

Scriptures and Doctrine :: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is His hold of you."

"It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is His hold of you." - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/10/1 9:03

I love this quote by Spurgeon: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is His hold of you."

I'm curious though about the Scriptural basis for it. Can anyone direct me to relevant biblical verses substantiating the quote?

Would be cool to hear your thoughts and reflections on this quote too.

Re: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is his hold of you." - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/10/1 9:20

Eph. 2:8, 9 ?

Re: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is his hold of you." - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/10/1 9:33

Brother John,

Tho I like and to a certain extent agree with this excerpt from Spurgeon, there is an inevitable implication that I've never been able to find a clear scriptural basis for. One would think that, due to its gravity, if it were true as many hope it is, scriptures would be more clear regarding it.

We are all aware how much this has been studied and subsequently debated for centuries and neither position has budged.

It seems to be an experiential issue of faith... in that respect I totally get and relate to Spurgeon here as there have been many occasions where I have been less than faithful and yet Lord Jesus has remained faithful. So in this way I can share in brother Spurgeons words-

Having said this, there are numerous verses that speak of the believers responsibility regarding the faith and seem (to me) to imply that as conditional...

At the end of the day I can be and may be deceived where the scriptures themselves cannot,... so (for me) my experience, no matter how substantial, is always secondary to what the scriptures plainly teach.

Re: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is his hold of you." - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/1 10:40

I submit just this, knowing that Scripture does not contradict;

1 peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith to salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Luke 22:31 Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.â€

John 17:20 Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word;

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/10/1 11:33

Thanks everyone for the replies.

I can also recall Jude 1:24 - "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy..."

BTW in Spurgeon's original sermon, his emphasis was that we should focus not on our faith, but on the object of our faith - Jesus Christ. I think those are wise sentiments.

When I focus on my ability to cling to Jesus - that's like trying to hold onto the edge of a helicopter lest I plunge to my death, and so the peace of God eludes me. But when I consent to let Jesus grab hold of me, my mind is governed by His Spirit, who fills me with life and peace.

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/10/1 11:44

Brother John wrote; "When I focus on my ability to cling to Jesus - that's like trying to hold onto the edge of a helicopter I lest I plunge to my death, and so the peace of God eludes me. But when I consent to let Jesus grab hold of me, my mind is governed by His Spirit, who fills me with life and peace."

AMEN dear brother AMEN!

I sincerely appreciate your including "when I consent" in that this (to me) seems to be the point of contention for so many when it could/should be a point of unity in the faith:)

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/10/1 12:11

Fletcher,

More succinctly, "Let go and let God" :)

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/10/1 13:22

Yes brothers, I cannot picture Jesus Christ holding us by the scruff of the neck while we kick and scream to be somewhere else ðŸ™, Paradoxes of the Christian life. Dying to live, losing to gain, humbling ourselves to be exalted. Holding on by letting go...

As always, it IS His power that keeps us, yes, but that through faith.

All of the benefits we possess in Christ remains ours as we remain in Him and hold fast to our faith in Christ. That holding fast is not a fleshly grasping but a patient trusting rest in Him.

Blessings,

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2016/10/1 14:37

Thank you for this post and the comments that were made.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" (Philippians 1:6).

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

Even before we were saved it was God that was drawing us to Himself by the Holy Spirit.

We were saved by grace, and it is by grace that we stand.

The vine is holding the branches up, and it is our responsibility to abide in Him and bring forth fruit.

"My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me is greater than all. No one can snatch them out of My Father's hand." (John 10:27-29).

Re: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is His hold of you." - posted by narrowpath, on: 2016/10/1 17:46

I need to hold the hand of him that holds me firm. I could struggle myself free and he would let go of me, but not without entreating me back.

Remember the lost son, the father did not hold him back.

Here is where my hold is required. Negligence on my side will lead to loss.

Hold fast to the word 1 Cor 15:2, Php 2:16, Tit 1:9, 2 Timothy 1:13

Hold fast to the head Colossians 2:19

Hold fast to what is good 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Hold fast to the tradition taught 2 Thessalonians 2:15

hold fast the confidence Heb 3:6

Hold fast our confession Heb 4:14, Heb 10:23

hold fast to My name Rev 2:13

hold fast what you have Rev 2:25, Rev 3:11

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2016/10/9 2:48

almost the same; It is not me in Christ that saves me, it is Christ in me.

By The incorruptible Seed of the Word of God, Jesus Christ in you is the only birthing that counts to the Father.

Now I can say I am in Christ, because He was first birthed in me.

2 Corinthians 2:15-17 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

"speak we in Christ"

Col 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Col 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

1Th 1:3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father

"It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

I think this is pretty close to what Spurgeon was getting at.

Christ in me, making me in Christ:

Phillip

Re: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is His hold of you." - posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/10/9 15:16

Spurgeon's understanding seemed to be this : To have true peace and comfort we do not rest on our will power, decision and personal strength to be kept.

Peter did just that :

He speculated about how the future was going to play out :

He made a decision that he would not deny the Lord no matter what.

He made up his mind that He would go to prison and die before he would deny the Lord.

He was confident in his own strength to keep the course.

ADD : and he concluded that others may not have the same level of will power and strength to keep the course that he felt that he had

And he failed and If our mindset is the same as Peter's was how do we suppose that our outcome will be any different than his was ?

Spurgeon's understanding was that we are to trust on the Lord's Strength to Keep us, We are to trust and rest : On The Lord's Keeping promises and strength to preserve us till the end.
The Lord is whom we are to trust and not ourselves.

In the end the reason that Peter's faith did not completely fail was because of Christ's hold on him. Luke 22:32
But he learned a valuable lesson on trusting in himself.

Re: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is His hold of you.", on: 2016/10/9 18:27

If it depended on our ability to hold on to Him - NO ONE WOULD BE SAVED!!

NO ONE

Re: Amen, Narrowpath - posted by narrowpath (), on: 2016/10/10 11:23

I do not hope or trust in my ability to "hold fast" to Him, but do rest in His Power which keeps me - though He has given us the clear instructions to "hold fast" and I dare not neglect my duty in this.

Quote:

-----by narrowpath on 2016/10/1 14:46:32

I need to hold the hand of him that holds me firm. I could struggle myself free and he would let go of me, but not without entreating me back.

Remember the lost son, the father did not hold him back.

Here is where my hold is required. Negligence on my side will lead to loss.

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Amen, "Narrowpath", thank you for sharing these precious words from our loving Father and Living Head.

"And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight* *if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard,* which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister."
~ Colossians 1:21-23 (emphasis, by way of asterisks, mine.)

We are not saved by our ability, but through our, in faith, abiding in Him and, --> by faith

Re: Beautifully, skillfully, gracefully and graciously put, brother. - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/10 11:30

Quote:

-----by StirltUp on 2016/10/1 10:22:05

Yes brothers, I cannot picture Jesus Christ holding us by the scruff of the neck while we kick and scream to be somewhere else ðŸ™, Paradoxes of the Christian life. Dying to live, losing to gain, humbling ourselves to be exalted. Holding on by letting go...

As always, it IS His power that keeps us, yes, but that through faith.

All of the benefits we possess in Christ remains ours as we remain in Him and hold fast to our faith in Christ. That holding fast is not a fleshly grasping but a patient trusting rest in Him.

Blessings,

William

Thank you for that. What a drink of cold water. I have touched Jesus in your humility and graciousness. I am sure He is well pleased with your yielding to Him and His ability to reveal Himself through you, brother.

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/10/10 15:37

Thank you for your kind words Forrest!

It is so encouraging to receive feedback when our comments have been helpful to our brothers.

God bless.

Christ Himself was held tight by His father, on: 2016/10/11 7:56

Yes Christ had to depend totally on His father's promise to keep and hold him. How can we do better than that?

This is a section written by David Wilkerson on the new Covenant.

God gave His Son these everlasting covenant promises:

"You will have the Holy Spirit upon You without measure." Jesus testified, "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me" (Isaiah 61:1). Christ did not have just a small portion of the Spirit, coming to Him in little drops. He had the Father's Spirit in fullness, without measure: "For God does not give the Spirit by measure" (John 3:34).

"You will never be out of My sight. My presence will always be with You." According to the author of Hebrews, God gave this promise to Jesus: "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son" (Hebrews 1:5). This meant Christ would constantly be under His Father's watchful eye. He would always have the Father's help available to Him.

"I will lift You up in all times of opposition and discouragement." Isaiah wrote: "He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law" (Isaiah 42:4). God is saying, "Every time the enemy brings discouragement upon You, I will be there to counteract it. I'm going to encourage You by My Spirit every time You need it."

"I will highly exalt You and give You a name above all other names." Paul wrote, "God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Philippians 2:9-10).

"After Your work is finished, I will bring You back to glory." Jesus said, "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:26). He knew the Father had promised, "Son, after You have fulfilled all the terms of the covenant, I will bring You back to glory - in victory, power and anointing."

