

DEEPER TEACHINGS
(MEAT OF THE WORD)

#71

Salvation vs. Eternal Salvation

By Buddy Cobb



A Faithful Apostolic Teacher of the Word

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In 1Tim. 2:15, the apostle Paul advises Timothy to...Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.**

In 1Tim. 3:15, Paul reminds Timothy...And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee **wise unto salvation** through **faith** which is in **Christ Jesus.**

Then in 1Tim. 4:3, 4 Paul warns Timothy...For the time will come when they will not endure **sound doctrine**; but after their **own lusts** shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be **turned unto fables.**

When Paul wrote Timothy about showing himself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be **ashamed**, he also stated what was essential to that end: **the rightly dividing of the word of truth!** (Note: This would have to be the Old Testament scripture of which Paul was referring, as the New Testament was not yet in existence.) In his letter to Timothy it is evident that Paul was concerned about two things: first, that Timothy be **sound in doctrine** (what he taught), and second, that he be **upright in his walk!** We see these two concerns also expressed in 1Tim. 4:16, where Paul tells Timothy...Take heed unto **thyself**, and unto the **doctrine**; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt **both save thyself, and them that hear thee.**

That Timothy was born again and had also received the Holy Spirit is clear by what Paul says in 1Timothy. 1:5-7. When I call to remembrance the **unfeigned faith** that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and **I am persuaded that in thee also.** Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up **the gift of God**, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us **the spirit** of fear; but **of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.**

It is also evident by what Paul wrote in II 1:9, 10, that he believed both he and Timothy were saved.

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, **not according to our works**, but according to his own purpose **and grace**, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who **hath abolished death**, and hath brought **life and immortality** to light through the gospel:

If Paul believed that he and Timothy were already saved, why then does he tell Timothy to "take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shall both **save thyself** and **those that hear thee**?" Why would Timothy still need to be saved, seeing he was already saved? Why would it require that he both be sound in doctrine and upright in his walk? Had not Paul just acknowledged that God had saved them and called them with an holy calling, not according **to their own works**, but according to **His own purpose and grace**?

Why would Paul tell Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on **eternal life**" (1Tim 6:12), if, indeed, he already had **eternal life**, by virtue of being born again? The fact that we do have **eternal life** by our believing on the name of the Son of God is clear in 1Jo. 5:13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that **ye may know that ye have eternal life**, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

It is the purpose of this teaching to answer the above questions **by rightly dividing the word of truth**.

In 1Co. 15-.21, the apostle Paul explains, For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. When Adam hearkened to the voice of his wife (Ge. 2:17) and ate of the tree of which God had commanded him not to eat, he sinned and died!

When he died, because we were all in the loins of Adam, **we all died in him!**

Wherefore, as by one man **sin** entered into the world, and **death by sin**; and so **death** passed upon all men, for that all have sinned...(Ro.5:12)

Because of Adam's transgression (sin), we are born into this world **dead in trespasses and sins**. The only way out of this state is for God in His mercy and love to deliver us.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)(Ep. 2:4, 5)

It is obvious that the death spoken of in the above scriptures is not physical death but spiritual death. The life that Adam lost was the life that God had breathed into him, when He formed him from the dust of the ground;

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils **the breath of life**; and man became **a living soul**. (Ge. 2:7)

In Job 32:8 we read, "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration (breath) of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

When Adam lost this **breath of life**, he was no longer a living soul! The light (life) in his candle (spirit) went out!

Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.(Job 18:5,6)

Obviously the kind of light referred to here is spiritual, not natural. In order for one to walk in the way of God, they must have the light (understanding) of His way in them. Man without the Spirit of God in him is altogether void of this light.

O LORD, I know that **the way of man is not in himself**: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. (Je. 10:23)

There are only two ways that man can walk--his own way and **God's way**. God has made clear in the scriptures that His way is not our way.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Is. 55:8, 9)

In Ps.145 -17 we read: “The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works “

To depart then from His ways is to walk in the ways of the wicked, whose works are evil!

When Adam and Eve through an **evil heart** of unbelief departed from the living God, they left the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness (Prov. 2:13). It was now no longer possible for them to worship God **in spirit and in truth**, for they had changed **the truth of God into a lie!**

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. **Who changed the truth of God into a lie**, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.(Ro. 1:21, 25)

Adam, having been formed from the dust of the ground, was by nature, earthy (Gen. 2:7; 1 Co. 15:47)! As such he was corruptible (i.e. he could be tempted with evil). Therefore, he was subject to **sin and spiritual death!** The reason God had made man so imperfect in himself is revealed to us in

11 Co. 1:9. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, **that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:**

The purpose of God in breathing the breath of life into Adam was to enable Adam to live in the Spirit and to be taught of God.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, **but the spirit which is of God;** that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, **but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.** But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, **because they are spiritually discerned.**(I Cor. 2:11-14)

As long as Adam kept his trust in the living God, walked in the Spirit, and did only what God commanded him, he was clothed in **the righteousness of God.** The imperfection in himself--**the shame of his nakedness**--was not seen. Since all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in God (Col. 2-3), the lack of knowing how to direct his own steps was not a problem; all he had to do was ask God.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. (James 1:5)

As long as Adam was content to abide under the shadow of the Almighty God, he would be delivered from evil and preserved blameless. God, by His Spirit, would lead him on to perfection. Though Adam was subject to death (losing life in the spirit), God would save him from death until he was **changed** and **death was swallowed up in victory!**

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory.**(I Cor. 15:51-54)

Until the final victory over death, Adam needed to be saved from death. Though Adam was alive, until he was changed from being corruptible to incorruptible, from being mortal to immortal he was subject to death. There was only one that could save him from death—**God!** God had made it

clear to Adam that the day in which he disobeyed His voice (commandment), **he would surely die!**

And the LORD God **commanded** the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt **surely die.**(Ge. 2:16,17)

God was teaching from the beginning that **obedience to His voice** was essential to keeping God-given Spirit life **unto life eternal!**

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. (Jo. 12:25)

Instead of holding to what God had told him and keeping his trust in the living God, Adam hearkened to the voice of his wife and transgressed God's commandment! (Ge. 3:17). It is shown in 11Cor. 11:3, that Eve was beguiled by the serpent in her disobedience.

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Adam, however, was not deceived in his transgression as shown in 1Ti. 2:14. "And Adam **was not deceived**, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." God was showing by their example that, deceived or not, when we fail to believe (hearken to His word), and take our own way in a matter (trust in ourselves) we go astray! That is, we leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness! (Pv. 2:13) It also reveals that there is no fear of God before our eyes.

