

SERIES: I JOHN: HOW TO KNOW YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, WEEK 21

TITLE: THE FRUITS OF NEW BIRTH

TEXT: I JOHN 5:1-3

INTRODUCTION: (1) MOST OF YOU AT LEAST ONCE OVER THE YEARS HAVE HEARD THE PROVERBIAL, CONUNDRUM QUESTION, WHAT CAME FIRST, THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG?

* WELL, AS CHRISTIANS, WE KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS: THE CHICKEN.

** FOR ON DAY 6 IN GENESIS 1:24&25, GOD MADE THE CATTLE, THE CREEPING THINGS AND THE BEASTS OF THE EARTH.

*** AND THE HEBREW WORD FOR CATTLE SPEAKS OF LIVESTOCK AND ANIMALS THAT ARE CAPABLE OF BEING DOMESTICATED, LIVESTOCK LIKE COWS, SHEEP, GOATS AND CHICKENS.

**** SO CHICKENS WERE CREATED ON DAY 6 AND LIKE ALL OF GOD'S CREATION, WERE CREATED FULLY MATURE AND ABLE TO REPRODUCE LIKE ADAM AND EVE.

(2) BEYOND THAT, GOD CREATED FEMALE CHICKENS, HENS, THAT WOULD LAY EGGS AND SIT ON THOSE EGGS, SO THEY COULD HATCH, FOR EVEN EVOLUTIONISTS KNOW THAT FERTILE CHICKEN EGGS CANNOT SURVIVE WITHOUT A HEN KEEPING THEM WARM OR BEING PUT IN AN INCUBATOR.

* THOSE EGGS NEED A TEMPERATURE OF ABOUT 99.5 DEGREES WITH 21 DAYS TO HATCH. BUT TEMPERATURES UNDER 96 DEGREES OR OVER 103 DEGREES FOR A PROLONGED TIME, WILL LEAD TO THE CHICKS NOT HATCHING OR SURVIVING.

** NOW THE QUESTION LEADS ME TO ASK A THEOLOGICAL QUESTION, WHAT CAME FIRST, FAITH OR LIFE? OR BETTER SAID, FAITH OR THE NEW BIRTH?

*** WELL, THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS BIRTH, LIFE, THE NEW BIRTH.

**** WE HAVE TO BE MADE SPIRITUALLY ALIVE BEFORE WE CAN TRUST CHRIST.

(3) NEW BIRTH OR REGENERATION COMES BEFORE FAITH OR PRECEDES FAITH.

* LET ME EXPLAIN FROM AN EXCERPT FROM R. C. SPROUL'S BOOK, THE MYSTERY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

** SPROUL SAID: “ONE OF THE MOST DRAMATIC MOMENTS IN MY LIFE FOR THE SHAPING OF MY THEOLOGY TOOK PLACE IN A SEMINARY CLASSROOM. ONE OF MY PROFESSORS WENT TO THE BLACKBOARD AND WROTE THESE WORDS IN BOLD LETTERS: REGENERATION PROCEEDS FAITH.”

*** SPROUL SAID: “THESE WORDS WERE A SHOCK TO MY SYSTEM. I HAD ENTERED SEMINARY BELIEVING THAT THE KEY WORK OF MAN TO EFFECT REBIRTH WAS FAITH. I THOUGHT THAT WE FIRST HAD TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST IN ORDER TO BE BORN AGAIN. I USE THE WORDS IN ORDER HERE FOR A REASON. I WAS THINKING IN TERMS OF STEPS THAT MUST BE TAKEN IN A CERTAIN SEQUENCE. I HAD PUT FAITH AT THE BEGINNING. THE ORDER LOOKED SOMETHING LIKE THIS: FAITH – REBIRTH – JUSTIFICATION.”

**** SPROUL THEN HUMBLY SAID: “I HADN’T THOUGHT THAT MATTER THROUGH VERY CAREFULLY. NOR HAD I LISTENED TO JESUS’ WORDS TO NICODEMUS (IN JOHN 3:1-21) I ASSUMED THAT EVEN THOUGH I WAS A SINNER, A PERSON BORN OF THE FLESH AND LIVING IN THE FLESH, I STILL HAD A LITTLE RIGHTEOUSNESS, A TINY DEPOSIT OF SPIRITUAL POWER LEFT WITHIN MY SOUL TO ENABLE ME TO RESPOND TO THE GOSPEL ON MY OWN.”

