, which concomitantly condemned all men and in testimony reject all supposed merit of them having met some condition of surrendering to Christ as their Savior. In fact the documentation is that perfect salvation was graced to His helpless elect on no other terms than His unsolicited, unmerited and unconditional choice to do so in eternity.

When the underlined issue of dedication to God is scripturally stated in its most demonstratively illustrated form, testimonies of martyrdom are evidenced through those who were caused to exhibit faithfulness to God, when being enjoined unto death (Revelation 2:10). Such personal sacrifice indeed is a glorious challenge to the devout believer as many have been chosen to suffer a martyr's death. In this view, would any zealous advocate of teaching that the Lordship of Christ must be applied as a condition of salvation dare to propose that in addition to believing on God, one must also be willing to die a martyr's death for Him? The very proposal of such a question serves only to demonstrate the ignorance and disregard for the revealed truth which this error exhibits. Depraved persons, because of their condition of spiritual death, are void of the ability to desire the things of God (I Corinthians 2:14) or to anticipate what their walk of life will be after they are manifestly saved. It is therefore an extremely grievous error to exert requisites upon depraved mankind to exercise their "God-given faith" for salvation in the complex spheres of self-dedication when in fact; unbridled dedication is ones greatest challenge of service to God.

## 3. The Ministry's Role in conveying Scriptural Doctrine

The ministry's role entails energetically militating against distorted messages that project the issues of character, conduct and service as requirements of ones acceptance in the presence of God. It is critical to declare plainly that the truth as presented in the Scriptures; has no implicational inference of meritorious input on the part of the grace recipient. Such reminders, as often as they are repeated, preserve God's elect from the deadly supposition that He is seeking to improve their manner of life rather than manifest the salvation of their souls by instilling in their minds the fact of who and what they are in the Body of Christ. Void of this comprehension, one can only

hopelessly perceive oneself as condemned and apart from Christ without Him as ones Savior. God's elect must be extricated the clutches of such un-scriptural teachings that exclaim situations wherein a large percentage of the members of the Body of Christ are habitually addressed as though they were saved on the basis of their consent and adherence to some perceived conditions of salvation.

Sadly, it is rare indeed for God's people to gain the correct impression of their secured relationship in Christ when they believe that they are determinately included in the appeals made regarding their daily lives. The importance of ones attention to this is not appreciated and respected by the ministry and the fault is nearly unpardonable since the results figure prominently in hindering the growth and development aspect of many souls. In the conveyance of sound doctrine, no more important obligation rests on the ministry than instilling the Sovereignty of Christ's Lordship exclusively on His Saviorhood of those who were chosen by Him in eternity. The Scriptural doctrine that is born of this theme is that grace teaching is in reference to eternal life in regeneration, which is far beyond that which is manifestly only in testimony to the glorious accomplishment of what God previously wrought in behalf of His beloved. Prioritized attention to this is not only in perception of the scriptural truth but it is also in spiritual adjustment to the traditional limitations and conditions of what has been erroneously foisted in antithesis to what is actually addressed in the Gospel of Grace.

The implication of teaching inherent humanly capacitated "self-dedication to God" is devastating among those who honestly ponder their capacity to accommodate such a requisite. Because of the weakness and inability, which they observe in themselves, they are fearful lest they will not be able to hold out under such stringent demands. Hence, it is utterly important to inform God's people exactly what the Scriptures teach concerning their newly realized relationship in Christ. First their relational position is eternal and always has been .....it existed before creation and will always exist because it was not actuated upon them manifestly "receiving Him." Thus, nothing regarding the relationship is predicated upon their "newly possessed abilities" by which they perceive themselves to live to the glory of God. The assurance of eternal salvation is far removed from the practice of introducing obligations, which exclusively promote self-performance in character and as something to which they must consent in order to be saved. Multitudes of God's people have been diverted from the basic source and cause of their acceptance in Christ as Savior and Lord to other questions regarding their alleged obligated involvement. Depraved persons are void of any capacity or spiritual light by which to face such requisites and will only be bewildered by such un-scriptural and humanly unreasonable challenges. The underlined issue is not so much whether God's people will default on what is been purportedly required of them but rather what is their knowledge base concerning the truth of their placement status in Christ?

