

What Saith the Scripture?

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Only God Can Change A Heart Or, The Miracle of Turning a Stony Heart to Flesh

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My Statutes, and ye shall keep My Judgments, and do them... Without Me ye can do nothing"

(Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 15:5).

by Katie Stewart

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Preface

How hard-hearted people can be! "14 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matthew 13:14-15). An increasingly large number of inhabitants occupying this beautiful planet seem to have no conscience whatsoever. "18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the Life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Ephesians 4:18).

But with real Christians, the opposite is always true. "But blessed are your eyes, for **they see**: and your ears, for **they hear**" (13:16). What is a *real* Christian?

- (James 2:18) "Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith BY my works."
- (James 1:22) "Be ye DOERS of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

NOTE: If a person professes to be a Christian, and yet will NOT "see" and "hear" what God says, then give heed-- that person does NOT know the LORD. "20 By their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto Me, LORD, LORD, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but **he that doeth the Will of My Father** which is in Heaven... 23 Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that **work iniquity**. 24 Therefore whosoever **heareth** these Sayings of Mine, and **doeth** them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a Rock... 26 And every one that heareth these Sayings of Mine, **and doeth them not**, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand... 28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these Sayings, the people were astonished at His Doctrine: 29 for He taught them as One having Authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:20-21, 23-24, 26, 28-29). [Please read, "[That Ye May Know That Ye Have Eternal Life](http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/That.Ye.May.Know.That.Ye.html)" -- <http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/That.Ye.May.Know.That.Ye.html> -- to understand why only those who abide in Christ may know that they have Eternal Life.]

How does a heart change from potentially one to "whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13), to one who will "show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness

into His Marvellous Light" (1Peter 2:9)? Many look for hiding places in the Scripture where they falsely assume that sin can be excused, i.e., verses such as, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: *who can know it?*" (Jeremiah 17:9). It is assumed that, with such hopelessness and deception, how can an evil heart ever convert to the extreme opposite? "21 For from within, **out of the heart** of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23 **all these evil things come from within**, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

Man's efforts to redeem himself bring to fruition only "vanity and vexation". "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 2:11). But with the LORD as man's Source of Strength and Wisdom, he "bringeth forth his fruit in his season... and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psalm 1:3). "For God giveth to a man that is good in His sight Wisdom, and Knowledge, and Joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God" (Ecclesiastes 2:26). Things which are "impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27), for "with God ALL things are possible" (Mark 10:27).

God Does His Work

Only God can change a heart. "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all" (1Corinthians 12:6). And it is God Himself Who assuredly promises to anyone who will take Him at His Word, "26 A NEW HEART WILL I GIVE YOU, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT WITHIN YOU, and **CAUSE** you to walk in My Statutes, and ye shall **KEEP** My Judgments, and **DO** them" (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

His Power, from The Beginning, has demonstrated His complete Omnipotence in all areas of existence, "for by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him" (Colossians 1:16). And the Godhead, the Trinity, the "Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these Three are One" (1John 5:7), have given of Themselves to us, sacrificially and with all love, that we would be "without excuse" (Romans 1:20) for denying them. For the Father "spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32), and the Son, "Who being the brightness of His [the Father's] Glory, and the Express Image of His [the Father's] Person, and upholding all things by the Word of His Power... had by Himself purged our sins" (Hebrews 1:3). The Father "hath in these Last Days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed Heir Of All Things, by Whom also He made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:2) and "left not Himself without witness, in that **He did Good**, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). The LORD certainly has accomplished His Divine Best for man!

And when it comes to man's impenitent heart, frozen in obstinacy, God has provided all that can possibly ever be provided to change that heart. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of His Son" (Romans 8:29). And so, being "without excuse" (Romans 1:20),

hell-bound people certainly CANNOT rightly blame God for their plight, even though they do so unrighteously. "Then My anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?" (Deuteronomy 31:17). After all, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the Living" (Matthew 22:32).

But when one of the LORD's people knows how to plead the Promises of the Word of God as a mighty praying warrior, an intercessor, whether they be a spouse, a child, a friend, or even a stranger, bringing the name and destiny of a needy soul before the Father's Throne, with our Most Holy Advocate (1John 2:1) and Divine Intercessor (Romans 8:34)-- "Jesus Christ the Righteous" (1John 2:1)-- Himself, presenting the case in the Absolute Language of God's Own Word-- then "HE CANNOT DENY HIMSELF" (2Timothy 2:13).