The Father made this covenant pledge to His Son: "I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the Gentiles" (Isaiah 42:6). God was saying, "My hand will always be holding on to Yours. You will never be away from My keeping power. I pledge to keep You safe from all the schemes of the devil."

And Christ appropriated this promise of help from His Father: "My God shall be My strength" (Isaiah 49:5), and "I will put My trust in Him" (Hebrews 2:13). He was saying in these verses, "My Father made a covenant with Me, and it's settled. It is good for eternity, because He cannot lie. He said He would be My strength - and now I appropriate all of that promise and power."

Here are all the terms of the covenant, laid out in black and white for every believer to see. The Father and Son have hidden none of them from us. They want us to be encouraged by them all. The Father is showing us His faithfulness to His Son, to prove to us He will be just as faithful to us, Christ's seed.

Re: Christ Himself was held tight by His father - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/11 11:46

I absolutely agree that it is by the grace and power of God that we are saved and kept and made to stand...but that doesn't negate the reality that it is by humility and faith that one receives the grace of God - hence: "The just shall live by faith."

It seems that some believe that it is 100% a work of God and that man and his will and willingness have absolutely no place or duty in permitting the grace of God to come in and cooperate (or "work together") with it...

It is in the knowledge that it is only by the grace of God anyone will be made to stand, and that this grace is only accessible in Christ through His blood, that one maintains the "fear and trembling" necessary to truly "work out your own salvation" and "keep yourselves in the love of God" and to be careful to ever be "building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit"...

It is the sober reality that I must maintain sincerity and humility and "work out own salvation with fear and trembling"; seeing that it is "God who works in both to will and to do for His good pleasure"; that keeps me in the place of humility and brokenness needed to "pray in the Holy Spirit."

I am not seeking to negate the scriptures that speak of the precious grace and power of God to save and keep a person "to the end" that he may be "blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But nor do I dare neglect and ignore all of the faithful warnings and instructions of God to His people either, which are all so mercifully given to us and dearly received as from a Loving and Holy Father, and which are also the setting in which the gem of the grace of God is set and held in its proper place...

We ought to ever hold the Word of Life in trembling hands and not ignore the abundance of scripture that clearly speak of the duty of the chosen vessels of God to "yield", "reckon", "submit", "fear", "tremble", "strive", "work", "be careful", "take heed", "beware", "maintain", "abide" and the like...

Remember, it was Jesus who warned His students to "fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell"...

And so long as we maintain such a sane, healthy, sober and faithful fear of God - we are surely securely upheld by the arm of the LORD:

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is His mercy toward ****those who fear Him,****

As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from ****us.****

As a father pities his children,
So the Lord pities ****those who fear Him.****

For He knows our frame;
He remembers that we are dust.

As for man, his days are like grass;
As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.

For the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
And its place remembers it no more.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting
****On those who fear Him,****
And His righteousness to childrenâ€™s children,

****To such as keep His covenant,****
****And to those who remember His commandments to do them.****

~ Psalm 103:11-18

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/10/11 15:21

if it is by faith we hold fast ,then the question is what is faith ?

is it a product of natural carnal man will ,or is it a grace in its self that is part of his divine nature born in us ,the faith of the son of god ..

Re: everlasting covenant - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/11 16:48

Jeremiah 32:36-42

And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city, of which ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in my anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again to this place, and I will cause them to dwell in safety. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. For thus saith the LORD; As I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.

Read verse 40 again, and see that it is 100% God's Grace. If it were any less than 100% His Grace it would cease to be Grace.

Verse 40

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/10/11 16:52

...is that faith perhaps what Paul wrote in Romans 10?

Believe with the heart and confess with the mouth?

...as we began so we must continue and so we will finish our race as Paul did:... I have kept the faith...

Continue in Him by believing in the heart (leaning our entire personality on Him in surrendered trust) and holding fast the good confession (profession)

God bless,

Re: Faith and grace... - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/11 17:00

Amen, living and abiding faith is of God, I do believe. It is of His grace, **which He gives to the humble.**

I don't think I said "it is by faith that we hold fast"...but it seems true enough, nonetheless...

To the question of whether faith is "the product of natural carnal man" - if Moses taught us anything, it is that it most definitely is not.

As to trying to arrive at a systematic conclusion as to how one "holds fast", I dare not try...

I know that godliness is indeed a mystery. It has indeed been revealed in general and to an extent - but much of it is the mysterious working of God deep down in the heart of man. I dare not try to formalize it.

But I do know that God commands us time and again to "hold fast" and if you (brothagary) are implying that a clear command of scripture is not something that God truly expects me to do (through faith/Christ, of course), then you have a far greater mystery on your hands than do I: why would God even tell us to do something that He doesn't truly expect us to do...or, at least, something that we have no part in whatsoever and is completely all God's duty and responsibility and doing?

God says in His word: "Hold fast", I say to the child of God, "Hold Fast". Jesus says "abide in Me", I say "Abide in Him"...

Paul said:

"...I discipline my body and make it my slave..."

And God through the apostle tells us to:

"Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us **cleanse ourselves** from all defilement of flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**"

I know it is the blood of Jesus that cleanses us from all unrighteousness - but there must be some part of it's being applied to me that is incumbent on me in this process in order for God to tell me to "cleanse" myself.

There are many, many, such verses. In fact, it's hard to understand Jesus and His words in the gospels if we remove our responsibility to cooperate with God and our duty to Him...

...but we are wading into very old and often messy and contentious debate that I am sure will not be solved here and now anyhow.

Re: - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/11 17:17

Quote:

-----by savannah on 2016/10/11 13:48:48

...it is 100% God's Grace. If it were any less than 100% His Grace it would cease to be Grace.

Amen, Savannah, no one is claiming that we are saved by merit or wages...it is surely grace. It is more the issue of whether God's grace is irresistible or not - or whether it is conditioned on anything in the person (such as humility?) and whether we are called and commanded to work out our own salvation in fear and trembling and whether holding fast is a command of scripture and something that is our duty to do.

Quote:

-----by savannah on 2016/10/11 13:48:48

Read verse 40 again...

Verse 40

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

My question for you, Savannah, is this: "Is the context in this passage the whole nation or the individual person?"

It is my understanding that Christ was given as the everlasting covenant (Isaiah 42:6 and 49:8)...and He told His disciples to abide in Him and explained the consequences of failing to do so...it had to do with being "cut off" and "thrown into the fire" and "burned"...

The Church, corporately, is called "a holy nation" and "a royal priesthood":

"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.â€™™ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.â€™"

~ Exodus 19:5-6

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."

~ 1 Peter 2:9-10

And as Peter indicated in saying "who were not a people, but are now the people of God", that the church is the nation that the kingdom of God was given to when it was taken away from Israel according to the flesh.

"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."

~ The Lord Jesus; Matthew 21:43

And why didn't it previously bear fruit? Was it God's doing or some deficiency on their part?

My Well-beloved has a vineyard
On a very fruitful hill.

He dug it up and cleared out its stones,
And planted it with the choicest vine.
He built a tower in its midst,
And also made a winepress in it;
So He expected it to bring forth good grapes,
But it brought forth wild grapes.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard.

What more could have been done to My vineyard
That I have not done in it?
Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes,
Did it bring forth wild grapes?

And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard:
I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned;
And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

I will lay it waste;
It shall not be pruned or dug,
But there shall come up briars and thorns.
I will also command the clouds
That they rain no rain on it.

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel,
And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant.
He looked for justice, but behold, oppression;
For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.

~ Isaiah 5:1b-7

Re: 100% from beginning to end - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/11 17:50

100% from beginning to end -

I emphasize 100% because of what is written below;

"It seems that some believe that it is 100% a work of God and that man and his will and willingness have absolutely no place or duty in permitting the grace of God to come in and cooperate (or "work together") with it..."

Permitting the grace of God? Cooperate?

This is called synergism, the doctrine of Romanism!

I submit to you, the testimony of George Mueller;

I had been much opposed to the doctrines of election, particular redemption, and final persevering grace; so much so that, a few days after my arrival at Teignmouth I called election a devilish doctrine. I did not believe that I had brought myself to the Lord, for that was too manifestly false; but yet I held, that I might have resisted finally.

And further, I knew nothing about the choice of God's people, and did not believe that the child of God, when once made so, was safe for ever. In my fleshly mind I had repeatedly said, "If once I could prove that I am a child of God for ever, I might go back into the world for a year or two, and then return to the Lord, and at last be saved."

But now I was brought to examine these precious truths by the word of God. Being made willing to have no glory of my own in the conversion of sinners, but to consider myself merely as an instrument; and being made willing to receive what the Scriptures said; I went to the Lord, reading the New Testament from the beginning, with a particular reference to these truths. To my great astonishment I found that the passages which speak decidedly for election and persevering grace were about four times as many as those which speak apparently against these truths; and even those few, shortly after, when I had examined and understood them, served to confirm me in the above doctrines.