The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.(Ps. 36:1)

Eve was not deceived concerning what God had said would happen if they ate of the tree. She told the serpent what God had said.

And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree

which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, **lest ye die.** (Ge. 3:2, 3)

Where Eve was deceived was in believing **the doctrine** of the serpent.

And the serpent said unto the woman, **Ye shall not surely die** For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.(Ge. 3:4,5)

The purpose of the serpent was to take away, if he could, the **fear of God.** If he could get the woman (a figure of the church) to believe that she would **not really die,** then she would not be afraid to transgress! The reason God allowed the serpent to be in the garden is understood by what Jesus said to Simon Peter regarding him.

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

This was the trial of their faith! Job 26:12 tells us that God's hand formed the crooked serpent. The serpent is also called the devil and Satan, is shown in Re. 12:9.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

We can there understand that God formed the crooked serpent to test His people. The purpose of the test is to reveal what is in **the heart,** whether or not we will keep His commandments! The reason that this is a **heart** matter is because it is **the test of love!**

In Jo. 14:31 Jesus said: "That the world may know that **I love the Father;** and as the Father gave me **commandment, even so I do."**

In 1Jo. 6 the apostle John says, And **this is love,** that we walk after **His commandments.** This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

Again in Deu. 8:1, 2 Moses, speaking to the of Israel, said...All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

We can see how the keeping of God's commandments is essential to the keeping of God given **Spirit life unto life everlasting!** Jesus in Jo. 12:50 said: "And I know that His commandment is life everlasting.." Thus, in Ecc.12:13,14 we read:

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

It is clear by Eve's example what happens when one doubts the truth of God's word and believe the lie (doctrine) of the devil: "You shall not surely die!" When Eve bought that line, she changed **the truth of God into a lie** and was not afraid to transgress what she knew God had said.

And the serpent said unto the woman, **Ye shall not surely die:** For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. (Ge. 3:4-6)

We see in this how the devil comes as an angel of light (11Co. 11:14) and how God uses him to test what is in **the heart**. We can also see how, as the disputer of this world (1Co. 1:20), God uses Satan to give us a choice of believing the **truth**(what God says) or believing a **lie** (**what the** disputer of this world says). In James 1:12-15 we read,

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

This is the graphic lesson that God purposed to teach us from the beginning. **Blessed is the man that endures temptation!** For only after he is tried shall he receive the **crown of life** (i.e. eternal life), which God has **reserved** for those who love him. When Adam and Eve **failed the test of love**, here is what happened,

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. (Ro. 1:21-25)

Adam and Eve have **now entered the way of the wicked!** They chose to go for **gain** instead of **godliness**, to serve **the creature** rather than **the Creator!** As we noted before in the book of Job, we read...

Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.(Job 18:5,6)

In other words, Adam and Eve lost their access to the truth. They no longer had spiritual understanding but were now carnally minded, **sold under sin!** They could no longer

walk in the light as children of light but had now become darkness! They were no longer clothed **in the righteousness of God** but were now **naked**!

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. (Ge.3: 7)

When Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together to use as a covering for their nakedness, it was to foreshadow the church, under Moses, electing to cover herself by the works of the law. For God in time under the leadership of Moses would bring His people out of Egypt unto Himself at Mount Sinai. There He would offer to restore them back into a **hearing** relationship with Himself. They, however, for **the fear of losing their life**, would draw back from hearing God's voice and elect instead to hear Moses's voice!

And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, **lest we die**. (Ex. 20:19)

God went along with their request and used Moses as a mediator between Himself and the people to establish them under the covenant of the law. This was essential to God's plan and purpose. Before God would provide a way for man to be redeemed from under the law of sin and death, He first needed to use the law of God as a school master to teach some great lessons. Let us look now at those lessons.

There are four kinds of trees spoken of in the garden of Eden. They are there as a figure of the four kinds of lives that are possible for us to experience. The fact that God uses trees in scriptures as a figure of men's lives is shown in Deu. 20:19

When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy **the trees** thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (**for the tree of the field is man's life**) to employ them in the siege:

In Genesis 2:9 we read...And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every **tree** that is **pleasant to the sight**,

and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the **tree of knowledge of good and evil**.

The **first kind of tree** mentioned, the one which is **pleasant to the sight and good for food**, represents **life in the Spirit**. This life is what Adam had in the beginning and is describe in greater detail in Ps. 1:1-3.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And **he shall be like a tree** planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The **second tree** mentioned, **the tree of life**, represents incorruptible, immortal, resurrection life! This tree is spoken of in greater detail in Re. 22: 1,2.

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Once God has brought His true people forth out from among the dead by resurrection into incorruptible, immortal life (perfection), He will then use them as the mountain of the Lord's house for **the healing of the nations**.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall

not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (Is. 2:2-4)

The **third tree** mentioned in the garden is **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**. This is the only tree which God commanded that Adam and Eve were not to eat of because it represented **life after the flesh**. In the book of Galatians the apostle Paul explains about the flesh.

This I say then, **Walk in the Spirit**, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of **the flesh**. For **the flesh** lusteth against **the Spirit**, and **the Spirit** against **the flesh**: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.(Ga. 5:16,17)

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to **his flesh** shall of **the flesh reap corruption**; but he that soweth to **the Spirit** shall of **the Spirit reap life everlasting**. (Ga. 6:7, 8)

It is because of this law of sowing and reaping and the fact that man is a partaker of flesh and blood, that man has **the sentence of death** in himself. It is clear that to avoid spiritual death (i.e. losing the ability to live godly), man must not live after **the flesh**! It was true in the garden, and it is true today!

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. (Ro. 8:12,13)

The definition of **spiritual death and life** is revealed to us in Ro. 8:6 where we read, “For to be **carnally minded is death**; but to be **spiritually minded is life and peace**.”. The reason that Adam and Eve took the way of the flesh was that they perceived they would **gain** by doing so. In the pursuit of personal gain they lost **godliness**. God would use their error to teach the great truth that **godliness with contentment is great gain**.

