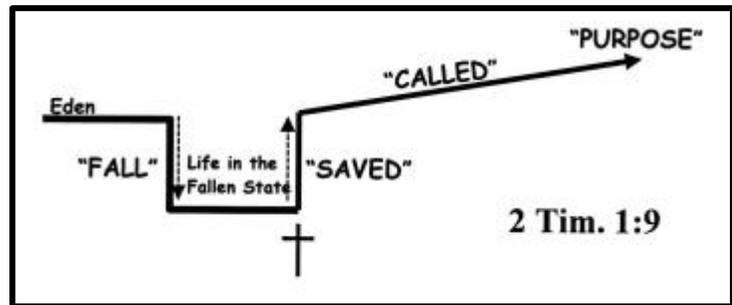


THE MASTER PLAN: FROM THE CROSS TO THE ETERNAL PURPOSE

In **Chapter 2** this concept of a model used to describe God's master plan was presented. It is a simple yet unique way to illustrate the various aspects of God's plan that was set into motion before the *beginning of time*, continuing through the *present time*, and extending to the culmination of all things in Christ (His eternal purpose) at the *end of time*.

Also in **Chapter 2** God's original purpose for man, beginning with Adam and Eve in the Garden of **Eden**, was described. This is followed by the **Fall** of man from that original intent, **Life in the Fallen State**

which alienated him from God and His high calling, and the **Cross** where man, may be redeemed from this fallen state and be restored to pursue God's high calling for his life. **Chapter 3** now will begin with a further examination of the work of the **Cross** and continue to examine the scripture, "*who hath saved us and called with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.*" (2 Tim. 1:9)



Chapter 3. THE MASTER PLAN: From the Cross to the Eternal Purpose, is quite lengthily involving many foundational and important Biblical concepts that require explanation that cannot be treated succinctly. Therefore this chapter will be divided into two sections: **I. SAVED** and **II. CALLED**. The CALLED section will be further divided in 3 parts. Thus, there are a total of 4 teachings involving this chapter. Each of the four messages will have an associated video and voice recording.

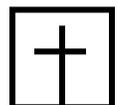
Ch. 3. The Master Plan: From the Cross to the Eternal Purpose

I. "SAVED": Understanding the Work of the Cross

FOUNDATION. There are two important foundation stones to be laid in understanding salvation and the work of the cross, not **for** the believer, but **in** the believer. It is a work of grace beyond the redemptive sacrifice of Christ. Once clearly understood, they will serve as a sure foundation upon which to build one's spiritual life. Together, they are the *rock* Jesus referred to in Matthew 7:24-27 upon which to build. When the *rains* of life come, and they will, and the *water rises*, and the *winds* of life's many challenges blow strong, you will stand secure and not *fall with a great crash*.

FOUNDATION STONE 1: Understanding the Cross as a Place of "Termination."

The apostle Paul came to realize his former condition as an offspring of Adam and consequently as a member in this fallen darkened state. Although a high ranking Pharisee of the Jewish religion, a faith "originally" ordained by God, he understood the inadequacies of all religions, and of all the cunningness, power, and philosophy of man to



escape the bondage and darkness of this life. He was so alive to *himself* that the zeal to promote himself and his belief consumed him. His religion provided a system of belief and worship but, as a member of this fallen race, his spiritual faculties were insensitive towards God Himself. He was essentially alive to himself, the world, and the spirit world about him, but dead to God.

It seems quite a paradox to be so alive to something seemingly religious but actually being spiritually dead to God. O' the endless accounts of those deeply rooted in various ministries and religious vocations but within themselves darkness still lies. Outwardly to the world they appear a "man (person) of God," but inwardly something essentially vital is missing. There is, of course, a soulish or fleshly satisfaction of doing good and of acts of kindness. They receive their personal rewards for "serving man."

