

### **An Inward Change Wrought by Supernatural Power (continued):**

*The elect hear the Gospel and believe—not always at the first hearing, but at the divinely appointed time—the non-elect hear but disbelieve, not because they lack sufficient evidence, (which is what an Arminian might contend) but because their inward nature is opposed to holiness. The reason for the two kinds of response is to be traced to an external source.*

**I Cor 3:6-7** I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

*It is unreasonable to suppose that the sinner can thus defeat the creative power of Almighty God. "All authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth," said the risen Lord. No limit is set to that authority. "Is anything too hard for Jehovah?" "He doeth according to His will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and no one can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?" In view of these passages and many others to the same effect it ill becomes us to imagine that God is struggling along with man as best He can, persuading, exhorting, pleading, but unable to accomplish His purpose if His creatures will otherwise. If God does not effectually call, we may imagine Him saying, "I will that all men should be saved; nevertheless, it must finally be, not as I will but as they will."...No Christian who is familiar with what the Scriptures teach about the sovereignty of God can believe that He is thus defeated in His creatures...Furthermore, if God actually stood powerless before the majesty of man's lordly will, there would be but little use to pray for Him to convert any one. It would then be more reasonable for us to direct our petitions to the man himself.*

### **I. The Effect Produced in the Soul**

*The immediate and important effect of this inward, purifying change of nature is that the person loves righteousness and trusts in Christ for salvation. Whereas his natural element was sin, it now becomes holiness; sin becomes repulsive to him, and he loves to do good. This effective and irresistible grace converts the will itself and forms a holy character in the person by a creative act. It removes a man's appetite for sinful things so that he refrains from sin...because he hates sin for its own sake. The holy and thorough submission to God's will, which the convert before dreaded and resisted, he now loves and approves. Obedience has become not only the obligatory but the preferable good.*

*But so long as people remain in this world they are subject to temptations and they still have the remnants of the old nature clinging to them. Hence they are often deluded, and commit sin; Yet these sins are only the death struggles and frenzied writhings of the old nature which has already received the death blow. The regenerate also suffer pain, disease, discouragement, and even death itself, although they are steadily advancing toward complete salvation.*

*At this point many people confuse regeneration and sanctification. Regeneration is exclusively God's work, and it is an act of His free grace in which He implants a new principle of spiritual life in the soul. It is performed by supernatural power and is complete in an instant. On the other hand sanctification is a process through which the remains of sin in the outward life are gradually removed, so that, as the Shorter Catechism says, we are enabled more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness. It is a joint work of God and man. It consists in the gradual triumph of the new nature implanted in regeneration over the evil that still remains after the heart has been renewed. Or, in other words, we may say that complete sanctification lags behind after the life has been in principle won to God. Perfect righteousness is the goal which is set before us all through this life and every Christian should make steady progress toward that goal. Sanctification, however, is not fully completed until death, at which time the Holy Spirit cleanses the soul of every vestige of sin, making it holy and raising it above even the possibility of sinning. Remember examples of*

*Strictly speaking, we may say that redemption is not fully complete until the saved have received their resurrection bodies. In one sense it was complete when Christ died on Calvary; yet it is applied only gradually by the Holy Spirit. And since the Holy Spirit does thus effectually apply to the elect the merits of Christ's sacrifice, their salvation is most infallibly certain and can by no means be prevented. Hence the certainty that the will of God for the salvation of his people is in no wise disappointed or made void by His creatures.*

## **II. The Sufficiency of Christ's Work- Evangelicalism**

*We now come to discuss the sufficiency of Christ's work in the matter of redemption. We believe that by His vicarious suffering and death He fully paid the debt which His people owed to divine justice, thus releasing them from the consequences of sin, and that by keeping the law of perfect obedience and living a sinless life He vicariously earned for them the reward of eternal life. His work fully provided for their rescue from sin and for their establishment in heaven.*

*Jesus did all that is included in the great word 'save.' He did not come to induce us to save ourselves, or to help us to save ourselves, or to enable us to save ourselves. He came to SAVE us. And it is, therefore, that His name was called Jesus—because He should save His people from their sins. . . . Nothing that we are and nothing that we can do enters in the slightest measure into the ground of our acceptance with God. Jesus did it all. And by doing it all He has become in the fullest and widest and deepest sense the word can bear—our Saviour. For this end did He come into the world—to SAVE sinners; and nothing short of the actual and complete SAVING of sinners will satisfy the account of His work given from His own lips and repeated from them by His apostles. It is in this great fact, indeed, that there lies the whole essence of the gospel. For let us never forget that the gospel is not good advice but good news. It does not come to us to make known to us what we must do to earn salvation, but proclaims to us what Jesus has done to save us. It is salvation, a complete salvation, that is announced to us; and the burden of its message is just the words of our text—that Christ Jesus came into the world to SAVE sinners. - Dr. B.B. Warfield*

*To doubt that any for whom Christ died will be saved, or that righteousness will eventually triumph, is to doubt the sufficiency of Jesus Christ for the work which He undertook in our behalf. On the cross Jesus declared that He had finished the work of redemption which the Father gave Him to do. But as Toplady remarks, "the person with power to accept or reject as he pleases must say: 'No, thou didst not finish the work of redemption which was given thee to do; thou didst indeed a part of it, but I myself must add something to it or the whole of thy performance will stand for naught.'"*

## **III. The Arminian View of Universal Grace**

*Certainly, if God loves all men alike, and if Christ died for all men alike, and the Holy Spirit applies the benefits of that redemption to all men alike, one of two conclusions follows. (1) All men alike are saved (which is contradicted by Scripture), or, (2) all that God does for man does not save him, but leaves him to save himself! What then becomes of our evangelicalism, which means that it is God alone who saves sinners? If we assert that after God has done all His work it is still left for man to "accept" or "not resist," we give man veto power over the work of Almighty God and salvation rests ultimately in the hand of man. In this system no matter how great a proportion of the work of salvation God may do, man is ultimately the deciding factor. And the man who does come to salvation has some personal merit of his own; he has some grounds to boast over those who are lost. He can point the finger of scorn and say, "You had as good chance as I had. I accepted and you rejected the offer. Therefore you deserve to suffer." How different is this from Paul's declaration that it is "not of works, that no man should glory," and "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," Eph. 2:9; 1 Cor. 1:31.*