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the

doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. (I Ti.6:3-6)

Once Adam and Eve were drawn away of their own lust and enticed, when lust conceived it brought forth **sin and death** (James 1:14, 15)! Adam and Eve were now no longer in the liberty of the law of the spirit of life (Ro. 8:1,2). They were now **in the bondage of corruption** under the law of sin and death.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, **who is the figure of him that was to come.** (Ro. 5:12-14)

As we have noted, the **fourth** kind of tree in the garden was **the fig tree**. We know that this tree was there by the fact that Adam and Eve used its leaves to make themselves a covering for their nakedness. In so doing, as we have also noted, they were foreshadowing **the next error** that God's people would make, that is, to establish their own righteousness (i.e. perfect themselves) by **the works of the law**. While the law would give them an outer covering (leaves), it would leave them without the fruit, i.e. **life of the Spirit!** We are given more details on the fig tree in Mark 11:12-14

And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing **a fig tree** afar off having **leaves**, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found **nothing but leaves**; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafterforever.**And his disciples heard**

Thus, in the four kinds of trees in the garden, we have pictured for us the four kinds of men's lives that man can experience.

First, **life in the Spirit**, is where in the liberty of the Spirit we walk in obedience to God's voice, **the Living word!** Where, under the covering of **the righteousness of God**, we can have the shame of our nakedness (imperfection) covered and be **preserved blameless** until our **change comes, i.e. resurrection!** Where though we are alive, **we are subject to death**, until death is swallowed up in victory!

Second, **resurrection life**, is where we are changed, where corruptible puts on incorruption and mortal puts on immortality, and death is swallowed up in victory! Therefore, it is **eternal, everlasting life, where we shall ever be with the Lord!**

Third, **life after the flesh**, is where we walk in disobedience to **the voice of God**, after the **lust of our flesh, the lust of our eyes, and the pride of life** (I Jo. 2:16). Where in the pursuit of gain we lose godliness (life in the spirit) and are now naked, robbed of our covering (God's righteousness). **Cursed children** (II Pe. 2:14) who have forsaken the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness, and are now in the bondage of corruption, under **the law of sin and death!**

Fourth, **life in the law**, is where we walk after **the letter of God's written word**. Where we attempt to cover the shame of our nakedness (be justified) by **the works of the law and are going about** to establish our own righteousness. Where we have the form of godliness but deny **the power (Spirit life) thereof** (1Tim. 3:5)!

The order in which the trees are introduced in Genesis is significant, for God began by breathing **the breath of life** into Adam, that is, **freely** imparting to Adam **life in the Spirit**. This was, as we have seen, to enable Adam to be **taught of God**, for God had not put in man the way he should go (Jer. 10:23)

Therefore, it was critical that Adam only did what God taught him to do if he was to **live and not die!** If Adam had honored God as God and had refused to hearken to another voice, he would have been kept by the wisdom and **power of God** (i.e. the Spirit of God), **through faith** (i.e. obedience to God's voice), unto **perfection** (i.e. resurrection)! Therefore, the second tree introduced was the **tree of life!** If Adam had been steadfast with God, then **sin and death** would never have had an opportunity to enter. Instead, as we know, he chose to hearken to the voice of the woman (**his flesh**) and to partake of the third tree mentioned, **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil!**

Once Adam and Eve, through **unbelief**, transgressed God's commandment and ate of **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**, the eyes of them both were opened and they knew they were naked. To cover their nakedness, as we have seen, they sewed **fig leaves** together and made themselves aprons, thus foreshadowing that the people under Moses would elect to come under the covering of **the law**. Therefore, the fourth and final kind of tree spoken of in the garden is the **fig tree**.

As we have noted, Jesus **cursed** the fig tree that had leaves but no fruit, as it was a figure of the church under the law. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. (Ga. 3:10)

Once Adam and Eve fell from their steadfastness with God, since all were in Adam, all fell with him! The man that God had created **in the image and glory of God** (1Co. 11:7) had now chanced **the glory of the incorruptible** God into an image made like to **corruptible man** (Ro. 1:23)! Though Adam had begun **in the Spirit and wisdom of God**, he had now become **foolish** to believe he could **be made Perfect** by the flesh (Ga. 3:3)! God would use this error to teach...It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the

words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. (Jo. 6.-63.)

Fortunately, the fall (death) of Adam did not bring to an end God's purpose to bring man **up into perfection**, i.e. **resurrection life!** In fact, Adam's fall was essential to the way God had before ordained, that in the process of time He would work it out. For in the economy of God's plan He purposed to reveal **the man of sin** before He would reveal **the man of righteousness**, i.e. **the perfect man, Christ!**

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (II Thes. 2:1-4)

Since **the man of sin** operates in **the temple of God**, we need to let the scriptures identify for us **the temple of God**.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.(1Co.3:16,17)

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.(1 Cor. 6:19-20)

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father

unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (11Cor. 6:16-18)

We understand then by the above scriptures that it was in keeping with God's purpose that **the man of sin** be revealed first. Therefore, God would use the falling away of the first man (the first Adam), who was of the earth, earthy, for this purpose.

However, in the fullness of time God would send into the world **the second man, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, the man of righteousness**, whom he would use as **the Saviour!** He would redeem us and recover **all who would receive Him** out of **the flesh and alienation from the life of God (death)**, into which the first Adam's disobedience got us. So that, once recovered from **so great a death**, we might be led by the Spirit of God into all truth, **walk as children of light, and go on to perfection!**

However, now that man through disobedience was out of the Spirit and in the flesh, walking in his own ways, God would let him discover where such ways lead.

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are **the ways of death**. (Pv. 14:12)

Now that Adam and Eve were out from under the covering of God's Spirit, God Himself moved to provide them with another covering

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. (Ge.3:21)

This was to foreshadow the animal sacrifice that God would establish under the first covenant of the law, i.e. the Levitical priesthood. The law itself, in turn, would be a shadow of a **perfect sacrifice** that would come! For man could not be **made perfect** by the sacrifice offered under the law.

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (He. 10:1)

The next thing that God did was to make sure that man would no longer have access to **the tree of life!**

And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (Ge. 3:22-24)

Now that man was out of the way of God he could no longer live in the paradise of God or eat of the tree of life, i.e. have access to eternal life! Man was now under the curse of God and no longer under His blessing.

Thus saith the LORD; **Cursed** be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh **flesh his arm**, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. (Jer. 17:5)

The flaming sword guarding the way of **the tree of life** pictures for us the judgment that fallen man would have to come through before he could again have access to **the tree of life!** God would never allow man access to **eternal life** (the life of God) until he came to judgment, was back in a sound mind, and properly covered (clothed) in **the righteousness of God!**

As we have noticed in the fullness of time, God would send the second man, the last Adam, His **only begotten Son, Jesus**, into the world as **the better sacrifice** to redeem fallen man. First, however, He would take four thousand years to show man that his own ways, i.e. the ways of the flesh, profits nothing.

