

Title:                    **FOUR THINGS**  
**THAT MUST COME TO PASS**

Text:                John 3:7, 14, 30 *and* 4:4

Subject:        *The Sure Salvation of God's Elect*

Date:             Sunday Morning — November 4, 2007<sup>1</sup>

Reading:        *John 3:1-4:4*

Introduction:

Every morning, when I come into the office, I have in my mind some things which I simply must get done. Shelby and I often say, concerning one thing or another, “That is a must. It simply must be done today.” Usually, we manage to get all the things on our “musts” list done.

When we say, “That’s a must,” we mean, “That is a matter of great priority.” But we do not really mean, “That is a must.” Many things may happen in a day’s time to alter our “musts” list considerably.

But when the Lord God uses that little word “must” with reference to something, you can mark it down. — It must come to pass. Earlier we read John 3:1-4:4 together. I chose that very familiar passage for our reading because it speaks of four specific things that must come to pass; and that is what I want to talk about — **FOUR THINGS THAT MUST COME TO PASS.**

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<sup>1</sup> Wasilla, Alaska — (WED 10/31/07)

**FOUR THINGS THAT MUST COME TO PASS**

(John 3:7) “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

(John 3:14) “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.”

(John 3:30) “He must increase, but I *must* decrease.”

(John 4:4) “And he must needs go through Samaria.”

Four times that little word “*must*” is used in this passage with reference to four specific things. We all use the word, “*must*,” many times every day. But it might surprise you to discover what it means. This word, “*must*,” is an imperative verb. It means — “necessary, binding, behooving, meet, needful, ought to be, should be.” But the primary meaning of the word is “necessary, or binding.”

**Proposition:** When the Lord our God says something is a must, he means that it is a must.

Nothing causes him to change his mind, alter his purpose, or adjust his plan. With that in mind, let’s look at this very familiar passage of Scripture one more time. May God the Holy Spirit be our Teacher, taking the things of Christ and showing them to us.

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**THE CHOSEN SINNER**

(John 3:7) “*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*” — Here is **a must for the chosen sinner.** Every chosen, redeemed sinner must be born again. Our Lord Jesus was not simply saying to Nicodemus — You really should be born again, or You need to be born again, or I urge you to be born again. Our Savior said to Nicodemus — **“You must be born again!”** The word “ye” is singular. He said to Nicodemus, specifically, **“You must be born again!”** And so it came to pass.

This is not a matter of speculation on my part. John tells us later on in this book (19:38-40) that Nicodemus came with Joseph of Arimathea to beg the body of the Lord Jesus from Pilate, and made considerable sacrifice for his burial. Thus, though he was not here born again, at the appointed time of love and grace, this man was, according to the purpose of God, born again.

**I take Nicodemus to be a representative of all God’s elect.** The Lord Jesus says, concerning all chosen sinners, **“Ye must be born again;”** and they shall, every one of them, at God’s appointed time. This is a matter of absolute certainty because it is a matter of absolute necessity.

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(John 3:3-8) “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? (5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. (8) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

Why must God’s elect be born again? What necessity is there for this? What makes this thing binding? — **SEVEN THINGS...**

1. **God’s elect must be born again because we need it.**

Though chosen and redeemed, though predestinated to eternal salvation, none of God’s elect can ever be saved apart from the new birth. We must be born again because we were all born wrong the first time.

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(Psalms 51:5) “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

(Psalms 58:3) “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.”

Because we were born wrong the first time, unless we are born again, we cannot...

- See the kingdom of God.
- Enter into the kingdom of God.

2. **Every one of the elect must be born again because God, who cannot lie, promised it, before the world began** (Tit. 1:2).

(Jeremiah 31:31-34) “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: (32) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: (33) But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (34) And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every

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man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

(2 Timothy 1:9) “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

(Titus 1:1-2) “Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; (2) In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.”

3. **All the chosen must be born again because election demands it** (2 Thess. 2: 13-14).

