

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**

Chapter 10- Luke 10:25-28

200- The Way to Heaven- Part 2

May 5, 2013

Luke 10:25-28

25 And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 And He said to him, "**What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?**"

27 And he answered, "**YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.**"

28 And He said to him, "**You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE.**"

To the Glory of God

For a number of years now- I have made the contention that far too many people in the modern Church have lost the concept of two very important aspects of the Bible:

- ✓ God
- ✓ Man

As the modern Church becomes increasingly occupied with teachings and efforts designed to make this life more comfortable and less risky- the knowledge of what the Bible reveals about both God and Man goes lacking. I do not believe that most people who sit in the pews of the modern visible Church know the God of the Bible in all the Particularities that He has chosen to reveal about Himself. And

because they do not know the Character and the Nature of the one true living God in all their glorious Distinctions- their understanding of Who God is and what God does and why God does it- is skewed. It is warped; it is sorely lacking in the detail that would renew their minds and inform their hearts and change their lives.

And because that is true- far too many people in the modern Church no longer wonder after God- they wonder after the special effects of the latest movie- but not after God. They are not amazed at God- they are amazed at the new app on their smart phone. They are not in awe of God- they are in awe of the power and the glory of Government. They do not respect God- they respect people who openly and blatantly promote sin and who attempt at making sexual perversion normal and acceptable. And they do not fear God- they fear men with bombs.

And the result of this lack of wonder and amazement and awe and respect and fear of God results in a breathtaking collapse of Biblical holiness in the lives of modern believers and it results in an amazing toleration of terrible and pervasive and habitual sins; and a general devaluation of God in music and art and in preaching and in thought and in books and in conversation that borders on blasphemy and it results in the invention and the creation and the pursuit of strange new doctrines and teachings and practices that are not found in the Bible and a resurgence and acceptance of ancient pagan heresies and false teachings that have already been confronted and exposed and rejected by the Church many centuries ago. And yet over 2,500 years ago- the weeping prophet Jeremiah said that knowing God and His various Attributes was the highest and most noble effort by anyone when he said this in **Jeremiah 9:23&24**

**23 Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches;
24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.**

And along with this glaring lack of knowledge of God- we have also lost the understanding of *ourselves* from a Biblical perspective. Most people today have bought into what Sociology teaches about Man

and what Psychology and Psychiatry teaches about Man and his behavior and the issue of Sin and Salvation and what they call "the basic goodness of the human soul"- but we don't know what God has said about Man.

And because we no longer understand God or Man- we have a very small and narrow and shallow and frivolous understanding about what it means to be lost and what it means to be saved and what sin is and exactly what it takes for a sinful a man to pass through God's Judgment of his life.

And that loss is reflected in all the teachings in the modern Church that center on exalting and making much of Man and of Man's effort and Man's activity in his own Salvation and a *devaluation* of the magnificence of God's Grace and a minimization of the opulence of God's Mercy and an almost total rejection of the majesty of God's Sovereignty in the saving of sinful souls.

The pulpits of the modern Church are filled with politics and social issues and patriotism and moral pronouncements but they are not filled with God. They are not filled with God or with the *particularities* of God's Glory and so the people of God are left with very vague and very *general* information about God that leave our heads empty of the infinite Majesty and Worth and Awe of the spectacular Glory of God.

And that is why, for example- most of us are no longer captured or overwhelmed by **The Glory of God's Eternality** and our minds no longer explode with the knowledge that God never had a beginning. Or why we are not amazed at **The Glory of God's Omniscience** that makes Quantum Physics look like a first grade reader. Or **The Glory of God's Wisdom** and we no longer stand in awe of the fact that God has never and will never be counseled by anybody. Or **The Glory of God's Omnipotence** in that God is Almighty so much so that without God's allowance- no man or beast or angel or demon on earth or in Heaven or in hell moves once single inch. Or in **The Glory of God's Providence** whereby no bird hops on the ground and not one single leaf in the Amazon Forest falls to the ground and not one hair on our head turns white. Or **The Glory of God's Word** which upholds the entire universe and all the atoms and all the subatomic particles in it as well as all the galaxies and all the stars. Or **The Glory of God's Power** to walk on water and raise the dead and heal organic diseases and curse fig trees and open blind eyes and raise the dead. Or **The**

