*Introduction*

Last week during the message, we touched on a piece of false teaching that is very popular in many Churches, and may well be a belief that some of you hold that actually stops you living an obedient life and one that is in the presence of God, it is the teaching - Once saved, always saved.

There are many scriptures that Christians will use to uphold this view:

***Mark 16:15-17 He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;***

***John 10:9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.[***[***a***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+10:8-10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26491a)***] They will come in and go out, and find pasture.***

***Acts 2:21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved***

But when you read those verses in their proper context, there is more to it. It's only half the story.

Many preachers and Christians alike will tell you it is by "Gods Grace" that we are saved. Of course they are right, and the very thought of doing something for your salvation is wrong.

BUT......

Jesus spoke alot about obeying, following...

The great commission states:

***Matt 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”***

***Luke 11:27As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.”***

***28He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”***

***John 14:23Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. 24Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.***

So very quickly we can see through the 'once saved always saved' argument and see that it is not true.

But in case you cannot see this, I want to show you from the OT and in particular the Tabernacle, that God has laid out, through this amazing structure the way we can come to God and what He expects of us.

Before we look at this I need to categorically state that Salvation is by GRACE ALONE through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and NOT by works, as Paul said:

***Eph 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.***

When the Children of Israel had come out of slavery in Egypt and had started their way to the Promised Land, they were a disobedient people, but they were God's chosen people.

In Ex 25 we first read about the Tabernacle and the first thing this morning I would like you to notice is this:

God wants a relationship with His people - but it is a free will relationship.

***Ex 25:1 The Lord said to Moses, 2“Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from everyone whose heart prompts them to give.***

They were to bring gifts willingly, they were not forced to do it.

We are not forced to follow Jesus, we are not forced to believe. God wants everyone to believe, but they have to be willing.

Why does God want Moses to build this Tabernacle? Because God wants to dwell in the midst of His people.

Physically in the wilderness, God was going to dwell/live with them.

Eventually when they came to the Land of Israel they built a Temple where God would dwell.

The Bible tells us that we who are 'born again' through the acceptance of Jesus Christ become the temple of God:

***1 Cor 6:19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies.***

The next thing I want you to see, and you will come to it if you continue reading the chapters in Exodus, is that the Tabernacle has three areas and is designed in the image of God who is three yet one, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

We are also made up of three parts - Body, Soul and Spirit.

The Tabernacle is made up of the Outer Court, the Holy place and the Holy of Holies

The next thing we read about in chapter 25 of Exodus is the Ark - commonly known as the Ark of the Covenant, and it housed the Covenant law.

It was to be the place where God would meet with Moses and in the future with the High Priest.

The Ark was to be placed in the Most Holy place or the Holy of Holies and it would be shielded by a curtain. It was The Holy place.

The ark had a cover on it with Cherubim on it, this was known as the Mercy Seat.

Ex 25: 23 then goes on to talk about a table, this table would become known as the Table of Shewbread.

***30 Put the bread of the Presence on this table to be before me at all times.***

This bread represents the Word of God, and there were 12 loaves to represent the 12 tribes of Israel and they were changed regularly. The Priests were the only ones allowed to eat this bread.

Tradition states that a Priest could take just a tiny morsel of this bread and be completely satisfied.

***Matt 4:4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”***

Next we come to the Lampstand

***31 “Make a lampstand of pure gold***

The number 7 in Scripture is the number of completeness, and we see a reference to seven lampstands in the book of Revelation:

***Rev 1: 19“Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. 20The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels[***[***e***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30718e)***] of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.***

The lampstand was in the holy place in order to give light so that the Priests could see what they were doing. I believe this golden lampstand speaks of the illumination that the Holy Spirit gives to believers who seek God. In this context it is the illumination of the truth as we partake of the Word of God.

The next item in the 'Tent of Meeting' or the holy place is the Altar of Incense.

This is quite a small golden altar that was only to have a specially made incense placed upon it. The Priest was to put incense on it daily when he tended the lampstand.

The incense made a beautiful aroma that went up to God.

Coming outside the Tent of Meeting into the Courtyard we have the Laver, a mirror like copper container containing water for washing.

The Priests had to wash their hands and feet before entering the Holy Place so that they would not die. It was important that they did this every time.

Lastly we then come to the Altar of Sacrifice, a square bronze altar that was lifted up and upon which all sacrifices were offered.

No one was allowed to come into the courtyard without an offering.

There was only one way into the courtyard, there was no back entrance.

What is the relevance of all that I have spoken about so far, to me and to you?.

Simply this,

God gave to Moses in the tabernacle, the blueprint for salvation that can only come through Jesus Christ.

Let me explain how the Tabernacle, with its layout and furniture shows there is only ONE way to God, and it has been acted out in Jewish history year after year after year, then it was taken over by the building of the Temple, it was a blueprint of what would be fulfilled by Jesus Himself.

Having worked from the Ark of the Covenant to the door, let us now work in the opposite direction.

When Jesus came to this earth and started his earthly ministry he said:

***John 10 “Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ...............7Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. 9I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.[***

There is only one way into the sheepfold, the tabernacle, the presence of God - Heaven, Eternal life, and that is through Jesus Christ the One and only Son of God.

As we enter the Tabernacle the first thing we come to is the Altar of Sacrifice, the place where the sacrificial sheep was taken and killed and offered as an offering for sin.

The Psalmist said:

***PS 22:14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. 15 My mouth[***[***a***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+22:13-15&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14220a)***] is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.***

***ISA 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.***

Jesus himself said

***John 3:14Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,[***[***f***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26135f)***] 15that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”[***[***g***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26136g)***]***

***16For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.***

We as sinners can only come into the presence of God through the gate Jesus and through his sacrificial death upon the cross.

When we come and accept Him as Lord and Saviour we come to the Laver, we have been washed clean of our sin by the blood of Christ, but on a daily basis we must wash our hands and feet, the things that touch, as it were this sinful world.

Although we are saved, we need to wash daily and ask God to forgive us, we are to confess our sins.

The Laver was made of mirrored copper, as you approach the laver you could see yourself as a reminder that you sin daily and need that forgiveness.

***1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.***

When we have been washed in the blood and forgiven, we are to walk the road of obedience, we are in the process of being sanctified, that is, set apart for the purpose of God, that gives us access to the Holy place, the tent of meeting, where we come into the light of the Holy Spirit

***2 Cor 1:21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.***

 The Holy Spirit (Candlestick) guides us, the bread on the table which represents the Word of God is there to feed upon

***Matt 4:4Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God***

And as we walk in faith and obedience to the Word of God, an aroma goes up to God, the aroma of our good works

***Eph 2:9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.***

***Phil 2:12Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.***

***14Do everything without grumbling or arguing,***

When the day comes, either through death or through His coming, we will be taken into the Holy of Holies, the very presence of God - for Eternity.

*Conclusion*

 The Tabernacle is a picture of the Christian life, the obtaining of eternal life in the presence of God.

Where are you this morning? Have you entered in through the gate - the only gate! JESUS CHRIST, who gave His life as THE atoning sacrifice for your sins.

Or are you trying to get in through some other way - another religion or belief, through the things you do, perhaps by the money you give to the Church or to the needy......

Jesus made it quite clear

***John 14:6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me***

There is no other way!

Only through Jesus

It is all of God's amazing Grace.

Amen