"The Words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself:
but the Father that dwelleth in Me,
He doeth the Works"
(John 14:10).

[Please read "[Pleading With God and Argument in Prayer](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Promises/Pleading.and.Prayer.html)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Promises/Pleading.and.Prayer.html> -- by [A. T. Pierson](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/A.T.Pierson.html) -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/A.T.Pierson.html> -- (1837-1911), and our article "[Intercession Promises: Casting The Net](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Promises/Intercession.Promises.html)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Promises/Intercession.Promises.html> -- for help with these concepts.]

We Are To Do Our Work

The wicked gainsay righteousness and cast derision on all that truly speaks of Divine Effort. "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and **I work**" (John 5:17). Jesus went right on working, despite the fact that the world hated Him. And being our Example, the LORD expects the same of us.

- (John 7:7) "The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."
- (John 15:18) "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you."

We are commanded, "Put ye on the LORD Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:14). When the LORD was asked, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" (John 6:28), His response was simply, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him [Jesus, God the Son] Whom He [God the Father] hath sent" (6:29). But many people "add unto" and "take away from the Words of the Book" (Revelation 22:18-19) God gave us, and twist the Word from God's intended meaning. For example, they limit a wonderful verse such as, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9), to mean *only* that as long as you "confess", even if it's only *once*, and "believe", even if it's *lightly* done, that nothing else matters-- you're in! Heaven belongs to you forever! NOT so, for "the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19). But the LORD distinctly said, through James, that "faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17).

Keeping the Commandments, i.e., obedience, is not just an Old Testament work of the Law which is cast aside in this present time of deception and false doctrine. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in Truth" (1John 3:18). People commonly live as though, "Since Jesus' Blood washes away any sin committed, committing sin is no longer important." That is a lie, born in the heart of Satan when he discounted God's Word and Divine Being as meeting only his own desires. "For thou [Satan] hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God... I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13-14).

Obedience was commanded in the Old Testament, this is true. King Solomon put it this way, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His Commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). But the New Testament carries that same Banner. "If ye love Me, keep My Commandments" (John 14:15). In all of Scripture, you cannot find a plainer statement than this one. Love keeps Commandments. Hate does not. In fact, the LORD Jesus took it a step further in the New Testament, as opposed to the Old, when He said, "27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman *to lust* after her hath committed adultery with her already **in his heart**" (Matthew 5:27). Man's duty is clearly and completely stated in Scripture, "That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but KEEP His Commandments" (Psalm 78:7). Jesus said it, and did it. "I must work the works of Him that sent Me" (John 9:4). We must "walk in the Light, as He is in the Light" (1John 1:7). "For we are His Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

When we do our work and live "holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:4), then we free His hands to work in our behalf and change the hearts of the ones for whom we intercede. "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the Truth" (John 17:19). This is mission critical, for "if I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). The Word from God's heart causes our hearts to be clean, when we heed it and claim it, and God's Word will do the same for those whom we seek. "Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:17). **THIS IS HOW GOD CHANGES HEARTS**, ours, and also those yet to be born into His family. "But as many as received Him, **to them gave He Power to become the sons of God**, even to them that believe on His Name" (John 1:12). And once saved, we are "**KEPT by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation**" (1Peter 1:5). Do your work, live right before God, pray the Promises, and trust the LORD to then do His work. You will see hearts change. "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).

- (Titus 3:8) "This is a Faithful Saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to **maintain good works**. These things are good and profitable unto men."
- (1Corinthians 6:20) "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
- (Ephesians 4:1) "I therefore, the prisoner of the LORD, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the

vocation wherewith ye are called."

"15 But speaking the Truth in Love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: 16 from Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the Effectual Working in the measure of every part, **maketh increase of the body** unto the edifying of itself in Love"

(Ephesians 4:15-16).

Man's Folly is Bound in a Stony Heart

If "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child" (Proverbs 22:15), then consider how hard that uncorrected foolish heart can be by the time the child has grown. And since "even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11), it is only the Scriptures that can give us the Wisdom needed to discern what is in the heart of a person. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Luke 6:45). Discernment is the God-given derivative that comes as a result of studying God's Word, to "those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to **discern** both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:14). "For the Word of God is Quick, and Powerful, and Sharper Than Any Twoedged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a **Discerner** of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

Unrighteousness, whether found in the hearts of the backslidden, or found in the hearts of those who have never confessed to belong to Christ, can be seen and known by judging conduct. "Ye are they which **justify yourselves** before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is **highly esteemed among men** is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). Actions are the outgrowth of "the thoughts of the heart" (1Chronicles 29:18), and can be seen and known. "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). And since the LORD sees directly into the hearts of men, He understands firsthand, when He says, "My Thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My Ways, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 55:8).