If even one of those chosen to salvation should fail to obtain salvation, then God’s election is meaningless, his purpose is useless, his love is worthless, and his word is comfortless! If God cannot be trusted to do this, to save the people he purposed to save from eternity, he cannot be trusted to do anything!

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(2 Thessalonians 2:13-14) “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: (14) Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(Ephesians 1:3-6) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

4. **God’s elect must all be born again, because predestination arranged it.**

Predestination is God’s appointment and arrangement of all things from eternity to secure the salvation of his chosen.

(Romans 8:28-30) “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to

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them who are the called according to *his* purpose. (29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

5. **Every one of God’s elect must, without exception, be born again because the sin-atonement blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has obtained it.**

(Hebrews 9:12) “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us.*”

6. **Every chosen, blood-bought sinner in this world must be born again because our God wills it.**

(2 Peter 3:9) “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

Someone may ask, “How do you know that is what 2 Peter 3:9 teaches?” I know because 2 Peter 3:15 tells me so.



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(2 Peter 3:15) “And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;”

7. **All the chosen, all who were predestinated to eternal life, all the redeemed, all of them must be born again because the Holy Spirit was sent here to do it.**

(John 6:37-40) “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (38) For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. (39) And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (40) And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

(John 6:44-45) “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (45) It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”

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(John 6:63) “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.”

**THE COMMISSIONED SURETY**

(John 3:14) “*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.*”

— Here is **a must for the commissioned Surety.** — The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into this world with a commission, on a mission of mercy, under the bondage of his own voluntary suretyship engagements, which he assumed for us as the Surety of the everlasting covenant, whom the Father trusted from eternity (Eph. 1:12).

(John 3:14-17) “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: (15) That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. (16) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”

The death of our Lord Jesus Christ was no accident. It was not something which came to pass because of

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man's free will, or because the Jews would not let him be their king! The Lord Jesus died at Calvary because he must die at Calvary!

(Luke 9:22) "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."

Why? What necessity was there for the death of the Son of God upon the cursed tree? Why must this Holy One be made sin for us? Why must this Savior be put to death?

1. **The Lord Jesus Christ must die at Jerusalem as he did because God the Father purposed it from eternity.**

(Acts 2:23) "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:"

2. **Our dear Savior had to die at Jerusalem, in order to fulfill his covenant engagements for us.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ voluntarily assumed all responsibility for our souls in the covenant of grace; but once he assumed that responsibility, he must fulfill it.

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He is honor bound to do so (Gen. 43:8-9; John 10:18; Acts 13:29).

(Genesis 43:8-9) “And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, *and* also our little ones. (9) I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:”

(John 10:18) “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

(Acts 13:29) “And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre.”

3. **The Son of God must die as he did because the Scriptures must be fulfilled.**

- Psalm 22
- Isaiah 53
- The Two Goats
- All the Sacrifices were Lifted Up

4. **It was absolutely necessary for the Lord Jesus Christ to die as he did upon the cursed tree, lifted up from the earth, in order for the holy Lord God**

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**to save us from our sins** (Rom 3:24-26; John 3:14-17).

(John 3:14-17) “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: (15) That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. (16) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”

(Romans 3:24-26) “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: (25) Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; (26) To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

If God would save us from our sins, he could only do it this way, because...

- Righteousness must be maintained.
- Sin must be punished.
- Justice must be satisfied.
- Forgiveness must be legitimate.

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- Love must be blameless.

**THE CONTRITE SERVANT**

(John 3:30) “*He must increase, but I must decrease*” —  
Here is **a must for the contrite servant.**

(John 3:29-30) “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. (30) He must increase, but I *must decrease.*”

**Christ is the Bridegroom.** — “*He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom.*”

**Gospel preachers are the friend’s of the Bridegroom.**

- We stand before the Bridegroom.
- We listen for the Bridegroom’s voice.
- We rejoice to hear his voice.
- Our joy is fulfilled when we are used of God to bring the bride and the Bridegroom together.