Glory of God's Purity whereby Jesus Christ never, ever sinned one single time; Jesus never had a bad attitude for even one millisecond; He never lusted- not one single time; He never coveted- ever; He never was envious or enacted vengeance. Or **The Glory of God's Trustworthiness**- God *always* keeps His Word and He has never let one single Promise fall to the ground and He *cannot* lie. Or **The Glory of God's Justice**- whereby- at the end of all time- there will be no outstanding accounts left open and *everything* will be forever settled either on the Cross or in Hell- every man, woman and child will either be redeemed or they will burn forever in Hell and there will be absolutely no injustice. Or **The Glory of God's Patience**- as God endures decade after decade after decade of Blair Bradley's sin and agonizingly slow Sanctification. Or **The Glory of God's Slave like Obedience**- as Jesus fully embraced the most excruciating death ever invented by Man in humble and joyful obedience to His Father. Or **The Glory of God's Wrath** which one day will be poured out in such infinite fierceness that men and women and children will cry for the rocks to fall on them to hide them rather than have to look on the Face of the Lamb of God. Or **The Glory of God's Grace**- which justifies the ungodly; or **The Glory of God's Love** that dies for us while we are yet sinners.

But until we grasp and until we are so overwhelmed with all of the *Particularities* of God's Glory- to the point where we thunder it from our pulpits and are consumed by it in our own daily lives; Until we make God to be so magnificently attractive in all of His various Attributes- none of our marriages and none of our money and none of our businesses and none of our lives will be lived to the Glory of God! And please hear me when I tell you that the very epitome of the Vastness and infinite Worth of God's Glory is found in Jesus Christ in Salvation.

So if we are to understand Salvation from a Biblical perspective- then it is a requirement that we re-discover the God of the Bible in all His amazing and glorious Particularities and we must recover our wonder and our amazement and our awe and fear and respect of this Sovereign God. And I want to be faithful to tell you that if you plan on having a Biblical understanding of the Majesty and Glory of God- then you will have to consciously reject much of what the lost and pagan

world teaches about God and sadly we must also reject much of what the modern Church teaches as well.

And if we are to correctly understand sin and the Fall and Original sin and therefore the glory of Salvation by Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ alone- we must re-discover what God says about us- in all of its insulting and offensive reality and I want to be faithful to say to you that if you plan to hold a Biblical understanding of Man- then it will also be a requirement that you also consciously reject much of what Sociology and much of what Psychiatry and much of what Psychology says about Man and his behavior.

Here in this Passage- Dr. Luke gives us a very simple and yet very profound statement about eternal Salvation and the condition of Mankind since the Fall of Adam. Luke quotes Jesus here in verse 28 that all that anybody has to do to inherit eternal life is to love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love his neighbor as himself. That's it. So all we have to do to go to Heaven is to love God perfectly and love Man to the very same extent that we love ourselves. Piece of cake, right?

So the real issue about Salvation therefore is love- and the *exclusivity* of that love and the focus of that love and the *perfection* of that love. So if it is true that all of Mankind is lost from the moment of birth by virtue of the imputation of Original Sin- then it must be said- based on this Passage- that all of Mankind is lost because they do *not* love God and because they do *not* love others.

So the definition of Salvation from this Passage is

Salvation= loving God perfectly and continually to the exclusion of loving someone or something else and loving others to the same degree that we love ourselves.

And so then the definition of being lost based on this Passage would be

Lost= loving something or someone else to the exclusion of loving God and loving ourselves more than we love others.

Now inherent in this statement by Jesus is that we do, in fact, love ourselves. So being lost isn't that we lack love- but that we lack

love for God. And this lack is in both the *desire* to love God and in the *power* or the *ability* to love God. And so I suggest to you that love for self and love for sin is really what our problem is and is therefore the epitome of what it means to be lost. You see, dear friends- Jesus teaches here that you do not have to be saved to love yourself and you do not have to be saved to love someone or something else- because that is the definition of being lost. Jesus Himself said in **John 3:19**:

"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

Now notice here that Jesus didn't simply say that lost people "do" darkness or that lost people "engage themselves in darkness"- but that lost people **"love darkness"**. And then Jesus went on to say that lost people love darkness **"rather than"** or in *place of* or *to the exclusion of* loving the Light.

So that is why I tell you that you don't have to be saved to love- because here lost people love darkness. But you *do* have to be saved to love God and you have to be saved to love others to the same extent that you love yourself.

So being lost is the misplacement or the perversion of love. Lostness is taking love and affection and devotion *away from* God and placing it on someone or something else. It is the *withholding* of our love for God- while at the same time- giving our love to someone or something else. So being lost is robbing God of the love that only rightly belongs to Him and giving that love to someone or something else or to yourself.

