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**PART 2:**  
**SALVATION APPLIED (Page 126)**

**I. Salvation Applied by God in Eternity Past**

God does have a predetermined plan for the ages (Isa 46:10; Acts 4:28). Christ's death on the cross did not catch God by surprise for it had been planned in the eternal counsels of God (Acts 2:23; Heb 13:20; 1 Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8). God determines all events either in the direct sense that He causes something to happen or in the indirect sense that He allows something to happen by foreknowing it but not intervening to change it. In the day-to-day course of life, we do things and make decisions that seem from our perspective to be based upon our own choices. However, God controls all. Sometimes God has narrowed our course of action so that we never really had a choice at all. Other times we are genuinely operating on our own initiative by God's permission. The most important soteriological aspects to God's sovereign control are the subjects of predestination and election. In what sense does God choose and predestine a person to be saved?

**A. Factors Influencing One's View of Election**

The proper method of interpreting Scripture is to interpret difficult truths (such as election and predestination) in the light of clearer truths. There can be no doubt that God's compassion and plan of salvation is universal in scope.

**1. God Loves the Whole World**

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” [John 3:16].

**2. Christ Died for the Whole World** (See verses on unlimited atonement in Chapter 9, Part 1, VII.C, p. 123.) The work of the cross was for the whole world (redemption, 2 Pet 2:1; reconciliation, 2 Cor 5:19; propitiation, 1 John 2:2).

“Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” [John 1:29].

“...and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh” [John 6:51].

“...God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent” [Acts 17:30].

...that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone [Heb 2:9].

**3. The Gospel Message of Salvation is Directed to All People**

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” [Matt 28:19]

“[A]nd that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations...” [Luke 24:47].

“...you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” [Acts 1:8].

#### **4. God Says He Desires All to be Saved**

“Thus it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish” [Matt 18:14].

...who desires all men to be saved [1 Tim 2:4].

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance [2 Pet 3:9].

...And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely [Rev 22:17 (KJV)].

#### **5. Basis for Eternal Condemnation is Failure to Accept Christ** (For details see Chapter 6, Footnote 5, p. 65.) Each person is accountable and must be responsible for his own eternal destiny.

“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” [John 3:18].

...when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus [2 Thes 1: 7-8].

#### **6. Conclusion** These simple Bible facts must be incorporated into any specific views on election and predestination. Since God wants “all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth,” it is difficult to maintain He has decreed only some to salvation. Since God has commanded “all men everywhere to repent,” it is difficult to believe He has devised a system in which the major responsibility for repentance or unrepentance lies with Himself rather than with man. Since the primary basis for eternal condemnation is not inherited or personal sin, but rather failure to accept Christ, it is difficult to adopt a position in which the majority have no real responsibility for whether or not they accept Christ. Indeed, if Calvinism is true, most people simply are *unable* to accept Christ because God has not chosen them. The result is that there is no remaining basis for eternal condemnation. God does not condemn in the eternal sense for sin. How could He condemn a soul for unbelief if God Himself is primarily responsible for belief or for unbelief?

Some are willing to accept all of these contradictions in their theology. To them the doctrines of election and predestination are conundrums, mysterious doctrines that must be accepted even if not understood. It is true that a doctrine can be true without being well understood. However, it is better not to give up prematurely in an effort to understand the Bible. Perhaps it is possible to view election and predestination in a way so that they are compatible with the simple facts about God’s universal compassion and worldwide plan for salvation.

## **B. The Reason for God's Program of Election**

Satan blinds all unsaved people to the Gospel. Unless there is conviction by the Holy Spirit, the natural man cannot see the importance of revealed truth. He may intellectually know of a cross and a death, but blindness prevents receptivity or an appreciation for the truth. There is no welcoming of the truth. There is no impression that the Gospel is important, precious, relevant, significant. If God did nothing to dispel this blindness, there would be no salvation at all. Unless God had intervened, no one would have ever understood the Gospel.

The blindness of unsaved humanity is a primary factor that makes a system of election absolutely imperative. God must take the initiative to dispel darkness and blindness in a lost person's heart. The Holy Spirit penetrates that darkness so that the Gospel is fully understood. Then, and only then, is it possible for the person to exercise his or her own faith in Christ. There will be more evidence for the Holy Spirit's role in election on the following pages. God does not give the faith, but He makes it possible for faith to be expressed. These verses establish that man is blinded to the truth. Therefore, a program of election was necessary if salvation were to ever be applied.

