

## THE CRUCIAL WORK OF GOD IN EVANGELISM

Before creation, God determined that He would allow humanity to fall into a state of sinfulness. God predetermined to send Jesus to rescue people from sin. So that love is not forced, man was given free-choice to respond to God's initiative either appropriately or not. God further planned that His Holy Spirit would convict all men of personal sin, their need for righteousness before God, and the fact of future judgment concerning their works and actions in life. The Bible reminds us that free-choice alone would never cause man to seek after God. But an appropriate response to Holy Spirit conviction can be willingly made by any person through freedom of the will. Because of the conviction of the Holy Spirit, a person has the ability to allow the Spirit to bring them to knowledge of Jesus and to saving faith in Jesus. The initiative in saving a person, the work and the power for salvation rests in God alone. All that man has is the ability to cooperate with Holy Spirit conviction. But free-choice allows a person to reject Holy Spirit conviction as well.

When a person cooperates with God to the point of believing in Jesus and receiving the resurrected life of Jesus into their life, that person is born into the Kingdom of God. He is forever a child of God, a member of the family of God, and forever secure in God's salvation and rescue from sin. That person is "in Christ" and Christ is in that person for all eternity. God has predetermined that all people who cooperate and are "in Christ" will be made holy and blameless in His sight. God chooses that those persons will be conformed to the image of Jesus.

Those "in Christ" have been saved (born into the Kingdom), are being saved (working out their salvation with fear and trembling), and will be saved (given new glorified bodies made in Heaven having no sin and having total righteousness in a glorified state). Today, God is at work in the born again person, both to do His will and to do His good pleasure in the believer's life. The fruits of the Spirit are to flow through the believer and produce good works. Believers are created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Romans 5:8,10

1 Peter 1:3,4

Philippians 1:6; 2:12,13

Ephesians 1:4;2:10

**Romans 5:8** God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

**Romans 5:10** For if, while we were sinners, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, we are saved by His resurrection life.

**1 Peter 1:3b,4** God caused us to be born again through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.

**Philippians 2: 12b,13** Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

**Ephesians 1:4** Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us “in Christ” to be holy and without fault in His eyes.

**Ephesians 2:10** For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Some systems of theology teach that lost people have no ability to cooperate with Holy Spirit conviction. They teach that lost men are so dead in their sin that they cannot know the conviction of the Holy Spirit until after they are saved. Some place regeneration before faith. This system states that God must give spiritual life before cooperation, conviction, and belief in Jesus can occur.

According to some, only a select few can be saved because only a select few were chosen before the foundation of the world to be saved.

This system defies the Biblical command to seek God, cooperate, believe and receive Jesus.

**Acts 17:27** **Hebrews 11:6** **Isaiah 55:6,7** **Proverbs 8:17** **Luke 12:31** **John 1:12; 3:16**