As to the effect which my belief in these doctrines had on me, I am constrained to state, for God's glory, that though I am still exceedingly weak, and by no means so dead to the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, as I might and as I ought to be, yet, by the grace of God, I have walked more closely with Him since that period.

My life has not been so variable, and I may say that I have lived much more for God than before. And for this have I been strengthened by the Lord, in a great measure, through the instrumentality of these truths. For in the time of temptation, I have been repeatedly led to say: "Should I thus sin? I should only bring misery into my soul for a time, and dishonour God; for, being a son of God for ever, I should have to be brought back again, though it might be in the way of severe chastisement."

Thus, I say, the electing love of God in Christ (when I have been able to realize it) has often been the means of producing holiness, instead of leading me into sin. It is only the notional apprehension of such truths, the want of having them in the heart, whilst they are in the head, which is dangerous."

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2016/10/11 18:09

Will this statement be void? "They will hear it"

Acts 28:24-28 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes

have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

Who is speaking? The that salvation is sent to, gentiles, then they must hear and understand, seeing they see, their heart is not gross, but understanding that they might be converted and who is going to heal them? Who is the "I" in this passage?

It looks like where ever the Gospel is sent that God must prepare the way and by truth that cannot lie, It is sent to those God has prepared to hear and see and understand with the heart, unto salvation.

Man by the faith of Christ can believe with the heart and be saved. Without this rebirth, man cannot see the things of God.

So who is responsible for me to see, hear and the heart be converted? Then and only then; Colossians 1:27-29 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Who is making this mystery known? Warning every man?

Teaching every man? Who has been made our wisdom? Who is perfect in Christ? Who now can labour, striving according to His working in us and His mighty power? We must be to those to whom the Mystery is revealed in the riches of the glory of this mystery,

"which is Christ in you the hope of glory" which without there is nothing, no seeing, no hearing, no understanding, no works for the kingdom, nothing.

Everything In Christ our only Hope of Glory.

In Him who is of the Power:

Phillip

Re: Savannah - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/11 18:40

Quote:

-----by savannah on 2016/10/11 14:50:57

100% from beginning to end -

I emphasize 100% because of what is written below;

"It seems that some believe that it is 100% a work of God and that man and his will and willingness have absolutely no place or duty in permitting the grace of God to come in and cooperate (or "work together") with it..."

Permitting the grace of God? Cooperate?

This is called synergism, the doctrine of Romanism!

You didn't answer my question to you...

And honestly, I care very little what a man says if it does not accord with the word of God...

We are discussing scripture here, or so I thought.

You also didn't even touch any of the points I made or passages I shared below... :(

Well, I am not tasked with changing your mind - just to abide in Christ and to speak the truth in love and seek to build up the body of Christ (among many other things, such as building myself up on my most holy faith and keep myself in the love of God) - and that is what I am here to do.

If you are unwilling to deal with me as a brother and have a humble, two-way discussion...then there is nothing I can do from here...

Re: Christinyou - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/11 18:43

Christinyou,

Who is responsible for unfruitfulness in the below passage? And what seems to be God's intention and will in it all? That they be fruitful or unfruitful? (See also John 15:8)

My Well-beloved has a vineyard
On a very fruitful hill.

He dug it up and cleared out its stones,
And planted it with the choicest vine.
He built a tower in its midst,
And also made a winepress in it;
So He expected it to bring forth good grapes,
But it brought forth wild grapes.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard.

What more could have been done to My vineyard
That I have not done in it?
Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes,
Did it bring forth wild grapes?

And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard:
I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned;
And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

I will lay it waste;
It shall not be pruned or dug,
But there shall come up briars and thorns.
I will also command the clouds
That they rain no rain on it.

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel,
And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant.
He looked for justice, but behold, oppression;
For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.

~ Isaiah 5:1b-7

Re: Romans has your answer - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/11 19:24

My question for you, Savannah, is this: "Is the context in this passage the whole nation or the individual person?"

The context is the everlasting covenant He will make with His people.

He promised to save His people from their sins.

Not pre-conditioned upon any humility in them, or some other virtue he saw in them, and consequently adopting them into His Family.

Not every member of the nation of Israel was of the faith of Abraham. He knows them that are His. He knows them by name.

Within nations are individual persons. And so also is His body made up of many members. If we be in Him, it is His doing, as Scripture declares.

Romans here in chapter 8, as well as many other passages, is very personal.

And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who will lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, or rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

But in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2016/10/12 4:41

Quote: ""by forrests on 2016/10/11 15:43:52

Christinyou,

Who is responsible for unfruitfulness in the below passage? And what seems to be God's intention and will in it all? That they be fruitful or unfruitful? (See also John 15:8)""

Gods intention was in His blessings they would be fruitful, but they could not. That is why God: 1 Corinthians 1:29-31 That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

That no matter how much blessing God bestows on man, He cannot, will not and doesn't even want to please God, only his own pleasures.

No fruit in the vineyard is the proof that all that are saved need Jesus Christ as the only redemption that will give entrance into God's House.

In Christ: Phillip

why would God even tell us to do something that He doesn't truly expect us to do., on: 2016/10/12 5:48

Forrests - I think you should rethink your position.

Why did God give the law?
Did God really expect it to be kept?
If a person Truly kept the law would it save him?

Can the law cleanse the heart?

Can the law make anyone holy and righteous?
Can the law save anyone?

Please answer these questions.

Re: why would God even tell us to do something that He doesn't truly expect us - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/12

Quote:
-----by tuc on 2016/10/12 2:48:31

Forrests - I think you should rethink your position.

Why did God give the law?
Did God really expect it to be kept?
If a person Truly kept the law would it save him?

Can the law cleanse the heart?

Can the law make anyone holy and righteous?
Can the law save anyone?

Please answer these questions.

You are truly setting up some straw man here...

In your subject line you seem to quote me: "why would God even tell us to do something that He doesn't truly expect us to do."

And then you ask a series of questions about "the law" in the body of your comment; the problem is that I was not talking about the law when I wrote what you quoted as your subject line. I was clearly referring to the New Covenant commands of God in the New Testament. Jesus and His apostles words to us.. Surely you aren't saying Jesus and Paul and James and Peter were teaching "the law"..?

Now as for the Isaiah 5 passage on the vineyard: God says clearly that He had done all that could be done to cultivate fruitfulness in the OT nation of God - Israel, "after the flesh." Those are His words, not mine.

Quote:

"And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard.
What more could have been done to My vineyard
That I have not done in it?"

Now, was this "fruitfulness" the same type or measure that we in the New Covenant are capable of and called to? Perhaps (likely) not, but God clearly says He expected whatever it is He meant by "good grapes"...again, those are His words, not mine.

Quote:

"Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes,
Did it bring forth wild grapes?"

Now, for your questions and then some clarification of my, and I believe God's, position in this.

Q: Why did God give the law?

A: In short - 1. as a tutor, 2. to keep under guard until faith would come, and 3. that every mouth would be stopped and the world would "become guilty before God."

Q: Did God really expect it to be kept?

A: Absolutely. Through Him, and by faith - not my power or by might. It's all there in the prophets. We in the New Covenant actually "establish the law" by faith, not make it void.

Q: If a person Truly kept the law would it save him?

A: In theory, yes. If one was able to perfectly keep it (Lev. 18:5, Rom. 10:5).

But seeing that the issue was a lack of *life*, this law would have to administer life in order to provide righteousness...which is a circular situation. (Gal. 3:21)

Q: Can the law cleanse the heart?

A: Not as an end, in itself - but it is a means to that end. Life is needed, "the law" cannot supply life, so therefore it, in itself, is inadequate. But it is a means to that end - as a tutor to teach man Christ, himself, his lack, and in his desperation and crisis - point him to Christ.

So, no, the law itself cannot "cleanse the heart." But it is used of God to reveal Christ and what is expected so that the Spirit of God can produce it in the person (by faith).

Q: Can the law make anyone holy and righteous?

A: As stated before, no. Not in and of itself. But it is instrumental as a means to that End (even Christ Himself).

Q: Can the law save anyone?

A: I repeat: no. Not in itself. Though it is an essential part and did and does have a crucial ministry (or service) toward that end.

Now, to a couple clarifying thoughts, as time permits:

I do not believe God is referring to sinless glorified perfection through the law in Isaiah 5, and neither am I, but instead those "good grapes" that could be expected in their situation; a couple mentioned are "Justice" and "righteousness". If these are the sort that require faith to produce, then surely God had provided what was needed for them to understand and turn to Him in faith for the life needed. He says as much. It is their failure to do so, if that is indeed what was required (and I tend to believe that it was), that was the cause of God's judgement on the nation as a whole and His taking the kingdom of God from them and giving it to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

Now, it seems that your position is this:

God tells man to do what he has no part in doing, even if it is just to realize and agree that in his own power there is nothing in and of himself that can supply his want and to fully lean on Christ in humble faith and yield to His Spirit working in him to will and to do the will of God for His good pleasure...

