

CHAPTER 2

(NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS FOR LIVING A GODLY LIFE)

SUMMARY: You have to receive certain qualifications to keep the law of God. There are 4 qualifications for living a godly life, which you must receive from God:

1. Your heart has to be freely willing to live a godly life.
2. You have to be assured that you are forgiven and reconciled to God.
3. You have to be sure of a happy, eternal future with the Lord.
4. You have to have sufficient strength both to will and to do what God calls you to do.

INTRODUCTION:

A. THE PURPOSE OF CHAPTER 2

“Let me now tell you how you can reach this grand goal of holy living. I am going to tell you the *means* by which you can live this holy life...I am going to tell you about *four qualifications God must first give you if you are going to live a godly life*. You must have them if you are going to continue on in holy living. Then, after I tell you what they are, I am going to tell you how you receive them.” p. 25, 26

B. 4 INTRODUCTORY POINTS CONCERNING THE FOUR QUALIFICATIONS:

1. “Very few people understand that they need these qualifications, but they are absolutely critical for Christian growth.” p. 25
2. You need to have power that is greater than Adam first had, since your work is now much harder than his! p. 25
3. There is no “universal ability” in man that enables him to will and do his duty! pp. 25-26

Before going to “war” we must first consider whether we have sufficient spiritual equipment to stand in the evil day!
p. 25

4. A necessary warning concerning these four endowments, p. 26

PROPOSITION: 4 necessary qualifications for living a godly life, which you must receive from God:

LESSON:

- I. QUALIFICATION 1: YOUR HEART HAS TO BE FREELY MOTIVATED TO OBEY GOD'S LAW. pp. 26-29 ("In the first place, I assert, that an *inclination and propensity of heart*, to the duties of the law, is necessary to frame and enable us for the immediate practice of them...the three other endowments...are subservient to this as the chief of all..." pp. 12-14, original)

FOUR REASONS TO UNDERSTAND WHY FREE WILL IS INSUFFICIENT FOR HOLINESS/OBEDIENCE: pp. 26-29 (Note: These four sub-points support point I)

- A. You cannot keep the commands of God if you hate them! (The duties of the law are of such a nature, that they cannot possibly be performed while there is wholly an aversion or mere indifference of the heart to the performance of them, and *no good inclination and propensity* towards the practice of them..."), p. 27
- B. Remember how human beings were first created. When God created Adam, he was righteous, upright, and truly holy. pp. 27-28
- C. Original sin, which makes you dead to God and to godliness right from the time you are born, makes you a willing slave to sinful actions. p. 28
- D. In the work of the Gospel, God addresses your slavery to sin. God restores you to holiness by giving you a new heart and a new spirit (cf., Ezek. 36:26, 27) pp. 28-29

- II. QUALIFICATION 2: YOU HAVE TO BE TOTALLY ASSURED THAT YOU ARE RECONCILED TO GOD AND ACCEPTED BY HIM. pp. 29-34

- A. ASSURANCE OF JUSTIFICATION AND RECONCILIATION WITH GOD IS THE FOUNDATION FOR HOLINESS (I.E., OBEDIENCE/LAW-KEEPING) P. 29
 - 1. Justification-based assurance is a great mystery. p. 29
 - 2. A proper understanding of justification leads to holiness; an improper understanding leads to licentiousness. pp. 28-29

B. 5 REASONS YOU MUST KNOW YOU HAVE BEEN RECONCILED TO GOD IF YOU ARE GOING TO DO GOOD WORKS (THESE 5 SUB-POINTS SUPPORT POINT II)

1. In this regard, think about the first Adam...Think also about Jesus, the second Adam. p. 30
2. Those that know how dead they are under the power of sin and satan know that if God leaves them to do what their heart wants to do, they can do nothing but sin. pp. 30-31
3. The nature of true obedience to the law absolutely requires you to understand that you are reconciled to God, loved by him, and under His favor, if you really are going to obey the law. pp. 31-32
4. Your conscience must be cleansed from dead works so you can serve the living God. pp. 32-33
5. God has made it very clear in His Word how He brings His people from sin to holy living- He first makes them understand that He loves them, and that their sins are totally blotted out. p. 33

III. QUALIFICATION 3: YOU HAVE TO BE ABSOLUTELY ASSURED THAT YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE A HAPPY, ETERNAL FUTURE WITH THE LORD IN THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH. (I am speaking about what we usually call "eternal security." Eternal security will enable you to live a holy life!) pp. 17-19, 34-36

A. DEFINITION & IMPORTANCE OF ETERNAL SECURITY

1. Definition: "The teaching that God shall with no uncertainty bring into their eternal inheritance those who are actually justified—delivered from the curse of the law and have the righteousness of Christ reckoned to their account—and who have been begotten by the Spirit of God. And further it is the teaching that God shall do this in a way glorifying to Himself and in harmony with His nature..."
2. Importance:

- a. It is necessary to strengthen young and fearful Christians in their faith—by safeguarding the honor and integrity of God and His Word.
 - b. It is necessary in order to preserve one of the grand and distinctive blessings of the Gospel, which to deny is to attack the very foundations of the believer's comfort and assurance.
 - c. It is necessary because it enables you to live a holy life.
- B. 3 REASONS WHY ASSURANCE ENABLES YOU TO LIVE A HOLY LIFE, pp. 35-36 (These three sub-points support point III)
- 1. First, you cannot keep the law of God if you are not assured of your own happy future in heaven. p. 35
 - 2. Second, everywhere in Scripture, since the fall of Adam, God uses the sure hope of the glory of heaven to encourage his people to obey him. p. 35
 - 3. Third, this absolute assurance of eternal, heavenly happiness will not lead you to live a sinful life if you understand how it fits into your Christian life. pp. 35-36

IV. QUALIFICATION 4: YOU HAVE TO BE TOTALLY ASSURED THAT YOU HAVE SUFFICIENT STRENGTH BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO WHAT GOD CALLS YOU TO DO. pp. 19-20, 36-38

3 REASONS WHY YOU NEED GOD'S STRENGTH BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO WHAT GOD CALLS YOU TO DO. pp. 36-38

- A. First, you are by nature, dead in trespasses and sins, and thus totally unable to will or do anything that is spiritually good until Christ makes you alive (Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:7-9), p. 36.
- B. Second, if you think obeying the law of God is easy, you know neither the law nor yourself! p. 37
- C. Third, in his wisdom, God has assured you that He will give you sufficient strength to enable you both to will and to do what you are called to do. pp. 37-38

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