(4) SPROUL WENT ON TO SAY: “NO MAN HAS THE POWER TO RAISE HIMSELF FROM SPIRITUAL DEATH. THE REASON WE DO NOT COOPERATE WITH REGENERATING GRACE BEFORE IT ACTS UPON US AND IN US IS BECAUSE WE CANNOT. WE CANNOT BECAUSE WE ARE SPIRITUALLY DEAD. WE CAN NO MORE ASSIST THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE QUICKENING OF OUR SOULS TO SPIRITUAL LIFE THAN LAZARUS COULD HELP JESUS RAISE HIM FROM THE DEAD.

* THE KEY PHRASE IN PAUL’S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS IS THIS: “...EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN TRESPASSES, MADE US ALIVE TOGETHER WITH CHRIST (BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED.)” (EPHESIANS 2:5) HERE PAUL LOCATES THE TIME WHEN REGENERATION (NEW BIRTH) OCCURS. IT TAKES PLACE ‘WHEN WERE DEAD.’ WITH ONE THUNDERBOLT OF APOSTOLIC REVELATION ALL ATTEMPTS TO GIVE THE INITIATIVE IN REGENERATION TO MAN ARE SMASHED. AGAIN, DEAD MEN DO NOT COOPERATE WITH GRACE. UNLESS REGENERATION TAKES PLACE FIRST, THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF FAITH.” (END QUOTE)

** NOW I GO BACK TO THE THEOLOGICAL QUESTION, WHAT CAME FIRST, FAITH OR NEW BIRTH OR FAITH OR REGENERATION OR FAITH OR LIFE?

*** AND THE CLEAR ANSWER FROM SCRIPTURE IS NEW BIRTH – REGENERATION – LIFE. REGENERATION OR NEW BIRTH PRECEDES SAVING FAITH THAT BRINGS A PERSON WHO IS A SINNER INTO RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH A HOLY GOD.

**** LET ME SAY IT THIS WAY: GOD'S SAVING SOVEREIGN GRACE IS OPERATIVE, NOT COOPERATIVE. IT'S EFFECTUAL NOT DEPENDENT, IT IS MONERGISTIC NOT SYNERGISTIC.

(5) MEANING A MONERGISTIC WORK IS A WORK PRODUCED SINGLY, BY ONE PERSON. THE PREFIX MONO MEANS ONE. THE WORD ERG REFERS TO A UNIT OF WORK, WORDS LIKE ENERGY ARE BUILT UPON THE ROOT ERG.

* SO A SYNERGISTIC WORK IS ONE THAT INVOLVES COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO OR MORE PERSONS OR TWO OR MORE THINGS. FOR THE PREFIX SYN MEANS TOGETHER WITH.

** THEREFORE REGENERATION IS MONERGISTIC, NOT SYNERGISTIC, IT'S OPERATIVE FROM GOD THE HOLY

SPIRIT, NOT A COOPERATION BETWEEN GOD AND HUMANS AND IS EFFECTUAL OR EFFECTIVE IN WHAT IT PRODUCES – LIFE AND IT IS NOT DEPENDENT UPON US.

*** AND IN OUR PASSAGE FOR TODAY'S STUDY, WE WILL SEE THE ORIGIN OF FAITH IS FROM GOD, THAT NEW BIRTH COMES BEFORE FAITH, AND OVERALL WE WILL LOOK AT THE FRUITS OF NEW BIRTH.

**** AND I WILL ATTEMPT THROUGH CROSS REFERENCING SCRIPTURE TO PRESENT A BIBLICAL CASE THAT NEW BIRTH PRECEDES FAITH AND IS THE ORIGIN OF FAITH.

(6) AND FURTHER TALK ABOUT THE FRUITS OF NEW BIRTH WHICH IS THE TITLE OF OUR SERMON FOR TODAY.

* AND WITH THE THEME OF NEW BIRTH AND THE FRUITS OF NEW BIRTH BEFORE US, WE'LL LOOK AT 3 MAIN POINTS IN OUR STUDY OF I JOHN 5:1-3.