So when God, in His word to us, in the New Testament, instructs us to do just that - yield to Him and not the sin - He doesn't really expect us to do it...because we have no part in doing it anyhow? Why even waste all the ink and paper writing that and re-publishing it over the centuries if man is incapable of either permitting or hindering it and God doesn't actually expect man to obey it, in spite of the fact that He instructs him to in no uncertain terms...

Am I wrong about your position? If so, would you help me understand just what it is that you believe? Thank you.

One final reiteration/clarification:

The passage in Isaiah 5 about the vineyard shows, in my opinion, the will of God and the working of God toward the end that it would produce "good grapes" - and this will and working of God not being fruitful in those that He was willing and working toward fruitfulness in.

So, the lack of fruitfulness in the vineyard, was it God's will to be so? Or was His will that there would be "good grapes"?

And doesn't God Himself challenge us to find some lack in what He had provided as the culprit of their unfruitfulness? Isn't it clear that the LORD God is in fact saying quite clearly and emphatically that there was nothing He didn't provide that was to blame for their unfruitfulness?

Quote:

-----What more could have been done to My vineyard
That I have not done in it?
Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes,
Did it bring forth wild grapes?

Please address this apparent contradiction between the clear word of God and (what I perceive as) your position. Thanks.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/10/12 12:52

Forrests - you missed out the last sentence in Galatians 3:23-25:

"But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

The relationship between faith and law is indeed an important topic. Perhaps you could start another thread for this discussion.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/10/12 12:59

Quote:
-----Spurgeon's understanding seemed to be this : To have true peace and comfort we do not rest on our will power, decision and personal strength to be kept.

Peter did just that :
He speculated about how the future was going to play out :
He made a decision that he would not deny the Lord no matter what.
He made up his mind that He would go to prison and die before he would deny the Lord.
He was confident in his own strength to keep the course.

ADD : and he concluded that others may not have the same level of will power and strength to keep the course that he felt that he had

And he failed and If our mindset it the same as Peters was how do we suppose that our outcome will be any different than his was ?

Spurgeon's understanding was that we are to trust on the Lord's Strength to Keep us, We are to trust and rest : On
The Lords Keeping promises and strength to preserve us till the end.
The Lord is whom we are to trust and not ourselves.

In the end the reason that Peter faith did not completley Fail was because of Christ hold on him. Luke 22:32
But he learned a valuable lesson on trusting in himself.

Proud papa - I think you encapsulated Spurgeon's quote very well.

Thanks too to everyone who had chipped in with Bible verses of God's keeping.

"If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself." (2 Tim 2:13)

Re: "Christinyou" - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/12 13:19

Quote:
-----by Christinyou on 2016/10/12 1:41:48

Gods intention was in His blessings they would be fruitful, but they could not. That is why God: 1 Corinthians 1:29-31 That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

I am not exactly sure what you are saying, but you seem to be implying that me saying that man must humble himself in the sight of the LORD (as James, Jesus and many others in the bible instruct and do) is tantamount to "earning salvation" or achieving justification and life and righteousness by his own power and that this gives him something of himself to boast in... This is a ridiculous argument, if you ask me.

Quote:

"Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."
- Mat 18:4 NKJV

"And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."
- Mat 23:12 NKJV

"For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."
- Luk 14:11 NKJV

"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."
- Luk 18:14 NKJV

The LORD God doesn't say in the passage in question that what He supplied to the vineyard was "blessings" per se - nor does He say it was "the law" either.

God says quite clearly in the passage in Isaiah 5 that He had supplied all that was needed for what He was looking for, and this is why He is angry and will judge them - because it is their fault and not His that they are unfruitful. That is unarguable if you ask me. It is in the plain reading of it.

Had He supplied only things that were wholly inadequate and not conducive of true fruitfulness at all - then He is employing deceit and doublespeak in the passage at hand, no?

Quote:

"And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard.

What more could have been done to My vineyard
That I have not done in it?
Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes,
Did it bring forth wild grapes?

And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard:
I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned;
And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

I will lay it waste;
It shall not be pruned or dug,
But there shall come up briars and thorns.
I will also command the clouds
That they rain no rain on it."

And may I add that the imagery that God uses is that of life and conditions conducive to it:

Quote:

My Well-beloved has a vineyard
On a very fruitful hill.

He dug it up and cleared out its stones,
And planted it with the choicest vine.

This is not imagery that calls to mind the law as applied to the human heart - that is lifeless and death and cursing (thorns and briars). This is imagery of life. Perhaps not fully and universally administered and obviously not so received - but provided in some way and measure - the vine was planted. (Think: John 15:1-8)

But first, the conditions were made favorable for its nourishment and growth (which is possibly a reference to the law - the "removing of the stones", etc. Clearing the way; removing pride and hardness by teaching the heart of man about its own unfruitful condition in and of itself).

This is clearly not merely the law being described in the "vineyard passage" in Isaiah 5 - and it seems more clear that it is not mere temporal blessing.

Re: yuehan - "If we are faithless, He remains faithful..." - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/12 13:46

Quote:

-----by yuehan on 2016/10/12 9:59:00

Thanks too to everyone who had chipped in with Bible verses of God's keeping.

"If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself." (2 Tim 2:13)

I'm sorry, but I must submit to you that the verse you seem to use to speak of God's faithfulness to man in light of and in spite of his faithlessness - is used woefully out of context and actually says just the opposite.

Here is the whole "saying":

Quote:

This is a faithful saying:

For if we died with Him,
We shall also live with Him.
If we endure,
We shall also reign with Him.
If we deny Him,
He also will deny us.
If we are faithless,
He remains faithful;
He cannot deny Himself.

Notice:

"If we deny Him,
He also will deny us.
If we are faithless,
He remains faithful;"

When you read it in it's context it becomes very clear, no?

I believe the "He remains faithful, He cannot deny Himself" is likely a reference to the fact that God kept His word to Abraham and the covenant that He swore by Himself to bless him - but He did it with a different vessel, because the first was faithless and denied Him.

Quote:

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."
~ Hebrews 6:13-14

Paul discusses this in Romans 3...and 9 and 10 as well.

Quote:

-----But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."
~ Romans 9:6-7

Scriptures and Doctrine :: "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is His hold of you."

It seems that the Jews would argue that if Paul was right, then God didn't keep His promise to bless Abraham and His seed...and He failed and His word had "no effect"...

Paul shows them that God will be true, let every man be a liar.

Quote:

For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar.
~ Romans 3:3-4

I do not doubt that this is seen other places in scripture as well.

My point is that God will keep His promise and covenant and reach His end; it's just a matter of who will be a part of it and who won't. He will use the church and not turn away from them, as a whole, but many of the verses used to make the case that a man can never disqualify himself from being a part of God's program are not written about individuals at all - but nations and groups.

God promised Abraham a vast family, and that they would both be blessed of Him in the end and would bless the whole world. "Israel after the flesh" was certain that this was them and they were irrevocably a part of the program - for God has promised and they were His means. But He ended up setting them aside due to faithlessness and unfruitfulness in order to keep His word of promise to Abraham using a different means - the church.

But let us not be haughty, but fear:

Quote:

"For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either."
~ Romans 11:21

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/10/12 14:26

I like Hudson Taylor's take on 2 Tim 2:13 in his famous "exchanged life" letter:

"As I read I saw it all! "If we believe not, He abideth faithful." I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh, how joy flowed!) that He had said, "I will never leave you." "Ah, there is rest!" I thought. "I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has He not promised to abide with me - never to leave me, never to fail me?" And, dearie, He never will!"

<http://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/biotaylor11.html>

Re: yuehan - I like Hudson Taylor's take on 2 Tim 2:13... - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/12 15:02

Quote:

by yuehan on 2016/10/12 11:26:09

I like Hudson Taylor's take on 2 Tim 2:13 in his famous "exchanged life" letter...

This is the problem...it's not a matter of which we like, but which is true. I would be inclined to "like" that interpretation more myself - but I, by the grace of God, desire to walk in truth...and I don't find the word of God to support such an interpretation.

Re: yuehan - the last sentence in Galatians 3:23-25 - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/12 15:05

Quote:
-----by yuehan on 2016/10/12 9:52:21
Forrests - you missed out the last sentence in Galatians 3:23-25:
"But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor."

I guess I don't understand your point. I didn't miss it. I don't see the contradiction. Perhaps you can point it out to me...?

Let me reiterate: I never said the law saves and gives life and righteousness. I never said that. I just want to be clear.

Re: Grace humbles - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/13 11:05

2 Chronicles 30:6-12

So the couriers went with the letters from the king and his officers throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, "children of Israel, turn again to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may return to the remnant of you who have escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. Do not be like your fathers, and like your brothers, who trespassed against the LORD, the God of their fathers, so that he gave them up to desolation, as you see. Now do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers were; but yield yourselves to the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you. For if you turn again to the LORD, your brothers and your children shall find compassion before those who led them captive, and shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him."

