

What Influence does the Actualization of Salvation in Eternity exert on the Eternal Doctrines of Grace?

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PROLEGOMENON

It is crucial to the subject of salvation to solidly establish the utility or essentiality and usefulness of the **Eternal Doctrines of Grace**. These doctrines are continuously lightly esteemed and are constantly under attack as being less than useful or even deemed downright counterproductive in the ministry of so-called "Evangelism." Quite often the position is espoused that such doctrines, if they are taught at all, should be reserved for those already converted. They are treated as intellectual facts, which have little if any practical value in "winning the lost to Christ." Yet, a thorough comprehension of these eternal doctrines conduce that the very opposite is true. Not only are these precious truths useful in scriptural evangelization but they are the precise antidote to the poisonous errors that grip most of orthodox Christianity in this day.

First it must be understood from the outset that it is not the humanly perceived "usefulness" of any truth that qualifies such for dissemination. The appropriate dispensational "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) is to be taught and proclaimed for no other reason than that it is in fact the "whole counsel of God." If proclaim what is true about God and His eternal relationship with His elect supposedly "drives anyone away," it should be proclaimed, as God is truth and every man a liar! (Romans 3:4). Unfortunately, the Sovereignty of God's Grace is mostly militated against by some in error because of their zeal to preserve and proclaim the so-called doctrine of "human responsibility." A purely Scriptural assessment immediately recognizes the fact that the major problem confronting the evangelical community of today is that an entire generation has cut its teeth on the idea that mankind can be saved at any time, any place and almost in any way through the contribution of some gesture of consentience to salvation.

Hence, one's belief of the gospel has taken on the greater inference of a catalyst or determinant of salvation rather than merely God's process of manifesting in time what He has exclusively actualized on behalf of His elect in eternity. In this sense, the terminology "human responsibility" dangerously takes on the symbolic form of "human contribution," which actually aids and abets the haughty, prideful spirit of Synergism. Here it is crucial to reject this un-scriptural yet predominantly traditional doctrine of misperception in the great sectors of orthodoxy, as one is granted a "teachable spirit" in the comprehension of God's Eternal Enactment of salvation. Rightly divided Scriptures are definitively the exclusive authoritynot only for doctrinal beliefs but also for the teachings utilized in Christian evangelism.

Is Mankind Spiritually Dead or Alive? (Total Depravity)

Doctrinally, the evangelical utility of Total Human Inability must be enthusiastically employed in consideration of the fact that in a nutshell, every faculty of man's ability is mitigated by his sinfully depraved nature. This engenders the entire structure of human mankind, inclusive of his mind, heart and especially his will; because he is in a state of utter and complete inability to comply with or participate in any part of the righteous proceedings of God's salvation requisites. Here it must be tersely conveyed and understood that mankind's problem is far deeper than that he simply "will not" comply. Compliance versus non-compliance is neither the matter that one is spiritually injured nor spiritually sick but spiritually "dead," resulting in a condition which can only be described by the words "can not!" Does this mean that he does not have a "free will?" Of course

hashe will freely function in the attenuated state of depravity of those who are dead in trespasses and sins according to his designed nature! In the Kingdom Gospel, Jesus states that it is the nature of the tree that determines the nature of the fruit (Matthew 7:17-18).

In like manner, mankind's depraved nature will determine the nature of his choices unless such has been determinately overruled. Therefore, even though the Kingdom Scriptures declare that a lost man **MUST** be born again, they just as clearly declare that such "new birth" occurred by the sovereign will of God, not the free will of man (John 1:13). Though they declare that men must come to Christ to manifestly be saved, they just as clearly declare that none can come unless God has effectually drawn them (John 6:44-45). The Kingdom Gospel and Doctrine definitively declare that certain designated ones manifestly believe on Christ by their testimony of their salvation, as it clearly declares that the faith (fullness) that saved these souls belongs to Christ and the faith (fullness) granted to His elect is a gift of God's grace for the exclusive purpose of the revelation and/or manifestation of their salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9; Philippians 1:29). Thus, it declares that man manifestly "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for to him they are foolishness and he is not able to know (them) because spiritually they are discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Those that revile against the doctrine of the Sovereign Grace of God in election of individuals to salvation mostly attempt to assail it by simply labeling it "Calvinism" in lieu of considering its Scriptural merits. The view of the conferment of salvation is couched in the language of the following illustration....."salvation works like this: lost men are in a condition like a sick man in a bed dying of some disease. Christ is like the antibiotic which God has placed on the night stand next to him. The message of the Gospel is that if only he will reach out to the night stand and take the medicine, he'll be saved!" The focal problem with this scenario is its inconsistencies with rightly divided exegeses of the Scriptures. Indeed, Jesus Christ is the exclusive "medicine, antidote and remedy" for mankind's deliverance from the curse and penalty for his sinful nature. However, the illusionary perception that God has set Christ before a man and commanded all of depraved mankind to make a choice to embrace Him; fails to recognize the inability of those spiritually dead, to respond to the edit. Hence, the entire illustration breaks down in this sense: If the sinful nature is analogous to sickness, an individual's will to choose or reject treatment is unreliable since it is especially the will of the flesh that is sick!

Hence the flesh will inherently decline to take the medicine for the simple fact that it loves its sickness and despises any remedy to it thereof. In fact, the flesh is more than sick, as it is dead. In this sense, where does that posture mankind? Obviously in despair without any hope and that's precisely where all mankind reside. But beyond mankind's inability, the greater consideration must be focused on the sphere in which the work of salvation was accomplished, which is scripturally assigned exclusively to eternity wherein God dwelled alone. This fact of eternal assignments unequivocally renders all arguments of human ability and righteousness useless and irrelevant. Unfortunately, the vast majority of Christendom has been programmed to believe in a combination of the mercy of God and Work of Jesus Christ plus the volitional input of humankind to effectuate the salvation process, which encompasses the widespread teaching that God has done all that He can do to save and now it is all up to humanly depraved ones to "accept" (terminology used nowhere in scripture) His offer.

Hence, man is the determinant force of salvation in this scenario, as the prevailing doctrine foisted is that one can only be saved according to if, when and how one accepts "God's offer." These erroneous proponents are quite unreceptive and even indignant to the Scriptures, which certify that the case is quite otherwise. Rather than bringing the flesh to despair of self, this doctrine specifically points to depraved humanity, as the critical contributor to one's salvation! In this view, Jesus is like the beggar knocking outside the human heart's door pleading with mankind to "let" Him save them (notice who's in charge of the situation). Rather than stripping mankind of every possible ground of boasting, this doctrinal system leaves him with at least one act by which he may justly be proud and boastful, i.e., his vaunted "choice," which "allowed" the work of Christ to be effectual and the will of God not to be frustrated.

The eternal Doctrines of Grace have a far different effect, in that they produce no "knocking" or "pleading" in a depraved sinner relied upon to do anything! In Acts chapter 17, the Apostle Paul introduces Jesus Christ to the Athenian philosophers on Mars' Hill who had never heard of Him. How does he introduce them to Him? Notice that the very first glimpse he gives these pagans of the Savior is not as a beggar at their door.

door but as the One Who holds their destiny in His Hands! Here the question is not what such ones will with Jesus but what He has done to His elect! Mankind is void of the ability to manifestly "choose" God and will automatically bar the door of his heart to the Lord of Glory. Were it not for the fact of God's Sovereign choice in election to salvation, no one would be saved. Does this lead to passivity or fatalism? Absolutely not; that would be the case only if mankind was the determinant; then he would surely remain in His dead state. The greater explication and adduce to one's comprehension of the actual workings of salvation lies in the proper assessment of the locale of its formulation.

In the Grace Covenant, the Eternal Doctrines of Grace exclusively establish that all the workings of salvation were wrought in the essence of Christ in eternity. This seems to be at variance with much of what is conveyed in the Kingdom Gospel; when the language of the New Covenant is not understood in light of the intent of its conveyance. For example, at the conclusion of one of Jesus' parables, a Publican is justified by casting himself on God's mercy, whereas a proud Pharisee is rejected. Hence, Christ states, "Everyone that exalts himself shall be abased; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:14). In this and other passages, i.e., John 3:16, a universal declaration is mistakenly construed and applied wholesale to the "salvation will only be found by men who have drunk deeply from the cup of humility and put their trust in God." Now this seems to be a very sensible statement on the surface but upon close scrutiny, its latter phrase implies some determinant impetus of mankind's crucial volitional act in activating his salvation, which is not its informed intent. Here it must be clearly understood that if it were possible that mankind was left with a leg to stand on, he will indeed attempt to stand on it! If He is accorded a hope in addition to Christ, he will trust it rather than Christ! If He is accorded any other hiding place other than the Savior, he will flee to it and subconsciously ignore the Savior! If He is afforded some other ground on which to stand in addition to the Propitious Sacrifice, he will bank his soul upon that sinking sand rather than upon the Solid Rock!