## V. Believe and Confess Sin or Make Restitution

A further scriptural assessment of the applications of certain traditional practices must be examined in acknowledging that such have been orthodoxy adopted in their misconceived regenerating process of conferring salvation. Close scrutiny is therefore devoted to the error, which prevails among certain groups of zealous people. Incredibly, they consistently assert a precondition that one must believe, confess and/or make restitutions regarding sin; and/or in fact, implore God to save, as they insist that this is the only way one can receive salvation. Scriptures employed by the advocates of this error are misapplied both in their interpretation and placement aspects. Some of these passages are herein scrutinized in the pursuance of their correct conveyance:

The general accepted and orthodox translation of I John 1:9 read: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Here it should be obvious that the Apostle John is addressing those auspicated under the New Covenant through the Kingdom Gospel. In this verse, the subordinating conjunction *ἐάν* (**eh-ahn**) implies the rendering "even as" or "even when" in conveying God's process of interfacing with His elect. In this light, John is not inferring a condition for the conferment of salvation but this declaration was a directive to those who were already saved but were in error as he presents the grounds on which such may be restored to tranquil fellowship with God. Any notion that restitution must be made before one can be saved is based on the unscriptural theory that salvation is predicated upon ones conduct and that such one must divest oneself of that which is evil before such one can be saved. In other words, this type teaching avers that God is not unconditionally propitious respecting sin but He is only propitious toward those who have though their own restitution redeemed themselves to His presence and fellowship. Whenever this illusionary impression is foisted, the truth is ignored that no one can improve ones fallen condition by bringing ones meritorious reconciliation to God. All semblances of merit must be wholly excluded to the end that grace may abound and may be magnified eternally. The ministry must be ever vigilant to discourage the tendency of some to pursue salvation along human courses of reformation in lieu of God's Devine Decree of eternal regeneration.

All who are serious regarding the peace and security of their salvation estate are best guided by the body of truth which declares how God through Christ eternally saved His elect from their sins. This truth conveys that He extricated all His elect from the very nature that sins and He manifestly causes growth and development in maturity, in testimony to their temporary Earthly estate under sin. There are various ways by which natural men propose to obtain salvation and yet retain their supposed "dignity and worthiness." One of these is their contention that sin must be confessed and restitution must be made as a conditional requirement of salvation. Romans 4:5 conveys that "it is God who is justifying the ungodly." Romans 5:6-10 conveyances are that while the elect were enemies, sinners and without strength, "Christ died for them" and all their unworthiness is completely furnished and accounted for by Christ in His death. There is an obligation belonging only to the ministry to set things correct in scriptural terms and there should be no neglect of that responsibility. It therefore remains true that those who

are saved were saved in eternity exclusively on the condition of them having been chosen by God in eternity.

## **VI. Believe and Implore God to Save**

Here it is important to assess the scriptural applications of various traditional practices that have been misconceived and adopted in the orthodox regenerating process of conferring salvation. None of the errors are reasonable yet none strike a deadly blow at the foundation of the Eternal Divine Grace of God more than the claim that one must "seek the Lord" or one must plead with God to be merciful and save the petitioner. These two misconceptions, though nearly identical, are herein considered separately:

### 1. "Seek the Lord"

This phrase is entrenched in the Mosaic Covenant with prophetic inferences to the New Covenant. It is quoted from Isaiah 55:6 and represents Jehovah's invitation to His covenant people Israel, who have wandered from their place of rightful blessings under His covenants .....to return to Him. Hence, it was directed to them to "seek the Lord while He may be found" and to "call upon him while he is near." Yet, this is mitigated even by the limited knowledge of God's eternal workings in the New Covenant, which conveyance in Luke 19:10 states that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." This inference is that even in the Kingdom age, there are none who seek the Lord, which accords with the testimony of the New Covenant relative to the incapacity of Israel, who are lost and "cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). In the light of these revelations, there is no scriptural basis for humanly capacitating a doctrine, which avers that someone can "seek the Lord;" which is essential to correctly understanding that the only means to obtaining salvation, regardless of the dispensation, is by God's Grace. In this intelligence, these type directives in the New Covenant (Hebrews 11:6), i.e., "seek the Lord," are conveyed in testimonial intent only; in order to demonstrate that Israel's (or anyone's) ability to respond to this requirement, will be manifestly complied with by Jesus Christ on their behalf.

