

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by
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The Steps of Man

“A man’s goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?”
(Proverbs 20:24)

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and He delighteth in his way.”
(Psalm 37:23)

“A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps.”
(Prov. 16:9)

“O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself;
it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”
(Jerem. 10:23)

Per the scriptural record, “A man’s goings are of the Lord”. First, I would like to express that I make NO excuse for believing that God is the FIRST CAUSE of all things which come to pass. I am persuaded that the Spirit of the Almighty has taught my heart, mind and soul to understand such “abnormal” and “unnatural” form of theological doctrine. I, in my early Christian experience, fought against God’s “unconditional election” as a twice born child of grace, until I was driven to the word of God in an attempt to prove otherwise. I spent three nights well into the mornings studying the Bible prayerfully seeking the truth of the matter. I had come away weary in mind and beat down in logic as God revealed to me that there is a people which are chosen, ordained, appointed, called, elected, and predestined to become heirs of divine grace. And these people were not merely natural Israel as I had been taught by man.

These people under consideration referenced in the New Testament oracles were a people who “were not a people.” From every tongue, kindred and nation. Oh! What glorious revelation flooded this mortal frame of God’s sovereign love, mercy and grace. It was as a “third birth” in regard to experience and divine understanding. The truth of God’s Unconditional Election had catapulted me into an understanding that greatly enhanced my heart’s ability to worship a now MORE awesome God than I had known previously.

That was about the year 1974, three years after God's grace brought about a new birth in this sinners experience. As I continued to read the scriptures and was brought progressively along exposed to the writers from the Old Paths, I was exposed to the historical doctrine that was the "backbone" of the American Christian heritage. The subject of "Unlimited Predestination", which was the strong doctrinal benchmark of the "Strict & Particular Baptist" that first inhabited this North American continent. Well, back to God's boot camp I go, logically thinking how could this doctrinal position be the truth of the matter.

As time went on and I was exercising in the preaching ministry in the mid 1970s, it would drive me to the scriptures seeking that which I sought God to give me to attempt to speak about. As time moved on and the scriptures were collated in my mind and they began to fit together as one GRAND PUZZLE which is unknown by the natural mind and neither can it be understood apart from divine revelation. The PUZZLE being slowly put together over time was growing in size as God enabled me to see the vastness of His character and Almighty attributes. That finally the conclusion of the matter had to be faced with an answer to this majestic question, "Is God UNLIMITED" in his determined decrees and predestined purposes, or is he LIMITED to foreknowledge as the precedence upon which predestination rest"?

If the STEPS of a good man are ordered of the Lord (which they are), can anything be thrown in the path of man's steps to cause them to step in another direction? Can God's determined purpose be altered by the creatures' action or by creations events? If you were to answer "YES," then God IS NOT ALMIGHTY and his purposes become frustrated and LIMITED.

"Yeah, men deviseth their way, they PLAN and DEVISE a way in which they desire to tread, BUT the Lord directeth his steps." Is not this scripture principle true and correct? As the Minnesota bridge plunged downward into the Mississippi River last week, were any of the creatures' steps altered from the direction in which the Almighty had determined them to go? When the Twin Towers came tumbling down by the hands of Islamic terrorists, were those who perished and caught in such calamity altered from the "steps" the Almighty had ordered?

Has one soldier in Iraq's conflict fallen by the enemy's bullet because they were "out of step" from what the Almighty had ordained?

The way of man is NOT IN HIMSELF. I contend that the God of the Holy Bible has so directed the path of mankind that every baby that is born this day, has been born upon an appointed time decreed ONLY by the Almighty God of eternal glory. And every mortal that falls to physical death has done so by the divine appointment of the same eternal God. The steps of the newborn baby as well as the wheel of the nursing home wheelchair moves in orchestrated harmony as determined by the Lord God omnipotent.

Oh! Yes, men can plan and devise, they can design and invent, they can construct and tear down, but ONLY by the divine direction of the Almighty shall any of man's doing be manifest. No Medicine could ever be formulated to combat a disease that God had not planted within the creatures mind the ingredients to such formula. No Engineer shall design a bridge that shall support its own weight let alone the millions of pounds of vehicular traffic apart from God granting knowledge for man to devise such inventions. What has man received that he has not been given by the God that created the heavens and the earth. Jesus Christ said, "Take no thought for tomorrow?" Why? Because our WAY IS NOT IN OURSELVES, it is divinely ordered by God and NOTHING shall circumvent his determined purposes from coming to pass.

Let me conclude by saying this, what has occurred this very day that was not in fulfillment of the will of God? Is his will being done in earth as it is in heaven? Jesus said it was; can you, dear one, step in a manner that is OUT OF the will of the Almighty? If you this day trip and fall physically upon the ground, was that an accident? Oh! My..... our God is in the heavens, and has done and is doing as He pleases, his beloved Son Jesus, of whom we have to do is seated beside the Father.

And our beloved Saviour has sent HIS Holy Spirit to indwell us and guide us every step of the way. Leading us in paths of righteousness for his names sake. And even when our steps take us through sins sloughs and pits of despair, our God hath ordered the experience that chastisement would have its PERFECT work in us, conforming us into the very image of his Son Jesus. For "ALL" shall be partakers of our God's chastening love, therefore ALL shall be led in steps of training even that the result be through sin dark season, that the brilliance of CHRIST would shine through with GREATER brightness than what we have seen before.

I have written in a manner which on the most part would cause you to interpret my thoughts as being ONLY regarding the Lord's chosen people. But allow me to clarify, if God has not determined the steps of ALL mankind, then His determined purposes could be in conflict with the steps of those outside God's divine control. But, because the God of the Holy scriptures IS THE FIRST CAUSE of all things that come to pass, NOTHING can interfere with his foreordained and predestined purposes. Knowing that our God HAS ORDERED OUR STEPS, in what can man glory or boast? Hath not the Potter power over the clay? Was Pharaoh's heart hardened over seventeen times by God for naught? BEHOLD!! It was to make his mighty POWER known and that his NAME would be manifest throughout the earth...Oh! The ordered steps of Pharaoh as his hardened heart fulfilled God's divine purpose.

That, ALL for the praise, honor and glory of our great God and Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, the ONLY hope for unworthy sinners, and who ONLY shall direct our STEPS and cause our hearts to desire HIM.

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