

## Biblical Theology by Dr. Chuck Baynard

### Lesson 27 (HCLD 24)<sup>1</sup>

**Preparation:** Begin and end each study time with prayer. Pay particular attention to the background reading and pray over each passage asking God to reveal Himself to you.

**Background Reading:** Read all the Scripture verses in footnote # 1 & 2.

**Vocabulary:** Justification, adoption, and sanctification

**Question:** : Death, being the wages of sin, why are not the righteous delivered from death, seeing all their sins are forgiven in Christ?

**Answer:** Death being threatened as the wages of sin,[a] it is appointed unto all men once to die:[b] for that all have sinned.[c] The righteous shall be delivered from death itself at the last day, and even in death are delivered from the sting and curse of it:[d] so that, although they die, yet it is out of God's love,[e] to free them perfectly from sin and misery,[f] and to make them capable of further communion with Christ in glory, which they then enter upon.[g]<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 24

Q62: But why cannot our good works be the whole or part of our righteousness before God?

A62: Because the righteousness which can stand before the judgment seat of God must be perfect throughout and entirely conformable to the divine law,[a] but even our best works in this life are all imperfect and defiled with sin.[b]

- a. Gal. 3:10; Deut. 27:26
- b. Isa. 64:6; James 2:10; Phil. 3:12

Q63: Do our good works merit nothing, even though it is God's will to reward them in this life and in that which is to come?

A63: The reward comes not of merit, but of grace.[c]

- c. Luke 17:10; Rom. 11:6

Q64: But does not this doctrine make men careless and profane?

A64: No, for it is impossible that those who are implanted into Christ by true faith, should not bring forth fruits of thankfulness.[d]

- d. Matt. 7:18; Rom. 6:1-2; John 15:5

<sup>2</sup> a. Rom. 6:23  
b. Heb. 9:27  
c. Rom. 5:121.  
d. I Cor. 15:26, 55-57; Heb. 2:15  
e. Isa. 57:1-2; II Kings 22:20  
f. Rev. 14:13; Eph. 5:27  
g. Luke 23:43; Phil 1:23

The only two exceptions in Scripture we know are those of Enoch and Elijah, though we have no reason to not believe they were translated, that is given a new spiritual body for the trip into the presence of God. In fact, from what we know from Scripture and the nature of heaven and the sureness of God's word that it is given unto man once to die, then the judgment, we can be sure that though they appear from earth to have ascended into heaven without first tasting of death, that this is no different than the saints on earth will experience when Christ returns, who will be translated, as they are caught up to meet Christ in the air. Thus we could give a very emphatic yes in answer to the question do all men die and stand on the solid word of God in so doing.

I don't agree that death is threatened in Scripture as some teach, I think it is a sure judgment pronounced from the throne of God. The Westminster Assembly combine three key Scriptures, and rearrange the words thereof into the statement before us. Thus every word in the answer is from Scripture and I would think only the fool would try and cavil with this answer.

To that end though we see the mass of humanity from the beginning try and find another way than death, to become immortal. That having failed throughout recorded history, man early on denied the finality of death and that it was the end of the story and in the fancy of their imaginations began to create schemes whereby there is a succession of life upon life until man becomes God. We find this same theme of upward movement to godhood in the Mormon religion for example. Most religions other than that of the Bible and Christ have such a method for the continuance of life in paradise, whether directly achieved or through a succession of lives on earth. The only portion of this that has any truth of course is that this death is not the end, but the beginning of life. Only the Bible truthfully lays out this truth that for man death is a certainty, and there is only one way to reach this dreamed of paradise of man, which is the reality of life in Christ.

To this end Christianity is an exclusive religion and thus the very present danger to the church of compromise with so called people of faith from other disciplines. Christianity is not a learned discipline, but a loving obedience to the one and only living God. True we teach our children, and study to show ourselves approved, but the "way" of life is internal with the regeneration of the heart and mind. We have an organic union with Christ that exists both in this life and the one to come. Man was never destined to become a god, but to glorify the one God of creation. Because God chose to create man in His own image, with a living soul and ability to reason, along with the will to do so, man has seen himself even as Satan did, the ultimate not only of creation, but all things and able even to ascend to the throne of God and usurp the power of the Creator.

The world is filled with denominations that all claim to be the true Christian church. Not all can be correct. The reformed faith being no different than the rest in this sense, many of her faithful seem to consider all that do not believe as they do to be in gross error or completely apostate needing not revival, but evangelism to introduce them to Christ. I think we err in this and that the Gospel story is very simple and the requirements of being of the family are much broader in this respect than many of us are willing to concede. Surely this was (is) the position of the Jew in the day of Christ and before. They considered all outside the Jewish religion to be destined for eternal darkness. It was not true then as the advent of the Christ and resulting manifestation of the new covenant accompanied by a new canon for the church of God has proven. The long awaited promise to Abraham, to be a blessing to many nations was made manifest.