It is humbling only when mankind utterly turns his back on himself in every aspect of his abilities, including the fact that he is completely eliminated as a participant in the salvation process, which is absolutely essential. It is most beneficial for all of God's elect to comprehend that He placed His chosen beloved in such positions in Christ before creation. Either one stands upon God's eternal enactment of salvation or one falls upon one's volitional participation and deterministic adage that avers all are called upon to initiate and effectuate their salvation. An un-accomplishable requisite of this type, if placed upon depraved mankind, will grind him to dust in every instance. Hence, there is no middle ground of partnering man's cooperation with God for the salvation of his soul! The axe must be completely laid to the root of man's sinful pride; by fully acknowledging that there is no other truth that God employs more often in the salvation process than the doctrine of Total Human Inability, which declares that there is no soundness in man from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet. It trumpets out that man's best righteousness, i.e., that his best work is as filthy rags in God's sight. Accordingly, all must bow down to the testimony of God Almighty, in acknowledging that this doctrine is the most humiliating truthespecially in this generation, which is steeped in the modern-day atmosphere of self-help, self-love, self-confidence and self-glorification. As painful as the Eternal Doctrines of Grace may be to orthodox traditionalism, one's confession of mankind's Total Depravity automatically eliminates all doctrines that run counter to the testimony of the ever perishing brokenness of man. In fact, in the manifestation of time, it is impossible for any man to initiate the first step down the road that leads to eternal life because the initial enactment of salvation is only palpable in Eternity (Titus 1:2)!

The Scriptural Utility of the Doctrine of Unconditional Election

The word Election is almost certain to stir up a ruckus amongst those vehemently opposed to the Sovereignty of God's choice of individuals to salvation in eternity. In fact, its very introduction into certain religious circles is usually met with either: open-mouth ignorance, unbelievable hysteria or downright hostility! Obviously, the doctrine is a sore spot for the synergistic pundits. The reaction generated by those militating against election ranges from assertions that this teaching produces pride in its adherents, to anger in its detractors, to the claim of it being totally disruptive as well as generally conflictual to the evangelical process of "winning souls." However, none of these scenarios correctly identify the doctrine of Election's stabilizing effect as an antidote for many of the poisonous errors foisted by those that have not internalized the scriptural perception of Election in essence produces the very fruits that are so sadly missed in evangelical circles, when it is rightly apprehended.

Election Ensures the Concept of Salvation by Grace

Even the most casual student of God's Word must admit that the Scriptures indeed employ the language election when it is referencing God's eternal purposes. Yet most seek to dodge the implications of this language by fleeing to the refuge of the erroneous terminology "conditional election," which purports that God's choice or election of certain men to salvation is "conditioned" by His foreknowledge through His foreseeing their faith as He looks down into time. The theme of this "time tunnel" hypothesis is devised to mitigate God's independent excellent works in His Eternal Decree. One needs only to thoroughly study the many references in the Scriptures concerning this subject to realize that its ramification deals not so much with its proof, as it does with the intent of the doctrine.

If "conditional" election is true, i.e., if God's eternal choice of mankind is determined by man's choice of Him, then the practical effect of this teaching is no different than if there was no election by God at all! The proof of this is seen in the fact that the groups that hold the Synergistic View (God and mankind participating in partnership to enact salvation) seldom, if ever mention the term "election." And why should they? To what purpose? Since their doctrinal persuasion is that God has done all He can do to save and all the rest is entirely left up to man, hence the will of man becomes the determining and dominant electing factor in salvation. Whenever it is conveyed that God's choice of men to salvation hinges upon what He "looks down into time" and foresees in thembe it their works, faith or choicessuch that is foreseen by Godnot produced by Godhave effectively undermined the entire concept of mankind's salvation by God's Sovereign grace alone!

Either salvation depends upon God's sovereign choice and good pleasure or upon what He knows men are going to do and then He simply aligns His choice with what He knows they are going to do anyway. Here the underlined questions arewhat is the principle of "grace?" i.e., is it dependant upon something that mankind himself produces? If this is how things transpire, then such exudes the principle of "works." It really matters not whether this "thing" which God foresees is something tangible, seen outwardly in the man's life or something intangible, i.e., that which is seen inwardly only by God. It matters not whether it's a huge thing or whether it's a miniature thing. So long as the functionality of man's part is the critical, determinative ingredient, such evinces a system based upon "works" in lieu of "grace."

An illustration of this is exhibited by the example of an item that commands a certain value. In order for one to effectuate the purchase transaction of the item, a price must first be paid. Now suppose that there was a condition that the ultimate reception of the item required the exhibition of the intended recipient's willingness to receive the item before the purchaser would buy it. In this scenario, the purchaser's decision to buy the item was determinately impacted by the recipient's decision to accept it. In this sense, the recipient indirectly contributed to and influenced the purchaser's decision to buy the item. Hence that would constitute a contributive action on the part of the recipient, which would infringe upon the true concept of grace (no merit). But on the other hand, if the item in question was unconditionally purchased beforehand, without any of the recipient's contributions, i.e., one's knowledge, prompting or influence; that alone would be the total concept of "grace," without any "work input."

But now let's try to mix the two concepts: Suppose that the purchaser said to the recipient, "I will only buy this very expensive item for you if you are willing to accept it?" Then the actual determination of the purchase transaction would rest with the recipient, since it would be solely up to the recipient as to whether to accept the item when it is offered. Here the question may be posed as to whether this combination constitutes a successful commingling of "grace" and "works?" The answer is an emphatic NO! For what is the practical difference between an offer of a gift that is conditioned upon the recipient's agreement to accept the item and the purchaser's reliance upon the recipient's choice as to whether it should be bought for such one?" The answer is no difference because the purchase transaction would still be in either instance; on the basis of the purchaser obtaining the recipient's consent before the "gift" could be "given" to the recipient. Hence the principle of the recipient's input would not be changed as the determinable factor as to whether the item could be purchased. So this is precisely the point conveyed in Romans 11:5-6, which certifies that "unconditional" election is the only concept of election that is consistent with the conferring of one's salvation solely by God's Sovereign Grace in eternity!

Election Precludes Man from Boasting

Scriptural passages such as Romans 3:27, I Corinthians 1:26-31 and Ephesians 2:8-10 convey that God designed the enactment of salvation in eternity such that none could boast of mankind's participation. The eternal sphere of the finalized completed workings of salvation renders any type of boasting as not only impractical but also irrelevant. Hence all boasting should be absolutely excluded, as this is precisely what Sovereign Unconditional Election does! At this point, several things should be made crystal clear. First, election in no way runs counter to the manifestation of salvation in the Gospel. There are various depictions of salvation being extended indiscriminately to all men manifestation-wise in the Scriptures. This is because it is not God's design and purpose to always reveal who His elect are. Hence, it is the minister's commission to preach the Gospel to every creatureconveying to all men everywhere the gracious gift of salvation therein. On the one hand, the Gospel was never intended to identify to mankind who may come to Christ nor the message that whosoever willscome! On the other hand, election informs through revelation that designated ones were foreordained by God and that such will manifestly come to Christ according to His sovereign purpose for individual lives. Ultimately, this is the only adduce to the question, "why some and not others?"

Secondly, election to salvation is essentially salvation itself unto those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, as they were actually placed by God's Decree into the Body of Christ. The ontologized (actualized) eternal son-positioning of God's elect far overshadows their manifestation as "children of wrath, even as others" in this present world (Ephesians 2:3). There are those that have misconstrued the conveyance of II Timothy 2:10 and from it have foisted the notion that the elect must through some effort or gesture, "obtain" life in Christ. But scriptural exegesis of this verse specifically states that Paul's sacrificial ministering was *dia tou j evklektou j (theeah toos ehklehktoos)* rendered "for the elect's sake." So it was "Because of the elect," i.e., God's elect (Romans 8:33; Colossians 3:12; Titus 1:1) for whom the Apostle Paul suffered so much (Colossians 1:6; 12:15; Philippians 2:17; Ephesians 3:1, 13). Thus, the elect being addressed (II Timothy 2:19) were already manifestly saved, as confirmed by the Greek phrase *ifna k auvtoi. swthri,aj tu,cwsin (een-ah keh ahf-tee so-tee-ree-ahs tee-kho-seen)* rendered "that they also may obtain (receive) salvation." Note that this is a purpose clause with the second aorist (effective) act subjunctive of *tu,cwsin (tee-kho-seen)* rendered "obtain" or "receive," as it is linked with the genitive case of *swthri,aj (so-tee-ree-ahs)* rendered "salvation."