- (Proverbs 21:2) "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts."
- (Proverbs 24:12) "Doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works?"
- (Psalm 53:1) "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

And the majority, "for WIDE is the gate, and BROAD is the way, that leadeth to destruction" (Matthew 7:13), shall surely see "destruction". "18 For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the Truth in unrighteousness; 19 because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for **God hath showed it unto them**... 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they

became FOOLS" (Romans 1:18-19,21-22).

Excerpt by C. G. Finney:

"Moral fools are those whose intelligence remains unimpaired, but who refuse to use it, and who give themselves up to be controlled by their sensibility and their passions as if they had no intelligence at all. This is the sense in which the Bible uses the term, fool."

--from "[The Folly of Refusing to be Saved](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Oberlin_1845/OE1845.Folly.of.Refusing.html)" -- http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Oberlin_1845/OE1845.Folly.of.Refusing.html -- Lecture XIV (from the "[Oberlin Evangelist](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Oberlin.Evangelist.1845.html)", 1845 -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Oberlin.Evangelist.1845.html> --) by [C. G. Finney](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/Charles.G.Finney.html) -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/Charles.G.Finney.html> --

If the wicked are "without excuse" (1:20) for "God hath showed it unto them" (1:19), then why didn't God make them listen? If God can change a heart, then why do so many hearts go to Hell? Simply put, because even though God is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2Peter 3:9), He will not override the freewill He has given to all men, making them "in His Own Image" (Genesis 1:27), with the ability to choose right and wrong (yet all the while yearning that men would choose Him). "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

- (Proverbs 1:29) "...they hated knowledge, and did not **choose** the fear of the LORD."
- (Proverbs 3:31) "Envy thou not the oppressor, and **choose** none of his ways."
- (Isaiah 7:15) "...know to refuse the evil, and **choose** the good."
- (Isaiah 56:4) "...**choose** the things that please Me, and take hold of My Covenant."

But if choice is made against God, "be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

- (Isaiah 65:12) "Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did *not answer*; when I spake, ye did *not hear*; but did evil before Mine Eyes, and did **choose** that wherein I delighted not."
- (Isaiah 66:4) "I also will **choose** their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, *none did answer*; when I spake, *they did not hear*: but they did evil before Mine Eyes, and **chose** that in which I delighted not."
- (Isaiah 30:1) "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, **that take counsel, but not of Me**; and that cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin."

But even those who refuse to love and serve the LORD, God will use for His Own purposes. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee" (Psalm 76:10).

Excerpt by C. G. Finney:

"God will be as truly honored in the damnation of those who reject, as in the salvation of those who receive Christ.

- 1. Because it will be known He did all the nature of the case admitted, to save those who are lost--that when they had forfeited their lives, He took not the forfeiture at their hands. But when they infinitely deserved damnation, He pitied and spared, and sent his Son to die for them--that they refused salvation either by the law or gospel--that they would neither obey the law, nor repent and be forgiven--that nothing that infinite love could do for them, could persuade them to accept salvation.
- 2. His sending them to hell after manifesting so great a desire to save them, will most impressively demonstrate and illustrate his holiness and justice. So great was his pity and love for them, that He would sooner die Himself, in their behalf, than send them to hell, and yet so great is his holiness and justice, that when they refuse salvation upon the only principles that can reconcile justice and mercy, he does not hesitate to send them to the depths of hell. If an earthly sovereign should order his own children to execution, for rebellion against the laws, would not this be an impressive exhibition of his regard to public order, and of attachment to the principles of his government? What an amazing reluctance did God manifest in the Atonement, to sending sinners to hell. And after such an exhibition of bleeding mercy, if He is obliged to send them to hell, how infinitely honorable to Him, will be such an exhibition of his Holiness and Justice.
- 3. The damnation of the finally impenitent, will greatly increase public confidence in God. What a glorious magistrate is this, how infinitely desirous to avoid public execution, and yet so attached to the principles of his government, so in love with order, so high and holy in his regard to the public interests as to sentence his own children to an eternal hell, if they persist in rebellion, and those very children for whom his love is so great as to have laid down his own life for them! What must the universe think of a sovereign that could do this! What an infinitely holy and glorious king is this! And how must such an exhibition as this establish forever the confidence of all holy beings in Him and his government.
- 4. The damnation of the wicked, as rejecters of the gospel, will give to the law of God great power. The death of Christ has magnified the law, and made it honorable, has manifested God's great regard for it, and demonstrated that, sooner than repeal it, or suffer it to be trampled under foot, he would have his own Son to die, that a way might be opened for setting aside its penalty in consistency with the honor of its precept. The damnation of the wicked, will greatly strengthen the power of his law, by showing that so high is God's regard for it, that when so costly an expedient for setting aside its penalty had failed to subdue the sinner, he would execute his penalty upon him notwithstanding his love and compassion for him were infinitely great."

