

His Workmanship

Ephesians 2:10



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FOCAL Read Together Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

What is my part in salvation, and what is God's part? The best answer for this is seen in the earthly ministry of Christ. When Jesus said “**stretch out thy hand**” the man with the withered hand had to stretch out his hand. What could the crippled do? Hold out his hand to Jesus. When Jesus said “**take up your bed, and walk**” the crippled man had to take up his bed and walk. What could the crippled do – he could not walk. But once Jesus healed him he picked up his bed and walked. When the blind man needed sight Jesus told him, **go, wash in the pool of Siloam**, the man had to do as Jesus said before he could see. In each and every case when a person was healed they did absolutely nothing to heal themselves. They came to Jesus, they did as Jesus said, and they were healed.

People are saved – not because the preacher is particularly good – nor because the ground you stand on has any inherent value. People are saved from death and damnation when they **hear the Word of God**, and, hearing that Word, **believe it for themselves**.

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

Psalms 33:9 For he spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

It is God's Word that made all that we see, and it is God's Word that makes the Christian. **The Lord was alone and unaided in creation, and so is He alone and unaided in the creation of the Christian.** Like the Psalmist (Psalm 119:50) we say “**Thy Word, O God, hath quickened me. By You I am alive!**” The Gospel of God is not a *self help Gospel*, nor does it call on you to save yourselves. What does God say? “**Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else**” (Isaiah 14:22). Here is the text that saved C.H. Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher, and this same text will save you. Look unto God and be saved. Look unto God, knowing that *what I try to do God will not do*. My sufficiency and my salvation is in God.

If you are in Christ then you are accepted as God's child (John 1:12), as a disciple (John 15:15), as one declared innocent (Romans 5:1). as one with God in Spirit and truth (1 Corinthians 6:17), as one bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), as a member of His Body (1 Corinthians 12:27), and as one who is complete (Colossians 2:9-10). God hath made us “accepted in the Beloved” (Ephesians 1:6).

1. What God Does In Salvation

FOCAL Ephesians 2:10 For **we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus ...**

There's an old question that goes along the lines of “What came first, the chicken or the egg?”. This

supposedly unanswerable question is easily answered if you know and trust the Holy Scripture. The Bible tells us that:

Genesis 2:19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

God formed the animals then brought them to Adam *to see what he would call them*. God made the animals, not the eggs. The chicken came before the egg. Why is this important. Because it teaches us a great truth. **The fruit does not create the tree, the tree creates the fruit.** When the tree creates the fruit and the fruit falls to the ground it – like an egg – produces *another tree just like the one that made the fruit*. In the history of the world no apple has ever produced the mothering tree, but the apple – falling to the ground – dies to make another tree.

When a Christian is made he is not the product of his own hand, but the product of the Creator. The Christian is not made a Christian by his works. The apple cannot make the pear, nor can the pear make the apple. Every believer is **His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus**. We, like Adam, are made from corruption. Just as

Genesis 2:7 ... the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

God took the dirt and made a perfect Man, He took that which is corruptible and made us. We did not make ourselves. If you are a Christian, you are made by God.

Some people believe that they *evolve* into being Christians. I remember when the movie Jurassic Park (1993, PG13) first came out. In that movie scientists and amusement park operators got together and – finding the blood of dinosaurs – starting cloning lizards now long dead. In the movie (which was *not* a Christian movie, but a movie that promoted the faith of *evolution*) the park director – along with all others within that park – discovered how foolish it is to recreate that which is extinct. If a Tyrannosaurus Rex was a vicious, bloodthirsty animal when it roamed the earth, when it is recreated it would still be a vicious bloodthirsty animal. Now I don't know for sure if a Tyrannosaurus Rex was as vicious as the film claimed (for I trust evolutionists about as far as I can throw them), but I do agree with this. Man cannot make something out of nothing. God can do this – He can take nothing and make something out of it. God can take dirt and make perfect Adam, and God can take a sinful son of Adam and turn him into a son of God. Only God can do this. What the egg comes from will make another. The egg of a chicken will not make an eagle, and the fruit of an apple tree will not make a pear.