Revelations in The Grace Covenant, which is the Gospel of Grace, disclose that Israel's mind was blinded by God according to His purpose for inclusion of the Gentiles in the Body of Christ. Hence their temporarily arranged estrangement by God is only in force until the "fullness of the Gentiles" has been accomplished (Romans 11:11-25). In the light of these revelations, there is no Scriptural ground for asserting the condition that one must "seek the Lord;" Hence the truth is that no one should ever be placed in the position of being required to discover God or prevail upon Him to be gracious. Contrariwise, illuminated conveyances of the Grace Covenant in the present age declare to Jew and Gentile alike that "there is none that seeks after God" (Romans 3:11). This declaration is that in this age of Grace, there are none who seek the Lord, which accords with the testimony of the New Covenant relative to the incapacity of those who are lost; to turn to God. One can only manifestly exercise faith toward God, as such one is enabled to do so by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:2). The non-elect minds were assigned by God's eternal Decree to be blinded by Satan (II Corinthians 4:3-4).

Hence, they can't manifest faith toward God because they were not enabled to do so in God's Decree by the Holy Spirit in eternity. It is ludicrous to ever assert the conditional requirement to "seek God" or "prevail upon Him to be gracious," in light of His eternal accomplishment of salvation (Ephesians 1:3-14).

## 2. Believe and Pray

The question, which arises in assessing this pathetic assertion, is one of whether God was eternally propitious to His elect. If His Eternal Sacrifice was sufficient, then there remains no occasion for one to plead for salvation .....to wait (tarry) until God is on "the giving hand" or to implore Him to save. His propitiation was and is to an infinite degree and the only problem confronting His elect is one of understanding that revelation. The truth of the transforming effect of Christ's Eternal Redemption penetrates every phase of the Doctrines of Salvation. His flood tide of blessing ...all that is impelled by His infinite love .....sufficiently accommodates .....not ones imploring, prevailing appeal that might move Him to be gracious but rather it was the Sovereign Purpose of God that was initiated, implemented and culminated on behalf of His chosen beloved in and by His Eternal Decree. Attention must be focused on the fact that salvation began and was actualized in the heart of God in eternity and is precisely what His infinite love decreed, demanded and preordained. Salvation's entire scope and extent reflect that immeasurable love, in that it embraces all that infinity can manifestly produce.

In the manifestation of time, the sinner's plight is serious indeed and the benefits one receives from God's saving grace cannot be underestimated but all this together is secondary compared with the satisfaction that God's great love accomplished in Eternity. Manifestly speaking, there are only two obstacles that could hinder satisfaction of God's Divine Love, i.e., the sin nature and resulting depraved will of the creature that He loves. As the Creator of all things, even these obstacles were all rectified in His Divine Decree, which ordained and ontologize all things that exist. Accordingly He has, as the only One who could have done it, met by Christ's sacrifice, all the obstacles, which sin imposed and it is He too that causes the glad "surrender" of the human will. The effect of the death of Jesus rendered God righteously free to act for those whom He loves and that freedom for love to act was and is propitiation. Therefore, it is His infinite love that calls and establishes the elect sinner to eternal glories and it is His infinite love that manifestly causes such one to response to His summons.

With this marvelous revelation in view, there is no place left for the idea that the sinner must "seek the Lord" or that the sinner must plead with God to be merciful and kind. No burden rests on the sinner to persuade God to be gracious but the challenge of the gospel is for the believer to comprehend the extent of God's Grace. Since these great truths are completely revealed only in the Word of God conveyed in the Grace Covenant, these Scriptures comprise the overwhelming lion's share in the undertaking of directing mankind to salvation in the present church age. It is common however for some, who with great passion of soul, attempt to mix or even substitute the Kingdom Gospel, which fails in ascertaining the total apprehension of Divine Propitiation that



confirms the elect's salvation as secured, but not by entreating God, otherwise, the value of Christ's mediation in eternity on behalf of the sinner is nullified.