Thus the phrase, "they as well as I" in II Timothy 2:10, is referencing its addressees' internalization of salvation, *th/j evn Cristw/| Vlh sou(tees ehn Khrees-to Ee-ee-soo)* rendered "that in Christ Jesus," which is *meta. do,xhj aivwni,ou A (meht-ah thox-ees eh-o-nee-oo)* rendered "with eternal glory." Hence, this phrase's conveyance is concerning the elect's growth toward maturation of realizing that they, according to II Corinthians 4:17 have an "eternal weight of glory." But it still must be understood that they of themselves have not obtained this by meeting some specified conditions. In this light, the Gospel of Grace comprehends that every aspect of Election, as well as Salvation IS UNCONDITIONAL! Manifestation-wise, designated ones of God's elect do believe on Christ and repent (have a change of mind through the knowledge of Him) as their comprehension is gifted to them for the express purpose of testimony sake. It is in this respect that God confers salvation as a gift BUT not through one's repentance and faith, because one's Eternal Election renders it unnecessary. Thus, the Doctrines of Eternal Election and Salvation run counter to all assertions that one MUST "repent and believe," if such one is to ever be saved. Hence, salvation was conferred purely as the results of God's gracious work and not because certain ones have produced any such input for themselves (Philippians 2:12-13; II Thessalonians 2:13-14). Admittedly, none can boast in the PRODUCTION of the gift of salvation nor should any even ever be tempted to boast in the RECEPTION of that gift. Election effectively removes all possible grounds of boasting, in that it functions by the Sovereign Grace of God alone.

The proponents of this glorious truth should be not intimidated by the fact that the vast majority of Christendom today has espoused various forms of Synergistic doctrinal teachings. It seems that orthodox Christianity in the latter centuries, has succeeded in solidly establishing the doctrine of "Mankind's Free Will" as though it is scripturally authentic. Hence "Mankind's Free Will," is viewed as being doctrinally correct to the extent that those who vehemently oppose it through rightly dividing God's Word immediately qualify as being "Cultist." The truths that are so explicitly documented in the Scriptures, should hardly be classified as "cultist" doctrine and in fact, these are the very truths, which Paul admonished Timothy to guard (II Timothy 1:14).

Sadly, even a brief survey of the Eternal Doctrines of Grace is troubling, particularly to the religious denominations and sects, as it quickly draws excommunication from these sectors of Legalism, Traditionalism and Evangelicalism. Their claims are that "Election of individuals to salvation by God is the most awful thing they've ever heard! Also, "election of individuals to salvation by God gives the impression that God intentionally turning away some who might otherwise choose to be saved, which can't possibly happen if is receiving only the elect!"

Those who express such ire concerning the Sovereign Choice of God in election of individuals to salvation eternally, absolutely misunderstand this doctrinal revelation by visualizing that its conveyance is that God standing at the door of Heaven while men are contending to get in that door. In this asserted scenario, God says to various ones: Yes, you may come but not you or you or you etc." But the situation is hardly that. Rather, God has from eternity determined and established all things in and by His Decree, so there is no invitation based on mankind's decisional response. If such was extended, it would automatically result in fatality because depraved men of their own accord, without exception are inherently estranged from God. Hence, they would automatically move in the opposite direction from Him as intently as they could. Election entails the fact that God graciously reached out and sovereignly selected designed onesgave them life and nature and placed them in the Body of Christ, in eternity.

Hence, the testimonial operations of manifestation in time entail the process of Him imparting the gift of faith to them for the revelation purpose of drawing them or changing their hearts, which in effect testifies that God is the sole cause of their "willingness to come." So Election does not keep anyone out of Heaven who might otherwise have been there if the opportunity had been afforded to them but it delivered an entire multitude from eternal separation from God whose lot this certainly would otherwise have been! Were it not for election the Heavens in Christ would be void of all mankind and the population of those eternally separated from God would comprise the entire human race! This evinces the Scriptural Application of Election: on the one hand, separation of mankind from God is automatic and inevitable; on the other hand, the eternal union with Christ of His elect was predetermined by God, of which to Him alone belongs all the praise and glory! In essence, Election exclusively by God is the only assurance of salvation, which is purely by grace through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ and "not of works lest any man could boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Election Guarantees the Success of the Gospel of Grace Ministry

The ultimate product of the Eternal Doctrines of Grace is confidence in the Gospel of Grace, as the power of God unto salvation (I Corinthians 1:18, 24; 2:5; 4:20). In Acts 18:1-11, Paul was in Corinth ministering the Gospel without much apparent success, as perceived by him; hence he was preparing to move on it seemed. By God's design, Christ in a vision, told him to remain there and preach "for I have much people in this city." But where were they? Paul couldn't see them! Yet Christ foreknew His own and would manifestly bring them to salvation through the preaching of Paul. Surely this should resonate in a note of encouragement to those who seemingly labor on and on with what seems like so little fruit to show for it. This should serve as instructions that the demands of the Eternal Doctrines of Grace do not need to be soft-pedaled in order to "gain disciples." The Grace Ministry doesn't need to rely on psychological gimmickry and humanly persuasive techniques to wrangle "decisions" out of men nor wonder whether had just one more verse of "Just as I Am" been sung or had things been said in a slightly different way or a better illustration been employed, someone might have responded. NO! The knowledge of Election simply directs the ministry to keep its nose to the grindstone and teach the Eternal Doctrines of Grace just as clearly and accurately as God has decreed. This in effect exudes "letting the chips fall" where they have been ordained to, in the total confidence that this is the revealed proclamation that God has ordained in manifestly bringing His elect to salvation.

The Scriptural Utility of the Doctrine of Particular Redemption

The dominant question that arises in debates on the doctrine of Election is, "for whom did Christ die?" It is simply assumed by the great masses of Christendom that "Christ died for everyone." In making this declaration, the assertion is EVERYONE, i.e., for every child of Adam who ever has or ever will live; for both the believer and unbeliever; for the one who "goes to Heaven" as well as for the one who "goes to Hell." In fact, most of the so-called "plans" of salvation employed confronts the sinner with the "fact" that Christ died for EVERYONE! "Then," it is foisted that, "it is up to THEM to receive the benefits of what Christ died for."

done." They further assail, how could anyone presume to question their "doctrine," which they claim is "obviously" taught in the Scriptures, is so vital to the faith of believers and central to their "plan" of salvific Well, the answer is because NOTHING could be further from what is accurately taught in the Scriptures as confusingly deceptive and misleading in conveying the Grace of God to a "lost sinner!" Here one must be persuaded that "if also our gospel is hid, in those perishing it is hid" (II Corinthians 4:3). This evinces the futility of what was pre-determinately designed, as to those perishing, which absolutely removes all assertions of mankind's so-called "free will" to believe and respond to the gospel.

Limited Reconciliation (Atonement)

The word atonement is utilized herein only with the notation that it is exclusively an Old Testament term which is (*kawfer*) in the Hebrew. It must be understood that one absolutely will not find the word "atonement" in the New Testament. In response to this statement, some will adamantly point to Romans 5:11's translation of the King James Version. Contrariwise, the proper exegesis of this verse as well as context clearly renders *katallagh.n(kaht 'ahl lah'y een)*, the translation "reconciliation," giving the basic meaning of restoring to favor. As conveyed in Romans 5:11, it denotes the restoration of God's favor in tandem with rectifying His elect's sinful nature; based on the expiatory death of Jesus Christ in eternity. Hence, the Reconciliation (Atonement) of Christ must be considered, as to both its scope and its power. Except for those who believe in "Universalism," i.e., the unscriptural doctrine that "everyone will go to Heaven," the position of Reconciliation is limited in one way or another. It is either limited in regards to its SCOPE (upon whom was it conferred?) or in regards to its POWER (how is it accomplished?).

In this sense, Reconciliation is either "limited" in who is saved or how one is saved. Hence, Reconciliation was limited in its scope of salvation to the elect but is unlimited in its power to save those for whom it was intended in Eternity. This is proven from the Scriptures, in their declarations of God's eternal workings, and that Christ died for His "sheep" (John. 10:15) and His "church" (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25). Further, the Scriptures present the Reconciliation as efficaciously purging sin (Hebrews 1:3), obtaining eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:12), putting away the sin (Hebrews 9:26) and perfecting forever (Hebrews 10:14) all those upon whom it was conferred in eternity. The indocility (unwillingness or indisposed to be taught) of how passages in John 3:16 and its likes have been foisted, i.e., as being antithetical to limited reconciliation; is perplexing indeed. However, the limitations of the utility or usefulness of the doctrine of "limited reconciliation" is without doubt adequately accommodated in the purposes of God's eternal Decree.