"No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day" [John 6:44].

And a certain woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul [Acts 16:14].

"...to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God" [Acts 26:18].

For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness...[1 Cor 1:18].

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised [1 Cor 2:14].

...in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel...[2 Cor 4:4].

## **C. The Basis of God's Program of Election**

Scripture makes a direct connection between election/predestination and foreknowledge. God does not arbitrarily and unconditionally choose one soul for heaven and shut the other out to inevitable hell. God knows all the people who will ever believe, if given enlightenment. Yet, even those with a latent potential for faith will never respond unless their blindness is penetrated and dispelled by God Himself so their faith can be exercised. Therefore, God has a program of election to reach all of those whom He foreknows will believe if the blindness is dissipated. His election is conditional. It is conditioned upon a foreknowledge of potential faith. God does not irresistibly cause the faith, but

He causes understanding of the gospel so that the expression of the person's faith can take place. God also knows those who have no potential for faith. They would never believe regardless of the amount of God's gracious efforts. Apparently, many of these still receive conviction (John 16:8-11); yet, regardless of whether these "non-elect" are recipients of a convicting work of the Holy Spirit, God knows they will never believe. He holds them accountable for not having any latent potential for faith, and He certainly did not actively decree their unbelief (though He does not force belief and thus indirectly decrees unbelief). No one who would have ever believed will be in hell.<sup>39</sup> Just as it is a mistake to fail to incorporate God's universal love into views of His sovereignty, it is also a serious mistake to fail to note the connection between election, predestination, and foreknowledge. God's election and predestination means that anyone foreknown to have a potential for faith will have an opportunity to have blindness removed by the Holy Spirit so that he can understand the gospel and so that the result will be faith and salvation.

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren [Rom 8:29].

...who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood...[1 Pet 1:1,2].

Because unsaved man is blind (1 Cor 1:18; 2:14; 2 Cor 4:4) and God's work is necessary to penetrate the darkness (John 6:44; 16:8-11; Acts 16:14; 26:18), one would expect the Scriptures to associate election with the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit. A person is not so much chosen to salvation: in reality God chooses those with a latent potential for faith to be recipients of the Holy Spirit's ministry to cause enlightenment to the gospel. Then the individual's latent faith can become an expressed faith. The connection between the Holy Spirit and election is found in 2 Thes 2:13 and 1 Pet 1:2. Keep in mind that sanctification means "setting apart". The elect are chosen to be set apart to a special work of grace and influence of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit penetrates and dispels blindness, and then faith can occur.

...God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth [2 Thes 2:13].

...who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood...[1 Pet 1:1-2].

#### **D. The Ultimate Goal for God's Program of Election**

It is common for the doctrines of predestination and election to cause a focus upon the time of conversion. They do pertain to the time of salvation. However, the teachings of predestination and election have implications far beyond the

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<sup>39</sup> The author does not view man's will as totally free. Still, God can righteously hold a person accountable for his or her eternal destiny. Either a person rejects the truth after direct enlightenment, or God foreknows that he would eternally do so even if given enlightenment. God knows there would not be faith in Christ regardless of the frequency or strength of His merciful efforts.

time of enlightenment and reception of Christ as Savior. Eph 1:5 says, “He predestined us to adoption as sons....” While the term *adoption* gives rise to the thought of time of entering a family, Biblical authors give the term the more general meaning of *son-placing*, and they commonly associate adoption with inheritance and a level of maturity.

In Gal 4:5-7 adoption does refer to the time of entering God’s family and becoming an “heir apparent” (one who is named as an heir but does not yet possess all the inheritance). The believer in Christ is placed as a mature son as compared to a lesser degree of maturity that the “children” of God had under the Law System. He is presently an heir but doesn’t have full possession of the inheritance.

However, in Rom 8:23 the term *adoption* has a future thrust. It refers to the “redemption of our body,” i.e., the “son-placing” in which we become like the Lord Jesus Christ as a glorified human (1 John 3:2). Believers will become mature sons at this future point, and then they will obtain full inheritance as opposed to being just named as heirs. This progression is also implied in the context of Rom 8:15 and following. Those with the Spirit of adoption (v. 15) are heirs (v. 17). Yet, they are awaiting their full glory and full inheritance (vv. 17-18). The first fruits or partial inheritance is a reality (v. 23), but a more complete “son-placing” is a future event when our bodies become like mature sons of God after the pattern of Christ (v. 23; see also 1 John 3:2). It is significant for the doctrine of predestination and election that, further in the context, Paul links the outcome of predestination to being conformed to the image of Christ (v. 29) and full glorification (v. 30). Adoption, while referring to the entrance into God’s family at salvation, also refers to a future “son-placing” when believers are mature sons after the image of a glorified Christ. Paul teaches in Romans 8 that Christians are predestined to this future adoption, “son-placing.”