**Every true servant of God is anxious to turn honor and attention away from himself to Christ.** This is the prayer, desire, and determination of every true, faithful servant of God. — “*He must increase; but I must decrease.*”

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- Christ is from heaven and is heavenly. — We are just men of the earth, and earthly (v. 31).
- We will soon fade away. Christ is eternal.
- Christ is himself the Revelation of God. — We are just his messengers (v. 32).
- Christ has the Spirit without measure. — We have the Spirit as he is measured to us (v. 34).
- To believe me is meaningless. — To believe him is to seal this fact to your own heart, that God is true (v. 33).
- Christ must increase because the Father has put all things in his hands (v. 35).
- Christ must increase because Christ alone is our Savior!

(John 3:36) “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

**“He must increase; but I must decrease.”** – The more I decrease, the more I delight to just stand before him and hear his voice. And the more I stand before him and hear his voice, the more he will increase before me and I decrease before him.

Oh, let Christ increase and me decrease! **We cannot be occupied with more than one thing at a time. Let us ever be occupied with Christ, and not with**

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**ourselves!** The more we are occupied with him, the less we shall be occupied with ourselves.

Humility is not something we cultivate. Rather, it is something that comes from beholding the Lord Jesus Christ. The more I try to be humble, the prouder I become. But the more I stand in his presence, hear his voice and behold him, the more I am occupied with him, the more humbled I am before him.

**THE COMPASSIONATE SAVIOR**

(John 4:4) “*And he must needs go through Samaria.*” — Here is **a must for the compassionate Savior.** When the appointed time of love has come, the time in which the chosen, redeemed sinner shall be born again, then our great God and compassionate Savior **must needs** go to where the chosen, redeemer sinner is and give life to the object of his love; and he shall! — The reason why the Lord Jesus must go through Samaria, was because of a divine needs-be. From all eternity it had been ordained that He should go through Samaria. Some of God’s elect were there, and these must be sought and found (John 10:16).

**Arthur Pink** wrote, “We shall never appreciate the Gospel until we go back to the basic truth of predestination, which puts God first, which makes the choice His before it is ours, and which, in due



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time, brings His grace to bear upon us with invincible power.

All the great movements of the universe are regulated by God's will. — It was predestinated that our Savior should go through Samaria, because there was a chosen sinner there. — The whole machinery of grace was therefore set in motion in the direction of one poor lost sinner, that she might be restored to her Savior and to her God.”

Children of God, ever look for the source and cause of that grace that has brought salvation to you, not in time, but in eternity. We are taught in the Book of God to date our eternal life from eternity.

Father 'twas Thy love that knew us  
Earth's foundation long before  
That same love to Jesus drew us  
By its sweet constraining power,  
And will keep us  
Safely now and ever more!

- Election marked the house into which Christ must come.
- Predestination set the time of his coming.
- Blood atonement paved the road on which he would come.

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- Providence brings him to the appointed house at the appointed time.
- Efficacious grace brings him in!

(Isaiah 55:11) “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.”

**Robert Hawker** wrote, “This was the time, the place, the manner, the method, and the whole train of events, linked in the chain with it; which, from all eternity had been marked for Christ's calling to himself this woman, and other *Samaritans*, who were effectually wrought upon, to the knowledge and belief of Jesus. — What a sweet thought is it, that all things are arranged with infinite wisdom, for all the purposes of Christ's Church and people, *in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*. What the world calls chance, and accident; the believer cannot admit in his creed. Everything, from the numbering of the hairs of our head to the bringing home the Church to glory, is arranged, ordered and appointed; and to a minuteness, which nothing can counteract, by the stratagem of men, or devils (Dan. 4:35; Rom. 11:36).”

If you are one of God's elect there is a needs be put on the Lord Jesus Christ to save you. If you are yet in your sins, you will not always be. For years you have been

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fleeing from Christ; but when his appointed time comes he will overtake you. However you may kick against the pricks and contend against him; however deeply you may have fallen, he will most assuredly overtake and conquer you. Even now he is on the way! Perhaps this day shall be to you the day of grace and salvation!

(Psalms 115:1) “Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth’s sake.”

Amen.