So the couriers passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even to Zebulun: but they ridiculed them, and mocked them. Nevertheless some from Asher and from Manasseh and from Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. Also in Judah came the hand of God to give them one heart, to do the commandment of the king and of the leaders by the word of the LORD.

* Note verse 12 *

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/10/13 11:16

I also see it the other way, Savannah.

When the people obeyed and humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem, God responded by giving them one heart...

So humility also attracts grace.

He gives grace to the humble but resists the proud.

He crowns the humble with salvation!

Re: "That Saves You" - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/13 12:30

I just thought it worth saying that I don't believe that it is the position of any who hold the belief (no pun intended) that we are instructed by God in His word to "hold fast to the Head", and it is our duty to do so in order to abide in Him and therefore be preserved and kept by God and His power - that doing so "saves you" or that in so doing we are in any way "saving ourselves."

It is JESUS who saves us. It is by His blood that we have been redeemed and justified - and it is by His life that we will be "saved."

I just find that the apparent quote that was used as the subject line/title of this thread could potentially be a bit misleading and perhaps mis-characterizing of the opinion of those who disagree...I trust that was not intentional.

I just wanted to go on the record and be very clear as to what it is that I and, I am confident, the brothers that hold a like position, are and are not saying.

Re: One Way - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/13 13:01

This is a One Way Road - No flesh permitted -

2 Chronicles 30:12

God by the power of his grace inclined their hearts to a unanimous compliance with God's will and the king's will. And this is mentioned as the reason of this wonderful change wrought in these men, who had lately been utterly averse from God's worship, and wholly given up to idolatry. John Wesley

Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart,... To make them unanimous in this service, hearty and willing to it, to a man, which was owing to the power and efficacy of divine grace. John Gill

He shows the reason why some obey and some mock God's calling, that is, because his Spirit is with the one sort and moves in their heart, and the others are left to themselves. Geneva Study Bible

Re: Savannah - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/13 13:12

Savannah,

I do agree that the new heart and will and ability to live pleasing to God and keep His law is God's doing and working in us. I don't deny the doctrine of regeneration.

Please try to hear what we are saying and try not to read into it what you think it is that we are saying.

William didn't deny that the compliance with God's law, etc., was God's gracious working in them...just that there was a humility required first...

Jesus clearly says the same thing...as do James and the other apostles...

I also wish that you would be a bit more kind and relational and personal in the way you present your position...it may even go a long way in earning you a sincere hearing with those that disagree with you.

I must say, you come across much better on the phone than here on the SI discussion board...

Edit: "No flesh permitted" - again, there is this insinuation that we are claiming that anything of the old man is meritorious or, in itself, effectual in God's purpose and glory...which (I reiterate) we are not.

We are simply standing on the plain and clear words of Jesus and the apostles and prophets (and scribes) of God. That

is all. When Jesus says: "He who humbles himself..." We believe He means it. When James says: "Humble yourselves...", we understand that there is some duty on our end to do so and we want to obey. When Paul says: "Put on...mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering..." - we understand that is an apostolic instruction for us to do something.

Again, it is the grace and life of God that provides all these traits of Christ, but we are commanded to "put them on", nonetheless.

That is, for the most part, what I am saying (and I trust William is as well).

I do not seek to side-step all duty and every command/instruction of scripture by claiming that anything that I so much as will to do and agree with God about (not that willing, in itself, is sufficient for realizing the thing willed - this would be "the flesh") is "the flesh" and forbidden and detestable to God.

What a confusing gospel and God you guys must have...honest. One who instructs you to do things that you have zero part whatsoever in their being done - and which will only be accomplished if God, from "eternity past", has "decreed" and decided that it will be done in you. And if not...well, have fun trying.

And if you are one who will see the will of God come to pass in yourself, regardless of anything about you (including humility and abiding and holding fast) - then God only gives you His commands and instructions as a type of time-waster, because understanding and agreeing are not at all any part of being and doing...so why read your bible at all...?

I'm not trying to be sarcastic, just trying to follow what it is that I perceive you are saying and follow it to its logical conclusion.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/10/13 13:26

Forrests,

Quote:
-----I just thought it worth saying that I don't believe that it is the position of any who hold the belief (no pun intended) that we are instructed by God in His word to "hold fast to the Head", and it is our duty to do so in order to abide in Him and therefore be preserved and kept by God and His power - that doing so "saves you" or that in so doing we are in any way "saving ourselves."

I'm glad for your clarification.

In an earlier post, you had expressed that, "We are not saved by our ability, but through our, in faith, abiding in Him and, --> by faith

Re: the work of God - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/13 13:30

I type very slowly so I only write what's absolutely necessary.

I can communicate verbally/audibly much better than this method allows.

Now...on the subject of this thread;

I'd emphasize that that humility in any person is the work of God and His grace. Not something one works up from himself "first" as some are implying.

Re: yuehan - notice "through" verses "by" - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/13 13:41

Quote:
-----by yuehan on 2016/10/13 10:26:04

Forrests,

Quote:
-----I just thought it worth saying that I don't believe that it is the position of any who hold the belief (no pun intended) that we are instructed by God in His word to "hold fast to the Head", and it is our duty to do so in order to abide in Him and therefore be preserved and kept by God and His power - that doing so "saves you" or that in so doing we are in any way "saving ourselves."

I'm glad for your clarification.

In an earlier post, you had expressed that, "We are not saved by our ability, but through our, in faith, abiding in Him and, --> by faith

Re: Humble Yourselves - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/13 14:18

Quote:
-----by savannah on 2016/10/13 10:30:38
I'd emphasize that that humility in any person is the work of God and His grace. Not something one works up from himself "first" as some are implying.

It isn't a "working up" at all, but a "setting low". Scripture clearly tells us to "humble yourself" many times... Is God just messing with us?

There is evidently some sort or level of humility that we can will and do (I'm sure through faith and God's grace) that is in our power to accept/do/assume...

"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart..."

~ 1 Peter 1:22

They purified their souls...? *They* purified? In what way? Through their obedience to the truth...? That's the flesh...no? Is Peter talking about legalism or 'the works of the flesh' here?

And James:

"Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."

~ James 1:21

He clearly instructs us to "lay aside" something and "receive with meekness" the "implanted word" which is "able to save your souls"...

There is a lot there, but am I to see the apostle of Jesus Christ telling me to "lay aside" as him telling me that I cannot and I have no part or place in said laying aside? Am I to interpret the apostle instructing me to "receive" as him saying that I cannot receive? Or his specifying what my heart condition is to be in receiving, "with meekness" - am I to take him telling me to "receive with meekness" to mean that I have no part or place in ensuring I do so?

This is confusing indeed.

And notice: "...which is able to save your souls."

Able to save. Either these are regenerated people he is writing to and he is saying that there is the abiding possibility of their souls not being ultimately "saved"; or he is writing to unregenerate people and saying there is in the word of God the ability to save their souls...and this is contingent and incumbent upon their doing what he just told them to do, namely, "receive with meekness the implanted word"...and that as unbelievers!

And I think Peter goes on to make mention of this in the above passage, as he goes on to say:

"...having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever..."

~ 1 Peter 1:23

Combine that with what James says and it seems to say that one is saved through the word of God, when he receives it with meekness...

No?

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/10/13 15:31

i havnt been able to log in on my ipad for some reason...

we are commanded to be rich in good deeds and when we do is it us doing them

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

paul says nay not i

and i think that all that being said he god gets the credit for every thing not part

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/10/13 15:34

Thanks Forrest for your efforts (is that allowed?) ðŸ™, in clarifying this.

I absolutely agree that our salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. There will always be some mystery to our faith, some areas which God reserves for Himself and therefore I categorically state that I am open to conviction and convincing where my beliefs are perhaps not 100 percent correct according to scripture.

I do believe as a believer there is some work involved. Of course not fleshly works for no flesh shall boast in His presence. Works of faith and dependence on the Holy Spirit. In His infinite wisdom God wants us to co-operate with Him in this new life. We work...as He works in and through us...and we "allow" Him to work through us, for lack of a better description.

Remember Paul's words? I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
Was he boasting in his flesh?

God bless,

Re: brothagary - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/10/13 15:54

Again, it seems that you think there is some place for boasting in a person humbling himself in the love of God through keeping himself low and clinging to Jesus for dear life and thus abiding in Him....

Not so. As a matter of fact, it seems that it is those who believe they have redemption and righteousness, as a thing, irrevocably in themselves, that do not "hold fast" and so instead "wander from the truth" and "turn away from the holy commandment" - as seen below:

"The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

"But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live.

"Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live?"

"But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.

"Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' Hear now, O house of Israel, is it not My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair? When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and dies in it, it is because of the iniquity which he has done that he dies. Again, when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. Because he considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

"Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' O house of Israel, is it not My ways which are fair, and your ways which are not fair?"