When the context of Eph 1 is considered, it seems best to view the term *adoption* as also giving a future orientation as in Rom 8:23 (rather than a more present orientation as in Gal. 4:5 and Rom 8:15). The phrase itself, “He predestined us to adoption as sons,” is capable of meaning, “He predestined us to enter God’s family at salvation” or “He predestined us to obtain glorification, a full inheritance, and a full son-placing when we are mature sons like Christ.” In the Ephesians 1 context, Paul goes on to speak on the topic of inheritance. Believers have a down payment, or “pledge,” of their inheritance but the full inheritance is future (v. 14). Verse 14 is also dealing with the redemption of believer’s bodies and is in ideology and phraseology reminiscent of Romans 8. Both Eph 1:5 and Rom 8:15ff. teach that believers are going to receive full inheritance and redemption of their bodies. Romans 8 specifically includes the idea that a future adoption (son-placing) is predestined. In fact the final goal of predestination is not conversion but glorification. Because of the parallels between Romans 8 and Ephesians 1, it is difficult to exclude future aspects when Paul speaks of predestination to son-placing in Eph 1:5. Both books are by the same author.

When Paul teaches about predestination and the “adoption of sons” in Eph 1:5, he probably does have the “son-placing” (which initially brings us into God’s family) in mind as in Gal 4:5ff. and Rom 8:15. However, to stop with this is incomplete. It actually misses the main goal of God’s predestination. Paul is also teaching that believers have been predestined to obtain their full “son-placing,” i.e., the glorification of their bodies after the image of a mature Son, Jesus Christ. Believers are predestined to the possession of their inheritance. Election and predestination must be given a future thrust. They are teachings that make the doctrine of Eternal Security unquestionable. The elect are predestined to eternal glory.

In summary, God foreknows all those with a latent potential for faith. Not one will miss salvation. He chooses them to be special recipients of the Holy Spirit’s enlightenment. Blindness is removed so that the individual’s faith responds. This leads to a “son-placing” or adoption. Yet, election and predestination do not end at conversion. Regardless of whether election is viewed as conditional or unconditional, all should agree a proper view of God’s sovereignty needs to include a future orientation. These doctrines are controversial, but they are a blessing. Believers are inevitably predestined to a future “son-placing” with its future inheritance and future glory being conformed to the image of His Son (Rom 8:29-30). Nothing and no one can stop this destiny for it is an immutable decree by a sovereign God.

## **II. Salvation Applied in This Life to Those Who Comply with God's Condition for Salvation (Page 130)**

### **A. Introduction**

If one browses a typical tract rack in a Bible-believing church, he may be surprised at the number of terms and phrases that are given as conditions for salvation. Gospel appeals come across variously as “believe,” “repent,” “confess,” “deny self,” “yield,” “surrender,” “receive,” “accept,” “make Jesus Lord,” “ask Jesus into the heart,” “forsake all,” etc. Sometimes the terms are combined to give three, four, or five steps to salvation (e.g., first repent, then believe, then confess, and so forth). Do all of these terms mean the same thing? Is there one, or is there more than one, condition for salvation? Before a Christian is ready to witness, and certainly before an evangelist is equipped to speak in public, the question, “What must they do to be saved?” must be answered with precision.

### **B. Believe, Trust, and Exercise Faith**

Many scriptural texts present the only condition for salvation as being belief (synonyms: trust and faith). In fact, there are over 150 New Testament passages where salvation is conditioned upon believing alone. If any other requirement is added, it will cause these verses to be incomplete and misleading. Therefore, all terms that express a condition genuinely necessary for salvation (such as repentance) must be interpreted as to be compatible with a salvation based upon faith alone. Terms that cannot be made compatible with faith alone as a condition for salvation are used improperly and dangerously at best and, at worst, are sheer heresy. All Protestant theologians began with that basic tenet of the Reformation, *sola fide*, faith alone. Here are some of the key texts where the Bible declares faith alone brings salvation:

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” [John 3:16].