** NO. 1 THE OBJECT OF SAVING FAITH, V. 1A; NO. 2 THE ORIGIN OF SAVING FAITH, V. 1B; AND NO. 3 THE OUTGROWTH OF SAVING FAITH, VV. 1C-3.

*** AND WITHOUT ANY FURTHER INTRODUCTION, LET'S JUMP RIGHT INTO OUR STUDY TODAY BY LOOKING AT OUR FIRST POINT, THE OBJECT OF SAVING FAITH. LOOK AT I JOHN 5:1A WITH ME PLEASE.

I. THE OBJECT OF SAVING FAITH, (READ V. 1A)

A. NOW THE OBJECT OF SAVING FAITH IS JESUS WHO IS THE CHRIST.

* A PERSON MUST BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST TO COME INTO RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH A HOLY GOD, TO BE FORGIVEN OF THEIR SINS AND GO TO HEAVEN.

** THEREFORE TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH IS NOT MERELY FAITH IN FAITH OR BELIEF IN BELIEVING. FAITH OR BELIEF MUST HAVE AN OBJECT.

*** AND BIBLICALLY THE ONLY OBJECT OF SAVING FAITH IS JESUS WHO IS THE CHRIST.

**** ANY PERSON (WHOEVER) MUST BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST.

1. AND WITH THAT SAID UNDERSTAND THE VERB BELIEVES IN THE GREEK LIT. MEANS, TO THINK TO BE TRUE, TO BE PERSUADED OF, TO PLACE CONFIDENCE OR TRUST IN OR TO ENTRUST.

* AND SAVING BELIEF IS MORE THAN A SIMPLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT JESUS IS SAVIOR AND LORD, IT IS MORE THAN INTELLECTUAL ASSENT OR AGREEMENT.

** SAVING BELIEF HAS TO DO WITH RELATIONSHIP, COMMITMENT AND TRUST.

*** SAVING FAITH CONSISTS OF THREE ELEMENTS. NO. 1 KNOWLEDGE OF THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST AS THE BIBLE COMMUNICATES AND IN I JOHN 5:1 THAT JESUS MEANING SAVIOR IS THE ONE WHO SAVES AND THAT HE IS THE CHRIST WHICH MEANS THE MESSIAH, THE ANOINTED ONE OF GOD, THE PROMISED DELIVERER, THE KING, A TITLE OF THE SON OF GOD AND GOD THE SON.

* WHICH LEADS US TO A 2'D ELEMENT OF SAVING BELIEF WHICH IS ASSENT OR AGREEMENT THAT THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST AND THE BIBLE ARE TRUE AS THEY CLAIM TO BE.

** AND THEN NO. 3, PERSONAL TRUST, COMMITMENT, SURRENDER OF THE WILL, THE VOLITIONAL ELEMENT. IT IS TURNING FROM MY SIN, MY WAY IN REPENTANT BELIEF AND RECEIVING JESUS AS MY SAVIOR AND SUBMITTING TO HIM AS MY LORD, QUOTE ROMANS 10:9&10&13.

*** SO BIBLICAL BELIEF IS ALL THOSE THINGS, SO WHOEVER BELIEVES THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST IS THE ISSUE. AND WHOEVER MEANS ANYONE, CHRISTIANITY

EXCLUDES NO ONE WHO TRULY BELIEVES IN JESUS AS THE CHRIST.

**** SO JESUS IS THE OBJECT OF OUR FAITH.

2. AND LET ME ADD FROM SCRIPTURE JESUS IS THE ONLY OBJECT OF SAVING FAITH, THE ONLY WAY TO HEAVEN.

* AND BACK IN 1960'S AND 70'S, THE ONE WAY SIGN – THE INDEX FINGER HELD HIGH – WAS A POPULAR ICON OR FIGURE – ESPECIALLY IN THE JESUS MOVEMENT. (AND I REMEMBER THAT FOR GOD SAVED ME IN 1971 AND I HAD A GOOD FRIEND WHO WAS A PART OF THAT MOVEMENT.)