And if you know anything at all about what the Bible teaches about the Fall and Original Sin- then you understand that unsaved people; unregenerate people; lost people; people who have not experienced the miracle of the new birth do not *plan* to rob God of the love that only rightfully belongs to Him; they do not even *consciously think* about it. For example- the Apostle Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:3**:

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

So lost people are “children of wrath” or “children of damnation” or “children of God’s displeasure” **“by nature”**- meaning that we sin and we love darkness as the *normal* and the *natural* function of our fallen nature- and *not* because we learn to do it at some point later in life. Sin is what we do as human beings who are fallen.

And of course this is why you don’t have to teach your children to rebel. They will rebel to your face- all on their own- by virtue of the fact that they are born sinners *by nature*. And that we can do real good for a while- and then suddenly- we are drawn back into sin again. And this is also why we *do* have to constantly teach our children and ourselves to love and serve God faithfully and why we must hold one another accountable- because to love and serve God runs counterintuitive to everything it means to be fallen human beings.

So all lost people- *constantly* and *consistently*- rob God of the love that belongs to Him as the normal and natural operation and function of their depraved minds and darkened hearts. And in 100% of the cases- they do this only because they want to.

It is *unnatural* for any human being to love God or to love the things of God. It just isn’t normal. It is Divine; it is supernatural. It just isn’t the way that our minds and hearts work- absent a Sovereign and Powerful move of God the Holy Spirit to that individual to forcefully interrupt his life and to powerfully impose upon him eyes that see and ears that hear and a heart that believes and mercifully grants to him both the desire and ability to love God.

In other words- loving God is *not* the normal thought pattern of the human mind prior to being regenerate nor is it the normal, logical, or reasonable intent of the unsaved human heart. And lost people don’t have to think about it; they don’t have to make a conscious decision *not* to love God because loving God and the things of God to a fallen individual is as foreign to them as breathing water or living on Mars. It doesn’t even enter their minds.

The Bible says that lost people do not miss God; they do not desire God; they do not seek after God; they do not have any internal longing to be near to God; they do not have a God size hole in their hearts; they do not wish they could love God; they do not ponder what it would be like to love and serve God. Lost people basically want God to leave them alone. They have their lives all planned out and while some of them would appreciate God *sanctioning* their plans or *confirming* their

plans or even *blessing* their plans- they certainly do not want God to interfere with their plans. Please turn with me to look at what the Apostle Paul wrote about the human condition before Salvation and after The Fall by looking at **Romans 3**.

Romans 3:9-19

9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;
10 as it is written, "***THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;***
11 ***THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;***
12 ***ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.***"
13 ***"THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";***
14 ***"WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS";***
15 ***"THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,***
16 ***DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,***
17 ***AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN."***
18 ***"THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."***
19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God;

Now let's rehash what Paul just said about the condition of lost man. Here in this Passage- Paul says:

- ✓ Every single lost person is "under sin" (**Romans 3:9b**)
- ✓ Not a single lost person is "Righteous" (**Romans 3:10**)
- ✓ Lost people do not "understand" God or the things of God (**Romans 3:11a**)
- ✓ Lost people do not naturally and normally "seek after" God (**Romans 3:11b**)
- ✓ Every single lost person has "turned aside" from God and God's Ways (**Romans 3:12a**)

- ✓ The summation of all that lost people are and all that they do is "Useless" in an eternal sense (**Romans 3:12b**)
- ✓ Not a single lost person does anything that is "Good" in an eternal sense (**Romans 3:12c**)
- ✓ Since their heart is totally corrupt- everything that comes out of their mouths (and by extension everything in their hearts) is dead and lifeless and deceptive and poisonous and cursed and manifests their inherent anger and hostility and bitterness toward God (**Romans 3:13&14**)
- ✓ Their acts are all self-serving and therefore spiritually deadly (**Romans 3:15**)
- ✓ The end result of their willful rebellion against God is eternal destruction (**Romans 3:16**)
- ✓ They have no knowledge or love for the path of peace (**Romans 3:17**)
- ✓ They do not fear or respect or reverence God (**Romans 3:18**)

Now this is an insulting and offensive indictment of all of Mankind. And yet this is the way that the Owner and the Creator of the Universe describes Man's lost and unsaved condition in sacred Scripture. And we must keep in mind that this is not simply describing child molesters or mass murders but it is describing nurses and doctors and housewives and hardworking husbands and even young children who live and play and laugh and help their neighbors and who give to charity and who smile and wave and build businesses and plant vineyards and do not harm other people and yet are not saved. The Bible says that all lost people are like this.

