

Articles and Sermons :: Apart From ME, Ye Can Do NOTHING!

Apart From ME, Ye Can Do NOTHING! - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/7 2:02

Christians talk about Grace, Faith, Salvation, Righteousness, Holiness as if they are static commodities that they obtained at some point in time and they now own regardless of their future life's orientation and conduct.

But as Joe Carson Smith notes in "Christian Standard" magazine (9,9,79),

"There is an unfortunate tendency to focus upon grace as a 'threshold factor' in the Christian life, limiting the concept of grace to the doctrine of conversion.....(we) tend to look upon grace as a past event in the Christian life. ... Most of the New Testament passages about grace do not deal with grace as a threshold factor in salvation. Rather, God's grace is presented as pervasive in the life of a Christian."

We think of SALVATION as a commodity that once we get IT (what is IT), we will never lose IT.

Remember the bumper sticker, "I FOUND IT", from the Campus Crusade campaign? What is the IT they were claiming to have found? Salvation? Eternal Life? The implication is that "salvation" is an IT; something, rather than Someone. Such is sloppy salvation terminology!

Do we have a preventative salvation, or an ongoing, dynamic, functional salvation which is Christocentric?

Are we just acquiring spiritual benefits? Salvation is not a "benefit" dispensed by a "benefactor." "Jesus is the dispenser of divine salvation and forgiveness." Such is a separated concept that separates salvation from the Savior, and creates a static view of salvation. Jesus does not dispense salvation like a bubble-gum dispenser; He does not dispense salvation like an airline ticket dispenser; Jesus is not like a medical dispensary dispensing the "gos-pill".

Salvation is only in the dynamic activity of the Savior. Jesus Christ IS salvation.

Salvation is not an entity, a commodity, a "package", a spiritual "goody"; Salvation is not a heavenly entrance pass, a ticket to heaven, an eternal life package. Salvation is not a "possession in my pocket".

Evangelical theology has swung from a God-centered theology to a man-centered theology, and has wrenched "salvation" from the grace-activity of God, placing it into the hands of men, to be manipulated by men (or so they think).

So, if Salvation, Grace, Righteousness, Holiness is a PERSON and not commodities that we somehow acquired at some static point in time, then maybe a better question would be:

What happens when we stop abiding or refuse to abide in Christ rather than "can you lose your salvation."

(How can this happen? Root of bitterness, hardening of the heart, etc.)

There are no Biblical references that use the word "security" to refer to the Christian's relationship with Jesus Christ. "Eternal Security" is a theological concept and phrase originating in the Augustinian/Calvinistic theological system.

This theological system emphasizes God's sovereign action to the neglect, diminishing or denial of human responsibility.

Considering the words "eternal" and "security" we find:

Eternality is an attribute of God alone, never inherent in another and never dispensed as a commodity to be possessed by another.

1Jn 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

So, as long as one has the Son, it would seem they have eternal life. Right? Hey, look at this next verse.

1Jn 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

So, is "having the Son" a static or dynamic event and what happens when you stop abiding in the Son?

The eternity of God's character constitutes His life, salvation, inheritance, covenant, kingdom, etc.

When you think about the word "Security" in relationship with God, you realize that God is absolutely secure without reference to any other. But the opposite is not true. We are not absolutely secure without reference to any other. We are only secure as we are joined to Christ in a dynamic (not static) relationship. We then share in His security, but must be joined to or abiding in Him (who is SECURITY). Thus, being joined to Him, the Christian is secure (from fear, anxiety, care, risk, danger, loss, etc).

And being joined to Christ in abiding fellowship and having the dynamic life of Christ active in us, gives us Assurance. There is no assurance apart from abiding in Him. There is no security in man-made creeds or doctrines, only in a PERSON.

And the Christian must persevere (implies responsibility). We have an active role in being receptive to God's continuing preserving grace.

Rom. 8:25 - "with perseverance we wait eagerly for it"
I Cor. 15:2 - "you are saved, if you hold fast the word preached..."
Col. 1:23 - "present you before Him...if you continue in the faith"
II Tim. 2:12 - "if we endure, we shall also reign with Him"
Heb. 10:39 - "those who have faith to the preserving of the soul"

Apostasy is to stand away from Jesus and renounce Him, having previously identified with Him.