A Meaningful Reconciliation (Atonement)

The most effective way for one to render Reconciliation absolutely meaningless, is to teach that it was done for each and every man! Unfortunately, Reconciliation is illustrated by the Synergists in the following manner. Their claim is that God's love is unlike anything that they've ever seen and there isn't anything quite like it (this is true). Also, He's thoughtful, caring, and considerate (this is true) but His provisions towards all men are only ascertainable on the condition that they must reach out to Him in order to receive these benefits. Well, it all sounds pretty good except the last part. Notice how it is that the very best thing there is about God's love, elusively depends upon, not only one's WILLINGNESS but also one's ABILITY to respond to it. Hence, God loves everybody but His love is limitedly beneficial to only those who have the capacity (which they claim that everyone has) to accept it. In this sense, the ability of mankind is the determining factor as to who receives God's love. In other words, He loves ALL but He is not able to provide for ALL unless/until ALL exhibit a willingness or capacity to love Him, as He loves them!"

The most effective way to render God's love meaningless is to extend it to all men, based upon their "decision" to respond to it. It's the "particular" love that God has only for His elect that effectuates it meaningfully something. In the very same way, when the death of Christ is extended to include all men without exception, the reconciliation is robbed of its significance and meaning. One may sing "Power in the Blood" with all or no might but if Christ's Blood was shed equally and indiscriminately for both those who will be saved and those who will perish, it's clear that the "power" to save CANNOT lie exclusively in the Blood of Christ but obviously is shared elsewhere, namely, in the willingness of men to accept it! But when Christ's death is portrayed

the exclusive and independent act that secured the salvation of God's elect in eternity, then such redeemers can correctly testify that there is exclusive "Power in the Blood."

The death of Christ, when seen in this light, is far more than a mere "attempt" or "gambit" on God's part to save every man but rather, it is the centerpiece of His Divine plan of redemption that actually accomplishes its purpose. Therefore, instead of utilizing the term "limited" reconciliation to refer to this redemption, the identity of "definite" or "real" preferably should be prefixed to reconciliation. The main difference between the doctrine that Christ died for the entire world and the teaching that He died for His elect only, is not so much the elimination of some from a chance to be saved but according to His choice of those for whom Christ died the inclusion of some that could not otherwise have been saved. One thing about this debate is crystal clear and that is: there is absolutely some limitation somewhere! Either God is unlimited in His ability to save all or He only sovereignly chose the ones He designated or He is limited by His ability to save only those that choose Him. Hence, some type of Limitation is the underlined theme of Reconciliation (Atonement).

Blood You Can Trust

Nothing is quite as destructive to one's understanding of the doctrine of Eternal Election than the teaching that Christ died for everyone! It is true that God's sovereign choice in election of individuals to salvation effect turns its back on all other acts and rests itself exclusively and completely on Christ's eternal works. If all men are given an equal opportunity, it would only be to manifest their failure to satisfy the righteous standard of God. It could be only in this sense that Christ did precisely the same thing for all men, as such would be absolutely fruitless if its initiation depends upon mankind's performance. The only distinction between the elect that have been placed in the Body of Christ and the non-elect that is eternally separated from God; is that the status of the former was determined by the eternal sacrifice of Christ's blood alone whereas the status of the latter is a reflection of such one's trust in themselves.

A vivid illustration of this is considered in Paul's distinction of the elect from the non-elect in I Corinthians 1:18, "for the word of the cross to those indeed perishing is foolishness and to usthose being savedit is the power of God." Here the Greek phrase *o` lo,goj ga.r o` tou/ staurou* (**o log-os gahr o t stahvr-oo**) rendered "and the word of the cross" is the testimony or message of the cross, which is that Christ died on behalf of elect sinners (Romans 5:6-8). The cross in itself is not significant but the revelation of what was depicted on it is extremely important, so it is in this sense that the word "cross" is emblematic. It is of note that the phrases, "the word of the cross" and "the gospel of salvation," are comparable, in that they convey that the gospel is the testimony of salvation (Ephesians 1:13; I Corinthians 15:1-2).

On the one hand, the word of the cross is *mwri,a* (**mo-ree-ah**) rendered "foolishness" to those who are perishing. This means that the testimony of Christ's substitutionary death is "foolishness," senseless, stupid and ridiculous to an identified group, namely, those *avpollume,noij* (**ahp-ol-lee-meh-nees**) rendered "perishing," dying or in the manifested process of eternal ruin. Apart from God's sovereignty in His elect purpose of calling out a people for Himself, all of mankind would be in this hopeless category of "those perishing" (Romans 9:10-16; Colossians 2:13-14; John 6:44). On the other hand, the word of the Cross is *du,namij qeou/* (**thee-nahm-ees Theh-oo**) rendered "the power of God" *toi/j sw|zome,noij h`mi/n* (**te sozo-meh-nees ee-meen**) rendered "to us ... those being saved." This conveyance is certification that full comprehension of Christ's death in its display of power, ability and strength is that which uniquely belongs to God and is dispensed exclusively to designated ones of His elect. Romans 1:16 also affirms this same truth in its statement, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes." Note that the salvation of designated ones is expressed in two tenses. In the first, the moment one "believes," one is made aware that one's salvation is eternal (from the aorist tense). In the second, as such one internalizes this knowledge (present tense), it is in testimony of one being manifestly delivered from all insecurities that are present in one's mind.

Thus, the determination of who's going to Hell or Heaven does not rest in the ability or even passive participation of humankind, as the question is not so much WHAT but WHO makes the difference? The determination is not expressive in answer to WHAT must one do to be saved, as much as it is, WHO is unconditionally saved such as one that possessed no merit? Here the bottom line issue is invested in the revelation of who one really believes the "savior" to be! Many of God's people believe that in spite of all the

Christ did, that alone does not make the difference between Heaven and Hell, in that Christ's sacrifice may be subsidiary-wise energized by their "free will." The precise problem is that they believe that they contributed to their salvation, i.e., in effect, they did it with God's help. Oh yes, they will admit that they couldn't have done it without what Christ did but in the final analysis, **THEY** made the difference. In this scenario, their ultimate trust is that their decisional input is **WHAT** made the difference. In this sense, one person is "going to Heaven" and another "going to Hell" even though Christ did precisely the same thing both. From this perception, it is clear that they don't construe that what Christ did was **ACTUALLY** what made the difference! Here it is obvious that even though they aver that the same opportunity is available to **ALL**, their doctrinal theme focuses on the acts of humans trusting in Christ for their salvation, as **THAT WHICH ACTUALLY** makes the difference!

Hence, in this scenario, one's own placement of trust for the salvation of one's soul is what determines the ultimate difference. So what is perceived then as determining the difference is that mankind must **TRUST**and that is precisely why so many unenlightened ones are trusting their decisions, trusting their auras, trusting their sinner's prayer, trusting just about everything imaginable **BUT** the Blood of Christ alone without any input or consentience on their part! But saving faith (fullness) functions solely upon God's sovereign choice by abandoning all human gestures and cleaves to the sacrifice of Christ's Blood alone for eternity, which is applied exclusively as the results of election. Those that are blessed to comprehend the fact that their salvation is exclusively the product of the faithfulness of Christ, are the ones that can truly test "Nothing in my hands I bring! Simply to Thy cross I cling." Those who are scripturally informed in any sense will admit that there was at the very least, a great obstacle in the path of a sinner going to Heaven, which is why all would agree that Christ's death, was absolutely necessary. But the question is this: Did His death remove **EVERY** obstacle or did it simply remove **SOME** obstacles, leaving it to the benefactors of Christ's sacrifice to provide the clincher for removing the rest? If it's the latter, then salvation yet operates on the basis of some human input, which is unavoidably some type of merit. Christ, in this case, died so that God could merely "offer" salvation or make it affordable **ONLY** to those **WILLING** to accept it. But if it's the former, then God indeed justified His elect **FREELY** based upon Christ's Blood alone.

How should the Gospel of Grace be presented?