And we must remember that lost people do not *become* like this as they grow older and learn just how bad the world is and as they live their lives. They do not *acquire* these characteristics as they live in the world. No, the Bible teaches that all human beings are *born* in this condition. They are like what Paul describes here in **Romans 3** from the very moment of conception- even *before* they are born. You see, the seed of the father that fertilizes the egg of the mother that produces the child doesn't just contain chromosomes and DNA- it also contains something else; something hideous; and something very terrible. The seed of the father contains the very same sinful and rebellious nature of Adam after he fell. And that very same evil and wicked nature of Adam is

imputed to every single child born of woman through the seed of the father.

So unlike what is commonly taught today by many in the modern Church- children are *not* born innocent. Children are *not* pure and then become sinful later on at some fictitious “age of accountability”. No, **Psalm 51** says that all children are “**born in sin**” and they are “shaped” in their mother’s womb with the very same rebellion and “iniquity” of the federal head of the human race- Adam.

So humans do not *become* sinners when they sin. That statement is not true; it isn’t Biblical. No we humans sin; we rebel against God; we love darkness rather than Light; we withhold our love and our devotion and our adoration to God; we rob God of the love that belongs to Him and we gladly and willingly give that love to ourselves and to other people and to other things precisely because we are already sinners in our nature- down to the DNA level of our makeup.

Now perhaps the very best verse in the entire Bible that summarizes what it means to be lost and unsaved and unregenerate is found in **Genesis 6:5**- and you may wish to turn there and read this for yourself. God the Holy Spirit moved upon Moses to write this verse 1,440 years before the birth of Jesus Christ and he said:

Genesis 6:5

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Now I want you to notice very carefully the words that God moved upon Moses to write here because they are very specific words and phrases that have very specific meanings. And so knowing what these words and phrases actually mean will affect the way you understand what being lost is and therefore knowing what these words and phrases mean will affect what being saved really means:

- ✓ Wickedness of Man
- ✓ Great
- ✓ Every
- ✓ Only Evil
- ✓ Continually

So let's go over these quickly.

Genesis 6:5a

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man...

God saw; He was aware; He understood; He wasn't confused; He saw that Man was wicked.

Genesis 6:5b

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth...

Now the Hebrew word that was translated here as “**great**” means: *pervasive; or all encompassing*. So the wickedness of Man was pervasive; it was all encompassing. In other words- there was no area of human existence that was untouched by the wickedness of Man.

Genesis 6:5c

... and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart...

Not just his actions- but the “**intents**” and “**the thoughts of his heart**”. This phrase has to do with the *origination* or the *beginning* of all thought and all action.

Genesis 6:5d

... was only evil...

The phrase, “**only evil**” here means that every thought and every intent was *exclusively* evil; nothing but evil; *totally* evil; no room for any goodness or any righteousness- but every intent and every thought of the heart of fallen was nothing but evil.

Genesis 6:5e

... continually.

Every intent and every thought of every heart of every human being after The Fall was exclusively evil and it was evil- “constantly” or “all the time”. Another way of saying this is that there was absolutely no room in the intent of all of Man's actions and the thoughts of every Man's heart that was “good” in any godly sense of that word or that it

was righteous in any godly sense of that word. So after The Fall- Man was "all evil- all the time".

This is the damning and the insulting and the offensive description of every human being born after the Fall by none other than God Himself. Now I hope that what Paul said in **Romans 3** makes more sense. And the terrible plight of fallen Man should now be very evident in your mind and eyes and heart. And that is why this same Apostle wrote this in **1Corinthians 2:14**:

1Corinthians 2:14

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.

Now once again- there are very specific words used here that mean very specific things.

- ✓ Natural Man
- ✓ Does Not
- ✓ Foolishness
- ✓ Cannot

1Corinthians 2:14a

But a natural man...

The "**natural man**" here is the lost person- somebody who does not have the Spirit of God dwelling internally in him by virtue of being born again. This man is *not* led by the Spirit of God- he is *driven* by his own sinful lusts and desires.

1Corinthians 2:14b

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God...

Paul teaches here that a lost unsaved person "**does not accept the things of the Spirit of God**". This has to do with the human will. A lost person does not have the desire or the will to accept or to believe or to trust in the things of the Spirit of God. Why? Because he can't. Keep reading.

1Corinthians 2:14c

... for they are foolishness to him...