You must be made of God! Every Christian is a God made creature! **We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.**

A person cannot *evolve* into being a Christian. There is a strange doctrine creeping about the Churches today that says that Christians come from good people who *evolve* into being what they are. The Scripture is very clear in its terminology that evolution is not an option nor a possibility. The Bible uses words like “**quickened**”, which means “**to make alive from the dead**”, and “**born again**” which means “**to be granted life a second time**”. Let's look at “**quickened**” first:

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he QUICKENED, who were dead in trespasses and sins

Before you were **quickened** or **made alive from the dead** the Bible teaches that you **followed after the devil and did as the devil's world bid you do. You were just like the unbeliever, alone and apart from God.** (**Ephesians 2:2**). Before the Christian calls on God for salvation the Scripture says:

Ephesians 2:5a Even when we were dead in sins...

We were **dead, separated from God and from life, but now God has “made us alive together with Christ – by grace you are saved”** (**Ephesians 2:5b**). What has God done? He has:

Colossians 2:13 QUICKENED (us) together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Quickened is not a gradual word, it is a **creative word, a word of life and of resurrection**. Spiritual life cannot come forth out of that which is dead unless God bring it

forth. God speaking through Jeremiah said:

Jeremiah 13:23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.

Those whose nature is evil cannot make themselves good, any more than the **Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots**. Job says:

Job 14:4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

There is **not one person** who can **bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing**. We cannot *clean ourselves up*. We cannot *get better over time*. That which is dirt stays dirt, and that which is bitter stays bitter, unless God enact the change. How does God change a person? Again, our text tells us:

FOCAL Ephesians 2:10 ... **created in Christ Jesus** ...

We who are saved are **created in Christ Jesus**. The Lord gives us a beautiful picture of this in the Old Testament.

Exodus 15:23-25 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. {24} And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? {25} And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the

waters were made sweet ...

Israel had been traveling all day and was thirsty. When they came to **Marah they murmured and complained to Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?”**. God told Moses to **take a certain tree and throw it in the waters, and the waters would be made sweet**. This was symbolic of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and its effect upon the life of the believer. The Christian is **created IN Christ Jesus**. Here is our crucible, here is the ingredient that the world does not have. If your life is bitter it cannot be made sweet by your efforts. **Darkness will never produce light, filth will never make purity, hell will never make heaven, and those who are depraved will never produce grace**. The Christian is formed – **created in Christ Jesus**. The Cross of Christ is added to our lives, and we are sweetened by Grace. **Out of nothing comes forth nothing, but out of God comes forth godliness**. We were and will be nothing without Christ, but with Christ we are the very sons of God.

Speaking of **sons of God**, the **second set of words used for Christians is “born again”**. When a person is born into this world he does not choose the time of his birth, nor does he have anything to do with the birth. The child is born when the child is born. When a person is **born again** he has absolutely nothing to do with that birth. We are **born again** because God responds to our willingness to be **in Christ**. What does the Scripture say?

John 1:12-13 ... as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: {13} Which were

born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

As many as received HIM, received JESUS, received what JESUS did for us on that Cross of Calvary. A pardon has no value if it is rejected. A prisoner, offered pardon, could say “no, I will stay and serve out my term”, or else “no, I will stay until the warden feels that I have done all that is required of me”. The warden in that case would be obliged to keep you in prison until your term expired. The warden is not the judge, nor is he above the judge. If a pardon is offered, it is offered because *a higher authority commutes your sentence.*

What Higher Authority commutes our sentence? **Sin is an offense against God.** King David said:

Psalms 51:2-7 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. {3} For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. {4} Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. {5} Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. ... {7} Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Only God can clean up a person. Only God can save the sinner. What is His provision for salvation? Again we flee to our text: **created IN Christ Jesus.** God has intervened for my sin and for your sin, and the only way that I can be made right is if God makes me right. It is

God's Word that formed the heavens and the earth, and it is God's Word that forms the Christian. God says “I have prepared a way in Christ Jesus – believe on Him. He is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased. He is the Only Way unto Me. Jesus Christ is the crucible.

Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

“By the Grace of God I am what I am” (1 Corinthians 15:10). Every Christian is saved by God's hand, not by his own.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: {9} Not of works, lest any man should boast.

It is all of God, all of Christ, all of Grace!

2. What God Is Doing In Salvation

FOCAL Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship ...

When a baby is born the first thing that a parent does is count its fingers and toes. If it has ten fingers and ten toes, and its eyes appear to contain some semblance of intelligence, then we consider the baby to be normal. The child is complete. It has everything that it needs, and is like all other babies, but if its parent does not love it and care for it then the child will soon die.

The same is true for the believer. **We are His**

workmanship. God stooped low to hang on a Cross to die for us. God stooped low to make a way for us to be saved. The Scripture says of Christ:

Colossians 2:9 For in {Christ} dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

All the fullness of the Godhead was in Christ. And yet, the Bible says, Christ ...

Philippians 2:7-8 ... made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: {8} And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

God stooped very low to save us by taking our sins upon Himself on Calvary. But I believe that God stooped lower still in **indwelling the believer – yet this is what God did.** God comes to live inside of every believer. Think of the patience of God! Year after year God lives inside of the believer – yet the believer is still prone to sin. Just as the baby messes up its diaper the Christian sins – often witlessly and unwittingly. Yet God stays, and stays. God has promised:

Hebrews 13:5 ... I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

He did not say “**I will never leave thee if you do such and such.**” God did not say “**I will never leave thee if you walk in My paths.**” No, His blessing and His promise is unconditional.

ILLUSTRATE Men often start works that they do not finish. **Mark Twain** wrote and then re-wrote the story “The Mysterious Stranger” in *three different versions over a period of 20 years, and the work was never completed.* **Thomas Aquinas** abandoned his great work, the “Summa Theologia” in 1273 because he believed he received a vision from God. **Leonardo da Vinci's** painting, the “Adoration of the Magi”, was unfinished *because he left Florence for Milan, Italy.* The **Ryugyong Hotel in North Korea**, if finished, would be the tallest hotel in the world and the seventh largest building. It is uninhabitable and will *not be completed due to the cost and poor structural integrity.* In classical music the **Requiem Mass in D minor (K. 626)** was never finished because **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** died before its completion. In modern music one of the most famous unfinished albums is the **1967 Beach Boys album, Smile.** The album could not be completed because the leader and chief songwriter of the band, **Brian Douglas Wilson**, became sick and could not carry on. Humans fail to finish projects and works because of our very humanity.

The same is not true of God. **We ARE His workmanship.** If you have been saved by God, and are a **new creature**, then God is at work in you. **We ARE His.** God does not start a story and then fail to complete it. We are His. He is ours. God will complete what He has started. The Bible says **we ARE His workmanship.** We keep on being His. The baby will not be abandoned by the parent. The child will not be aborted because it is unwanted. God, **Who created the New Creature in the**

crucible of Christ, will finish the New Creature.

2 Corinthians 5:17-18 Therefore **if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. {18} **And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;**

It is **God Who is at work in you**. Will God stop your project because *He has a vision*? No, absolutely not! Will God move residence and – because of that – fail to complete the brush strokes of your life? No! Will God fail to finish you because you are poorly designed, and because you cost too much? Absolutely never! **God is faithful**. The Bible tells us that:

Philippians 2:13 For **it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**

Dear friends, God does not abandon a project unfinished, and – if you are a Christian created by God – **you ARE His workmanship**. God had a plan for you when He called you, He had a plan for you when you answered His call, and He has a plan for you still. God is patient, and He works in His creations. We who are His need to focus on Him, and trust His Word and His Promise.