As noted already, the synergistic "plan" of salvation always avers that even though Christ has died for sinners, God's "acceptance" of what Jesus did must also be ratified by the sinner. In other words, the sinner's acceptance of Christ's sacrifice is what initiates and certifies such one's salvation. In fact, most synergists couldn't even conceive of how they would go about their work of evangelism if they could not make this assertion. Yet, when rightly divided and properly exegeted, the Scriptures do not ever proclaim that Christ died for **ALL** lost sinners nor that what Christ manifestly did at the cross was for **ALL** men! Rather Christ offered Himself "up" in sacrifice (Hebrews 7:27), i.e. to God. What is conveyed in the Scriptures is the very basic fact that Christ took upon Himself all the sins of those for whom He diedwhoever they might have been (having been) (subjunctive mood-aorist tense in the Greek grammar). Hence, He died to render a full and complete satisfaction of the penalty for the sinful nature of His elect. Thus, if God was satisfied in the death of Jesus (as certified by His Resurrection), how then can He justly put any one in Hell for whom Christ has been rendered a full and complete satisfaction of the ransom? If Christ's sacrifice, as it was manifested on the cross, was paid in full for the sinful nature of each and every human, then upon what basis did God reject **ANY**? How could on the one hand, God demand that the price of sin be fully paid then on the other hand reject the full payment of Christ's sacrifice by demanding that what Christ paid; must be ratified by depraved mankind's acceptance of it? Here someone will say "but what Christ has done for sinners can't be applied to them until/unless they accept what He has done." This cogitation is erroneous, in that it completely misses the fact that Reconciliation and its concomitant Salvation was secured in **ETERNITY**! The elimination of this transaction in the sphere of **TIME** also removes all questions of whether or when Jesus Christ's sacrifice was acceptable according to mankind's criteria for salvation and focuses on **WHEN** such was accepted by God on behalf of His beloved elect!" (Ephesians 1:4-6).

How then should this be presented to lost sinners? Where should they be pointed? The answer is, to the risen and enthroned Savior's eternal workings in the sphere wherein God dwells alone! Yes, from God's viewpoint (before creation) wherein He completed all the workings of His eternal "plan" of salvation, i.e. where and when He accomplished everything according to His purpose and scheme. This eternal view is

stark contrast to man's view in the sphere of time where the "plan" of salvation is most insecure. This because salvation is not perceived by many as the completed work of Christ, as it is sequenced in unreliable steps that are most unsecured. Thus, the secured viewpoint of salvation resides in the sphere where the "man" of salvation, the God-Man, Jesus Christ is seated at the Right Hand of God with all power Heaven and Earth in His Hands! The question to be asked by the sinner seeking salvation is not whether Christ died for him or her but the question is this: does the one seated on that Throne have the Power to save a sinner like me without such having to rely upon my active or passive participation? To that question, the Scriptures leave no doubt in answering: "where also He is able to save to the very end, those coming through Him (Christ) unto God -- ever living to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25). There is infinite merit in the work of the eternal sacrifice of Christ, as manifested at Calvary, even enough to save a million worlds of men. The underlined question resides in the intent of the Reconciliation, which is, for WHOM was accomplished? The Scriptures plainly answer that question: It was done for all those who MIGHT COME (HAVING COME) to Christ through His faithfulness. Who are they? The very ones that God Sovereign chose and son-positioned in Christ before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:3-6; II Thessalonians 2:14; II Timothy 1:9-10 Titus 1:2)!

The Scriptural Utility of the Doctrine of Irresistible Grace

The prime question is: what was exactly the motivational impetus for the inducement of God's election choice of designated ones other than His Sovereignty? In other words, what inspired God to save some of the depraved pit of humanity? The answer is simply not ascertainable among even the most learned scripturally scholars because such is not humanly comprehensible. God in His eternal election made a sovereign choice of certain individuals, which was in fact the effectuation of their salvation; hence, it is impossible that the manifestation of His choice can be thwarted. Otherwise God's "election to salvation" and "conferment of salvation" were not concomitant and the elect were not saved at the moment God made His choice of them before the foundation of the world. What is absolutely clear from the Grace Covenant Scriptures is that God's elect manifestly entered this present world as "children of wrath, even as others" (Ephesians 2:3); thus requiring the manifestation of deliverance from the sinfully depraved nature of mankind. Of a surety, the death of Christ was and is in the elect's stead, which is exclusively what qualifies for the deliverance of their souls and without His death, none could possibly be saved.

But the facts that escape the majority of Christendom is that Christ's death in eternity actually secured and purchased and guaranteed the salvation of His people immediately, according to God's Eternal Decree. It is the manifestation, albeit solely the testimony mode that exhibits Christ's death on the cross as bringing salvation upon His people. Else all those for whom He died would either be saved at the moment His work at Calvary was finished approximately 2,000 years ago or at the moment such ones consented to receive His sacrifice; the latter being what is predominately taught and believed. Yes, He bought salvation but He actually both bought and brought it into existence in the sphere of ETERNITY! In this light, the merit, value and efficacy of what He did were all distributed immediately, based upon His death (in eternity), as such reside in His Eternal Decree of salvation for His elect.

Eternal Life in Christ

The life Christ obtained for His people was not bestowed apart from Himself. The elect actually obtained life when they came into a living union with the one who is Life indeed. Those that are outside of Christ, are outside of life (I John 5:12) and the wrath of God abides upon them (John 3:36). Hence the obvious question is how then did designated ones receive this life in Christ? The scriptural answer is that God's exclusive process entailed His Sovereign choice (Election) through His Grace. Christ's faithful completion of His Eternal Works in Eternity is in effect His unconditional certification and conferment of salvation in behalf of His elect! Yes, there were indeed conditions which were required but they were all met in His accomplishments of addressing and satisfying every requisite of salvation before the creation of the world. This fact negates the teaching that no one can come to salvation or life in Christ except through such ones repentance and faith.

The conveyance of II Thessalonians 2:13 is, "And we ought to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, that God did choose you from the beginning to salvation, in sanctification

of the Spirit and faith of the truth." Here beginning with the middle phrase, it's conveyance: *ofti ei/lato u`ma/j o` qeo.j avparch.n eivj swthri,an (ot·ee ee-lah-to o Theh·os ahp·ahr·kheen ees so·tee·ree·ahn)* rendered "that God did choose you from the beginning to salvation." Here it is plainly stated that God chose His elect *avparch.n (ahp·ahr·kheen)* rendered "from the beginning," i.e., before "before the foundation of the World" (Ephesians 1:4) and "before times, eternal" (Titus 1:2). But God has also provided the means to that end, as conveyed by the last phase, *evn a`giasmw/ pneu,matoj kai. pi,stei avlhqei,aj (ehn ahy·ee·ahs·mo pnehv·mah·tos keh pees·tee ahl·ee·thee·ahs)* rendered "in sanctification of the Spirit and faith of the truth." Here the Greek preposition is translated *evn (eh)*, which is "in" the sphere of sanctification and *pi,stei avlhqei,aj (pees·tee ahl·ee·thee·ahs)* rendered "faith of the truth," i.e., Christ's faithfulness that belongs to truth. It follows then that if God has unconditionally chosen some and ordained that their salvation was obtained through faithfulness of the truth; then it is not required that God must do something further to insure their salvation.

Those so chosen may indeed manifestly believe but such is not necessary in order to obtain their salvation if the elect were eternally son positioned and have thus already laid hold of life in Christ, which is emphatically what the Scriptures convey! Manifestation-wise, the elect of God by their humanly depraved nature may exhibit a state of utter inability and rebellion towards Him but their salvation was ORDAINED by God from before the foundation of the world. Their salvation has been SECURED and PURCHASED by Christ in Eternity as depicted on Calvary's cross. It is strictly in this sense of grace that their salvation was actually OBTAINED and REALIZED, as a work of the Holy Spirit; in that He "irresistibly" brought them into the essence of manifested faith in Christ. Here someone's query may be: "of what use is this doctrine?" Well, it reveals where salvation actually resides, which is not in a work, gesture or consentience of mankind. Neither is salvation obtained by one believing a particular doctrine in the sphere of time nor even in such one comprehending God's eternal decree but in the Sovereignty of God's choice in Eternity! II Timothy 2:10 states: "Therefore, I endure all things for the elect's sake, which they may also receive (comprehension of) the salvation, which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." Here Paul's conveyance is that he is suffering the things he suffers because he knows that the elect have OBTAINED that salvation which resides in Christ Jesus because they were chosen TO salvation from the foundation of the world, thus his ministry engendered the impartation of this knowledge to them.

Mankind's Inability to Come

It's crystal clear from the Scriptures that all of God's elect were decreed eternal life according to God's determination as to those WHO are HIS or not. Because all men share the same contempt for God, no man on his own will manifestly come to Christ. In the language and New Covenant contents of the Kingdom Gospel, John 6:44-45 very tersely states that none "can" come to Christ except they may be (having been) "drawn." This statement that "apart from the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, no one will come to Christ," is only believed to some qualified extent. What they also believe is that this "conviction" may well be resisted and thwarted by man's stubborn will and rebellious nature but that's NOT what this passage is conveying! The Greek word *e`lku,sh| (ehl·kee·see)* is rendered "draw or drag," hence to impel, not "woo" (John 12:32). This is plainly speaking of that which manifestly brings a sinner in faith to an understanding of such a relationship in Christ. "Irresistible" does not mean that the sinner's nature does not resist God's workings! It definitively denotes that the Spirit of God overcame and conquered all resistance of human depravity replacing such with an undeniable allurement to God in the heart of the elect.