** ONE WAY BUMPER STICKERS AND PINS WERE POPULAR AND THE ONE WAY SLOGAN BECAME A CATCHPHRASE.

** AND EVEN WITH ALL THE DIVERSITY IN CHRISTENDOM IN THAT DAY, THERE WAS ONE POINT OF COMMONALITY, CHRISTIANS KNEW AND PROCLAIMED THAT JESUS THE CHRIST WAS THE ONLY WAY TO HEAVEN.

*** BUT TODAY, THAT IS NO LONGER THE CASE BECAUSE NOW, JESUS THE CHRIST IS ONE OF MANY WAYS TO HEAVEN ACCORDING TO SOME QUOTE EVANGELICALS.

**** IN FACT A COMMON AND GROWING MANTRA IS THAT PEOPLE OF ALL FAITHS AND RELIGIONS FROM BUDDHISM, TO ISLAM, TO NEW AGERS, TO ANYONE WHO HAS ANY KIND OF BELIEF IN A HIGHER POWER IS GOING TO HEAVEN.

3. PEOPLE WANT TO BE INCLUSIVE AND TOLERANT AND THEREFORE A PHILOSOPHY THAT PERMEATES OUR CULTURE IS PLURALISM, THAT THERE ARE PLURAL OR MANY WAYS TO HEAVEN.

* BUT BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY IS EXCLUSIVE. THE EXCLUSIVITY OF CHRIST AND ONE WAY AND THE ONLY WAY IS CLEAR IF YOU BELIEVE THE WORDS OF THE BIBLE AND OF JESUS. AND IF YOU DON'T YOU HAVE NO AUTHORITY FOR YOUR BELIEF BUT YOUR OPINION, YOUR EXPERIENCE OR YOUR TRADITION.

** BUT THE BIBLE, THE FINAL AUTHORITY FOR CHRISTIANS COMMUNICATES ANY PERSON OR BACKGROUND, OR RACE OF PEOPLE CAN BE SAVED, BUT THEY MUST COME THROUGH JESUS WHO IS THE CHRIST. QUOTE JOHN 14:6, JOHN 10:9, ACTS 4:12, I TIMOTHY 2:5, I JOHN 5:11&12, JOHN 3:36, I CORINTHIANS 3:11.

*** AND BEYOND THOSE SCRIPTURES JOHN 18:37 SAYS: THEREFORE PILATE SAID TO HIM, "SO YOU ARE A KING?"

JESUS ANSWERED, "YOU SAY CORRECTLY THAT I AM A KING. FOR THIS I HAVE BEEN BORN, AND FOR THIS I HAVE COME INTO THE WORLD, TO TESTIFY TO THE TRUTH. EVERYONE WHO IS OF THE TRUTH HEARS MY VOICE."

**** THEN LATER IN THE CHAPTER WE ARE IN TODAY, JOHN SAYS IN I JOHN 5:20 – AND WE KNOW THAT THE SON OF GOD HAS COME, AND HAS GIVEN US UNDERSTANDING SO THAT WE MAY KNOW HIM WHO IS TRUE; AND WE ARE IN HIM WHO IS TRUE, IN HIS SON JESUS CHRIST. THIS IS THE TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE.

4. NOW BECAUSE OF TIME, I WILL NOT GO ON AND GIVE YOU MORE SCRIPTURES BUT SIMPLY SAY, JESUS WHO IS CHRIST IS THE ONE WHO MUST BE BELIEVED IN TO GO TO HEAVEN. HE IS THE ONLY OBJECT OF FAITH.

* WHICH LEADS US TO WHY A PERSON CAN HAVE FAITH AND WHERE SAVING FAITH COMES FROM, OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE ORIGIN OF FAITH, OF SAVING FAITH. LOOK BACK AT I JOHN 5:1 PLEASE.

II. THE ORIGIN OF SAVING FAITH, (READ 5:1)

A. NOW THE GRAMMAR HERE IN THE GREEK IS VERY IMPORTANT. FOR WHOEVER BELIEVES AND THE VERB BELIEVES IS IN THE PRESENT TENSE AND THE MAIN VERB OF THE SENTENCE IS BORN IS IN THE PERFECT TENSE.

* AND THE COMBINATION OF THE PRESENT TENSE AND PERFECT TENSE HERE IS VERY IMPORTANT.