--from "[The Gospel the Savor of Life or of Death](#)"

-- http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Oberlin_1840/OE1840.Gospel.Savor.html --

Lecture XV

(from the "[Oberlin Evangelist](#)", 1840

-- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Oberlin.Evangelist.1840.html> --)

I. That God has great delight in the Atonement of Christ.

II. That a full exhibition of Christ must do great good, whether men are saved or lost.

III. That such an exhibition of Christ will produce great and manifest changes in the character of those who hear.

IV. That God will be as truly honored in the damnation of those who reject, as in the salvation of those who receive Christ.

by [C. G. Finney](#) -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/Charles.G.Finney.html> --

But Only God Can Change A Heart

Even when we do the choosing of God, yet it is God Himself orchestrating the process by His works of Providence in our affairs and benefitting our futures. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). His Omniscience and "determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge" (Acts 2:23) give Him Divine Advantage in the choices HE makes. "According as **He hath chosen us** in Him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:4) *Knowing whether an individual will ultimately choose Him or not, allows Him to choose us, who are then "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father"* (1Peter 1:2). [Please read Mr. Finney's "[Election and Reprobation](#)" -- http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Oberlin_1852/OE1852.Election.html --, for a definition of these Biblical terms.]

Only God has ALL Knowledge. Only God has the Wisdom that can handle such Knowledge. Only God has the Power to use such Knowledge for the greater good of every human being ever blessed with life. "We have this Treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us" (2Corinthians 4:7). This "Treasure" of Life was given by the "Power of God" "which lighteth EVERY man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). Because "in Him [that is, in Jesus Christ] was Life; and the Life was the Light of men" (John 1:4). "For God, Who commanded the Light to shine out of darkness, hath **shined in our hearts**, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2Corinthians 4:6). The "Life", the "Light of men" is "Jesus Christ". He is the Knowledge and the Wisdom by Whom EVERY man is Lighted "that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). And it is Jesus Christ, Whose "Name is called The Word of God" (Revelation 19:13), that promises to all who will believe Him, "26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put My Spirit within you, and **cause you to walk** in My Statutes, **and ye shall keep** My Judgments, **and do them**" (Ezekiel 36:26-27). Only God can keep a Promise like this. It is His Promise. He will keep it. "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the Power of God" (1Corinthians 2:5). "Is not My Word like as a Fire? saith the LORD; and like a Hammer **that breaketh the rock in pieces?**" (Jeremiah 23:29).

- (Luke 24:32) "Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?"
- (Acts 2:37) "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Remember, the Word from God's mouth and heart causes your mouth and heart to be "changed into

the same Image from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD" (2Corinthians 3:18), when you obey the Commandments of God and "bind them about thy neck; [and] write them upon the table of thine heart" (Proverbs 3:3). "O LORD, 'Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth' (John 17:17)." **THIS IS THE MECHANICS OF HOW GOD CHANGES HEARTS.** Of course, just saying the words is simplistically easy, but the "how" of God's accomplishing His Will in us, with all of our "nooks and crannies" that need His attention, literally fills our lifetimes "as a tale that is told" (Psalm 90:9). Only in Heaven, will we be able to understand how the LORD guided us in "a plain path" (Psalm 27:11). "Blessed be the LORD God... [for] I being IN the Way, the LORD led me" (Genesis 24:27). But, for today's record we are told-- and we KNOW this to be True-- that God has given us His Word "that He might sanctify and cleanse [us, His Church] with the washing of water **by the Word**" (Ephesians 5:26).

"God gave the increase" (1Corinthians 3:6), and like "Lydia, a seller of purple... whose heart the LORD opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken" (Acts 16:14), we can also EXPECT the LORD to do the same for us. "14 How much more shall the Blood of Christ, Who **through the Eternal Spirit** OFFERED HIMSELF without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this cause He is **The Mediator** of the New Testament" (Hebrews 9:14-15). "18 Forasmuch as ye KNOW that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 but with the Precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot... 21 who **by Him** do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him Glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. 22 Seeing ye have *purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit*... 23 being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which Liveth and Abideth for ever" (1Peter 1:18-19, 21-23).