But now Paul writes, "*O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*" (Rm. 7:24, 25) Praise God, deliverance had come. This, of which Paul speaks, is the **cross** of Christ. Primary understanding is, of course, man's **redemption** in which he is redeemed from the power of sin and by which light enters his soul and he becomes **alive** to God. His spiritual senses begin to sharpen. It is as though a light has come on. Please take time to contemplate the following account, which shows that absolutely nothing in or of this world could redeem man, except the coming, dying, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God:

*"knowing that you were not **redeemed** with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."* (1 Pet. 1:18-21)

To be **redeemed** from one situation means also to be saved unto another higher state. In God's *grace*, through the cross of Christ, the believer is saved from damnation and eternal separation from God. But one must also realize a great spiritual dimension of the cross, one involving the believer being found **in Christ** at His crucifixion.

Because all of mankind, in the natural, was born of the seed of Adam, one can easily perceive how the entire human race was "in Adam" when he fell in sin in the Garden. So too now, in the spiritual, all believers being born of the seed of Christ, are found "in Christ" in His death and resurrection. "*For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.*" (Rm. 5:19)

*'But of Him God) are ye **in Christ Jesus,***" (1 Cor. 1:30.) Do you see the identification of the believer with Christ at His cross, because we are born of His seed (see following section). One may say with Paul in faith, "*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;*" (Gal. 2:20)

This being so, now by the *grace* of God the believer is to also experience a termination at the cross, a spiritual death. It is of utmost importance to understand and apprehend by faith the following:

"But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (Gal. 6:14)

This is the practical outworking of the cross **in** the believer's life. It requires a mental and spiritual realization of a complete separation and termination of one's former relationship and reliance upon the

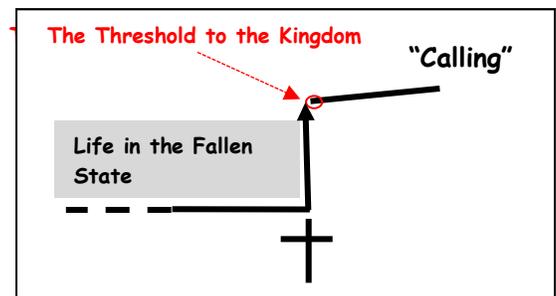
world as a source of light, strength and direction. It must be remembered that since the fall of Adam all mankind has been eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil without access to the Tree of Life. Thus, being alienated from God, he has over time formulated his own methods of doing things, his own life-style, and systems of government, economics, psychology, philosophy, education, and so on...even various forms of religion.

The apostle John cautions the believer from pursuing a love for the world. (See 1 Jn. 2:15-17) The world entices man into its own pursuits and puts man's self at its center. He writes, *"For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world."* A new door is now opened to the believer with God at its center and with a new life with God as its source.

FOUNDATION STONE 2: Understanding the Cross as from a Place of Spiritual Resurrection—Being Born of the Seed of Christ.

*"for you have **been born** again not of **seed** which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God."* (1 Pet. 1:23)

A second blessing of the **cross** is that of **restoration** to that former position of Adam in which one may now continually eat of that "Tree of Life," which is Christ Himself. Is not the act of Christian *communion* a visible act of eating the spiritually invisible *Bread of Life*? **By being born again of the Spirit of God, the believer has crossed the Threshold to the Kingdom of God.** Jesus told Nicodemus, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God,"* and, *"unless one is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."* (Jn. 3:3, 5)



The significance and power of the new birth cannot be trivialized or devalued in any way—as it is often done in this day both in society and much of the church. One is actually, *"born of God...and His (God's) seed remains in him."* (1 Jn. 3:9) God's own spiritual seed of life is conceived in the believer through His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself said, *"For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself."* (Jn. 5:26) ! What an awesome reality!! I pray every heart yearning for such spiritual reality be given fully to receive this measure of Christ into their heart and life.

An unseen reality now lies before the believer. Spiritual senses are now to become alive to God and be sensitive to the intangible things of the Spirit. Personally, those realities overwhelmed me at that time in my life: the Bible became alive as I began to see and understand things never seen before; a new moral compass began to guide my heart; a new sense of the reality of God's actual presence and not as some distant aloof God in the heavens; worship and praise became spontaneous; prayer became altogether different; and there was then, and remains today, a dramatic change in focus of life's goals. As with Paul, this began a new walk, a new life, daily eating and growing in spiritual matters. **Once in the Kingdom, the believer now has the opportunity to respond to a new grace in the "upward call" of God in Christ Jesus.** (Phil. 3:14)