** FOR IT SHOWS CLEARLY THAT BELIEVING IS THE CONSEQUENCE, THE RESULT, NOT THE CAUSE OF THE NEW BIRTH.

*** FOR OUR PRESENT, CONTINUING ACTIVITY OF BELIEVING OR HAVING FAITH THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST (PRESENT TENSE) IS THE RESULT, AND THEREFORE THE EVIDENCE, OF OUR PAST EXPERIENCE OF NEW BIRTH OR REGENERATION (PERFECT TENSE) BY WHICH WE BECAME AND REMAIN GOD'S CHILDREN.

**** THE BEGINNING OF VERSE 1 LITERALLY READS "WHOEVER IS BELIEVING THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST HAS BEEN BEGOTTEN (BORN) OF GOD."

1. AND MY POINT IS FAITH OR BELIEF IS THE RESULT OF THE NEW BIRTH, NOT IT'S CAUSE.

* THE MAIN VERB IN THE SENTENCE IS BORN AND THE PHRASE EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IS ITS SUBJECT.

** AND THIS MEANS THAT THE BELIEVER IS A CHILD OF GOD THE FATHER, FOR GOD CAUSES THE SPIRITUAL BIRTH OF HIS CHILD.

*** WHAT COMES FIRST, FAITH OR REGENERATION - NEW BIRTH? CLEARLY THE NEW BIRTH, THE GIVING OF LIFE.

**** FOR IN THE NEW BIRTH, GOD IMPLANTS LIFE IN A SPIRITUALLY DEAD PERSON AND RAISES THEM FROM THE DEAD SPIRITUALLY, GIVING PEOPLE HE CALLS EYES TO SEE THE TRUTH AND NEW HEARTS TO EMBRACE IT AND NEW EARS TO HEAR IT.

2. AND THIS NEW BIRTH IS A SOVEREIGN WORK OF GOD AS GOD USES HIS WORD (THE BIBLE) AND THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT TO BRING LIFE SO THAT A PERSON CAN AND WILL BELIEVE. THE NEW BIRTH IS THE CAUSE OF BELIEF OR FAITH.

* AND BELOVED AS NO CHILD HAS EVER BEEN BORN INTO THE WORLD BY ITS OWN WILL OR PLAN, NO CHILD OF GOD IS BORN AGAIN EXCEPT THROUGH THE SOVEREIGN ACTION OF GOD GIVING LIFE AND ENABLING A PERSON TO BELIEVE.

** AND AGAIN WITH EVERY CHILD WHO IS BORN INTO THIS WORLD, ITS CONCEPTION, GESTATION AND BIRTH ARE COMPLETELY OUT OF ITS CONSCIOUSNESS AND CONTROL.

*** AND JUST AS CERTAINLY, NO PERSON WILLS, MUCH LESS CREATES A NEW SPIRITUAL NATURE WITHIN HIMSELF.

**** AND THAT'S WHY JOHN 1:12&13 SAYS: (QUOTE THEM).

3. AND CHRISTIAN, WE WERE NOT BORN AGAIN OF BLOOD, NOR OF THE WILL OF THE FLESH NOR THE WILL OF MAN, BUT OF GOD, MEANING IT WAS NOT THROUGH ANY RACIAL OR ETHNIC HERITAGE (BLOOD) NOR PERSONAL DESIRE (THE FLESH) NOR THE WILL OF MANOR ANY MAN-MADE SYSTEM, BUT OF GOD! IT IS A SOVEREIGN WORK OF GOD'S GRACE. (QUOTE EPHESIANS 2:1-5)

* AND THEN TITUS 3:5&6 SAYS: (QUOTE THEM)

** AND HERE WE SEE THAT WE WERE SAVED BY GOD MERCIFULLY DECIDING TO GRANT THE WASHING OF REGENERATION. AND THE WORD REGENERATION IS A SYNONYM OF NEW BIRTH OR QUICKENING, OR MAKING ALIVE AND CARRIES THE IDEA OF RECEIVING NEW LIFE, OF BEING BORN AGAIN OR BORN OF ABOVE.