## VII. Believe and Recite the Sinner's Prayer

The example of the prayer of the publican is usually cited as the best of reasons for urging one to plead with God for His mercy and salvation via the so-called "Sinner's Prayer." What, it is asked, could be more appropriate than that the sinner should pray as the publican did, i.e., "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13)? From the misapplication of this passage in depicting the Kingdom Gospel, the purported appeal on the part of the publican is assumed to be the norm for all sinners, yet such assumption contradicts the very truth of the Gospel of Divine Grace. Here this incident must be examined carefully, as it is essential to note that the publican—a Jew of the Mosaic Covenant order, who was praying in the temple according to the requirements of the Law, did not in fact use the word "merciful," which properly renders the idea of kindness, bigheartedness, leniency and generosity. This misperception is chiefly perpetrated by the majority of the English translations, e.g., the King James Version, in rendering the Greek word *ἰλάσκομαι* (**eel-ahs-kom-eh**) "merciful." But according to the original Greek manuscript text, the publican said, *Ὁ θεός, ἰλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ* (**O Theh-os eel-ahs-thee-tee mee to ahm-ahr-to-lo**), which is literally word for word translated, "God, propitiated to me the sinner." Hence, the base Greek word *ἰλάσκομαι* (**eel-ahs-kom-eh**), which means "to make propitiation," is actually what appears in the text.

Here it should be noted that there is a great inferential difference between the word "merciful," with all its implications and "propitiation." The word merciful conveys the impression that the publican pleaded with God to be magnanimous. In stark contrast, the use of the word propitiation, when grammatically accepted as being in the imperative mood (Command), the aorist tense (completed action) and passive voice ..... if comprehended .....conveys that the publican acknowledged to God that the command was to cover his sins in such a way as to dispose of them; yet, the requirement to do this necessitated that God's holiness could not be compromised in complicity with his sins. According to the stipulations of the Law, if the publican did as Jews were accustomed to doing in his day when they went into the temple to pray, he left a sacrifice at the altar. Thus, it is most probable that he was referencing that sacrifice, as he prayed. Hence what the publican prayed was strictly proper to pray under those circumstances.

However, in viewing the advantageous terms of the Grace Covenant, his prayer would be most unfitting in light of its information and directives. With reference to the word merciful, it was not actually in the publican's prayer nor would it be proper in the Grace Covenant, in that it would constitute a work of penitent in pursuance of forgiveness for obtaining salvation. In fact, it would not be proper in neither the Grace nor New Covenant, as such is irrelevant in deferent to the manifestation of Jesus' death on the cross. God cannot be merciful to sin in the sense that He treats it lightly, whether it is in one age or another. In reference to the implication of propitiation, justification in every

dispensation exclusively demands solely Christ's death for the penalty of sin to eradicated by His sacrifice, which sinners can't in any sense provide or participate in .....neither actively nor passively. It was suitable for the publican under the Law, in having provided his own, to ask that this type/substitutionary sacrifice be accepted and himself absolved. Yet in revelation of the eternal accomplishments of the Grace Covenant, Christ died and secured propitiation in eternity (Revelation 13:8). It is thus established perfectly forever that nothing could be more outrageous in light of that priceless truth upon which the Gospel of Reconciliation is based than to implore God to be propitious. Though the "Sinner's prayer is enjoined through ignorance, the wrong is immeasurable for when this prayer is made for God to be propitious, there is the indirect assumption expressed that God is not propitious and to that extent, the petitioner is asking God to do something more effective than what He has already accomplished in the eternal sacrifice of Christ for sin.

A thorough scriptural consideration of the Grace Covenant discloses the immeasurable wrong that is committed when God is asked to be propitious, as such testimony runs counter to the infinite cost of Christ's propitiatory death in eternity. This essentially states that God is propitious only when He is petitioned to be. The fact that God is eternally propitious constitutes the very heart of the Gospel of Grace. Anyone who does not recognize this and sees no impropriety in injecting the application of the publican's prayer in this dispensation .....has yet to comprehend what is the first principle in the plan of salvation through Christ. The elect are not saved by petitioning God to be graceful, merciful or propitious. They were saved when He extended His love, mercy and grace in providing a propitiating Savior in eternity! The sinner is saved not because of such ones prevailing on God to withhold the blow of judgment that is justly due for sin but because the foundation and certification of God's eternal election was and is Christ's propitiatory sacrifice.