“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” [John 3:18].

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life” [John 5:24].

“For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day” [John 6:40].

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life” [John 6:47].

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” [John 11:25-26].

Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name [John 20:30-31].

“[A]nd through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things...” [Acts 13:39].

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household” [Acts 16:30-31].

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...[Rom 1:16].

...even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe...[Rom 3:22].

...whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith [Rom 3:25].

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law [Rom 3:28].

...since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one [Rom 3:30].

But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness...[Rom 4:5].

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ [Rom 5:1].

For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed”....So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ [Rom 10:11,17].

“[N]evertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.” [Gal 2:16]

Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham [Gal 3:6-7].

Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, “the righteous man shall live by faith” [Gal 3:11].

But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe [Gal 3:22].

Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith [Gal 3:24].

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus [Gal 3:26].

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast [Eph 2:8-9].

It is possible to accept the Scriptural fact that faith alone saves but give a wrong definition to faith. It is imperative that saving faith be accurately defined by Scriptural contexts.

**1. The Hebrew Background for the Meaning of Faith** With the exception of Dr. Luke, all the New Testament authors were Jews, and all the authors were conversant with the Old Testament. Their understanding of faith would be based upon the meaning of faith in the Old Testament.

The Hebrew word for “to believe” is *aman*, which relates to our word *Amen*. In some verbal stems (*qal/niphal*), the word means “to be firm, to support, to be secure, to be faithful.” B.B. Warfield, that great theologian from Princeton, said *aman* describes “whatever holds, is steady, or can be depended upon.”<sup>40</sup> This definition is based upon observation of how *aman* is used in the Old Testament.

*Aman* (in the *qal* stem) is used of people who are caretakers for children who support and sustain them (support by literally carrying them or by financial support). The word means “foster father” or “nurse” in Num. 11:12, Ruth 4:16, 2 Sam 4:4, 2 Kings 10:1,5; Esth. 2:7; Isa 49:23; Lam. 4:5. A guardian, nurse, nanny, foster father is someone on whom the infant utterly depends. He or she is reliable, trustworthy, dependable, firm, and supportive. *Aman* is used (in the *qal* stem) of door posts and pillars which are supportive, secure, firm, in 2 Kings 18:16 and with a negative in Jer. 15:18 to describe an unreliable stream.

Another grammatical form of *aman* (the *niphal*) yields the same meaning. The word refers to something that is firm, supportive, and dependable. Isaiah uses the word of a wall that can securely hold a nail in Isa 22:23, 25 and of supporting children in Isa 60:4. There are references to a stream that can be relied upon to provide water and not go dry in Isa 33:16 and a kingdom that will be stable in 2 Sam 7:16. When this form of *aman* is used of personal beings, the meaning is that God can be depended upon to keep a promise (e.g., Deut. 7:9; Psa 89:28) and that a treasurer can be relied upon in handling money (Neh. 13:13). These examples prove that the Hebrew word *aman* refers to firmness, dependability, faithfulness, trustworthiness, and reliability.

From these usages one would expect that the causative form of *aman* (the *hiphil*) means not so much to be firm, dependable and so forth, but to “consider someone or something to be firm, dependable, faithful, trustworthy, reliable.” The change is from being a faithful one to considering another to be a faithful one. When we consider another to have these characteristics we are trusting them, depending upon them, relying upon them. This is a basic meaning to Hebrew ideas of faith. The specific meanings might range from intellectually accepting a fact to trusting upon a

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<sup>40</sup> Benjamin B. Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies*, ed. Samuel G. Craig, reprint ed. (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1968) 429.

person.

Hab. 1:5 uses believe in the sense of to intellectually believe the truth of a message. Verses that seem to contain the idea of trust often use the phrase *to believe in*. The idea of trust seems to be included in these Old Testament references using *aman* (*hiphil* stem) Gen 15:6; Ex. 14:31; Num. 14:11; Deut. 1:32; 9:23; 28:66; 2 Kings 17:14; 2 Chron. 20:20; Job 24:22; Psa 27:13; 78:22; 106:24; Isa 28:16; 43:10. Sometimes both the ideas of intellectually believing a fact and trusting a person are combined. In Num. 14:11, Deut. 1:32, and 9:23, belief is the opposite of the Israelite failure to invade Canaan from Kadesh-Barnea. In other words, they should have both intellectually believed the message that God would give them the land, but also they should have trusted Him enough to begin the conquest. In Ex. 4:31 the people believed intellectually Moses' message that God was going to lead them out of Egypt, but they also believed in the sense of trust. In Isa 7:9 Isaiah wants King Ahaz to believe intellectually in the prediction of deliverance from enemies, but he also wants the king to have confidence and assurance in God's gracious promise.