*** AS JESUS TOLD NICODEMUS IN JOHN 3:5: TRULY, TRULY, I SAY TO YOU UNLESS ONE IS BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT, HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

**** AND THEN JESUS TOLD NICODEMUS IN JOHN 3:8 THAT “THE WIND BLOWS WHERE IT WISHES AND YOU HEAR THE SOUND OF IT, BUT DO NOT KNOW WHERE IT COMES FROM AND WHERE IT IS GOING; SO IS EVERYONE WHO IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT.”

5. AND AGAIN WE SEE THE NEW BIRTH IS MONERGISTIC; IT IS A WORK SOLELY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORD USED AS THE SEED. AND DEAD SINNERS DO NOT COOPERATE IN THEIR SPIRITUAL BIRTHS ANY MORE THAN INFANTS COOPERATE IN THEIR NATURAL BIRTHS.

* JAMES 1:18 SAYS: IN THE EXERCISE OF HIS WILL HE BROUGHT US FORTH BY THE WORD OF TRUTH, SO THAT WE WOULD BE A KIND OF FIRST FRUITS AMONG HIS CREATURES.

** THEN I PETER 1:23&25 SAYS: (QUOTE THEM).

*** AND THEN FINALLY IN JOHN 6:63 – 65 JESUS SAID:

V. 63 – IT IS THE SPIRIT WHO GIVES LIFE; THE FLESH PROFITS NOTHING; THE WORDS THAT I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU ARE SPIRIT AND ARE LIFE.

V. 64 – “BUT THERE ARE SOME OF YOU WHO DO NOT BELIEVE.” FOR JESUS KNEW FROM THE BEGINNING WHO THEY WERE WHO DID NOT BELIEVE, AND WHO IT WAS THAT WOULD BETRAY HIM.

V. 65 – AND HE WAS SAYING, “FOR THIS REASON I HAVE SAID TO YOU, THAT NO ONE CAN COME TO ME UNLESS IT HAS BEEN GRANTED HIM FROM THE FATHER.”

**** NOW BELOVED, WHAT COMES FIRST? CLEARLY BIRTH, LIFE, REGENERATION AND THEN FAITH FOLLOWS.

6. CHARLES SPURGEON SAID AND I QUOTE: “FAITH IN THE LIVING GOD AND HIS SON JESUS CHRIST IS ALWAYS THE RESULT OF THE NEW BIRTH, AND CAN NEVER EXIST EXCEPT IN THE REGENERATE.” (END QUOTE)

* AND SO THE ORIGIN OF SAVING FAITH COMES FROM THE NEW BIRTH. AS I JOHN 5:1 SAYS: “WHOEVER BELIEVES THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST IS BORN OF GOD.”

** SAVING FAITH IS THE CONSEQUENCE NOT THE CAUSE OF NEW BIRTH. THE ORIGIN OF SAVING IS GOD’S SOVEREIGN WORK OF NEW BIRTH – AND THEREFORE GOD GETS ALL THE GLORY FOR SAVING SINNERS LIKE US. WE DON’T COOPERATE AND GET ANY OF THE GLORY.

*** AND WITH THAT SAID, WE’VE LOOKED AT THE OBJECT OF SAVING FAITH – JESUS CHRIST, THE ORIGIN OF SAVING FAITH – GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORD AND LASTLY TODAY, THE OUTGROWTH OF SAVING

FAITH, THE FRUITS OF SAVING FAITH, LOOK BACK AT I JOHN 5:1 PLEASE.

III. THE OUTGROWTH OF SAVING FAITH, (READ V. 1)

A. NOW THE OUTGROWTH OF BEING BORN AGAIN WHICH LEADS TO SAVING FAITH PRODUCES THE FRUIT OF A CHILD THAT LOVES HIS FATHER AND HIS SIBLINGS.

* IT IS TO SAY, THE NEW BIRTH BRINGS PEOPLE NOT ONLY INTO A FAITH RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, BUT ALSO INTO A LOVING RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM AND HIS CHILDREN, THE CHILD BORN OF HIM.

** AND JOHN IS JUST GIVING US A UNIVERSAL SELF-EVIDENT PRINCIPLE OF FAMILY, OR WHAT IS TRUE OF THE HUMAN FAMILY IS THE SAME IN OUR SPIRITUAL FAMILY.

