

harden their hearts and this truth is part of the teaching of the passages that you mentioned.

It is also true that there is a further element in them that God causes a judicial blindness. Here we enter a problem that we cannot fully understand, though certain elements of it are abundantly clear in the Scripture. The Scripture makes plain that God has a great purpose in all things. We know that He does every thing well, and that everything is for the best interest of all His creatures. There are divine actions that we do not understand but must simply take on faith as being for the best. At the same time it is made abundantly clear in the Scripture that man has a definite power of choice. Even though we are greatly conditioned by our background, by our circumstances and by the influence of others, we choose over and over to turn away from God. We choose repeatedly what is not in accordance with His will. As a result all of us deserve condemnation.

God in His wonderful mercy reveals himself to people in most unexpected ways and at unexpected times. Sometimes a person will witness to someone repeatedly over a long period of years and seem to get no response, and then there will be a turning to Christ. On other occasions a mere word of witness produces an immediate response. There is much in life that we do not understand. It is our duty to be faithful and we can look to God to bring the increase.

The Scripture clearly teaches that when people go on continually in their own selfish ways God does not generally choose to provide an easy turning to salvation. There is such a thing as a judicial blindness after man has gone a certain distance in unbelief and sin. It is all part of God's good and holy plan, though we do not know the full details and cannot always clearly see His purpose. It would seem that the great mass of people are judicially blinded; since they have preferred darkness to light. He allows them to go further into darkness. Yet we must never count any living person as hopeless. For all we know it may be God's will to bring a particular individual to Himself, even perhaps in the very last moment of life.