There are two forms of the flesh in which corruptible man can be found. The first form God shows is the way of **the uncircumcised, the lawless, the Gentile**. The second is **the way of the circumcised, those under the law, the Jew**. To show the first God sent man out of the garden to plow the ground from whence he was taken (Ge. 3:23). This was to

show just what corruptible man is like when he rebels against the words of God, contemns the counsel of the most High, and walks instead in the counsel of the ungodly (hearkens to another voice). Now that man was no longer under the covering of God's righteousness, God would let the shame of his nakedness be manifest.

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.(Ge 6:5)

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (Ge.6:5, 11-13)

So God brought His judgment upon the world of the ungodly by bringing in the flood! Only Noah and his family were saved, thus making is an example unto all who, after that time, **live ungodly!** What enabled Noah to escape the wrath of God and to be saved is shown in this scripture.

By faith Noah, being warned of God of **things not seen** as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became **heir of the righteousness which is by faith.** (He. 11:7)

What enabled Noah to so move **by faith** is revealed in Genesis 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. By Noah's example God was showing that to escape **the wrath of God** in the time of judgment, one must be found in the righteousness of God, which is by grace through faith!

God, in the days of Noah, was setting forth some very important lessons.

First, He purposed to show His indignation and wrath (His severity) upon all that would live ungodly, and second, He wanted to show His grace and kindness (goodness) upon those that would fear Him and keep His commandments, i.e. **live godly** (Ro. 11:22)!

Thus, the first world (age) ended as it says in 11Pe. 2:5. God, spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

God had let it be seen that corruptible man in his natural state is nothing more than **a beast!**

I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see **that they themselves are beasts**. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that **a man hath no preeminence above a beast:** for all is vanity. All go unto one place; **all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.** (Ecc3:18-20)

God was also showing that though **we are His people** that apart from Him, we are wise to do evil, but to do good we have no knowledge. **For my people** is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: **they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.** I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end. (Jer. 4:22-27)

Because the Lord God had spoken to the serpent in the garden and said

Thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: **And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head,** and thou shalt bruise his heel.(Gen. 3:14,15)

To fulfill His word to the serpent, the Lord God had to preserve a godly seed (Noah). He could not make a full end! God would in the process of time, bring forth from the line of this godly seed another woman, **Israel**. Out of this woman God would bring into the world the promised seed, Christ, that would bruise the head of the serpent! For the serpent had now gained by one man's disobedience the power of death over all men! If God was to ever take man on to perfection, He would now have to first recover him from under **the power of death!**

Since man in the pursuit of his own perfection had chosen to walk after the flesh **in the uncircumcision thereof**, God had let it be seen just where that would lead. Instead of taking him on **to perfection**, it expose the shame of his nakedness and took him back to the dust from whence he came!

After this, through the godly seed line of Noah, God in the process of time brought forth Abraham and established a covenant with him.

And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. (Ge. 17:9,10)

God was ready to show the other form of the flesh that corruptible man could walk in--the way of circumcision! In preparation for this instruction, God brought Abraham and his natural posterity into the covenant of circumcision in the flesh. This would put a difference between the Jew, as they would later become known, and the Gentile,. When they had grown to be about seventy-five in number, God led them down into Egypt. There they multiplied in number, and after four hundred years, God led them out under the hand of Moses. Moses brought them to Mt. Sinai to meet with God! There God made them this offer.

Now therefore, if ye will **obey my voice indeed**, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine (Ex. 19:5)

Thus, God offered them the opportunity to come back under the authority of His Spirit so that He might take them on to perfection. They, however, for the fear of losing their own life, replied...

And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but **let not God speak with us, lest** we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and **that his fear** may be before your faces, **that ye sin not**. (Ex. 20:19, 20)

God would show by their example that as long as one fears losing their life, (i.e. love themselves and their own life) more than they fear God, (i.e. love God and His life), they cannot lay hold of eternal life!

He that **loveth his life** shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it **unto life eternal**. (Jo. 12:25)

Their refusal to accept God's offer, however, did not take God by surprise. He, of course, knew beforehand that they would not accept His offer. Therefore, He sent a deliverer, **Moses**, not **the redeemer Jesus**, to bring them to Himself at Mt. Sinai.

All of this was essential to God's plan to teach the next lesson concerning the flesh, the way of the circumcised! Since they refused God's offer of a personal hearing relationship, God used Moses as **a mediator** between Himself and the people to establish them under the first covenant of the law. God purposed to accomplish several things by the law, **righteousness**, however, was not one of them.

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till **the seed** should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of **a mediator**. Now **a mediator** is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: **for if there had been a law given which could have**

given life, verily **righteousness** should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore **the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.**(Ga. 3:19-24)

In the garden man sought his own wisdom; in the wilderness man sought his own righteousness. Both were man's attempts to be as God (i.e. made perfect) by the works of his own hands! In the garden the man hearkened to the voice of the woman (Eve). In the wilderness the woman hearkened to the voice of the man (Moses). The first took man in the way of uncircumcision (the Gentile) and the second in the way of circumcision (the Jew). God was using their error to teach the truth that...

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but **the keeping of the commandments of God.** (1 Cor 7:19)

God was showing that it was not in man to know the way he should go! That there were ways that seemed right unto him, they were the ways of darkness not light, and that the ends thereof were death, not life!

Having taken four thousand years to teach man that the flesh profits nothing, God was ready to send into the world **the Redeemer, His only begotten Son, Jesus!**

For God so loved the world, that **he gave his only begotten Son**, that **whosoever believeth in him** should not perish, but have **everlasting life.** (Jo. 3:16)

After so long a time, God was ready to open **The Way** for man to be saved Out of **death** and the error of his own ways! Since the first Adam had sold us all under sin and death by one act of disobedience, the first step of recovery required **redemption!** This Jesus accomplished for us by the shedding of **His own blood**, as **He laid down His life in obedience to Father God!**

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, **but by his own blood** he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained **eternal redemption for us.** (He.9:12)

Under the law, as we have noted, God instituted animal sacrifice to foreshadow the truth that with the shedding of blood there could be forgiveness of sins. However, the problem was that those sacrifices could not make one perfect, because they still left the worshiper separated from God. This was because it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing **perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.**(He. 7:18,19)

Once Jesus paid the wages of sin for us, God had a ransom!