- (John 6:63) "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life."

Conclusion

God does His work in us and we do our work for Him. "9 We are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 10 According to the Grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1Corinthians 3:9-11). Our Purpose and Goal should be Jesus. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1Peter 2:5). Jesus is the Heart of it all. "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us **from all iniquity**, and **purify** unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of **good works**" (Titus 2:14). For those of us who are called by His Name, the purpose and goal of our Jesus-- His Work-- is that we be a holy people. It is the reason why He "gave Himself" (2:14). "Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ **depart from iniquity**" (2Timothy 2:19).

The Work of the LORD Jesus in redeeming us from sin and sinning was the Work that was given to Him from the Father. "13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His Dear Son: 14 in Whom we have Redemption through His Blood, even the

forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:13-14). Jesus Christ didn't just "magically," or by slight of hand, pour a non-sticking substance over us that makes us only **appear** without sin to Him, even though we continually sin and take Him for granted. NO! "Create in me a CLEAN heart, O God; and renew a RIGHT spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). "Clean every whit" (John 13:10). His Blood is REAL and has POWER to "CREATE"! When He, "Who is the Faithful Witness, and the First Begotten of the dead, and... Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His Own Blood" (Revelation 1:5), when He cleansed us, His washing was complete, "to cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness" (1John 1:9). For there is no doublespeak with the LORD. He didn't die a fake death. His Death was complete. His Death was consummate and effectual. His Blood left His body so much so that when "the soldiers with a spear pierced His side... forthwith came there out Blood **and water**" (John 19:34). And His Redemption was just as perfectly factual as His Death, "that He might redeem us **from all iniquity**, and **purify** unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of **good works**" (Titus 2:14). The Redemption given to us by the truly Awesome Act of Love from Jesus the Crucified, "Who gave Himself a Ransom for all" (1Timothy 2:6), was just as consummate and effectual as the Death He truly died. "How much MORE shall the Blood of Christ... PURGE your conscience from dead works to SERVE the living God?" (Hebrews 9:14). "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:7).

- (Revelation 7:14) "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them WHITE IN THE BLOOD of the Lamb."
- (Ephesians 2:10) "For we are His Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
- (1Corinthians 6:11) "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the LORD Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
- (Hebrews 10:22) "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

The Redemption of Christ Jesus changes hearts. To "say that we have fellowship with Him, and [yet] walk in darkness" means that "we lie, and do not the Truth" (1John 1:6). "But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from ALL sin" (1:7). He washes us free from the power of sin-- past sin, present sin, and future sin-- from ALL sin. He creates us to be "a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you OUT of darkness into His Marvellous Light" (1Peter 2:9). His Redemption redeems us from sins committed-- IF we love Him, walk with Him, believe Him, and obey Him. "My flesh and my heart faileth: **but God is the Strength of my heart**, and my Portion for ever" (Psalm 73:26).

- (John 6:68) "Simon Peter answered Him, LORD, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the Words of Eternal Life."
- (Hebrews 13:15) "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name."

"19 For it pleased the Father that in Him should All Fulness dwell; 20 and, having made Peace through

the Blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled 22 in the body of His flesh through Death, **to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable** in His sight: 23 IF YE CONTINUE IN THE FAITH GROUNDED AND SETTLED, and BE NOT MOVED AWAY FROM THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL, which ye have heard" (Colossians 1:19-23), because "blessed are the **pure in heart:** for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). The Precious LORD Jesus has proved that He can change hearts, for there is a mighty multitude in Heaven that "see God" and that stand as His witness. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us **lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us**, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). "Walk worthy of God, Who hath called you unto His Kingdom and Glory" (1Thessalonians 2:12). "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the LORD, so walk ye in Him" (Colossians 2:6).

- (Colossians 1:10-12) "10 That ye might walk worthy of the LORD unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 **strengthened with ALL Might**, according to His glorious Power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; 12 giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light."

"A new heart also will I give you [or, *create* for you], and a new spirit will I put within you [or, *create* within you]: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and CAUSE you to walk in My Statutes, and ye shall KEEP My Judgments, and DO them...

Without Me ye can do nothing"

(Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 15:5).

Amen, and amen.