Unfortunately, other proponents of the erroneous teaching of so-called mankind's "free will" misconstrue the nature of "Irresistible Grace." What they militate against is a mental picture of the Hand of God laying hold of a lost sinner and dragging such one kicking and screaming into the Kingdom of Christ against such or "free will" to maybe choose to do otherwise." It is very important to dispel this un-scripturally skewed notion once and for all! Manifestation-wise, God's process of testimony imbues the elect being drawn by the induced internalization of the truth, wherein God opens their blind eyes to see their great need of the Savior. Hence, such ones are made willing and are thus caused to come to Christ. In fact, such ones are made feel desperate for Christ! This is of course not an "attempt" on God's part to persuade "all men" or God "trying" to talk men into something which they may or may not accept but the testimonial process is that "every" one of those so taught of God and learned; are designated ones having been caused, in manifest coming to Christ (John 6:45). In this sense, the doctrine of God's "irresistibleness" is certification that ALL

salvation is exclusively of grace. Those testifying of "being saved" may indeed believe and repent but such ones must not be tempted to misconstrue that their actions are requisite contributions to God's eternal workings of their salvation. The doctrine of God's "Irresistible Grace," clearly conveys that all conditions for salvation were eternally satisfied and it is strictly in manifestation or for the testimonial aspect that God's elect are portrayed as having been "irresistibly drawn to Him." Hence, manifested salvation simply exudes the fact that such ones respond only as they are (having been) given the grace to do so (John 6:65).

God's Exclusive Work

Perhaps the most critical lesson of all gleaned by this doctrine is that the components of salvation are things which only God can do. Men can not do anything as their contribution in coming to salvation, e.g., repenting, believing and choosing to come to Christ, which are things perceived with physical eyes. In stark contrast, the workings of the Holy Spirit in one's heart is something, which cannot be seen, so the tendency is always present to confuse the cause for the effect and the effect for the cause. This is the major doctrinal precept that has arisen from both the commingling and misuse of Kingdom Gospel and New Covenant Scripture. Consider the Prodigal Son: "he changed his mind (came to himself) about his father and his sin and made a decision to go home; hence, he actually arose and went home pleading mercy and actually found it from his father." There is the strong temptation to construe these actions on the part of the son as the cause and a reason for the mercy he received. But even in this parable, his father was not confused about cause and effect for he declares, "this, my son, was dead and is alive again; he was lost and was found" (Luke 15:24). Here the passage's conveyance is not that the son found his way but that he was found. Neither is this the case with the shepherd who sought and found his sheep nor the woman who swept her house until she found her coin; however, the passive voice in these parables exudes, as it is in the case of the Holy Spirit's work, which is indeed like the wind that is not seen directly but His effects certify that He is causative.

One striking result of the confusion about cause and effect has been the implication that salvation can be obtained by "imitating" the experience of others, i.e., "do what others did" (or thought they did), which means "kneel where they knelt, pray what they prayed and you'll be saved, too!" Today there are thousands that are walking aisles, kneeling at "prayer altars" and parroting the "sinner's prayer" while others are put through more stringent ceremonies and rituals, i.e., "water baptisms, mourner's benches and tarry rooms." They are told that because they have done these things, they are saved and are never to doubt that they received their salvation through the utilization of these divers' manners. Yet the Grace Covenant Scriptures declare that salvation engenders one's Regeneration, which requisite is "again birth," thus focusing on one's initial call and placement into the Body of Christ, in Eternity. Hence, in the sphere of time after creation, nothing in this universe "births" itself of its own will neither is the "New Birth" the production of man's will but the result of the eternal will and power of God (II Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 1:2). The elect's manifested faith and repentance are not the causes of the new "creation" but only the testimonial consequences of it! They are the testimonial responses of such having been raised from spiritual death to spiritual life. The bottom line of the matter is this: in salvation, there is simply no substitute for the eternal working of God! He alone must and did work, choose, draw, change and empower all of what salvation inevitably exerts! With men these things are impossible, yet with God; all things were and are possible! (Luke 1:37; Hebrews 6:18).

The Scriptural Utility of the Doctrine of the Preservation (not Perseverance) of the Saints

Here it is very important to distinguish the words Preservation and Perseverance. The term "Preservation" is indicative of the actualization of what has been forever accomplished in eternity, in which subsequent creation and time has no relevant effect. Contrariwise, the term "Perseverance" depicts the continuous progression of ongoing struggles even though the outcome has already been determined by God's enablement of those involved in such. The Kingdom Gospel's documentation of Jesus' declaration in Matthew 24:13: "but he who did endure unto the end, the same shall be saved," was spoken concerning the prophetic Great Tribulation and should never be construed to emulate the conformational safeguarding of one's salvation. The eschatological context of this verse is cast in a particular setting and yet the fact remains that it is not advocating that one's "ability to hold out" in the conditions and times of tribulation is a determining factor of one's salvation. Actually, the Greek participle *u'pomei,naj* (*eep·om·een·ahs*) rendered "endured," in the aorist tense denoting the predetermination of those by God's Decree that are assigned to endure, has

out, stand firm and remain under tribulation in those futuristic yet horrific times. Indeed, erroneously glean any other comprehension from this passage constitutes extreme violations of the grammatical and contextual aspects of exegesis.

Flawed perceptions are similarly gleaned regarding those that belong to Christ's household through misreading Hebrews 3:6's latter phrase, ".....if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end;" as well as also misconstruing its contextual and grammatical apportionments. It is of note that there are variances in the divers' Greek Manuscripts in that the wording "unto the end" is not in the older writings and thus not deemed from the context to be authentic. Hence, the actual wording is, ".....if the boldness and the rejoicing of the hope we might hold (having held) fast." Here note that the Greek verb *kata,schwmen(kaht-ahskh-o-mehn)* rendered "we might hold (having held) fast (firm)," is in the subjunctive mood, aorist tense and active voice, denoting manifestation of the past completed probability. Hence, the inference is that those that were eternally decreed to do so will manifest their probability holding firm in expressing the boldness (confidence) and rejoicing in their eternal hope. Hebrews 3:14 states "For we were and are made partakers of Christ, if we might hold (having held) the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end" Here also the conveyance is the manifestation of the past completed probability of ample testimony to the fact that those that were eternally decreed to do so will manifest their probability of holding firm in expressing their confidence steadfast (continuously) unto the end.

Thus the Preservation of God's people in respect to their eternal hope, which was actualized in every respect in God's Decree, is that which must be both focused and relied upon. This is in stark contrast to the premise of the Perseverance of God's people yet being progressively worked out in the sphere of time; with the guaranty and warranty of God's assurance of their continuance in service as their surety. Every age has had its share of those who once gave a seemingly valid profession of faith in Christ only to manifestly later depart away from that profession. In both the Kingdom and Grace scriptural records, there are notable cases, e.g., Simon (Magus) among the Samaritan converts (Acts 8:9-24) and Demas among those who originally accompanied Paul (Colossians 4:14; II Timothy 4:10; Philippians 1:24). Seemingly, in these times of modern day cultures, it's not uncommon to find that the vast majority of those "saved" may show very sparse scripturally testimonial evidence of their "salvation." Such results have seemingly become the rule rather than the exception yet it is to the purpose of God in demonstrating that the elect's eternal status is verified exclusively by what was accomplished in such ones behalf BEFORE times began rather than by their performance in testimony AFTER times began!

The Carnal Child of God

To the chagrin of the Legalists, Traditionalists and Synergists, the scriptural answer is readily supplied to the so-called "Carnal Christian Phenomena," which is indicative of the fact that there are those who are actual Christians, howbeit "carnal" Christians. Indeed, many of God's people abide in an immature state, hardly differing in any respect from the non-elect except that they were chosen and placed in Christ in eternity. They may even live out their days on the Earth without exhibiting any noticeable testimony whatsoever of their spiritual life, yet when they die; they have the assurance of being manifestly glorified; on the basis of their eternal placement in Christ. In all diligence to God's Word, all in Christ must be exhorted to focus on the higher level of the Christian life, i.e., ones progression to a manifested "spiritual" walk in Christ. When the Eternal Doctrines of Grace is improperly taught, they may be misconstrued by some as a haven for carnality but when they are scripturally presented, they engender fruitfulness and obedience entrenched in the knowledge of God (I Corinthians 15:34; II Corinthians 2:14; 4:6; 10:5; Ephesians 1:17; 3:19; 4:13; Colossians 1:10). Here it is of note that no evangelistic methods employed outside of the systematic teaching of God's Word, can bear the responsibility for the quality of lives of the children of God. Even if such ones are seemingly devoid of any signs of their spiritual life, none must ever dare to judge ones eternal status. Our manifested testimony is strictly a matter of God's designed enablement for each life; hence God's people might have problems in the exhibition of their growth but this should never be construed to be to the detriment of their status in Christ!