*** FOR BEING BORN AGAIN, OR THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING BORN AGAIN ESTABLISHES AN AFFINITY AND THEREFORE AN AFFECTION NOT ONLY BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD, BUT BETWEEN CHILDREN AND CHILDREN.

**** AND CLEARLY IN THE NATURAL REALM, WHEN A BABY IS BORN AND BEGINS TO FEED UPON ITS MOTHERS MILK, THE BABY GROWS TO LOVE THE ONE WHO HAS BEGOTTEN THEM.

1. AND IT WOULD BE STRANGE AND UNNATURAL FOR A BABY TO NOT LOVE ITS MOTHER. AND IT IS NOT NORMAL AND THEREFORE UNNATURAL FOR A CHILD BEGOTTEN OF GOD THE FATHER, NOT TO LOVE GOD.

* AND IF WE HAVE BEEN BORN OF GOD SUPERNATURALLY AND WE LOVE HIM, IT IS INEVITABLE THAT WE LOVE OTHERS WHO HAVE BEEN BORN OF HIM, OUR SPIRITUAL SIBLINGS.

** AND THAT IS A FRUIT OF THE NEW BIRTH. AND JOHN EXPANDS ON THIS IN V. 2. LOOK AT V. 2 AS THE OUTGROWTH CONTINUES.

B. READ V. 2. NOW JOHN HERE USES THE HUMAN FAMILY EXPERIENCE AND ARGUES FROM IT FOR LOVE IN THE FAMILY OF GOD.

* FOR AGAIN, TO BE BORN OF GOD IS TO BE BORN INTO A FAMILY WITH OBLIGATIONS AND NOT ONLY TOWARD THE FATHER OF THE FAMILY, BUT ALSO AS A PART OF OUR OBLIGATION TO HIM TOWARDS ALL HIS CHILDREN.

** HENCE LOVE FOR OTHERS IS THEREFORE A DIRECT RESULT AS WELL AS OBLIGATION OF HAVING BECOME ONE OF GOD'S CHILDREN. (THE REOCCURRING THEME WITH A NEW TWIST.)

*** AND THOSE TWIN PRIORITIES OF LOVING GOD AND LOVING HIS CHILDREN MARKS ALL WHO HAVE BEEN BORN AGAIN.

**** AND JUST AS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO LOVE GOD WITHOUT LOVING HIS CHILDREN, SO ALSO IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TRULY LOVE HIS CHILDREN APART FROM LOVING HIM.

1. AND THEN JOHN WILL COMMUNICATE AT THE END OF V. 2 THAT WHEN WE LOVE GOD, WE WANT TO OBEY HIM. IF WE LOVE OUR FATHER, WE WILL WANT TO OBEY HIM, AND JOHN EXPANDS ON THAT IN V. 3. LOOK AT V. 3 PLEASE.

C. READ V. 3. NOW THE OUTGROWTH OF GENUINE SAVING FAITH, WHICH RESULTS FROM THE NEW BIRTH IS LOVING OBEDIENCE. FOR GENUINE SAVING FAITH PRODUCES LOVE WHICH RESULTS IN OBEDIENCE.

* AND HERE LOVE TAKES ON ANOTHER SHAPE, THE SHAPE OF OBEDIENCE. THE ACTION OF LOVE FOR OUR FATHER IS OBEDIENCE TO OUR FATHER, KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS.

** AND LOVE FOR GOD IS NOT SO MUCH AN EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE, OR TALK, BUT A MORAL COMMITMENT, FOR JESUS SAID IN JOHN 14:15: (QUOTE IT).

*** AND OUR LOVE FOR OUR FATHER WHO BEGOT US INTO HIS FAMILY COMPELS US TO OBEY HIS COMMANDS FROM HIS WORD, IT CONTROLS AND MOTIVATES US. AND OUT OF LOVE, NOT LAW WE OBEY HIM.

**** AND THIS PRINCIPLE IS COMMUNICATED IN THE LAST PART OF V. 3, "AND HIS COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT BURDENSOME."

1. AND THE GREEK WORD FOR BURDENSOME IS HEAVY IN WEIGHT, THEY ARE NOT A HASSLE, THEY ARE NOT CRUEL COMMANDS FROM A DICTATOR BUT LOVING COMMANDS FOR OUR GOOD FROM OUR FATHER.