"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord GOD. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel?"

"For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!"

- Eze 18:20-32 NKJV

Again, there is a lot there, but God speaks of wicked men becoming righteous - so we know this is not the perfect righteousness through perfect keeping of the law that is in mind.

And He says that a righteous person (God calls him righteous, not "self righteous" or "so called righteous" - and there is no reason to interpret it in such a way in the immediate context) may "turn from his righteousness" (which is Christ and walking in Him and by His Spirit)...

Also, in a parallel passage in Ezekiel 33, verse 13, God says:

"When I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity, none of his righteous works shall be remembered; but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die."

He trusted in His own righteousness and failed to hold fast to the Head who is his righteousness...and turned away from

the holy commandment and he will surely die.

Re: Phillipians 2:13 - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/13 20:59

Those only, who have been given His Spirit, have also been given that grace to obey every command of the Lord their God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Phillipians 2:13

For it is God Himself whose power creates within you the desire to do His gracious will and also brings about the accomplishment of the desire.

For it is God who is producing in you both the desire and the ability to do what pleases him.Â

For the one bringing forth in you both the desire and the effort for the sake of his good pleasure is God.

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

Thanks be to God... and

All the glory be to God!

In this we are agreed...God commands thus and so...

and we do thus and so!

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/10/14 16:56

forest

i never said anything about someone humbling them selves.,,

my point was faith is a gift through which we hold fast .

and even good deeds and ministry is done by god through us its his work not ours ,,,,

hence Paul says YET NOT I

Can we say with Paul yet not i,,

i also believe god does command us to do things we cant do nor does he expect us to do ...

when i think of the greatest command ,love the lord your god , there wasn't one second of one day in the life of Christ where he failed this command, he fulfilled this law perfectly and god expected he would ...

yet we fail this command virtually every day ,in our hearts we know god deserves the perfect love that only son gave him

to love god with all the mind heart soul and strength every second of every day weather we wake or sleep.,,,

the porpus of the law is the knowledge of sin ,to bring conviction and humble us and to cause a broken heart contrite spirit on this one god look upon and through this true prayer and grace filled tears abound..

The other option is to lie to god and our selves and say god i keep your law perfectly , in doing so we grieve the spirit push away conviction heal our own brokenness and take on a haughty spirit The one who thinks he stands take heed lest he falls, don't be high minded,but be lowly in thoughts...

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/10/15 2:14

Amen Gary,

...we keep pressing on to a higher degree of perfect love...through Christ Who strengthens us!

Re: For every command of God there is a promise that fulfills that command, on: 2016/10/15 5:59

No man can save himself or ever please God without first coming to Christ. God sent Christ to earth because of His great love and to give everyone the opportunity for salvation from sin. God has offered salvation to everyone in the form of a promise. Now salvation is FREELY available by grace to anyone.

GOD HAS GIVEN US HIS PROMISES AND THEY ARE FULLY AVAILABLE NOW!! The promises when received will fulfill all the requirements of the law.

Now the PROMISE of Christ is designed by God to take a sinner, who is living in sin and rebellion and make him a son of God who truly loves God. This is the ONLY solution that God Himself has provided for mankind. It is NOT POSSIBLE for anyone to ever please God without taking hold of the promise of Jesus Christ. I repeat again, THIS IS THE ONLY SOLUTION!!!

Everything that God offers mankind is in the form of a promise. Salvation itself is based on God's free gift and promise to us. The gift of Christ is now fully available to anyone who will take hold of the promise by faith. Without receiving the promises of God, salvation is totally impossible.

2 Peter 1:3-4 "According as His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

The design of the promises is to make a person a partaker of God's divine nature. God forms His character in the believer by the provisions of the gospel. God has made ample provision for all holiness and spiritual growth. The promise when received fulfills all the requirements of the law. What the law requires, God freely makes available to every person as a gift. We must truly believe and then receive this gift.

God has provided man with everything that he could possibly need to live a pure and Holy life. He has made everything freely available in the form of promises. Salvation, Jesus, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are all offered to mankind by the promises. The ONLY way to experience being a partaker of God's Holy nature and escape the corruption in the world is from receiving the results of the promises. Without first receiving the results of a promise, holiness is impossible.

The main problem with the sinner is, that he is living in total rebellion to God and he does not have any love for God. God has the ONLY solution for this lack of love in the heart. God freely offers everyone the GIFT of love through Christ!! It is NOT POSSIBLE to love God before receiving God's gift of Christ and love.

For every command of God there is a promise from God that, if received, will fulfill that command. Or another way to put it is, what the law requires, God's grace freely makes available by faith. Only as a person receives the promise by faith and experiences its fulfillment in himself will he truly obey the commands of God. For example, the following command will never be obeyed without first receiving the results of the promise.

Command

Matt. 22:37 "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind."

Promise

Deut. 30:6 "And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your seed, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, that you may live."

It is clear that the love that the law demands is made freely available by God.

The language of the promise means just as much as the language of the command. It seems that few people misunderstand the command to fully love God continuously. Now, when it comes to the promise many seem to try to dilute it or make it seem weak. Does not the promise mean just as much as the command? The truth is, the only way this command will ever be fulfilled is by first receiving the results of this promise.

The law demands perfect obedience and threatens with a harsh penalty if the obedience failed. Under the law, it depends only on man's faithfulness to obey. Only IF man obeyed would he be blessed, if he failed he would be cursed. The law will never make any one obedient, in fact the law was never designed to make any person's heart holy. The Law will never supply the love God demanded. All it did was make demands and threats when the demands were not met. Man broke the law time and time again. He proved his unfaithfulness.

God has provided the only solution for man's disobedience and total failure through Jesus Christ. God's provision WHEN RECEIVED will fulfill all the requirements of the law. What the law demands, grace supplies. God has made provision for man's unfaithfulness and has made this solution freely available in the form of a promise.

More commands and promises, on: 2016/10/15 6:08

Another command and promise.

Command

Ezek. 18:30b-31 "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby you have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will you die, O house of Israel?"

Promise

Ezek: 36:25-29; 36b "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them. And you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save and deliver you from all your uncleanness: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it."

Another command and promise.

Command

Deut. 10:12 "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in ALL His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with ALL your heart and with ALL your soul."

Promise

Jer 32:39-41 "And I will give you one heart, and one way, that you may fear me for ever, for your own good, and for your children after you: And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, that I will not turn away from you, to do you good; but I will put my fear in your heart, that you shall not depart from me. Yes, I will rejoice over you to do you good, and I will plant you in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul."

Here is an exact Charles Finney quote from *The Promise of The Spirit* published by Bethany House 1980. Lecture 11. THE PROMISES--No. 1, page 135.

"We never keep the commandments, only as we take hold of the promises. By this I mean that grace alone enables us from the heart, to obey the commandments of God. It is, therefore, only when we lay hold of the promise, by faith, and receive its fulfillment in ourselves, that we really, in heart, obey the commandments of God. For example we never love the Lord our God, according to the first great commandment, only as we lay hold on, and receive the fulfillment of some such promise as this: "I will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your seed, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, that you may live."

We can take hold of the promises of God and then receive what we need.

Exact quote from Finney's *Systematic Theology* -- 1851 Edition Lecture 50

"It is true indeed that God requires of men, especially under the gospel, what they are unable to do directly in their own strength. Or more strictly speaking, he requires them to lay hold on His strength, or to avail themselves of His grace, as the condition of being what he requires them to be. With strict propriety, it cannot be said that in this, or in any case, he requires directly any more than we are able directly to do. The direct requirement in the case under consideration, is to avail ourselves of, or to lay hold upon his strength. This we have power to do. He requires us to lay hold upon his grace and strength, and thereby to rise to a higher knowledge of Himself, and to a consequent higher state of holiness than would be otherwise possible to us. The direct requirement is to believe, or to lay hold upon his strength, or to receive the Holy Spirit, or Christ, who stands at the door, and knocks, and waits for admission. The indirect requirement is to rise to a degree of knowledge of God, and to spiritual attainments that are impossible to us in our own strength. We have ability to obey the direct command directly, and the indirect command indirectly. That is, we are able by virtue of our nature, together with the proffered grace of the Holy Spirit, to comply with all the requirements of God. So that in fact there is no proper inability about it."

The grace of the gospel offers you, with every command, the strength to obey, and work in you the very thing commanded. Every command implies a corresponding promise, that is, if we are required to do anything by Christ, the very requirement is an implied promise or offer of all the aid we need to make it possible for us to perform it. Indeed, the command in itself is an implied gift of all needed help. The command itself implies the ability to obey it. Every command of God implies this in the strongest manner. It should be remembered that God is perfect in both love and wisdom: therefore He cannot be so unjust as to demand something from us that is impossible for us to perform. THE GRACE OF GOD TURNS THE REQUIREMENT OF THE LAW INTO A PROMISE OF GOD.