The Legalistic View

The classic view given by Legalist is of: God's people striving and even struggling to conform to His righteous standard in the pursuance of their salvation. Then when these manmade stipulations inevitably fail manifest, they simply assert that such ones were apparently never saved by misapplying the conveyance (John 2:19) or they aver that such ones were once "saved" but because of their failure to conform; they subsequently lost their salvation. This idea should be categorically rejected because of its violation of the contextual intent of the Scriptures in every dispensation and this is thus in every respect, an unscriptural view! Even though this view is skewed, it does in some respects present an honorable view of what constitutes the high requisite of the testimony of salvation when manifested in the depiction of the child God's outward conduct in this life. Further, at least it tries to be more consistent than the Synergistic view, stating that if a man can will himself INTO a state of grace, he is also able to will himself OUT of that state "free will" was the determining factor in the matter, it surely would flow in BOTH directions! However, in every respect, any view that is averring that mankind possesses this type of determinative power is both unscriptural and obnoxious.

Free Grace

Diligent study of God's Word sets forth the scriptural position that the elect are not saved by the utilization of their "free will" but by the mercy of God's "free grace" (Romans 5:15-21; Titus 3:5). Salvation was exclusively conferred by the Sovereign disposition of God, not by any acts, will or gestures of mankind. Then it follows that if it's not human acts, will or gestures that have placed God's elect IN Christ, then it stands to reason that no human acts, will or gestures or the absence of them could ever cause such ones to fall OUT of (from) Christ. The eternal salvation of God's elect abides in the scriptural documentation of such one having been chosen, redeemed, called, sanctified, justified and glorified before they were ever manifestly created (Ephesians 1:3-9). The definition of "salvation" within itself (deliverance); should be sufficient enough to depict that nothing could possibly arise to cause its recipients to be lost. God would have to be either unwilling or unable to save His electand the Scriptures' documentations are perfectly clear that neither of those suppositions are true (Romans 11:29; John 10:27-29). The Eternal Decree of God was motivated by His love, which is not fickle, i.e., here today and gone tomorrow. Those that He loves, "He loved unto the end" (John 13:1). Without question, there's no possibility that the elect of God could ever be lost!

However, there are always open questions manifestation-wise, as to whether those who have professed faith in Christ are in fact, of the elect. In effect, there are no testimonial evidences whereby someone can definitively comprehend whether or not a person's profession is genuine or real as opposed to it being false and spurious. No, only "the Lord has known those who are His" (II Timothy 2:19). In the Kingdom Gospel, John 10:27 states that Christ's "sheep" hear His voice and follow Him. But in testimonial evidence to this, Peter 1:10-11 conveyances are, ".....brethren, be diligent to make steadfast your calling and election, for doing these things, you may never stumble, for so, shall be richly supplied to you, the entrance into the Eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." Also James 2:14-26 states, one's faith should not be "dead" faith or mere mental consent of the testimony of one's outward life that is consistently exhibited by one's confession.

Finally, In the Grace Gospel, Ephesians 4:1 instruction is, ".....walk worthily of the calling with which ye were called." Colossians 1:10 conveyance is, "your walking worthily of the Lord to all pleasing, in every good work being fruitful and increasing to the knowledge of God." I Thessalonians 2:12 conveyance is "for your walking worthily of God, who is calling you to His own reign and glory." Hence, God's design for certain of His elect is that their manifested new life in Christ exudes testimonial evidence in their manifested life. This is testimony in the lives of those in Christ, which is exemplary of a new life that is itself everlasting! Thus enabled ones, the elect will manifestly endure in decreed instances because the God "..... who did begin in you a good work, will perform until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). Thus such testimonies are attributable to God's purposes in manifesting His power through His beloved, e.g., "...and by the grace of God I am what I am and His grace that towards me came not in vain but more abundantly than they all I labored, yet not I, but the grace of God that (is) with me" (I Corinthians 15:10).

Evaluating the Elect's Confession

What are the ramifications of the doctrine of the Preservation (not Perseverance) of the Saints? First provides insight regarding the status of those who seemingly once diligently served the Lord but do not currently evince whatsoever genuine faithfulness in Christ. Rather than asserting that such ones are actually saved but just carnal or that they once had salvation but have lost it, this doctrine merely states that those who profess Christ (whoever they areonly God knows), are preserved until the day of Christ. This is not true "because of" but "regardless of" their testimony. Some are quick to conclude that such ones once had the appearance of salvation but in the course of time, their discontinuance proved that it was false and thus spurious. In an attempt to certify such assertions, certain passages of Scriptures, particularly from the Kingdom Gospel, are both misconstrued and misapplied. An examples of this is their misuse of the parable of the two houses in Matthew 7:24-27: "one of which is built on sand and the other on a rock, which from without look identical, however when the storms of life beat upon both, i.e., when the trials and testing from without assault them equally, one falls while the other stands."

Here, their supposition for conclusively exposing those purported to be saved but aren't, is that: "the saint who fell to the storm, which revealed that one of the houses had no foundation, also revealed that the other one did. And the one that fell did not LOSE its foundation; it just APPEARED to have but never HAD one! When it was outwardly observed, it was assumed that it had one but the trial proved that it did not." They also convey in a like manner, the parable of Matthew 13:6: "the seed that fell and sprouted up quickly on the shallow soil but which withered away just as quickly when the hot Sun and hot wind blew upon it, didn't LOSE its root-never HAD a root!" Plus the parable of Matthew 25:3: "the foolish virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom, whose lamps went out when he appeared, didn't LOSE their oil; they just didn't HAVE any with them!" The misapplication of these parables is evinced in the fact that the conclusions of the elect's identities are never entrusted to human discernment (Matthew 13:25-30). The conveyances of these parables are from the one who determined in eternity those who were His and is thus ALONE qualified to name them.

The utmost importance of the children's of God conduct encumbers hastening the mentioning of its assignment as a prominent role in testimony of the elect's identity. Here it is of note that the best of the elect may AT TIMES be "carnally" walking after the "flesh" and in general living just like the unregenerate. In this light, one must not be too hasty in making a judgment that a confession is spurious as the result of the signs of carnality. At given times, all of God's people are in some way rebelling against Him, balking against following Christ and even striving against the Holy Spirit. However, the Scriptures' directives establish specifically that ones must "characteristically" mimic the Lord's. Under the Mosaic Covenant, King David committed both adultery and murder, yet God deemed that David was a man after His own heart. The Grace Covenant's application consistently sets forth the goal of walking in the light of knowledge, e.g., Romans 12:2 states, "and be not conformed to this age but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for your proving what (is) the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Directionally looking to God and away from Humans

The underlined issue is ones assurance of salvation, which is never attainable from the assessment of the depraved nature of mankind. In this sense, it is self-defeating to focus on a doctrine, which avers that the saints must persevere to the end in order to have any degree of true assurance in this life. How often have some been observed enthusiastically exhibiting evidence of the knowledge of Christ and then eventually falter in their testimony. Whenever the performance of humans are formulated as a factorial complement, such is automatically cast in instability, in that such is enviably linked to man's inability. After all, who can on their own accord actually guarantee that they will not turn out to be one of those who, like so many others, eventually fail in their perseverance? This is perhaps the most nebulous ramification of a doctrine that could be put on perseverance in lieu of Preservation. Not only is it important for the saints to have some assurance of the salvation but contrariwise, it's essential that they have the fullest degree of assurance. Assurance is the essence of faith, and thus can only assuredly rely on the faithfulness of Christ's eternal work on behalf of the elect, as a secured entity and that which has been laid hold upon as hope in its fullest measure (Hebrews 6:11). Further, without the assurance that God's elect are His exclusively because they are the recipients of His free grace and mercy, none could possibly live in the word with an earnest eternal expectation. The devotional goal to live as God's people ought to presuppose the unequatable fact that the elect are solely the results of such ones having been eternally made the objects of God's love, mercy and grace.