Paul teaches here that “**the things of the Spirit of God**” are “**foolishness**” to the lost person. Now this word does not mean: *silly or funny*. But this kind of foolishness has to do with something being so patently absurd that the only reasonable response from a thinking individual is that he would hold those things in utter contempt. So there is an underlying *hostility* associated with this word; there is an inherent *anger*; a serious and violent *rejection* of the things of the Spirit of God by the lost person due to the fact that to him- the things of the Spirit of God are patently absurd to the point of utter contempt. He does not honor them; he doesn't respect them- he categorically and angrily rejects them.

1Corinthians 2:14d

... and he cannot understand them...

Now this word, “**cannot**” has to do with “ability” or “power”. The Bible teaches that a lost person does not have the ability or the power to understand the things of the Spirit of God in his lost condition absent a Sovereign move of God to *give* him or *grant* him that ability and power. And these two aspects feed off each other. The lost person *does not* accept the things of the Spirit of God because he *can't*. And he cannot understand them because he won't. This is what Theologians call “Moral Inability”. And one of the best verses in the Bible that illustrates Moral Inability is **Genesis 37:3&4**:

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic.

4 His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms.

Now notice carefully what Moses wrote in the last part of verse 4:

(The brothers of Joseph) **could not speak to him on friendly terms.**

So Joseph's brothers were *unable*; they did not possess the *ability* or the *power* to speak to Joseph **on friendly terms**. The Bible says that they "**could not**". Now notice that this inability was *not* the result of any *physical* limitation on their part- they certainly had a mouth and were able to speak.

But notice *why* the Bible says Joseph's brothers were *unable* to speak to him on friendly terms:

His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him ...

The Bible teaches here that Joseph's brothers were not *able* to speak to him on friendly terms because of their vicious hatred toward him. So the hatred that Joseph's brothers had toward him was so great and so all- encompassing that it radically *ruined* their ability to act in any way contrary to that hatred.

This is a natural example of the spiritual Truth about "Moral Inability". Fallen Man's natural and normal hostility and hatred toward God that he received from the Fall ruins his ability to love and serve God.

And so absent a Sovereign and gracious intervention by God the Holy Spirit- no human being would ever love or serve God voluntarily- precisely because- in his fallen State- Man's normal disposition toward God is abject hatred and Man *cannot* and act in any way contrary to his *will*. So the way you should understand this is that fallen Man *cannot* love and serve God- because he *wills not to*.

And so the \$64,000 question that we need to ask this morning in relation to this Passage and one that this lawyer is asking of Jesus here in **Luke 10** is:

How does anyone who is in that condition ever come to love God?

How do people who are all evil all the time suddenly begin to love God and the things of God? How do people who naturally and normally hate God and who are by nature hostile to God suddenly begin to love and serve God? In other words, if the damning and offensive and insulting description of Man that is painted clearly and repeatedly throughout the Scriptures is true- then how does any lost person ever

become saved and then love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength? Please turn with me to read two very important verses that answer that question. The first one is found in **1John 4**.

1John 4:19

We love [God], because He first loved us.

Again, this verse is very simple and straightforward and yet what these seven words say has enormous implications on how we understand how lost people love God. So let's examine this.

1John 4:19a

We love [God]...

First of all- John begins this verse with a category of people. The “**we**” of this verse refers to believers; saved people; born again souls who have been redeemed. And John makes the clear pronouncement that echoes the same issue that Jesus was proving back in **Luke 10**- that true and genuine Salvation involves love for God. And so John says here that saved people- the “**we**” of this verse- love. And John says that the *focus* or the object of our love is God- which is the subject of this verse taken in context. So we are safe to say that saved people love God. All saved people love God. And it is loving God that proves that they are saved.

But we have already established the fact that lost people do *not* love God. So what does John say in this verse as to just how these people came to love God? Did they merely choose to begin to suddenly love God? Did they exercise their free will and their will power and simply begin to love God on their own accord? No, John gives us the answer in the last part of this verse:

1John 4:19b

... because He first loved us.

Now the way that the Greek s worded here tells us that the word “**because**” actually means: *source or origination or catalyst*. So the *source* of our love for God is that God first loved us. The *origination* of

our love for God is that God first loved us. And the *catalyst* as to why saved people love God is that God first loved them.

So based on this- we can rightly say that:

Our love *for* God is a gift *from* God

In other words- since we were fallen and depraved; and since every intent of the thoughts of our hearts was only evil continually; and since we are naturally and normally hostile to God and the things of God by virtue of the Original Sin of Adam that was imputed to us through the seed of our father; and since we do not possess either the will or the power to love and serve God- then for *anyone* to actually love God; for *anyone* to be saved; for *anyone* to have his eyes open and his ears unstopped and for anyone to be given a new heart- God must do something very powerful to that individual.