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and **one mediator** between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all,** to be testified in due time.(1 Tim.2:3-6)

Once God had what He required for the taking away of sins, our ransom, He could then restore us out from under **the guilt and penalty of sin!** Having the conscience cleansed by the blood (He.9:14) and released from death, i.e. **quicken**ed by the Spirit, we can now be reconciled to God; and once reconciled, we can then **be saved by HIS LIFE!**

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now **justified by his blood,** we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were **reconciled to God by the death of his Son,** much

more, **being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.** (Ro. 5:6-9)

After Jesus paid the price for our redemption, for it to be beneficial at all, man would have to repent! That is, he would have to turn from a walk after **the flesh**, seeking his own wisdom and his own righteousness, to a walk after **the Spirit!** For only in **the way of the Spirit of God** could man be led by the wisdom of God, be clothed in **the righteousness of God**, and **live in the Spirit (Life) of God!** It would be of no benefit to man or God for God to forgive man his trespasses and sins, cleanse him from all unrighteousness, and deliver his soul from the power of darkness and death, if he was not going to **walk after the Spirit in the light (Life) of the living!** Therefore, repentance is God's first requirement on the part of man. Thus, John the Baptist was sent by God as a special messenger to prepare the way before Jesus.

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach **the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.** (Mk. 1:2-4)

When Jesus was ready to begin His ministry at the age of thirty, even He came to John to be baptized into **the baptism of repentance.**

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. (Mt. 3:13-15)

John did not understand why Jesus came to be baptized by him, for John knew that Jesus was the Son of God! The first man (Adam) had come from the dust of the earth. Though Jesus was in the world in fashion as a man, He nonetheless was **the Lord from heaven and had come from His father,**

God! However, Jesus had now descended (Ep. 4:9,10), that is, He had left the glory that He had with the Father before the world was, where He was in the form of God (Jo. 17:5) and had become a partaker of flesh and blood. Thus, he was now in the world, like Adam before Him, in fashion as a man (Ph. 2:8) and in the likeness of sinful flesh (Ro. 8:3)!

And **the Word was made flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of **the only begotten of the Father**,) full of grace and truth. (Jo.1: 14)

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of **flesh and blood**, he also himself likewise **took part of the same**; that through death he might destroy him that had **the power of death, that is, the devil**; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; **but he took on him the seed of Abraham**. Wherefore **in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren**, that he might be a **merciful and faithful high priest** in things pertaining to God, **to make reconciliation** for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath **suffered being tempted**, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

In order for Jesus to be a merciful and faithful high priest, He needed to be compassed with the same infirmity that we are.

For every **high priest** taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that **he himself also is compassed with infirmity**. (He. 5:1,2)

In order for Jesus to be compassed with infirmity, it was necessary that He be a partaker of flesh and blood. That is, it was necessary for him to empty Himself of the glory that He had with the Father before the world was and to be in the world in the same weakness that we are, in the same flesh nature with all of its lust and affections so that He might be tempted the same as all men.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (He. 4:15)

It was in preparation for His being tempted that Jesus came to John to be baptized. Since Jesus was now in **the flesh**, if He, as the second man and the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), was going to avoid the error of the first man, the first Adam, He would have to stay out of the **way of the flesh!** Now that He was in the flesh, it was just as true for Him as it was for Adam before Him, that is, if **He ever walked after the flesh He would die in sin!** Therefore, to be our Redeemer and to put before us an example of **the way, the truth, and the life**, Jesus had to stay out of sin and death! By keeping Himself in restraint and doing only those things that the **Spirit of God** taught Him to do, would He succeed!

In submitting Himself to the baptism of repentance, Jesus was doing two things: first, He repented of ever walking after the flesh **in the lust thereof**; and second, He set before us an example that we should follow in His steps! For He had been sent not only to redeem us, but also to show us how, while **in the weakness of the flesh**, to fulfill **all righteousness and go on to perfection, i.e. immortality!** And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (Mt. 3:16,17)

Receiving **the Spirit of God** was the next step necessary in **Jesus' fulfilling all righteousness**. For only as He walked in the Spirit would He not fulfill the lust of His flesh (Ga. 5 -16)! Only by being led of the Spirit of God can one be clothed in the **right garment (the righteousness of God)** and be kept from **sin and death!** Now that Jesus was here as the second man and as the last Adam, He would have to succeed where the first Adam failed. Having submitted Himself to the baptism of repentance and having, received the Holy Spirit, Jesus was

ready for testing; that is, He was ready to be tried by the devil to see if He could be enticed and drawn away by His own lust!

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. (Mt.4:1)

In order for Jesus to redeem us out of death, He would have to offer himself to God, His father, without spot (He. 9:14). This would require Jesus to take upon Himself the form of a servant (humble Himself) and become obedient unto death—even the death of the cross!

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of **flesh and blood**, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that **through death** He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil;(He. 2:14)

And being found in fashion as a man,he humbled Himself by becoming **obedient unto death**, even **theeven to death on a cross**.(Ph. 2:8)

And having spoiled principalities and power, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. (Col. 2:15)

By enduring the temptations that the devil put before him to entice Him and draw Him out from the **covering of the spirit of God**, Jesus avoided the error of the first Adam. Therefore, when He came out of the wilderness, having spoiled the devil's attempt to draw Him out through the lust of His flesh into **sin and death**, He came in the power of the Holy Spirit. (Lu. 4:14)!

When He began His ministry, having gathered some followers, He began to address what we have seen to be the issues right from the beginning.

He said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that

thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. (lu. 12:22-31)

God had shown that if man is to keep life **in the Spirit**, once God imparts that life to him, then he must be content with the true bread! That is, he must hear God's voice and not another's. He must be taught by the Spirit of God only, not by the devil, not by the woman, or by man! This is what it means to walk by faith!

This, of course, would require one to put all their trust in God instead of themselves! This is what it means to **seek ye the Kingdom of God!**

They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. (Jo. 6:30-35)

The purpose of God from the beginning was to prove what was in the heart of man, whether he would keep His commandments or no, and to teach man that he does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the

mouth of the Lord! Further, until he was changed (resurrected), in order for the shame of his nakedness not to be revealed, he must be clothed in the righteousness of God, which is by the obedience of faith!

Now that Father God has sent Jesus, His only begotten Son, into the world to redeem man from sin and death, it was important that man understand, not only how to receive life, but also how to keep it, i.e. inherit eternal life! God had used the example of the first man Adam to show how, through unbelief, life was lost! He then used the example of the Jew (Abraham's natural posterity) to show that once the life was lost that it could not be regained by the scripture (i.e. the letter of the Word)! Therefore, Jesus in speaking to the Jews said. . .

