

A GREAT WORK

Text: Ephesians 2:8-10

Introduction:

1. Salvation is by grace through faith.
 - a. Grace is God's favor bestowed in the giving of His Son and providing the means of salvation.
 - b. Faith is trust in God joined with obedience to His will – submission that receives salvation.
2. Thus, salvation is a gift of God.
3. It is not earned by man's works of merit.
4. In fact, the Christian is the product of God's work – His workmanship.

I. The Work *Created*

- A. The word for "workmanship" first appears in Romans 1:20 describing the Creation of God.

Romans 1:20 "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse"

- B. In saving man from sin, God uses His power of creation (Psalm 51:10; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 4:24).
- C. The saved man is a "new creation" in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) having experienced a "new birth" (John 3:3, 5).

II. The Worker *His workmanship*

- A. In man's salvation, the worker is God.
- B. This does not mean that man does not do anything, for one must obey (Hebrews 5:9).
 1. Works of obedience are not works of merit (cf. James 2:17, 20-24).
 2. These works include: (1) hearing the Gospel, (2) faith in Jesus, (3) repentance of sins, (4) confession of Christ, and (5) baptism.
- C. Yet, the act of saving is God's.

III. The Workmanship *We are*

- A. The only other time the word for "workmanship" is used in the New Testament is in Romans 1:23 where it describes the making of images.

Romans 1:23 "And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

- B. Like a sculptor, God shapes the Christian into the image of His Son (cf. Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 18; Romans 8:29; 9:21; 12:1-2).
- C. "The character of the workman is seen in the workmanship. The beautiful sculpture or painting manifests the skill of the artist. We are the exhibitions of God's gracious handiwork. Every Christian is a monument of God's mercifulness, love, patience, and holiness."
- D. Thus, we are created "unto good works" (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 1:6).

- IV. The Workshop *In Christ Jesus*
- A. As one is baptized into Christ, God removes all sins (Galatians 3:27).
 - B. In Christ, one grows to maturity – until Christ is formed in him (Galatians 4:19).
 - 1. There is a begetting by the Word of God (1 Corinthians 4:15; James 1:18; Matthew 13:23; Luke 8:11).
 - 2. There is a new birth by water and the Spirit (John 1:13; 3:1-8; 1 Peter 1:22-25; 1 John 5:4).
 - 3. There is growth to maturity (1 Peter 2:2; 1 Corinthians 14:20; Hebrews 5:11-14)
 - C. The goal was spiritual maturity – becoming an imitator of Christ – with Christ formed within.
 - 1. The mind belongs to Christ (Philippians 2:5).
 - 2. The body belongs to Christ (1 Corinthians 6:15).
 - 3. The will belongs to Christ (Galatians 2:20; Romans 13:14).
 - 4. The intellect belongs to Christ (Colossians 3:10).
 - D. By our actions we are to demonstrate that Christ is within us. {*Actions giving outward expression of one's true inward nature*}

...Adapted from an article in *Handfuls On Purpose*, Volume 1