Contrasts and parallels help define a word. In Psa 27:13-14 *aman* is parallel to hope and in Psa 78:22 it is parallel to another Hebrew word that means trust. 2 Kings 17:14 and Deut. 9:23 show that faith is the opposite of rebellion, i.e., allegiance.<sup>41</sup> In Hab. 2:4, "the just shall live by faith," is contrasted with the pride exhibited by the insolent and self-assertive Babylonians. Thus, faith is humble dependence.

New Testament authors carry over these concepts of the meaning of faith into their teachings. Therefore, we would anticipate that to them faith in God would mean to consider God to be secure, firm, dependable and trustworthy. Viewed from man's perspective this is called trust, confidence, dependence, and reliance.

- 2. Saving Faith: What It Is Not** The New Testament is clear that saving faith is more than intellectual faith in certain facts about Jesus or orthodox doctrines (James 2:19; John 2:23-24; 3:2). Nicodemus believed in the existence of God and that Jesus was sent by Him as a miracle worker, but the Lord told him that he still needed salvation (John 3:3ff.). James reminds us that even demons intellectually believe in correct doctrine (James 2:19; see also Matt 4:3; 8:29; Mark 1:34; 3:11; 5:7; Luke 8:28; Acts 16:17; 19:15).<sup>42</sup> Saving faith does indeed include a belief in certain key facts about Christ. Yet, saving faith is more than intellectual faith.

You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder [James 2:19].

If intellectual assent to doctrine is not saving faith, neither is the attitude that could be called emotional or temporal faith. Emotional faith is the kind

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<sup>41</sup> This study argues that saving faith can exist in a heart that is less than totally yielded to Christ's authority. However, this does not mean saving faith can exist with total rebellion.

<sup>42</sup> In Matt 4:3 *if* means "since." Satan concedes that Jesus is the Son of God.

of faith that the crowds expressed when they proclaimed Christ as their king on Palm Sunday (Matt 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19). In these accounts one reads of great emotional assertions about Christ. The crowd cried, "Blessed is the king of Israel!" "Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord" and "Hosanna to the Son of David." Nevertheless, one week later the same crowd shouted, "Let Him be crucified," "His blood be upon us and our children" (Matt 27:22 and 25), and "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). Why was there such a change?

The Jewish people on Palm Sunday were expressing an emotional or temporal faith. They wished to accept Jesus solely as a political deliverer from their present distresses, mainly the Romans. Earlier in His ministry the people were desirous of making Jesus king by force (John 6:15). They wanted Jesus to save them from their temporal problems, but that is all they really wanted from Him (John 6:26). They did not care about a spiritual Savior from sin. Christ resisted such an emotional and temporal faith. The crowds got all excited and were willing to believe He could deliver from temporal political problems, but there was no real spiritual interest in being saved from sin. This type of emotional faith is described as "seed on rocky places" in the parable of the sower. The message is received with emotional joy, but, since there is no depth, the results are temporary (Matt 13:20-21; Mark 4:16-17; Luke 8:13). They wanted a political savior, or a medical savior, or an economic savior, but not a Savior from sin.

Today a person may desire Jesus to save them from sickness, a broken relationship, combat, financial burdens, etc., and may genuinely believe He can help in such temporal problems. They may even be excited about it. Of course, it is neither wrong nor unwise to want help from Christ for these trials, but this type of faith by itself is not saving faith. If all a person wants from Jesus Christ is that He will take away a given temporal trouble, yet he could care less about being saved from his sins, this is not saving faith. Believing that Jesus can help in taking away a problem is not the same as believing in Jesus as Savior from one's sin and guilt. Many people respond to high-pressure gospel invitations out of emotional turmoil or confusion. They walk aisles with hearts full of problems. They may even believe Christ can solve these problems and may beg Him to do so. Yet, if there is not also trust in Jesus Christ to save from sin, then all that results is an emotional religious experience that makes one temporarily feel better about life's problems. Such an emotional or temporal faith in Jesus to make life better is not saving faith and does not endure.

"And those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away" [Luke 8:13].