

The Gospel Herald

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

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by

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Contributing to Salvation

*“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone”
(James 2:17)*

In my 46 years as a believing Christian, I have been down many roads which I was told were contributing to my salvation. For I was informed immediately that I must be busy for the Lord as a new Christian and serve him in every capacity possible, as I was led into a typical Southern Baptist assembly near my residence and was shortly asked to be a Sunday School Director of the Young Married Class. I had only been a believer for possibly six months at the time, yet the typical arminian, freewill program was to get as many people as possible “busy” serving the Lord, and by doing so it would give some assurance to the assembly that you were going to be a consistent, faithful member.

So, as a zealous young believer desiring to please God in every aspect of my newly established faith, I was willing to do all I could to serve God among the assembly. I was involved in promoting the Sunday school bus ministry, passing out flyers for an upcoming Easter egg hunt, contributing to the SB Missionary Fund often, going out with another member on Wednesday evenings before midweek service, visiting folks who had visited the assembly the past Sunday, hoping to persuade them to return and/or lead them to Christ by the means and methods of “Evangelism Explosion” which were methods taught to steer people into a spiritual conversation by merely asking them, “If you were to die tonight do you know you are bound for heaven”?

And, of course, I heard every reason why a person was good enough to go to heaven, then I would explain John 3:16 to the people, often to their offense. So, I have been down the “soul saving” trail of the “make your decision” attempts to save folks.

All this previous busywork in the local assembly, attempting to grow the congregation by winning souls and getting additional folks in meeting attendance, was all supposedly CONTRIBUTING to my salvation. CONTRIBUTE: to share in a joint effort.

The more I began to grow in grace and knowledge in the Word of God, the more I began to realize that man cannot contribute anything to what God has already supplied in regard to salvation. It is not a “joint effort” between the redeemed sinner and Christ which makes salvation more genuine or more substantial, for it was revealed unto me that salvation is a gift; “the work of God, not of works lest any man shall boast” (Rom.2:8-9).

In God’s determined timing, it was revealed unto me, also, that the “works” of which the disciple James was referring to are the EVIDENCE of those born of the Spirit and made new creatures in Christ Jesus. For the Christian journey, once brought to saving faith, is a matter of Christ, “working in you causing you to BOTH WILL and to DO of his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

As time went by, I determined that the typical missionary soul saving-local assembly of professing Christians is a ministry of what the Old School Primitive Baptists would call “Conditional Time Salvation” effort merely wearing a different garment! It’s all about helping God and attempting to gain God’s blessings and favor in this time world by works and deeds.

The question is, can man CONTRIBUTE anything to God? Is not our Almighty God totally and absolutely self-sufficient in all things? Oh! Bless the Lord that salvation of his elect children both IN TIME and ETERNITY is decreed, determined, predestined and established. The born again heir of God’s free and sovereign grace has been saved from sin and is being delivered from the dominion of sin. Therefore, man CANNOT CONTRIBUTE anything to what has already been established in the divine purpose of God.

Is not this glorious truth the reason why God alone deserves all our praise and worship? And divine worship can ONLY be brought about as God is pleased to visit us with his Spirit’s unction to accomplish such acceptable worship.

*Those who have drawn a distinction between eternal salvation and time salvation have done so in error: For the salvation God is one in the same, for a supposed “time salvation” is the manifestation and evidence of our eternal salvation. For as the beloved apostle Paul had penned, “Being CONFIDENT of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will PERFORM IT until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6). What can man CONTRIBUTE to this glorious promise? NOTHING! For we have been quickened, Spirit-born, made new creatures, and marching on to Zion that Holy city of God by **GRACE and GRACE alone, the divine favour of our almighty and unlimited God and Saviour, The Lord Jesus Christ!***

We are sought out of the ruin of mankind, redeemed by the blood of the crucified one, granted imputed righteousness, and are given wondrous promises of our future destination all by HIS Free and Sovereign GRACE.

Continue to work in us, Oh God, my Saviour, proving unto the world that you have a people from every tribe, kindred and nation which have been brought by a way they knew not. Supernaturally born of thy Spirit and caused to walk in paths of righteousness for thy name's sake.

*Humbly submitted, unworthy as I am,
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