Genuinely "good" works can never flow out of the life of those who are unsure of their eternal standing w God for such ones inevitably will enthusiastically attempt to perform them "in order to be accepted" by G rather than "because they have been accepted" by Him. Hence, the teaching of the saints' perseverar presents a dilemma: How can they have such assurance in believing that the elect must endure to the e when they in all honesty know the weaknesses that inherently abide in their flesh? (Romans 7:15-25). T answer is simply that the elect have the full assurance of their Preservationnot because they are sure themselves or they are assured that God will not allow them to fail to performbut because they : assured of the eternal performance of God! They rest not in THEIR ability to persevere, but in GOD'S abi to preserve! Whether THEY are able to keep standing, they know not but they're confident in GOD'S ability keep them from falling (Romans 14:4; Jude 1:24) Whether God's people will exhibit the testimony of holdi on to God to the end is unknown but they can have total confidence in GOD'S power that has claimed the knowing that none are able to pluck them out of His Hand! Thus, come what may, they are confident having already overcomenot because they presumptuously rest in the performance of their fleshI because they have been caused to rest in the powerful Eternal accomplishments of God! Their eyes are fix upon a Savior; a Savior Who is able to keep that which they were caused to commit unto Him against tl day! (II Timothy 1:12).

Conclusion

Those whom the Lord has opened (or has decreed to open) their eyes to see the truthfulness of the "Etern Doctrines of Grace" will experience interesting encounters of stress-free serenity. To such that are bless with this internalization, serving and living for God takes on an entirely new spiritual dimension in their Eart vocational realm. This enlightenment transcends all physicality as comprehended in the Vertical View God's Eternal accomplishment of all things in (and by) His Decree in Eternity! Unfortunately, many of Go precious people revile against and malign the doctrine of Election but those that are privileged to perceive conveyances will began to understand what the Apostle Paul meant in describing the life of one who serv Christ when he stated in II Corinthians 6:9: "as unknown and yet well known!" Those who can adequat scripturally explain what they believed and why; must not resort to antagonistic or argumentative tactics I should just patiently and politely outlay scriptural reasoning of the faithfulness of God's Eternal workings Christ. Those who will listen have been decreed by God to embrace these glorious Truths.

The crux of the matter is that perseverance implies that the evidence of consistent human devotion required for authentication of salvation and the absence of ones Perseverance infers that such ones salvat may be lost or maybe never even existed. If this is true, then all are eventually LOST!" Even mo devastating, this type of cogitation is absolutely hostile to the Eternal Doctrines of Grace and confirms t misery of those held captive to such cogitation, which also runs counter to every semblance of assurar that all is well with ones soul. Contrariwise, when one receives the comprehension that all the workings salvation have already transpired in Eternity, it serves as the basis for alleviating all fears and removing evi qualm about the matter of one security in Christ. In analyzing this situation, the reaction of the opponents the doctrines espousing Eternal Security is quite puzzling when it is considered that the alternatives to th only serve as components devised to shake the assurance of salvation.

When the elect's eyes are opened to see the doctrine of unconditional election, they are filled with adorati and wonder. It is as if suddenly they have experienced relief through these answers to so many of t questions that had plagued themthe greatest of which is personally, "Why ME?" The comprehension these precious truths will suddenly remove every doubt and misunderstanding that has plagued God's peo for many years regarding their earlier plight prior to scripturally knowing the Lord. What blessing, joy a comfort that are realized from such knowledge! Yet this same doctrine that answers many questions a raises other questions that can be answered only through ones internalization that every aspect of th salvation was ontologized (came into existence) in God's Eternal Decree). Unfortunately, the same doctri that are perceived by some as such a joy and comfort, continues to be construed by others as a threat! Wl is the reasoning behind such fierce militation? Why wouldn't the saints of God be delighted to learn that th Savior eternally accomplished every requisite specifically to save them?

The knowledge that God chose and son-positioned His elect in Christ before the foundation of the wor according to His Sovereign grace and mercy, should serve as a source of constant joy and blessing. The fi

reaction experienced by many of those having come to a better understanding of this truth is: why other don't respond to these doctrines as they do. The answer is that only God can enlighten their mind to accept such magnificent Grace, which threatens their illusionary righteousness that they are trusting in for their salvation! If such ones think that they are saved because of THEIR DECISION, CHOICE or GESTURE walking down an aisle, etc., and if they are resting the hope of their soul upon these actions, whatever they were; these doctrines will be downright deadly to such humanly focused hope! So they will either have turned away from such misplaced hopes, admitting the irrelevancy of all human gestures and cast themselves on the Eternal mercy of God in Christ Jesus OR they will continue to attack these doctrines (and the proclaiming these truths) that are robbing them of sharing the glory in their hope before God.

Most of God's people don't REALLY think that they are going to Hell; however their rationales differ as to how they must proceed in certifying their eternal abode. The overwhelming majority may not lie asleep at night in agony of soul fearing that they are about to drop into Hell but they are also not sure why such a thing will happen to them. Their REASONING for escaping eternal judgment is entrenched in faulty and false MORAL rationales, i.e., "I'm not really a bad person," "I treat my fellow humans right" or "I've done (or I'm trying my best to do) everything that my church organization has teaches that God requires of me." Hence, they feel that they have complied (or they are striving to comply) with all orthodoxy and RELIGIOUS reasoning, i.e., they have been baptized, go to church, pray, read their Bibles and in general have done what God has said one must do. Yes indeed, make no mistake about it; they ALL have a reason; except these are all the WRONG reasons. Further, their TRUST is in the fact that "they have faith" and have banked the hope of their souls upon THEIR faith. The problems with this entire scenario are that all are in some way dependant upon human acts and gestures but the manifestations of none of these actions qualify as determinants upon which the elect's status eternally abides! Also, how does this relate to the salvation status of the Infant, Mentally Incapacitated and Ignorant?

The doctrines of mankind's determinable input are confrontational, in that they raise two very simple questions: "1). is the reason that you believe you're going to avoid Hell and make Heaven, based upon something YOU'VE done or something GOD did?" and 2). is your hope based upon something you've done FOR Him or upon the eternal work of eternal grace HE ACCOMPLISHED IN BEHALF OF YOU? The underlined question is which is it? Can God's people truly say, "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus Blood and Righteousness" in light of such doctrinal thinking? All other ground (and human acts) is indeed "sinking sand" because none of it can support Justification in the Day of Judgment! Every hope that dependant upon human performance is faulty and must be discarded by those whose hope would be turned from their contributions; exclusively to Christ's. Christ currently sits at the right hand of God in the Heavens (Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1), with all power in His Hands (Colossians 2:10), i.e., power to SAVE and CONDEMN. He alone is the Mighty DETERMINATOR; having Eternally Decreed the destinies of all creatures in His Hand. Thus He is also the exclusive Savior, having predestined all things including those who have been His from the beginning. Hence ALL OTHER hope must be disavowed as the exclusive hope is focus in Christ, in the Heavens. All those that have been placed in Him and are exempt from the wrath to come have the testimony that their fortunes are attributable solely to His mercy and grace.

The testimony that is conveyed through the Gospel of Grace proclaims that none were too sinful JESUS CAME to manifestly save sinners (His elect) according to those that He had seen positioned in Eternity. Men are totally depraved, helpless and are too filthy and vile to appeal to His righteous standard, hence God has granted to all His beloved, the spotless robe of His own Righteousness! None had nor have anything with which to purchase these blessings but can only give ultimate praise and glory, with empty, outstretched hands trusting only in His promises and His work performed for them in Eternity, as depicted at Calvary. He has granted Eternal Life with all its blessings solely as a free gift and there isn't anything that can impede His justice from executing the manifestation of His Eternal Decree. All who love His MERCY and GRACE must also embrace His Election and Foreordination of their salvation! Contrary to what the Legalist, Traditional Religionist and Synergist aver; those that cling to him solely on this basis are pleading "election" as the only reason they manifestly were caused to come to Christ! It is exclusively God's eternal Decree, which alone designed sinners the privilege and ability to approach Christ's throne! No, "Election" is not a problem contrariwise, it was the only solution. It is one's old sinful, satanic heart of pride that just cannot bring itself to abandon its own supposed works of righteousness and/or misperceived coessential gestures as part of their hope before God. None will be able to stand before God in the Heavens declaring "I did it MY way on my own terms!"

terms," but the testimony of the saints in the Heavenlies is that no other song is known, desired or allowed other than: "our Eternal placement in Christ was totally HIS designed purpose according as it has pleased HIM! All other dependency agencies are faithless and illusionary hopes that are erroneously focused in the manifestation mode of the Earthly transparencies of this temporary arena. Thus, the only plausible response to the WHY, HOW and WHEN questions are answered by the internalization of:

What Influence does the Actualization of Salvation in Eternity exert on the Eternal Doctrines of Grace?

"The Sovereignty of God in Election Doctrines"