Unfortunately, it is thought by too many of God's people that the teachings of Eternal Salvation are but a mere doctrinal distinction and that after all, God is love but the sinner will be treated in consideration of His love only if such one entreats Him to do so. Here explicated focus should be given to the fact that it was for the very purpose of manifesting a testimony of the salvation of sinners that Christ became incarnate, died on the cross and rose from the dead. To imply that salvation is conferred apart from this revelation and that it is merely a doctrinal speculation; is to reject the eternal plan of salvation and assume that one has to stand in the sphere of time before God, who is a consuming fire, without shelter, shield or surety and implore Him to enact His propitiatory sacrifice in ones behalf mainly because of ones plea.

Note the appendix, "Erroneously Perceived Formula for Salvation"

## Conclusion (Part One)

The consummating of Part One of the Scriptural Doctrine of Regeneration conclusively evinces the flaw in all human terminological doctrines that condition salvation in the vein of human contribution, participation and determination. Very briefly, these erroneous stipulations are reiterated:

a. God's initial election in eternity renders every feature of mankind's salvation as completed, which deems as irrelevant all perceptions of successive steps. All depictions of the sacrifice of the Savior, enlightenment by the Spirit, immediate saving work of God in manifold achievements, redeeming work of God, delivering work of the Spirit, empowering work of the Spirit and final perfecting and presentation in glorified form in the Body of Christ; are exclusively, revelations through Earthly manifestations of God's eternal workings. Only God could have effectuated these eternal accomplishments, hence, the only relation which man has to them is that of having been God's designated elect and a recipient of such marvelous grace! One's capacity to function is for testimony sake solely and is exclusively that which is attributable to the gift of human faithfulness from God. Such dependence is not only reasonable but it is what God has manifested in humans for creation's testimony of His elect's eternal salvation. This human testimony acknowledges that, according to revelation, God conferred the righteousness of Christ to His beloved on the exclusive basis of the eternal death of Jesus for them. In this light, the elect's status and placement in Christ is solely the production of God's Sovereignty through the Blood of Christ.

b. The primary divine purpose in the saving of a soul is the satisfaction of God's infinite divine love for that soul in exercising the attribute of His Sovereign Grace. If the slightest human effort or gesture (active or passive) of merit is allowed to intrude into this great divine undertaking, God's purpose in manifesting His divine grace would be negated. It therefore follows that of necessity, God's elect were saved in eternity, before there was ever any possibility of the contribution of any form of human worthiness.

c. In divers' passages of the preceding pages, the Grace Covenant definitively declares directly and without complication that the elect were saved upon the sole principle of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. In this connection, it has been demonstrated that it is not a matter of believing and repenting, of believing and confessing Christ, of believing and being baptized, of believing and surrender to God, of believing and confessing sin, or of believing and pleading with God for salvation but it was the sovereign choice of God alone in eternity that precipitated the placement of His elect in the Body of Christ. Such workings were apart from human efforts in the sphere of time (Romans 4:5). One's committal to Christ is strictly a matter of testimony (II Timothy 1:12) and is without a doubt, a definite turning or repentance (change of mind or function) but even this is an act of God's will, which should be viewed separate from every other confidence (I Thessalonians 1:9).

The theme "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved," has been inappropriately gleaned from the Kingdom Gospel Scriptures but it should not abide as

being relevant Doctrine in the Grace Gospel Scriptures. In this sense, it should not be depicted as that which initiates the enactment of the elect's Regeneration (again birth) and thus must be assessed as doctrinally out of sync in the Grace Covenant. To attend to this is neither a deception nor a withholding of the truth from those to whom it applies (the commonwealth of Israel). It only requires a simple adjustment in applying it to the limitations and actual conditions of those unto whom the Kingdom gospel is addressed. There are many among God's people who, because of their weaknesses and inabilities, which they correctly observe in themselves; are fearful lest they will not be able to "hold out" under such unattainable criteria for human performance. It is crucial that they comprehend the fact that their Regeneration was initiated and consummated in their actual placement and union in Christ, which was previously enacted when such was actualized by God's decree in Eternity. Manifestly speaking, after they receive Him (the revelation of their salvation), they can because of their eternal inheritance testify to the glory of God. Such unconditionally proffered assurance is far removed from the practice of invoking obligations because they are absolutely detrimental to humanly depraved characteristics. This runs counter to the premise that one must consent to the doctrines of human abilities in order for such one to be saved. Multitudes have been diverted from the question of their acceptance of Christ as their Savior to other questions regarding the assessments of their obvious inabilities to "obtain salvation." The depraved human nature has no motive or spiritual light by which to face such requisites and can only be bewildered by these issues. The underlined issue revolves around the refutation of the erroneous doctrines that espouse ones manifestly perceived "unsaved state" as actually being rectified by human contributions, participations and determinations in the sphere of time. In stark contrast, **The Scriptural Doctrine of Regeneration** is the only adduce plausible for those having the understanding that they have already received the Savior with every aspect of His salvation in the sphere of Eternity!