From *Christian Perfection* by Asa Mahan

The sinner is not required to "make himself clean," or to "make to himself a new heart," in the exercise of his unaided powers, but by application to the blood of Christ, "which cleanses from all sin." The grace which purifies the heart is provided; the fountain, whose waters cleanse from sin, is set open. To this fountain the sinner is brought, and because he may descend into it, and there "wash his garments and make them white," he can fulfill the command, "Wash you, make you clean," "make to yourself a new heart and a new spirit," and "cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." The sinner is able to make to himself a "new heart and a new spirit," because he can instantly avail himself of offered grace. He does literally "make to himself a new heart and a new spirit," ONLY when he yields himself up to the influence of that grace. The power to cleanse from sin lies in the blood and grace of Christ; and hence, when the sinner "purifies himself by obeying the truth through the spirit," the glory of his salvation belongs, not to him, but to Christ.

The grace of God now shows you that there is an entirely new position for you to take. You must take a possible position of simple childlike obedience, day by day, to every command His voice speaks to you through the Spirit. You must take a possible position of simple childlike dependence on and experience of His all-sufficient grace, day by day, for every command He gives.

HOW WE HOLD FAST, on: 2016/10/15 6:31

This is really impossible. We cannot do it. We cannot hold fast the profession of our faith - not on our own. We cannot because we are weak, and we are tempted, and we give in.

That is why it is important to remember that: "He is faithful that promised." That is how we will do it. That is what makes it possible. We will heed Christ's command because "God is faithful Who has promised."

The text is telling us that God makes promises to His people. And when we speak of the promises of God, we must remember that the promises of God are sure. They are certain. There is no doubt about them. God does not make promises as we do. We make promises, but we often break them. Not God. He is faithful. And that is because He is the unchanging God. This is the truth concerning Him that is expressed in the name Jehovah. He is the I AM. He is the God Who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He never changes His mind with regard to the promises He makes. He makes a promise, and even though we make ourselves unworthy of God keeping that promise, still He does. That we are unfaithful does not make a difference with God. He is faithful. When He makes a promise it will happen.

Consider some of the promises of God in Scripture - promises that directly relate to the admonition we are given in our text.

There's the promise God makes in Hebrews 13:5. "He has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." What a blessed promise that is. Here we are in the midst of an evil world, tempted on every side, facing not only temptations, but many trials and a great variety of things that make it hard for us to stand firm in the faith that we have confessed. And what does God say? "My people, I am with you. I will never leave you - never. And I will never forsake you. I will be there to uphold you. I will be there to give you the strength you need to remain steadfast in your confession. That's My promise. I will do that - I will." What a blessed promise.

Then there's the promise of God in Philippians 1:6. There God's promise is this: "I have begun a good work in you, and I will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." That's another blessed promise. God says: "I have begun a work in you. You didn't begin it - I did. And having begun it, I am going to continue that work. I am not going to stop it and then let you do the rest. But this is My work. I am going to continue that work. I am going to continue it until the day of Christ, that is, until the day that Christ returns to take you as one of His children to be in glory." What a blessed promise. God is saying, "I will do it all. I will begin the work. I will continue it. And I will finish it. I will perfect and complete what I have begun." And when God promises that, God will do it. He will.

Therein lies the possibility of our faithfulness to our confession - that God is faithful. Believe in Him, therefore. Trust in Him. Seek Him and His help daily. Hold fast the profession of your faith, and do so without wavering. Do that in the assurance of God's faithfulness. Remember His blessed promises: "I will never leave you nor forsake you. I will finish the work that I have begun. And when My work is done, I will bring you to dwell forever in heavenly glory with Me."

Confidence in GOD ONLY, on: 2016/10/15 6:46

Look at these scriptural examples to understand what I am saying.

Phil. 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:"

1 Thes. 5:23-24, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

Eph. 1:3-5, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,"

Look at what Paul was saying here. His CONFIDENCE was not in his own ability to believe but in what God had already accomplished and would continue to accomplish.

You may make this verse personal to you by saying "I am confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in ME will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:"

Now Paul had NO confidence in his own efforts to produce the necessary faith. He knew that Jesus Christ is the ONLY true source of faith possible. He did not have any faith in his own faith!

The Holy Spirit was showing Paul what God in Christ had already accomplished through Christ's life, death and resurrection. Then he saw and realized THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD TOWARD HIM!!!

Now this Gospel contains and supplies us with all the necessary faith, love, obedience, surrender and repentance. Do not forget that salvation is IMPOSSIBLE by anything a person can do. Salvation is the work of God.

Mark 10:26-27, "And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."

It was God in Christ who has reconciled us to Him, made us one with Him, justified us, made us holy, sanctified us, forgiven all of our sins, crucified us with Him, and then raised us from the dead in Him. He has given us HIS divine nature and HE is our LIFE. He has made us a NEW CREATION.

Heb. 8:12, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Heb. 10:16-18, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."

Christ, the LAST ADAM came to rescue us from sin and totally undo ALL the consequences of what the 1st Adam did.

God in Christ has now made us ONE with Him and we have been fully justified and born again BY CHRIST'S RESURRECTION from the dead. NOT by our OWN EFFORTS!!

Romans 4:3-5, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Gal. 3:8, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."

Now look at this part closely - GOD JUSTIFIETH THE UNGODLY AND THE HEATHENS!

Are you shocked and surprised that God justifies the ungodly and the heathens? It is by the Cross that God has saved wicked men and received to Himself the vilest of the sinners. See how this Scripture plainly states it. God makes those just who are unjust, forgives those who deserve to be punished, and favors those who deserve no favor.

God did all this in Christ BEFORE you were even born, before you could repent and before you could believe. He did this without your permission or consent. You had NO PART in what God did in Christ.

Have you ever tried to Love and Obey God and totally failed? Look at and examine all your failures that you have made.

Have you been defeated over and over again? Are you hopeless? Have you found it impossible to ever Love and Obey God correctly?

I hope that when you look back on all your defeats and failures that you now know the reason why you failed. It was that you were trusting in your own abilities to believe. Your faith was in your faith and your confidence was in your efforts.

Do you now realize the fact that you have been on the throne attempting to use your own will power and desires to get a rchive freedom but self can never dethrone self? Self can NEVER dethrone self - IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.

If you do not realize this fact you will continue to keep trying and failing over and over again.

Now you have a choice to make to make if you want to enjoy His VICTORY and be an active participant in what God has

s already accomplished for you in Christ. Will you put your confidence in HIS FAITHFULNESS TOWARD YOU or in your faithfulness toward Him?

Re: Confidence in GOD ONLY, on: 2016/10/16 12:21

No confidence in the flesh = total surrender

Phil. 3:3, "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.â€"

Many born again Christians still have some degree of confidence in their flesh. This means that they still rely on their own efforts, energy, will power, biblical knowledge, formulas, traditions and customs to grow spiritually. Now this is IMPOSSIBLE!

Now the result of all this activity and effort is continual failure and defeat. None of these things have any power to improve us or make us more Christ like. Not only do they have ZERO value they actually keep us from enjoying the true freedom that Christ has already made available to all of us.

We must come to the place where we really and actually die to any and all confidence in our own selves. Now just how does God accomplish this?

God gave us the Old Covenant with all the rules and laws to show us that we could never keep it.

Here is what David Wilkerson wrote.

"Now that we understand the foundation of the New Covenant into which we have entered with God, we can begin to appropriate its promises. One of the first steps we take is facing the truth that we cannot rescue ourselves from the power of sin. It is simply impossible for any believer to deliver himself from sin's dominion. That work can be accomplished only by the Holy Spirit.

This divine work is complicated by a twofold problem, however. God has to accomplish two things in us before He can deliver us from our besetting sins.

First, God has to inspire the sin-bound person to want to be free. By nature, man does not want to be delivered from his sin. He simply will not respond to a gracious mercy call. So, God has to implement a plan or device that will allow a person to see the exceeding wickedness of his sin. This person has to become sin-sick, aware of how wicked and devastating his sin is, before he will yearn for deliverance. He has to come to his wits' end, where he sees he is being ruined by sin - helpless, wretched, empty, ensnared and deceived by sin, and laden down with guilt.

Second, God has to cause the sin-bound person to see the utter futility of his own efforts to set himself free. Man remains convinced he can cut off his own chains. He thinks if he struggles hard enough or works out the correct formula, he will be able to free himself from Satan's grip. The Lord, therefore, has to bring him to a point of total surrender, where he submits his struggle completely into God's hands.

How does the Lord accomplish these two things? How does He cause the sin-bound person, first, to see his transgressions as exceedingly sinful, and, second, to give up the fight in his flesh, admitting, "I can't do it. I'm helpless to free myself from this sin. Lord, You have to do it in me"?

Scripture explains that this twofold work is accomplished in us by the Old Covenant. Indeed, we cannot fully understand or appropriate the blessing of the New Covenant until the Old Covenant has accomplished this dual work in us.