I Tim. 4:1 - "some will fall away from the faith"
Heb. 3:12 - "falling away from the living God"
Heb. 6:4-6 - "tasted of heavenly gift and then fallen away"

According to the Scriptures (and Jesus) you can sever or terminate your identification with Jesus Christ. This first verse is the answer for the question, "what happens if you stop abiding in Christ?"

John 15:6 - "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away."
I Cor. 9:27 - "lest I should be disqualified"
Gal. 5:4 - "you have been severed from Christ...fallen from grace"
II Pet. 2:20,21 - "last state is worst than the first"

Eternity, is the ongoing expression of Christ in you, the character of God. This requires your ongoing participation in cooperation with the Eternal One.

Salvation is not an event, experienced by certain "procedures". It is an ongoing process of the Life of the Spirit in us to conform us to the image of Christ and cause us to function as God intended us to in relationship with His Son and others. We are not "once saved". We participate in salvation as we continually allow the saving activity of the Savior to be operative in us. This is only done by staying joined to Christ through abiding in Him.

Most of Christendom today has a static understanding of Christ rather than a living, dynamic understanding of His life within them. Christianity has been reduced to creeds, doctrines, belief systems, procedures and associations rather than CHRIST in US the HOPE of GLORY.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. John 15:5

Pilgrim

Re: Apart From ME, Ye Can Do NOTHING! - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2012/7/7 8:32

Brother,

Thank you for sharing these truths with us. It is not enough to say that we were saved and filled with the Spirit 30 years ago, as if we have got it all and have arrived. What about today? Our testimony should be one that is that is current. Jesus should be more real to us today than He was when we first got saved. We should be increasing in the knowledge of the Son of God and growing in grace. The grace that saved us is the same grace that empowers us to live a holy life that is pleasing to God. In today's church much of the teaching is along the lines of "Your Best Life Now." It is eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which is living life that is independent of God in our own strength, being self sufficient.

May we continue to feed on Christ, who is our life. May we know Him as being our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

Mike

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/7 10:04

I think the church has given up on personal righteousness. Does God require men to be righteous or is it something that is impossible so we just say I am righteous because of Jesus Christ? We can't live half truths.

So, if Christ came to make men righteous, how does one experience righteousness as a work of the Spirit? Is this supposed to be an experiential reality in our lives or not?

Is there such a thing as the transformation of righteousness in a believer?

I believe there is because without righteousness the glory of God will not abide among men. It is not enough to be "declared righteous" and to say we are "justified", there must be real fruit. There must be some manifestation of the work of righteousness by the Spirit in a person. Otherwise, there is no reality of Christ in our lives and we just continue down the "happy" road of deception.

https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=45634&forum=34

Pilgrim

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2012/7/7 10:53

Hi Pilgrim,

I think this is a very good explanation of what true salvation is and what it means to be 'in Christ' in whom only we have salvation and are secure.

It is what I believe to be true and I am pleased that someone has put it in such a clear statement. Is this whole explanation written by Joe Carson Smith or you? I have not heard of J C Smith.

Blessings to you.

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/7 11:05

No, I just used JC Smith's quote.

Re: Apart From ME, Ye Can Do NOTHING! - posted by Heydave (), on: 2012/7/20 5:58

I'm Almost done watching the SI video teaching series by Paris Reidhead on 'Evidences of Eternal Life'. This pretty much complements what you have written. He is teaching from the book of 1 John and clearly shows what it means to know if you are a christian or not.

What is very interesting is that he came from a background of strong evangelical dispensationalism and used to teach a decisional salvation that had no relation to abiding in Christ or walking in righteousness. He even taught that repentance was not part of the gospel for this dispensation of grace! He repented of this error.

Well worth a watch. See link to part one: <https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/myvideo/photo.php?lid=3040>

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/20 7:09

Thanks for that synopsis, Dave. I will check it out.

Pilgrim