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have **neither heard his voice** at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, **him ye believe not. Search the scriptures;** for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And **ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.**(Jo. 5:37-40)

Jesus was making it plain that He Himself was the Way, the Truth, and the life! Life was not something that could be given apart from Himself. It was not a matter of **receiving life from Him.** Rather, if they were to have life, they would have to give themselves to Him, that is, to come under His authority! For He was there as the Shepherd and as the door of the sheepfold.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: **I am come that they might have life,** and that they might have it more abundantly. I am **the good shepherd:** the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth,

because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. **I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.** As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and **I lay down my life for the sheep.** And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and **they shall hear my voice;** and there shall be **one fold, and one shepherd.** (Jo. 10:9-16)

When the time came for Jesus to lay down His life for the sheep He gathered them and said. . .

But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Until Jesus laid down His life as a ransom for the sheep, there could be no reconciliation back to God. As long as Jesus was in the world as the Good Shepherd, though the Spirit of God was in Him, the Spirit of God was not in the sheep! Jesus knew that until He had fulfilled all that was written of Christ, was crucified, and on the third day was raised again and ascended back to the Father, **the Holy Spirit, the Comforter**, could not be sent. Until **the Spirit of God** could be sent, all were in the flesh! As long as man is in the flesh and not in the Spirit, he is dead in trespasses and sin and cannot walk by faith! By the example of Noah, God had shown from the beginning, that salvation was **by faith! For whatsoever is not of faith is sin** (Ro.14:23), **and the wages of sin is death!** (Ro. 8:23) Thus, the scriptures teach us. . .

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (He. 11:6)

After Jesus had been offered up for the sins of the world and was risen from the dead, He appeared unto His disciples.

To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.(Acts 1:3-5)

It was necessary that the disciples wait for the Holy Ghost (the Comforter and Counselor) to be sent before they made any efforts to be His witnesses. For though they had been baptized by John into the baptism of repentance, they still lacked the power of the Holy Spirit. This alone would restore their soul from death and enable to walk in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. (Ps. 23:3) Therefore Jesus told them...

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

Once Jesus finished the work of redemption that the Father had sent Him to do in the world, the way was now open for man to be saved out of the death into which the first Adam had gotten all of mankind. Once saved out of death, man would need to be saved from death (as long as he was still **flesh and blood**) until the final victory over death could be realized. As we have seen, the final victory over death is not realized until resurrection!

Now this I say, brethren, that **flesh and blood** cannot **inherit the kingdom of God**; neither doth corruption **inherit incorruption**. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this

mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory.** (1 Cor. 15:50-54)

But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and **the resurrection from the dead**, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: **Neither can they die any more:** for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being **the children of the resurrection.** (Lu. 20:35,36)

In order for us to be saved from death, we have to be saved from what causes death, until death is swallowed up in victory! In Ro. 8:12, 13 we read what causes death and what is essential to keeping life unto life everlasting.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

For if ye **live after the flesh, ye shall die:** but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, **ye shall live.**

As God had shown from the beginning, **life**, once received, could only be kept by obedience to His voice! To live and not die, one must **live after the Spirit, not after the flesh!** However, it is not possible to live after the Spirit until and unless God breathes the breath of life into us. Thus, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, one hundred and twenty disciples were gathered in one accord and in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. **And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

True to His word, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to quicken the disciples, to enable them to live after the Spirit, and to go on to perfection! Peter, when explaining to the crowd of Jews who were gathered and amazed at what was happening, said Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that **same Jesus**, whom ye have crucified, **both Lord and Christ.** Now when they heard this, they were

pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.** For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.(Acts 2:36-40)

At last God, through Jesus, had made a provision for mankind to be brought back into the Spirit and life of God. The way was now open for man who had been sold under sin to come out from under the yoke of sin and the prison house of death and **to walk in liberty and newness of life!** For the yoke of sin could now be broken by the power of the Holy Spirit! All that God required was for man to acknowledge the error of his own way **by repenting** (turning from it) and being baptized for the remission of his sins!

The gospel (good news) could now be preached to all men. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; **that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.** (II Co. 5:19-21)

The way was now open, and the provision was now available for man to have his soul delivered out of death and to have his steps ordered by God!

Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby **the dayspring from on high** hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, **to guide our feet into the way of peace.**(Lu. 1:78,79)

For thou hast **delivered my soul from death**: wilt not thou **deliver my feet from falling**, that **I may walk before God in the light of the living?**(Ps. 56:13)

As God forgives us of our sins, quicken us out of death (restores our soul), and **then leads us by His Spirit**, we can walk before Him in **the light (life) of the living**. Only as we walk in the light as He is in the light can we have unbroken fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Only as we stay in unbroken fellowship can we know the cleansing power of the blood!

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 Jo. 1:5-7).

Jesus taught when He was here that no man could come unto Him unless the Father, who had sent Him, draw him. It takes a mighty drawing by God for one to overcome the lust of their own flesh and to deliver themselves into the hand of Jesus! Because the lust of one's flesh is also a mighty strong power itself, it will, unless denied, draw one back into his own ways, which are the ways of death! However, for those who are so drawn by God to Jesus (i.e. love the Lord) and who continue in unbroken fellowship with Him, Jesus has promised that He would raise them at the last day (i.e. at the resurrection Jo.11:24).

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me **draw him**: and **I will raise him up at the last day**. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. (Jo. 6:44, 45)

Anytime we come to the Lord to be saved, it is because the Spirit of God is drawing us. We do not first choose Him, but He chooses us, and for a specific reason.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, **that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain:** that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. (Jo.15:16)

The fruit spoken of in the above scripture is the by-product of an unbroken fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. As we have seen, it is only as one **lives after the Spirit** that he can have unbroken fellowship with God and bring forth fruit unto holiness.

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness **unto holiness**. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. **What fruit** had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. **But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.** For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God is eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Ro. 6:19-23)

The above scripture makes it clear that eternal life is the reward of bearing fruit unto holiness, and it comes not at the beginning but at the end of fruit bearing.

As we have seen, God uses trees to represent the kind of lives that we can live. If we live after **the flesh**, we bring forth fruit unto death! If we live after **the letter of God's word** and not **after the Spirit**, we end with withered leaves and no fruit! If we live after **the Spirit**, we will bring forth fruit unto holiness and we will receive (inherit) at the end eternal life! Therefore, Jesus taught. . .