And God must do that "something" "Sovereignly"- all by Himself since in his fallen condition Man has neither the inclination or the ability to even desire it or cooperate with it. And God has to Sovereignly *impose* that "something" onto Man *before* Man can see or hear or believe.

And I suggest to you that that powerful "something" that God does all by Himself before Man can even want it or ask for it or cooperate in it- that something that God Sovereignly imposes on Man to save Him is His Love. It is that unmerited Favor of God; it is that unearned special treatment; and it is that undeserved Mercy. In short- it is **Grace**.

So the Grace of God is the Love of God that is powerfully and Sovereignly *imposed* on Man- *before* he wants it and *before* he asks for it and in spite of the fact that he doesn't deserve it and in spite of the fact that he cannot earn it and in spite of the fact that he cannot merit it.

If it is true that all lost people hate God and hate the things of God and if it is true that nobody loves God by simply willing himself to do so; and if it is true that our love for God is a gift from God and if it is true that nobody can be saved unless and until they love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and if it is true that all saved people love God- then if anyone is to be saved; if anyone is to be born again; and if anyone is to actually love God- then God must Sovereignly step in and he must Sovereignly- all by Himself- interrupt their plans and invade their lives and impose Himself upon them so that by

opening our eyes and by unstopping our ears and by taking out of us a stony heart and replacing it with a heart that is soft and that can believe- we will then love God.

Now there is another verse that I want to you to read and understand and that is found in **Philippians 2:13**- turn there with me.

for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

Again the Apostle Paul is teaching here that since Man really is as bad as the Bible says that he is and because God really is as Sovereign as the Bible says that He is- then it is God- all by Himself- that works inside us- without us asking Him to and without us cooperating with Him and without us even wanting it initially- God works in us to give us two very powerful and important things:

1. The will to work for His Good Pleasure
2. The ability to work for His Good Pleasure

Since we are fallen and do not naturally or normally love God on our own- God has to Sovereignly work in us to give us both the will or the desire and the power or the ability to do or to work for God's Good Pleasure.

Now if what the modern Church teaches is true and all that we have to do to be saved and to love God is to exercise our own free will and make a decision to love and serve God or pray a prayer or raise our hand or walk an aisle or go down front- why does God have to Sovereignly give us both the will and the ability to work for His Good Pleasure? And the answer is because what the modern Church teaches about this issue is dead wrong and our will is not "free" and we do not already possess either one of those ingredients that is necessary to love and to serve God.

So we are not only totally dependent on God to forgive us and to wash us and to impute Christ's Righteousness to us- but we are also totally dependent on God to give us the ability and the desire to love Him and to work for His Good Pleasure.

And so the reason why so many people today do not understand or even appreciate Salvation is because they do not understand what God has revealed about Himself and about us. They do not know that:

- ✓ God is absolutely Sovereign over everything all the time
- ✓ Man is totally and radically ruined by the Fall and is in his own strength and power unable and unwilling to love and serve God

Therefore, if anyone is to love God at all; if anyone is to be born again; if anyone is to be redeemed from the Curse; if anyone is to be saved- God must Sovereignly and graciously and mercifully *intervene* in that person's life and God must Sovereignly *interrupt* that person's plans and God must Sovereignly *impose* on that person- eyes that see; and ears that hear and a heart that believes. And God must *grant* that person the gift of faith and God must *give* that person the gift of loving God and God must *allow* that individual to be convicted of his sins and God must *permit* that person to repent and God must work in that individual- all by Himself to give them both the will and the power to work for His Good Pleasure.

And God must do all of this *before* that person wants it and *before* that person asks for it and *before* that person can cooperate with it. And all of this is what is called "Grace". And by doing it this way- God gets all the Glory precisely because He has done all the work.

And that is the only reason why any of us believes and that is the only reason why anyone of us ever gets convicted of his sins and that is the only reason why any of us prays and reads our Bibles and that is the only reason why any of us is saved and that is the only reason why any of us – who are all wicked sinners- can truly and genuinely love God.

So what Jesus is doing here in **Luke 10** with this lawyer is painting him into a corner. And by equating being saved with loving God- Jesus is proving to this man that he does not love God at all and that he is in fact a wicked sinner who is in desperate need of a gracious Savior- Who does have the Power and the Ability to cause him to love God and to work for His Good Pleasure.

Let's pray.