Even in the day of the apostles we find that the spirit of the anti-Christ was already at work and false teachers abounded to lead the unwary (non-elect) away. Yet this is not always the case within the overall church of God on earth today. We have a multitude of differences in our understanding of Scripture, the application and use of the sacraments, the corporate structure of worship, and the list could continue. The truth then is that all of the invisible church does not exist within the same visible church. However, within all true churches we will find a core doctrine of the triune God. May then the unity of the

Holy Spirit so hold dominion over all of the true church that in her diversity, she still is one, even as God is one.

The big “T” will continue to exist and control all but the elect until our Lord returns for His bride, the church. Perhaps the biggest “if” in all of Scripture is found in Matthew 24:24 where we read “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Here lies the power of the elect, because of the indwelling Holy Spirit, to be enabled to test the spirits and know the truth. In the flesh as it is written the will still abides, and of the will flows all evil. Nonetheless as the Lord explained at the time He was accused of casting out demons by the power of the prince of darkness and not of God, less a man first enter the home and bind the strong man, he cannot rob him. Thus in our union with Christ, we are given power over sin, for none can bind God and God the Holy Spirit lives within each of the believers. We are forgiven and justified in the sight of God, given a new position in Christ and protected from the evil of our own flesh. The sin (evil) is not removed, but its power is harnessed so to speak, that it no longer can control the elect. It is only from this position that man can see just how total the depravity is, and that it has an affect upon all the faculties of man.

Here too we find that blessed assurance so that while it is a truth that all men must die, for the believer this is not defeat, nor the end of things, but entrance into the presence of God. Our edifice is not of self, but Christ, and we are set free to accomplish the one duty assigned by God in the creation mandate, to glorify God, that we might reach the destiny that accompanies obedience to God for the elect alone, that we enjoy Him forever. Whereby we can with the apostle proclaim to die for me is gain. How complete, how beautiful the salvation of the Lord.

Once more I place before us the proposition that where we find one petal of the TULIP, the other four will flow by necessity. Here petal one once more exists in all its beauty and glory, and it is no stretch to see the other four are included, that we too may ask, O’ grave where is your victory, O’ death where is your sting?

The necessity of all five tenets of Christian doctrine are more easily explained at places like this where the Big T (total depravity) is so apparent. This being the correct sequence or beginning point, that is man is depraved in all his faculties and cannot save himself. Nothing less than God’s eternal love shown in His grace toward the elect could effect the salvation of such as mankind became in the fall. We find few detractors when each of these first two points are presented alone. Yet like grace, faith, justification, etc. each must stand alone, at least for purposes of explanation and study. Divisions begin with tenet three and limited atonement. Some give lip service to the last point, perseverance of the saints, but their denial of the previous two actually removes the foundation for perseverance. Nonetheless, you can begin with any point and see that the five are of such an interwoven whole each does indeed flow from the others of necessity.

### **Suggested Sermon Outline**

**Doesn’t Grace Make People Careless?**

**Romans 7**

**But why cannot our good works be our righteousness before God, or at least a part of it?**

Because the righteousness which can stand before the judgment of God must be absolutely perfect and wholly in conformity with the divine Law. But even our best works in this life are all imperfect and defiled with sin.

**Will our good works merit nothing, even when it is God's purpose to reward them in this life, and in the future life as well?**

This reward is not given because of merit, but out of grace.

**But does not this teaching make people careless and sinful?**

No, for it is impossible for those who are ingrafted into Christ by true faith not to bring forth the fruit of gratitude.

## **I. Good Works which Aren't Perfect Don't Count as Good**

**A. Any variation disqualifies something from perfection.** For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* (GALATIANS 3:10)

**B. God rejects the human tendency to adapt and excuse flaws in ourselves.** *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.* And all the people shall say, Amen. (DEUTERONOMY 27:26)

**C. Even the very best believers have to offer is still defective.** But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and *all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. (ISAIAH 64:6)

## **II. God's Rewards Are Rooted in Grace Not Obligation**

**A. A believer's best behavior cannot get beyond ordinary obligations to God.** So likewise ye, *when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.* (LUKE 17:10)

**B. We have nothing to give God which did not first come from Him.** But *who am I*, and what *is* my people, *that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?* for all things *come* of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. *For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.* O LORD our God, *all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.* (1 CHRONICLES 29:14-16)

**C. What imaginable thing could we give God to gain an advantage with Him.** *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?* (JOB 22:2-3)

**D. Observe the pattern in Paul's testimony.** For *I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle*, because I persecuted the church of God. *But by the grace of God I am what I am:* and

his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but *I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* (1 CORINTHIANS 15:9-10)

**E. Learn to trust God rather than your own best judgment.** *All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits. Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.* (PROVERBS 16:2-3)

**F. Accept the apostles' attitude.** *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:* (PHILIPPIANS 3:8-9)

### III. True Faith Won't Be Careless

**A. The fundamental nature will show through life.** *Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.* (MATTHEW 7:16-17)

**B. Carelessness and faithfulness are incompatible.** *Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.* (JAMES 3:12)

**C. Those who actually belong to Christ are so bound to Him that He works out through them.** *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.* (JOHN 15:5)