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by

their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (Mt. 7:16-21)

If then we are going to lay hold of (inherit) eternal life, we must do so by the only way that God has made such possible. It will not be by just calling Him Lord but by doing His will! If we are going to bear good fruit, we must abide in Him, for apart from Him we can do nothing.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. **Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: **He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit:** for without me ye can do nothing. (Jo. 15:1-5)

Once we have repented and have been baptized for the forgiveness of sins, we are clean. All our sins and transgressions are forgiven. Now we are ready to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for only as we are empowered and led by the Spirit can we walk in newness of life! Only as we do what the Spirit teaches us can we keep His commandments and abide in Him! Only as we abide in Him can we bear good fruit, be properly clothed in His righteousness, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming!

But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and **is truth**, and is no lie, and even as it **hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.** And now, little children, **abide in him;** that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and **not be ashamed before him at his coming.** (1 Jo. 2:27, 28)

As we through obedience to the Spirit abide in Him, we are able to be partakers of His life, which is eternal, for Jesus

has already inherited eternal Life by resurrection! Therefore, it is now His life.

Thus, He could speak to John in Re. 1:18 and say, I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, **I am alive for evermore**, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

This is why we are now saved by His life! It is living in the way of His life that keeps us dead to sin, alive unto God, and walking in the way of His righteousness! This abiding in Him enables us to now have a foretaste of eternal life before it becomes our life by inheritance. It is important for us to understand that God has not given eternal life to us yet, that is, the life is not **in us**, but only in **His Son!**

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us **eternal life**, and **this life is in his Son**. He that **hath the Son hath life**; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 Jo. 5:10-13)

What God does at the time we are initially saved is bring us out of Adam **where we are dead in sin** and then raise us up in Christ **where we are made alive** (I Co 15:22). Thus, we are delivered from so great a death! Once we are saved out of death, we then need to be kept by the power of God from going back into death, until death, our last enemy, is finally overcome by resurrection! To be so kept, we must keep our trust in God.

But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; (11Cor. 1:9,10)

In the above scripture, we can see the three fold steps that are involved in getting the victory over death! That is, in

laying hold of eternal life! The final act of deliverance from death is by resurrection. This is when mortality is swallowed up of life (11Co. 5:4), and we have been changed! This is when we will be born of God and will **inherit eternal Life!** Only then will eternal life be our life. Only then will we be no longer subject to death but eternally saved! Not only alive but alive forever more!

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. (Jo.15:6)

Jesus taught clearly that in order to not become a castaway one must abide in Him. Of course, it is not possible for one to take up abiding in Him as long as they are dead in trespass and sins! So, as we have seen, the first thing that has to happen is for God to save us out of death. This initial step of being saved out of death is all an act of grace on the part of Father God.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) (Ep. 2:4,5)

This quickening delivers our soul out of death and is accomplished by God's sending His Spirit into our heart. This in turn causes a spiritual awakening to take place (Ga. 4:6, Ro. 8:16) and is referred to as **being born again.** This also raises us up out of the flesh into which man fell and brings us back into the Spirit!

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.(1 Pe. 1:23-25)

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the

body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. (Ro. 8:9-13)

We can see by the above scripture that though a born again experience quickens us out of death, it does not remove the possibility of death! Just as Adam before us was subject to death after God had breathed into him the breath of life, and just as Jesus also was subject to death, though He was filled with the **fullness of the Spirit**, so are we, until death is swallowed up in victory by resurrection! The reason this is so is because we are still corruptible; only our state has changed, not our nature. We can still walk after the flesh and sin, and sin is the sting of death(1Co. 15:56)! Thus the scriptures teach us that the last enemy to be destroyed is death (1Co. 15:26). This is also why the scriptures teach us that there is a second death. For, if after we have been saved out of death in which we are in Adam, we are again found in death; we are now twice dead! This time, however, it will not be because of Adam's sin, but our own!

Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

This is the second death out of which there is no recovery! Therefore, no one will ever find themselves in this death because of someone else's sin, but only because of their own!

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Thus, we can see that God has, from the beginning, been endeavoring to teach us of our need not only to begin in the Spirit but also to keep ourselves under the covering of His Spirit until mortality has been swallowed up of life! For it is only as we do what the Spirit teaches us that we will not do what the flesh teaches us. It is only as we stay out of the way of the flesh that we can live, continue with the Lord in unbroken fellowship, go on to perfection (i.e. resurrection), and inherit eternal life! God, in His long suffering for over almost 6,000 years, has now wonderfully shown us that the flesh profits nothing! It is the Spirit that gives life!

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but **he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.** (Ga. 6:7,8)

Anyone who experiences the first step of deliverance out of death (initial salvation) does so because they have found grace in the sight of God. It is not because of any works of righteousness which they have done. The Jews thought that they had eternal life coming to them because they lived according to the right word. They had drawn back at Mt. Sinai from hearing God's voice for fear of losing their lives. Therefore, they remained ignorant of God's righteousness and gave themselves to establishing their own righteousness

by the works of the law. In other words, they trusted in themselves that they were able to be righteous by their own works. As we have noted, God allowed them to embrace this example of error (unbelief), that He might show the way of circumcision in the flesh profits nothing. Since God had already shown by the example of the Gentiles that uncircumcision did not profit, it could now be seen that salvation was impossible apart from God. Though man was responsible for his condition, **he had no ability to recover himself out of it!**

If there was to be a recovery and a going on to perfection for man, God would have to be the One to find the means to do it! God, of course, had already worked out the means by which He would do it before Adam fell, since all the works were finished before the foundation of the world for the recovery of man from the fall (He. 4:3). Since, when man fell from his steadfastness with God, he came under the power of death, he was now helpless and without strength to recover himself. For in his dead state he was separated from God and could not do anything to please God or to merit His favor. Therefore, if there was to be a recovery, it would have to be by **the grace and mercy of God**.

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Ti. 3:4-7)

There are several things here that we need to see and understand if we are to rightly divide the word of truth. The first is that this initial act of God's saving us is all on the basis of His mercy and grace only. It comes to us purely as a gift! It is not based on any works of righteousness which we have done. It is totally unmerited on our part. It has to be on this wise, as it is not possible for us to do any works of righteousness apart from Him This is God first loving us and

doing for us what only He can do, that is, forgiving us of all trespasses, purging our conscience from the guilt of sin, releasing us from the penalty of sin (death), and reconciling us unto Himself. All of this is freely done for us by God in order to enable us to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust and to become partakers of the Divine Nature (11Pe. 1:4), which is love.