* IT IS NOT LEGALISTIC COMPLIANCE, BUT LOVING OBEDIENCE, FOR HE OF HIS OWN WILL BROUGHT FORTH OUR BIRTH, HE GAVE US LIFE, HE SAVED US.

** AND THAT'S WHY JESUS SAID IN MATTHEW 11:28-30 (QUOTE THEM)

*** AND THE LORD'S BURDEN IS LIGHT COMPARED TO THE WORLD. AND THE WORLD'S PERCEPTION OF THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD ARE TRAGICALLY JAUNDICED.

**** FOR THE PEOPLE THAT DON'T KNOW CHRIST LOOK AT GOD'S COMMANDS AS A BURDEN, A HASSLE, THAT GOD IS

A COSMIC KILLJOY, LIMITING MY FREEDOMS AND ALWAYS TELLING US WHAT TO DO.

2. BUT GOD'S WAY IS BEST. IT IS NOT A BURDEN. IN FACT THE BURDENS IN OUR LIVES COME FROM DISOBEYING GOD, NOT OBEYING HIM. I MEAN HE TRIES TO PROTECT US IN HIS COMMANDS AND WE ARE TRULY FREE WHEN WE OBEY HIM, FOR JOY AND PEACE AND BLESSING FOLLOW.

* BELOVED, SIN BRINGS A HEAVY BURDEN. AS JOEL BEEKE SAID: "GOD'S COMMANDS ARE NOT WEIGHTS THAT DRAG US DOWN; THEY ARE WINGS THAT HELP US FLY." (END QUOTE)

** BUT IN CONTRAST, SELFISHNESS, DISHONESTY, DRUNKENNESS, BITTERNESS, PRIDE, IMMORALITY AND LUST WILL WEIGH US DOWN, BUT OBEYING CHRIST SETS US FREE AND SHOWS OUR LOVE FOR HIM AND OUR RELATIONSHIP TO HIM THROUGH NEW BIRTH.

IN WRAP UP: (1) I MUST FURTHER EXPLAIN THAT GOD'S COMMANDS ARE NOT BURDENSOME BY SAYING, THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY ARE NOT DIFFICULT AT TIMES.

* AND CONTINUING ON IN USING FAMILY ILLUSTRATIONS, WHEN YOU TELL A GOOD MOTHER TO TAKE GOOD CARE

OF HER BABY, YOU ARE ONLY TELLING HER WHAT SHE LOVES TO DO.

** BUT IN THE PROCESS OF RAISING A BABY THERE ARE SLEEPLESS NIGHTS, THERE ARE CONCERNS, THERE ARE CHALLENGES IN CARING FOR A CHILD, ESPECIALLY A SICK OR DISEASED OR HANDICAPPED CHILD.

*** BUT A GOOD MOTHER DOES WHAT IS DIFFICULT OUT OF WHAT? LOVE.

**** WELL, THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD ARE THE THINGS WHICH ARE BEST FOR US AND THE THINGS IN WHICH OUR NEW NATURE THROUGH NEW BIRTH WANTS TO DO OUT OF LOVE.

(2) BUT WE STILL LIVE IN UNREDEEMED FLESH THAT FIGHTS US IF WE ARE NOT YIELDING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO HAS REGENERATED US AND MADE US NEW.

* AND FAILING TO KEEP GOD'S COMMANDS WILL BE A GREAT SOURCE OF BURDEN TO YOU. YOU WILL BE GRIEVED. THERE IS FUN IN SIN FOR A SEASON, BUT IT DOES NOT LAST. SIN MAKES US MISERABLE.

** YET THE DIRECTION, NOT THE PERFECTION OF OUR LIFE IS MUCH DIFFERENT THROUGH THE NEW BIRTH.

*** SO I ASK, DO YOU SEE THE FRUITS OF THE NEW BIRTH IN YOUR LIFE TODAY? THE FRUIT OF LOVE FOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR SPIRITUAL SIBLINGS?

**** DO YOU DESIRE TO OBEY YOUR FATHER? IF NOT, TURN IN REPENTANT FAITH TO THE ONLY SAVIOR, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND TRUST HIM AND SUBMIT TO HIS LORDSHIP TODAY. (LET'S PRAY)