

Some Bible “Excepts”

by Bill Crews

The English word “except” is a strong word. It can be used as a verb, either transitive or intransitive, and as a preposition. But it is also identified as a conjunction, at least “archaically,” with the meaning of “unless.” This simply means that in the past in the English language the word was used as a conjunction and meant “unless.” That is exactly how the word is used, and frequently, in our English translations of the Bible. It has the meaning of “if not,” “unless,” “but that” and “without.” It is used to emphasize conditions that must be met. For example:

THE NECESSITY OF FAITH: *“I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for **except** ye believe that I am He, ye shall die in your sins”* (John 8:24). Thus, it is imperative that we believe that Jesus is He (the Christ, the One sent from God). (The necessity of that faith is also stressed in this way: *“And without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing unto Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him,”* Hebrews 11:6).

THE NECESSITY OF CHRIST: *“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father but (or **except**) by Me”* (John 14:6). We cannot come unto God unless we believe; we cannot come unto God except by His Son. How do we come unto that Son? *“No man can come to me **except** the Father that sent Me draw him”* (John 6:44). And how does the Father draw men unto the Son? *“It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God”* (that’s in Isaiah 54:13, v.c.). *“Everyone that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me”* (John 6:45). So the Father, through His word, draws men unto His Son. This is the same way that men are led to have faith (Romans 10:17 – faith comes by hearing the word of God; Acts 15:7 – by Peter’s mouth the Gentiles were to hear the word of the gospel and believe).

THE NECESSITY OF BEING BORN AGAIN: *“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except** one be born anew (or again), he cannot see the kingdom of God”* (John 3:3). This is explained further: *“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except** one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”* (John 3:5). On being born (or begotten) of the Spirit see James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 Corinthians 4:15 – we are begotten by the word or the gospel which was given by the Spirit. On being born of water see Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12 and 1:18 – we are brought forth from the water of baptism as new creatures.

THE NECESSITY OF HONESTY AND SINCERITY: *“For I say unto you, that **except** your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter in the kingdom of heaven”* (Matthew 5:20). Their righteousness was only apparent, external and hypocritical. Ours must be real, according to God’s word and from the heart.

THE NECESSITY OF HUMILITY: *“And said, Verily I say unto you, **Except** ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven”* (Matthew 18:3-4). *“Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein”* (Mark 10:15).

THE NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE: *“I tell you, Nay: but **except** ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish”* (Luke 13:3, 5). Jesus addressed these words to some specific individuals, as He compared them to others, but the words *“**Except** ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish”* can be applied in a spiritual and eternal sense to all sinners. *“The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent”* (Acts 17:30-31).

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