By its very design, the Old Covenant of works was intended to teach enslaved man how high and holy his heavenly Father is. The Ten Commandments, for example, give us a picture of what is known as the moral law. This is a representation of the heart and nature of God - a nature of holiness, purity, and righteousness. It sets a standard so high no human can possibly reach it in his own strength.

After giving man these commandments, God then commanded him to obey His Law perfectly. In fact, anyone who failed

to keep a single law was guilty of violating them all. That person might love God, be a faithful spouse and do good works, but if he had even the slightest adulterous or idolatrous thought in his heart, he would be breaking the entire covenant. God said, "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a ... holy nation" (Exodus 19:5-6). "Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people" (Jeremiah 7:23).

You may wonder, "Why would God make a covenant He knew no one could keep?" Simply put, it was the only way God could bring man to the end of himself - to cause him to see the futility of relying on his own strength to be holy. This is why Paul called the Old Covenant "the ministry of death" (2 Corinthians 3:7). He knew it requires of us a kind of dying. In plain language, we all must die to any attempt to establish our own righteousness, and to any thought that we can deliver ourselves from sin's strongholds.

The moral law is also meant to make man see his guilt: "By the law is the knowledge of sin... that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Romans 3:20, 19). Once we see our iniquity soberly, we are silenced by its exceeding sinfulness. "Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound" (Romans 5:20). Through the revelation of the Law, our sins become offensive to us - disturbing, sickening, overwhelming.

By setting His standard of holiness so high, God was proving to man that he could never attain the Law in his own strength. Instead, He was placing man in a school - a place where he would be taught how utterly wicked and sinful he was. By graduation time, he should be a dead man - dead to any hope he might have of freeing himself from the bondage of sin.

Likewise today, as long as we have the slightest idea we can achieve holiness on our own, we are still living under the Old Covenant's ministrations of death. God's whole idea behind implementing this covenant is to send us to our death.

After studying this aspect of the covenant, I wrote the following conclusion in my journal:

The Old Covenant has finished its work. It has put me on my face - empty, helpless, wounded, weak - and now it can fade away. I am fully persuaded that I cannot by human strength and will obey or please God. I have no plea of holiness. I am without strength, and I can do nothing in my own ability. My sin is too powerful, the chains too heavy. I am too wicked to free myself. I need a miracle, and I need a helper. All I can do now is cry, Abba, Father.

Which Covenant Defines Your Walk?

Let me tell you how you can know if the Old Covenant has finished its work in you, and whether or not you are ready to move into the glory of the New Covenant.

Think about this question: What is your reaction whenever you slip and fall, returning to your old habit or lust once more? Do you go to your prayer closet, fall on your face and begin wailing, "Oh, Father, I promise not to do it anymore"? Do you shout at God, asking, "Lord, where were You when I needed You? Why didn't You give me the power to resist this temptation? Where was the Holy Spirit to stop me from giving in?" Do you wallow in self-examination, trying to find some new measure of commitment to recover and move on?

If either one of the above scenarios describes your reaction to failure or sin, you are still living under the Old Covenant. Your cry probably comes directly from your flesh, not from God's Spirit in you. Your flesh feels sorry for itself because it did not accomplish the deliverance. And now it is asking for one more opportunity, begging, "Hang in there with me - try me one more time."

This is an ongoing problem with many Christians. We look to the Holy Spirit as some kind of booster shot to empower or energize our human will. We expect Him to build up our supply of grit and determination, so we can stand up to temptation the next time it comes. We cry, "Make me strong, Lord! Give me an iron will, so I can withstand all sin." But God knows this would only make our flesh stronger, enabling it to boast.

I want you to examine yourself: What has all your crying, grieving and questioning brought you? Do you now enjoy lasting freedom or do you occasionally go back to your sin? Are your times of repentance increasingly marked by more tears, louder crying and deeper despair - with no sign of deliverance from bondage?

If the Old Covenant had truly done its work in you, you would already be "dead." You would not have any tears left, any strength to cry out, any confidence in your flesh whatsoever. The truth is, most of our weeping, begging and striving com

es from our continuing expectation that something good can rise up out of our human nature to offer the Lord. But that simply is never going to happen. We are always going to be too weak and frail in our flesh to produce holiness. Yes, we are commanded to be strong - but only in the power of God's might, and not our own.

Please do not misunderstand me. I emphatically believe there is such a thing as godly sorrow over sin. Such sorrow produces true repentance. And I believe there are acceptable tears that flow from the hearts of those who grieve over wounding Christ. If you have never prayed from this place of repentance, you might want to do so now.

Lord, I confess my inability to obey Your commandments. I acknowledge my utter helplessness to deliver myself from sin's dominion. In all my strivings to get free, I have failed again and again. So now I come to You as "dead" - in full surrender. I confess my need to be delivered from my sin - and I admit I cannot do it on my own.

Oh, Lord, Your Old Covenant has accomplished in me two important things. First, I know in my heart that I want to be free. I truly want You to crush sin's dominion over me. I don't want to excuse my sin anymore, and I don't want to be given over to it. My heart's desire is to be holy and blameless before You. Whatever it takes, Father, I want to be delivered. I want to live wholly dependent on Your power.

Second, I have abandoned all hope of ever getting free by my own strength. I realize my only hope of freedom from slavery rests in Your power. I come to You now by faith, Lord, casting myself into Your hands. Show me the blessings and provisions of Your New Covenant. I need a new revelation, a new arrangement. The old one has only brought me to despair.

Thank You, Lord. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Understanding This New Agreement

If you have prayed that prayer from your heart, then the blessing of the New Covenant is yours. I remind you now of God's pronouncement of this covenant, as described by the author of Hebrews:

"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah - not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt."

Hebrews 8:8-9

God said to His people, "I am going to make a new agreement with you. It will not be like the old one that I made with your fathers. This covenant will be better, because it will be based on better promises."

Embedded in this New Covenant is a great and glorious blessing, which is outlined in the book of Acts:

"You are sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities."

Acts 3:25-26

God spoke this message to a people who had failed Him utterly. He was assuring them, "I have invested all power, authority and riches in My Son. And now I have raised Him up to bless you."

What wonderful news for the sin-bound Christian today! He has been burdened down and defeated by the power of sin, so he comes into God's presence cowering, feeling guilty, condemned and helpless. He wonders, "How could the Lord bless me? I have sinned against the light of His Word. I've failed Him." Whenever he prays, he waits for sin's curse to fall on him, looking for judgment to strike. But now he is given these incredible words: "I have sent My Son to bless you, by turning you away from your sins."

God did not send His Son to take vengeance on hungering, thirsting seekers. Jesus came to save! That was the whole reason He went to the cross. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17).

Christ is the seed of blessing God promised to give Abraham. Look again at Acts 3:25-26: "In your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed." And God the Father sent this seed to fulfill His covenant promise of blessing. The glorious blessing is that we can be "turned away" from our iniquities. "God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities." The Lord says, "The greatest way I can bless you is to deliver you from your sin - to break its power and dominion over you."

Many of the ancient Jews expected a different kind of blessing through this covenant promise. They had their own concept of blessing. They were convinced the Messiah would come to earth to set up an opulent society for them, showering them with wealth, prosperity and unending happiness. They thought He would give them all of the world's resources and positions of power so that they would not have to labor or strive anymore. Even today, some Christians expect this kind of kingdom to be manifested on earth.

But God says, "The greatest blessing I can give to sin-bound souls is to free them from sin's grip through the blessing of My Son's ministry." An angel of the Lord told Joseph in a dream that his betrothed, Mary, would bear a son. "And you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Today, every heaven-hungry believer who is bound by sin knows the value of this incredible blessing. Take, for example, a minister friend of mine. This man enjoyed fifteen years of freedom from a serious drug addiction. He even served as director of a successful drug rehabilitation program. Then one day he fell back into his old heroin habit - and sin's dominion came over his life once again.

After each fix, this minister's spirit was crushed. He would go into his office, shut the door, lie prostrate on the floor and weep and sob loudly, begging God to deliver him. He cried, "How could I have done this to You, Lord? What kind of man am I to have betrayed Your great kindness to me? Oh, how wicked I must be!" His repentance was so dramatic that his face grew red and raw from rubbing against the carpet in anguish.

I believe that if you had offered this tormented man a choice between a fortune that would last a lifetime, or freedom from his drug habit, he would have reached for the blessing of deliverance. Being set free from the dominion of sin and its guilt is the greatest blessing he could have received.

The Lord has made just such provision for us, offering us deliverance. Moreover, His New Covenant promise does even more than provide pardon and forgiveness. Scripture says the Spirit of God actually "subdues" our sins and turns us from them: "He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19). Think of it! Not I, but my God, will subdue and conquer all my sins, by the inner working of the Holy Spirit.â€

So what is your confidence in? Ask the Lord to show if you have placed any Confidence in your own self at all.