## End of Part One

## **APPENDIX**

# **Erroneously Perceived Formula** **for Receiving Salvation** **(Sample)**

## **WELCOME!**

**You can have your whole life changed forever! The answer is below...**

**Romans 3:23 is:**

**All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory.**

**Romans 6:23 is:**

**Sins pay off with death. But God's gift is eternal life given by Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Romans 5:8 is:**

**But God showed how much he loved us by having Christ die for us, even though we were sinful.**

**Romans 10:9-10 is:**

**So you will be saved, if you honestly say, "Jesus is Lord," and if you believe with all your heart that God raised him from death. God will accept you and save you, if you truly believe this and tell it to others.**

## **How You Can Know God**

### **What's missing In Our Life?**

**Purpose, meaning, a reason for living—these are all things we desire and search for in life. But despite our search, we still feel empty and unfulfilled. We each have an empty place in our heart, a spiritual void, a “God-shaped vacuum.” Possessions won’t fill it, nor will success, relationships, or even religion. Only through a vibrant relationship with God can this void be filled, but before such a relationship can be established, we need to face a serious problem.**

### **The Problem: Sin**

**The Bible identifies this problem as sin. Sin is not just the bad things we do but an inherent part of who we are. We are not sinners because we sin; we sin because we are sinners. King David once wrote, “I was born a sinner—yes, from the moment my mother conceived me” (Psalm 51:5). Because we are born sinners, sinning comes to us naturally. Scripture tells us, “The human heart is most deceitful and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?” (Jeremiah 17:9). Every problem we experience in society today can be traced back to our refusal to live God’s way.**

### **The Solution: Jesus Christ**

**God understood our problem and knew we could not beat it alone. So he lovingly sent his own Son, Jesus Christ, to bridge the chasm of sin that separates us from God. Jesus laid aside his divine privileges and walked the earth as a man, experiencing all the troubles and emotions we do. Then he was arrested on false charges and killed on a Roman cross. But this was no accident. He did it to suffer the punishment deserved by us all. And then three days later, Jesus rose from the**

**dead, conquering sin and death forever!**

### **The Response: Accepting God's Offer**

**To know Jesus Christ personally and have our sins forgiven, we must believe that we are sinners separated from God and that our only hope is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came and died for our sins. But we must not stop with this realization. We also need to take steps toward confessing and turning from our sins. And we must welcome Jesus Christ into our life as Lord and Savior. He will move in and help us to change from the inside out.**

**If you are ready to repent of your sins and believe in Jesus Christ so that you can receive his forgiveness, take a moment to pray like this:**

**God, I'm sorry for my sins. Right now, I turn from my sins and ask you to forgive me. Thank you for sending Jesus Christ to die on the cross for my sins. Jesus, I NOW ask you to come into my life and be my Lord, Savior, and Friend. Thank you for forgiving me and giving me eternal life. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.**

**If you prayed this prayer and meant it, you can be sure that God has forgiven you and received you into his family.**

**If you just sincerely prayed that prayer... Welcome to the family of God! You have just made the most important decision you can EVER make! The angels in heaven are rejoicing over the decision you have made: To Follow Christ. PRAISE GOD! Now that you have made this decision, you need to follow it up by action. Read God's Word, the Bible, and pray to Him daily. Praying to God is talking to Him. As you read your Bible you will come to a better understanding of how awesome God really is, and you will know what He expects from you. Also let me know that this page has helped you to come and know Christ, and I can become your accountability partner (a friend who makes sure you keep your commitment true).**

**You are now a "Child of God!"**

## NOTES