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that, having received forgiveness of sins and having been cleansed by the blood of Jesus, we now walk in obedience to the truth through the Spirit. This is the whole purpose of God in cleansing and quickening us, in bringing us out of death and into His Life!

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Ro. 6:4)

The experience of God bringing us out of death into newness of life is our initial experience of salvation. This initial experience happens when one responds to the word of truth by believing the gospel (good news) of our salvation. When one so believes, it is his first time of putting trust in the living God. Until one so responds by repenting and being baptized for the forgiveness of his sins, he is still trusting in himself, that he can find his own way into perfection. This trusting in one's self is called humanism, which is the worshiping of the creature, rather than the Creator! This creature worship is iniquity and is what God took four thousand years to show the end of, that it is not in man to know the way he should go! How then can man direct his own steps? As long as man trust in man, the way of God is corrupted in the earth, which results in the earth being filled with violence, not peace! This condition in turn brings God's wrath and curse upon man and the whole earth, as it did in the days of Noah! Indeed, this rebellion against God and His way is the cause of the condition of the earth today. As it

was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. (Lu. 17:26)

If, like Noah, we are going to escape the wrath of God that is soon coming and the curse that is upon all flesh that has corrupted His way, then we have to get out of the ways of the flesh! The only way this escape is possible is the way Noah did it—by grace through faith! The good news is that this way is now open for **all who believe**, for all who repent of trusting in themselves and instead, put their trust in the living God and in His Son, Jesus Christ! When they do this and are baptized into water for the remission of sins, God freely forgives all their sins. This forgiveness, in turn, purges their consciences from dead works and brings them out from under the **guilt of sin**. It is the shed blood of Jesus that enables God to lawfully forgive sins, for as God had shown under the law, with the shedding of blood there could be forgiveness of sins! This is God justifying us by the blood, i.e. bringing us back to a state of innocence, just as if we had never sinned!

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now **justified by his blood**, we shall be saved from **wrath** through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, **we shall be saved by his life**. (Ro. 5:8-10)

Once we have received forgiveness and cleansing from all sin, God then breathes **the breath of life** into us, i.e. quickens us by His Spirit. This brings us out from under **the penalty of sin** and raises us up to walk in newness of life! Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should **walk in newness of life**. (Ro. 6:4)

At this time we are delivered out of the body of death and are baptized into the Body of Christ. This deliverance is accomplished by the Spirit of God.

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For **by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been **all made to drink into one Spirit.**(1 Co.12:12,13)

This removes us out of the body of sin, the old man (Adam) where we are the servants of sin, and places us in the body of Christ, **the new man**, in which we now become the servants of God (i.e. righteousness).

Knowing this, that our **old man is crucified** with him, that the **body of sin** might be destroyed, that henceforth we **should not serve sin.** (Ro. 6:6)

This releases us from the captivity to sin and death, into which we are held as long as we are in Adam, and brings us into **the liberty and life of the Spirit of Christ!** Now, as long as we walk after the Spirit (do what the Spirit teaches us), we will abide in Christ and be free from **the law of sin and death!**

There is therefore now no condemnation to them **which are in Christ Jesus**, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus** hath made me free from **the law of sin and death.** For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.(Ro. 8:1-4)

As we have noted, it was the plan of God that there would first be a falling away before **the day of Christ** would come(11Th. 2:1-3) This falling away was to allow the man of sin to be revealed before the man of righteousness. If evil was to have its day, it would have to have its day first, before God ushered in **everlasting righteousness** (See Dan. 9:24 & 11Pe. 3:13). This was to give man time to discover the unprofitableness of living after the flesh and to repent before God would bring in **everlasting judgment** (He. 6:2 & Re.

20:11-15)! **In Adam**, all would experience life after the flesh, the man of sin. **In Christ** all can experience life after the Spirit, the man of righteousness. In the first, we are alienated from the life of God and in darkness; in the second, we are living the life of God and in the light! If, when we are given an opportunity to live in the light we choose, instead, to live in darkness, it is because we love darkness, and our deeds are evil.

And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. (Jo. 3:19-21)

We have seen from the beginning how, given the choice between light and darkness, man has always chosen (loved) the way of darkness (his own way), rather than the way of light (God's way)! Man has believed, that is, he has trusted in himself, that by his own ways (wisdom) and his own works (strength) he can come to perfection, thus, perpetuating himself under the **wrath and curse of God**.

Thus saith the LORD; **Cursed be the man** that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. **Blessed is the man** that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? **I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.** (Je. 17:5-10)

As we have seen, the initial act of God's bringing us out of death in Adam and into life in Christ is all based on God's love, mercy, and grace. It is not based on any works of righteousness we have done, for apart from Him we can do none! However, when God in His love draws us to Jesus, washes us clean by His blood, in His mercy forgives us of all our sins, and then by His grace quickens us out of death, it is all for bringing us out from being servants to sin and into being servants to righteousness. After being made free from sin and being no longer defiled by sin, we can now be joined (married) to Him!

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye **should be married to another**, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. (Ro. 7:4)

Only after we have been so joined (married) to Him can He search out what is now in our hearts, whether we will obey His voice or not! Then begins the trial of our faith and the test of our love toward Him. For the only way we can stay joined to Him is to obey His voice, i.e. keep His commandments, which we will only do if we love Him more than we love ourselves! It is only by staying so joined to Him that He can lead us in the right way and bring us into the reward of the inheritance! Only He knows the way that will bring us to perfection, where we will not only be alive, but we will be alive forevermore; where death is swallowed up in victory; **where we will not only be saved, but also eternally saved!** Thus, the scriptures teach us that obedience is better than sacrifice (1Sa. 15:22). By the sacrifice of Christ (His death) we can be reconciled to God, but only by **His life** can we be saved! To be reconciled to God only requires us to receive Jesus but to be eternally saved requires us to **obey Him!** And being made perfect, He became the author of **eternal salvation unto all who obey Him** (He. 5:9). In laying down His life for the sheep, Jesus showed His love for the Father and the sheep. In laying down our life in order to live in His life we, as the sheep, show our love for Him and

one another. The reason we are put to this test of love is because all that God has prepared in the way of an inheritance, He has prepared it for those that love Him, as shown in

1Co. 2:9. But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

In Ja. 1:12 we read. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.(Mt. 24:12-14)

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Heb. 13:20, 21)