

John 8: 31-45

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free'?" Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. "And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. "I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father."

Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

No Gentle Grafter

In O. Henry's book, 'The Gentle Grafter', the author presents people as easy prey for the con-artist. His stories are often humorous; however, the truth of man's vulnerability cannot be laughed at, especially when eternity is at stake. Scripture tells us that Satan has "blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ." How true this is. Even in Canada, most people believe that by living a good life, or by obeying the Ten Commandments, or by some other means, they can earn salvation. This is Satan's most successful delusion, because it preys upon the pride of man.

The Bible makes it very clear, man does not deserve heaven, nor can he earn heaven; "For by grace are we saved through faith and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Here scripture states that salvation is by God's grace. Grace implies a favour freely offered, something given yet completely undeserved. Here also, the Bible tells us that salvation is a gift. This implies something given out of love, something certainly unearned.

The only involvement that man has in securing heaven is the response of repentance and faith; repentance that senses sorrow because of sin, and faith that believes Christ paid the penalty of sin on the cross and rose from the dead to certify such claim. Such faith calls on Christ in prayer to be personal Saviour: "But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." (Romans 10:8-11).

Satan is no gentle grafter, he is a powerful spirit being opposed to God, who seeks by lies and deception to keep men from the salvation freely offered by a loving Lord. He is not, as some would tell us, a fictitious expression of man's imagination, but a deadly foe, imitating God even to the extent of establishing his own church. Therefore "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith" (1 Peter 5:8-9).

What is my response:
