

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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SALVATION WITHOUT WORKS?

Boyd E. Morgan - Mammoth Spring
This is meat not milk. Study it diligently.

Rom. 11:1-7. "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of Greece. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; Otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

Before one can properly understand God's revelation to us in His work two basic fundamentals must be understood. First, a knowledge of the division of the Bible. Patriarchal, Moscial, and Christian dispensation. Second, and here is where we shall study now an understanding of the doctrine of Election and the Foreknowledge of God.

We cannot deny the election. We would not want to. Neither would we desire to explain it away. There are many texts in the Bible but the interpretations are too often erroneous and we can in no wise allow unscrupulous men to use Romans the eleventh chapter to prove that salvation to us today is without works on our part. It behooves us rather to better know the purposes of God and his manner of giving us his laws. If we knew very little of the Bible and didn't know what Paul was talking about in this chapter we might have been led to believe these passages are talking about us and our salvation today or at best about salvation without works. That it is not talking about.

From the beginning God has had a perfect plan of operation and we do not question either His plan or

His method of carrying it out. "He is the Rock, His work is perfect." Duet. 32:4. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear, before him." Eccl. 3:14. Furthermore God's purposes are eternal and immutable. "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations." Psalms 33. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24.

Now I propose to show some cases of special elections as taught in God's work and given to us for our learning. First Rom. 9:15. "For he saith to Moses; I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."—Without works of merit God chose Moses as the mediator of a covenant and to be a leader of God's chosen people. Do you remember Pharaoh's decree when Moses was born? Pharaoh feared the Hebrews in time would outnumber the Egyptians and overthrow them. Pharaoh passed a decree, declaring all male children should be slain. The providence of God spared Moses. But who was Moses that he should be chosen of God among the hundreds of Israelite children and spared in the manner that was His? Here was election by grace without works. Moses had committed neither good nor evil.

Now read with me Rom. 8:28. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." The thing I propose is this. The election stands of the grace of God. But the election is not unto individuals with salvation by grace without works, but unto a special work appointed of God. So was Moses election even before he committed works. God chose him and elected him to lead the children of Israel, yet he required him nonetheless to keep His laws. His election did not render him excused from the law but made him a leader for a job planned in the mind of God. Duet. 4:20. "The Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even

out of Egypt, to be unto Him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day. Moses was a chosen man to lead a chosen people.

Now let's read this. Rom. 8:28. We often hear quoted for the wrong purpose namely to apply to us today. "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." Well, who did he foreknow? Here folks is a concrete example found just a few passages farther on. Rom. 9:10. "Not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one even by our father Isaac (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth). It was said unto her. The elder shall serve the younger." Here it is friends. In words not to be misunderstood and Romans eleventh chapter still deals with the same subject. Not salvation without works, but the selection of the generation to bring us to Christ. What had Jacob or Esau done. Nothing. Paul said, Neither having done any good or evil. It means God had chosen Jacob instead of Esau to be the father of the leaders of the twelve tribes. Entirely by grace. But Jacob still had to obey. Not elected to eternal salvation but for a special task. Duet. 32:9. "The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of mine inheritance."

Not Only these but God elected some to evil. Not that God made them evil but He chose some evil men and made them do a task He wanted done for "Compassion of whom I will" means negatively a lack or "whom He wills He hardeneth." Rom. 9:21-23. "The scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. What if God willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He afore prepared

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EDITORIAL

Occasionally we may speak of ourselves and not of the Lord. We mean by this the same thing that Paul meant by the same statement when he made it. We may offer words of advice for the purpose of helping his cause by expediency and where the law of the Lord is silent. Such is not to be misconstrued as bound by law but all expediencies should be beneficial to the church, else ought to be discarded. It also should be remembered that an expediency must never alter or deter from a commandment in anyway.

All of us like to visit and to be visited. The idea hoped to be put across by this editorial is visiting among the brotherhood. When brethren of the common faith visit us in the local worship from other local congregations and when we visit them this lesson deals.

Occasionally, when proper arrangements are made for our absence at home it can be beneficial to visit. If we visit a zealous church, we may catch some of their zeal. We may learn new ideas of conduct in the house of God. We may be encouraged to find men of like faith serving God in their community as we do in ours.

But we need someone to call our attention to an abuse of fellow labourers that we may be guilty of. Once in a while one of us becomes a perpetual visitor, visiting first one congregation and then another, just liking folks and wanting to see and be seen. We of course, when we get to this point claim as our home church the local church of our community and even visit it when we can't go somewhere else. Such a person would never dream of MISS-

ING Sunday morning worship some where, but of course with brethren.

Unless you worship regularly with one local church, you can never become a leader in the church. One group of people will never come to realize that they can rely upon your talents and select you as their leader.

Unless you attend regularly a group of elders will never appoint you as a teacher of a class. Oh, you may get to teach somewhere if you visit a group whose teachers are weak and try to put off the class on someone else at every opportunity. But rarely at well grounded and planned services. In fact, you may never learn enough to be a teacher, for as a visitor you may have a chapter in the middle of Romans one Sunday, the middle of Revelation next, and the middle of Matthew next and never follow punctual, regular persistent study. Unless you can be depended upon to be at one congregation regularly you can never shoulder responsibility in the worship. Again you might have learned much and be a good teacher but bury your talent by visiting until you could not be used.

Unless you attend regularly at one local congregation you may be ever so good a singer and want to lead singing, but who is willing to displace a faithful, diligent song leader who has to be depended upon because you are not there many times?

Now, let's look at money. Sure money enters into visiting, too. Every church of Christ takes a contribution each Lord's Day because the Bible teaches us to. Most visitors contribute wherever they visit. Now wherever you visit, the church gets a little one day lift. You won't be there next Sunday so they can't make plans for it in their program. But the home church may suffer irreparable loss by your repeated absences. The church's program is laid according to what it is able to do. To have vision the leaders must plan ahead. It would be ridiculous for leaders to assume responsibilities on the contributions of visitors so programs ahead must be planned on the contributions of those who do attend regularly. Sometimes even rainy days hurt a church's program. Because of things like this some leaders resort to a 'we've got to have the money first' attitude of any church work and when members are too uncertain put every program on a 'cash only' basis. This discourages others and many times leaders get the blame when really the members

are to blame, being too uncertain and undependable in contributing to the local church work.

There is a remedy, though. Attend regularly at your local congregation. You can visit through the week or afternoons. If you do, however, find it necessary to be away be sure to arrange for some one to lead singing if you are the song leader; tell the leaders you won't be there, for leaders are concerned for fear you are sick and know something is wrong if you do attend regularly and then miss. But if you are a 'visitor' in the sense mentioned, they'll just think you are visiting if you do get sick; leave your contribution with someone else to bring so the local program will not suffer. You may want to contribute something away too for 'face' sake. Be your judge in this, most folks fall short anyway. You may learn you are actually worth something at home too.

Someone needed to say these things. It may as well be me. God bless you in His work.

Boyd E. Morgan

NEWS

CORRECTION: Instead of the meeting at Sturkie being Nov. 6 as we advertised before the meeting will begin Dec. 26 and continue for a week. Bro. Hillard Story will do the preaching. You are invited.

Bro. Frank Gould will begin a six nights meeting at Viola Monday night, November 26 and continue through the following Saturday night. This will indeed be a welcome treat. Come out.

One was baptized October 24, and two were baptized and one restored Sunday, November 7 at Mammoth Spring. One was baptized at Thayer the same day. Truth knows no season.

The program for the Mammoth Spring church for the coming year includes: A lectureship in February; Painting the roof; Installation of air conditioning by refrigeration; A singing school in the spring after school is out; A meeting the first two weeks in October with Bro. L. N. Moody doing the preaching; and it is hoped that we can arrange a vacation Bible school.

Each Sunday evening at 6:50 we are conducting a singing drill for the young people. We have quite a large group but can be made happier with more coming out. We meet in the large wing room.

MAKE IT AS SURE AS YOU CAN

Matt. 27:65, II Pet. 1:10

This principle is closely followed in material things, but sadly neglected in matters of a spiritual nature.

We go to a great deal of expense, and spend much time to get a clear title to a home or a farm. Many years are devoted to an education to be able to make a comfortable living, and we are endlessly in quest of ways and means of improving our health.

Now there is no objection to this, as these are all necessary, but, are they done to the exclusion of, or the neglect of our eternal welfare? Jesus pointed out the fact that if we "Gain the whole world and lose our own soul" we are losers. It can be made as sure as anything that pertains to this life.

Just suppose that Infidelity, were right, what would be gained by it? How would business or social relations be improved by going through life, believing and teaching that there is no God, no heaven to enjoy, or no Hell to avoid?

What would one gain by Protestantism, (the doctrine of justification by faith only) and in the very words of some of their most prominent "Doctors", "It is a most wholesome doctrine, and full of comfort". If we would take the Bible way, and be SAFE about the matter, would not God be pleased?

We are taught in Jas. 2:24, "Ye see how by works a man is justified, and NOT by FAITH ONLY".

Whenever you hear a man say all you need to do is "Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved right then and there," just keep the above passage in mind, and say, "Let God be true, and every man a liar" as did Paul in Rom. 3:4.

Friends, Christianity is the only absolutely SURE position, anything short of complete obedience to Gods commands as found in what is termed the New Testament, is dangerous, and although seemingly "Full of comfort, and most wholesome" should be shunned. There is not a single one of Gods commands too hard or unreasonable for a person to do. Listen, and draw your own conclusion. In Matt. 17:15, God said of Christ, "Hear ye Him."

Christ in Matt. 1:15 says, "Repent ye and believe the gospel," also in Matt. 10:32, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." And in Mk. 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Which of these

could you point to as hard or unreasonable? You may be those who say, "But why does a person have to do these? Why does God require all of this?" I probably cannot answer this to your satisfaction, but to me Pauls words in I Cor. 1:25 are sufficient, hear him: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

If you haven't made it as "SURE AS YOU CAN" why not resolve NOW to do so, while the opportunity is yours? In just a little while you will be called to stand at the judgment bar of God, there to give an account of the things done in this life. Remember, that there, excuses will not be heard, I close with the words of a soulstirring song, "Oh, how would it be with you my brother, if today were the end of the world?"

Marion Farley

THE LORD'S DAY

Erwin Cowan

Moten

The primary purpose of the disciples for three hundred years after the resurrection of Christ in meeting on Sunday was 'to break bread.' This is called the Lord's Supper. I Cor. 11:20. This was the one memorial feast of the Christians who compose His church. It is observed in memory of the death of Christ and observance is held upon the day of his resurrection. His death procured the remission of our sins for us the hope of life eternal.

The service is marked by acts that denote an intelligent thanksgiving and appreciation of all that was done for us by our redeemer, Jesus is the center and soul of the Lord's Day worship memorial service.

Belonging to this memory of Christ's death, is the praise, the prayers, the teaching of the gospel, and the contributions from our financial means. Acts 2:42; I Cor. 16:14.

The praise consists of singing 'psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.' Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16. The prayers embrace all that the term implies and is the heart's cry for relief. The contribution is a liberal, cheerful, donation into the brotherhood's common treasury. This latter service was a distinct feature of the first day of the week meeting. I Cor. 16:2. Jesus instituted the common treasury and Judas was treasurer until the crucifixion of the disciples. This example was followed by the church. John 13:29.

Jesus also instituted singing at the Lord's Supper. Matt. 26:30, and finding these things continued in

the early church. Acts 2:42, and later on mentioned in connection with the first day of the week meeting. Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:20-30; I Cor. 16:1-2. We are compelled to recognize them as a part of the first day worship.

To some, these may not seem so important, but to all who weigh well the importance attached to these things by Christians for three hundred years after the resurrection and especially by our Saviour himself and by the Spirit directed disciples throughout New Testament history, this importance appears infinite. Surely Heb. 10:25-26 has an infinite meaning: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth; there remaineth no more sacrifice

for our sins: This passage teaches that any forsaking of the first day of the week assembling is wilful sin. The assembling is made certain by the words 'our own assembling together,' which thoroughly distinguishes it from the assembling of the Jews which was upon the Sabbath, the seventh day.

The sinfulness of 'forsaking' the Christian assembling is evident when we remember that upon this day, in this assembling, the Lord's death is remembered by all who have been redeemed by that death.

To neglect to remember such a sacrifice is to wilfully do so and the thing neglected is the only sacrifice provided for our sins. Hence 'there remaineth no more sacrifice for our sins.' When Christian people neglect the first day of the week assembly, they are forgetting the price paid by the Son of God. They themselves neglect to humble themselves before God, by keeping his commandments. They forget the praise and honor due Him in song and prayer. They forget the voice of Jesus when He said, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." I Cor. 11:26:

There will be all day services at Sturkie Thanksgiving day. Preaching in the morning, a basket dinner at noon and singing and preaching in the afternoon. What better way to spend Thanksgiving day could be found? Bro. Frank Gould of Pocatontonas will do the preaching. You are welcome to spend Thanksgiving day with the church at Sturkie.

unto glory."

But we leave this discussion of these under the law and turn to the "remnant according to the election of grace" which was in Paul's day (note: now at this present time does not mean 1934 but the time Paul wrote Romans.) Eph. 1:4 with reference to the apostles says, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world. (See God's plan, now to bring us His Bible way. B. E. M.) that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Paul doesn't mean you and me but "us" the chosen apostles. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will." Jesus said of them. John 15:16. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain." Therefore the apostles were chosen not to individual election to their own salvation without works but that they perform a special work. Such men, then, were the remnant. They were a portion of God's election to carry out the preaching of His gospel according to His plan of operation. Let us locate some special callings and operations of the remnant called by grace. Hear Paul again. Gal. 1.15. "But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathens, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

What had Paul done to merit his election. Nothing. He had been a persecutor of Christ. But God had chosen him to a job. But salvation was a different story. The calling was without works but salvation was not. The power of the light shined round him. Acts 9: What would thou have me do? Go down into Damascus and there it shall be told thee what thou must do. In Damascus Acts 22:16 "And now brother Saul, why tarriest thou, Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord." Here is salvation by works. James 2:24 "Ye see then how that by works man is justified and not by faith only." But the selection to be an apostle was without works. He was a chosen vessel of mercy. Acts 9--Rom. 9.

Well, that just explodes the denominational teaching of salvation with out works and teaches by the scripture what was elected. God has al-

ready used his chosen ones and the only election we are elected to is the election of sanctification through obedience of the truth and Rom. 11 is not talking about you and me. You and I had better do our job and obey his commandments without question as Bible men did. Space forbids more at this time. Study this carefully. Obey His commands, Believe, Repent, and be baptized.

QUESTIONS

By Ira G. Woodward

Were the apostles baptized? If so, by whom?

Answer: Yes. By John the Baptist.

This was said of John the Baptist: "and many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:16-17) John was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Here is how he did it. "And he come into all the country about Jordon, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (Luke 3:3) Every man that heard and believed the preaching of John, repented, and was baptized by him, received remission of sins, and in this way was made ready, prepared for the Lord. But those that refused to be baptized of John, rejected the counsel of God against themselves. (Luke 7:30). I believe that when Christ selected his apostles, they were from among His disciples, and His first disciples were certainly those baptized by John and in this manner made ready for Him. Therefore, the apostles were baptized by John in Jordon.

To suppose that Christ would select His apostles from among men that rejected the baptism of John, when John's mission was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, is not using fair judgment, especially so because those that rejected John's baptism refused the counsel of God. I don't believe that Christ would have chosen men who had rejected His Father, because Christ spoke of the apostles in His prayer to His Father: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the Son of perdition; that the scriptures might be fulfilled." (John 17:12)

God gave the apostles to Christ; therefore, I do not believe that God, after sending John before Christ to

prepare his way, would give him those that had refused John's baptism, or God himself. Moreover, God required Christ, His own Son, to be baptized of John before he had showed himself to Israel and before he owned him as His in the presence of the people, and Christ recognized this authority and will of God concerning baptism, by asking John to baptize him.

It was the will of God that Christ was baptized, therefore I don't believe God would choose people who had rejected himself and give them to Christ as his rebels. I further believe that it is dangerous for a person to put himself in the frame of mind to believe that he can't be wrong. I believe this will help you with a better understanding of this subject and I assure you it has helped me to prepare this. I enjoy searching the scriptures.

SHORTS

A tree is good or bad because of the fruit it bears and not because of its size. If the fruit is good, the tree is good. If the fruit is evil, the tree is evil, whether it be the dwarf variety in the yard or the giant on the mountainside.

—Boles Home News

I have read in Plato and Cicero sayings that are very wise and very beautiful; but I never read in either of them, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden."

—Augustine

The man with the most decided opinions usually has the least experience.

Love covers a multitude of faults. hatred magnifies a few faults into a multitude.

The bravest thing a man ever did is to start all over.

A train of thought is not always on time.

To be without friends is a serious form of poverty.

Men would be great criminals if they needed as many laws as they make.

A good motto to hang upon the wall is "This problem when solved will be simple."