**As I journeyed down the road,
Basking in the sun's warm rays,
I felt the presence of The Lord,
And in the comfort gave Him praise.**

**Then as the shadows silently fell,
And the stars began to appear,
My faith then began to waver,
And my soul was filled with fear.**

**Then I heard a voice gently speak,
“If you only trust Me in the light,
You are not walking by faith,
But you are still walking by sight.”¹**

So often we get our glance off of God and on to other things. Each and every believer needs to have confidence in God, and to *focus on Him and on nothing else*. The Apostle said to the Philippians:

Philippians 1:6 {I am} **confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:**

God has no unfinished works. You will be completed – keep your eyes on Him!

3. What I Must Do After I Am Saved

FOCAL **Ephesians 2:10** ... **created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**

What is left to me to do? If God does everything in salvation, what must I do? **I am to do good works**. Jesus said:

¹ A work of **W. Roger Lee** called “Faith”, copyright 2003 from **Poems of Praise** (ISBN 1-58495-923-1)

Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Shine for Jesus. Light up the world with your way of life. Do not let it be said that a Christian wallows in the mud of the pig pen. This happens – it does indeed happen. As in **the parable of the Prodigal Son** sometimes the believer – blessed beyond measure by the Grace of God – **takes his journey into a far country and wastes himself in riotous living.** In time that believer finds himself **in sin's pigpen, filling his belly with the husks that the swine eat.** The friends he thought were friends have abandoned him now that the money is gone, and he is starving. That person **arises and goes to his Father saying, I have sinned against Heaven and against thee. Expecting to be cast as a servant the Son is startled, for the Father falls on his neck and kisses him, and has a great party, welcoming him home.**

Dear friends, God does not abandon His children, even when they shame Him. However, do not wait for sin to lay you to waste before you realize you must serve Him and only Him. If you are a Christian **do good works.** Let the world see what Christ has done in you. Are you saved? **Do good.** The writer of Ecclesiastes said:

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

You will one day leave this life, dear Christian. Work hard *doing good* for the Lord. He has saved you, you should serve Him. **Do good. Do that which promotes love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance – against such there is no Law (Galatians 5:23).** The Lord says to **His workmanship:**

Ephesians 5:3-5 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. {4} Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. {5} For of this you can be sure: **No immoral, impure or greedy person - such a man is an idolater - has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.**^{NIV 2}

If you are God's workmanship **do all for the glory of God.** A friend of mine remarked the other day how terribly the Church has changed over the years. There was a time when **people came to Church to make God happy,** and now the **come to Church so that God can make them happy.** I agree, this is wrong! The Bible says:

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **UNTO GOOD WORKS,** which God **HATH BEFORE ORDAINED** that **WE SHOULD WALK IN THEM.** The believer is to walk in good works. He is to walk in

2 New International Version of the Scripture, used here for clarity

the Spirit. He is to **walk – not as a busy body – but as a believer**. Believers work for the glory of God. Believers work in love and in peace, doing the will of God. Do not let it ever be said of this Church that

2 Thessalonians 3:11-13 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. {12} Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. {13} But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

Do good. Do God's good. God has not created us to TALK about our good works, but to WALK in our good works.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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(Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9; Psalm 119:50; Isaiah 14:22) _____

1. What God Does In Salvation

(Ephesians 2:10; Genesis 2:19; Genesis 2:7; Ephesians 2:1; Ephesians 2:2; Ephesians 2:5a; Ephesians 2:5b; Colossians 2:13; Jeremiah 13:23; Job 14:4; Exodus 15:23-25; John 1:12-13; Psalms 51:2-7; Romans 3:24; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Ephesians 2:8-9)

2. What God Is Doing In Salvation

(Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 13:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17-18; Philippians 2:13; Philippians 1:6) _____

3. What I Must Do After I Am Saved

(Ephesians 2:10; Matthew 5:16; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Galatians 5:23; Ephesians 5:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-13) _____
