

MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY IN SALVATION

Man is responsible for his salvation. I say this in contrast to the Calvinistic idea that proclaims all responsibility belongs to God as He arbitrarily chooses who will or will not be saved. Now, before we go any further, let me clarify that man is not totally responsible in the sense that he has to devise a plan to save himself, or work in such a way as to place God in such a debt that Heaven “owes” him entrance. I say that man is responsible in the sense that he must freely and faithfully comply with God’s conditions of pardon in order to receive the gracious benefits that God offers through man’s Savior, Jesus.

While Calvinism proclaims that man is so depraved that he cannot do anything toward his salvation, the Bible demands that man must do certain things to obtain salvation!

THE QUESTION OF THE CONVICTED

In **Acts 2**, Peter indicted the crowd that stood before him of murdering the Messiah. Upon hearing the overwhelming evidence, **verse 37** says of the audience, **“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?”**

If Calvinism is true, Peter not only missed a perfect opportunity to teach thousands of souls that they couldn’t “do” anything, but he also proceeded to proclaim error by telling the convicted crowd that there was indeed something they had to do! Consider his response: **“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the**

remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Of course, Peter was not misleading the multitude that day — Calvinism is false, for salvation from sin does indeed require certain actions on the part of the lost. In fact, **Acts 2:40** goes on to say, **“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”**

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

According to Calvinism, since man is totally depraved, God has to work directly on the heart of the sinner in order to produce even faith in the individual. The adherents of this system teach that without a direct calling of God, man cannot come to Him for salvation. A popular text used by those who proclaim this doctrine is **John 6:44** wherein Jesus says, **“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.”** But notice the very next verse: **“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.”** The terms, **“taught,” “heard,”** and **“learned”** are key to understanding how the Father draws man. He does so by means of the Gospel, not a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. **“Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. 2:14).** God calls man out of sin — He draws men to Himself and to the Saviour — by His Word. This is precisely how the Holy Spirit works on the hearts of men.

Paul describes God’s Word as **“the sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17)** — that instrument by which He calls and convicts sinners. God doesn’t work directly on the heart of the sinner to produce faith; He uses His Word —

the sword of the Spirit — wielded by the hands of faithful men to accomplish such (**cf. Rom. 10:17**).

THE TASK OF THE TRANSGRESSOR

Once a person permits God’s Word to produce faith in his heart, other actions must follow. Though faith is essential to salvation (**cf. Jn. 8:24**), it alone is not enough. **James 2:19-20** says, **“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?”**

A few verses later, James writes, **“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”** Remember again what Peter told those who believed the gospel message he was preaching on Pentecost: **“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”** If we were to place this information beside **Mark 16:16**, we would have confirmation that faith, repentance, and baptism are all actions required on man’s part for his salvation. Not only that, once a person is in a saved condition, he must continue to **“walk in the light”** that the blood of Christ might continually cleanse him from his sins (**cf. 1 Jn. 1:7**).

God created us as accountable beings with the ultimate ability to obey Him if we so choose. By means of His Word, He pleads with us to come to Him in His appointed way. Though He desires for all men to be saved (**cf. 1 Tim. 2:4**), He will force no one. When all is said and done, we decide. Man is indeed responsible for his salvation.

Preston Silcox from GospelPreceptor.com

ANNIVERSARY

Chris and Sara Edwards, 12-29.

BIRTHDAYS

Tammy Marcum, 12-27; Jessica Carter, 12-30.

ILL

Sunday: Gary Cole, Charles, Amy, and Lois Tullis.

Wednesday: Janice Carter. Bob Adams is in the Olathe Medical Center in Room 406.

Those battling cancer: Jamal Abyad, Diane Cannon, David Cole, and Ledgia Campbell. Please remember these, as well as: Janice Carter, Lynda Cole, Meredith Greer, Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

HOME BOUND

Bob Adams resides at Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations are extended to the Wilson family on the birth of Chase Michael Wilson on December 17. He weighed in at 7 lb. 13 oz. and stood 19.5 inches tall. Jim and Wanda Wilson are the proud grandparents!

OUT OF TOWN

Jeremy Keifer is in Oklahoma over the holiday break. The Thrasher's will be Aurora, MO visiting relatives this coming weekend.

GUEST SPEAKER

Brother Jim O'Connor will be speaking at our AM and PM worship this Sunday as well as next Sunday, December 31. We welcome Jim and Judy to Olathe and are grateful for their good work.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 49; Sunday PM, 38; Wednesday PM, 33.

Those To Serve

December 24, 2006

BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Brown

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS..... George Thomas

SONG LEADER..... Joel Nelson

OPENING PRAYER Steve Brown

PRESIDE..... Myron Nebergall

ASSIST..... Jared Nelson

ASSIST..... John James

CLOSING PRAYER..... Jeff Nemechek

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYER John Cody Carter

CLOSING PRAYER..... Charles Tullis

LORD'S SUPPER..... Myron Nebergall

WEDNESDAY 27th

SONG LEADER..... Joel Nelson

INVITATION Jared Nelson

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Morning Worship 10:30 AM

Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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