

## But

- I. Any scheme to recover a sinner from his condemnation under sin (**ROM 5:12, 18**) which depends on the sinner is futile.
  - A. Perhaps if his good works outweigh his bad works on God's scale, man can recover himself from condemnation. But, **ISA 64:6; ROM 3:10**.
  - B. Perhaps if he performs an appointed ritual, man can recover himself from condemnation. But, **GAL 5:3**.
  - C. Perhaps sacrifice will recover him from condemnation. But, **ROM 8:21-22; HEB 10:1, 4**.
  - D. Perhaps if he changes his nature so that he might do good, man can recover himself from condemnation. But, **JER 13:23; MAT 12:33-34**.
  - E. Perhaps if he knows God's law and obeys it, man can recover himself from condemnation. But, **ROM 8:7-8; GAL 3:10**.
  - F. Perhaps if he wills in his heart to do good, man can recover himself from condemnation. But, **JER 17:9; ROM 6:20**.
  - G. Perhaps if he receives the gospel of Jesus Christ, man can recover himself from condemnation. But, **1CO 2:14**.
  - H. Perhaps if he seeks God with whatever light he has, man can recover himself from condemnation. But, **PSA 10:4; JOH 3:20; ROM 3:11**.
  - I. All possible schemes of sinner-generated salvation are hopelessly inadequate to undo the corrupt nature of man and the condemnation he merits. **PSA 49:7-9**.
  
- II. Against the sinner's powerlessness, Scripture declares that God is the active power in recovering men from sin and condemnation.
  - A. It is not man's purpose that produces salvation, but God's. **2TI 1:9; EPH 1:11**.
  - B. It pleased God to make His Son to be sacrificed for sin in the stead of men and then impute His righteousness to them *freely*. **2CO 5:21; ROM 5:19; 4:6**.
  - C. Men are redeemed *freely* by the justifying blood of Christ. **ROM 3:22-24; EPH 1:7**.
  - D. This is salvation by GRACE, or "God's Riches At Christ's Expense."
  
- III. Jesus Christ's death was a covenant death. **HEB 13:20**.
  - A. covenant: A mutual agreement between two or more persons to do or refrain from doing certain acts; a compact, contract, bargain; sometimes, the undertaking, pledge, or promise of one of the parties.
  - B. There are three parties to the Covenant: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The covenant work of the Godhead is applied to the sheep as described in **1PE 1:2**.
    1. The Father *wills* to save some. **ROM 9:15-16, 18**.
    2. The Son *obeys* the Father's will. **HEB 10:9-10; JOH 6:37-39**.
    3. The Spirit *applies* the Son's obedience according to the Father's will. **JOH 3:8; 6:63; TIT 3:5-6**.
    4. No wonder that, when speaking of the election of men unto God's saving mercy, man's will is not a consideration. **ROM 9:16**.
    5. No wonder that, when speaking of the gift of spiritual birth, man's will is not a consideration. **JOH 1:12-13**.
    6. No wonder that, when speaking of how men are made God's children, man's will is not a consideration. **EPH 1:5**.
  - D. The work of the Father in the covenant is described as *foreknowledge* in **1PE 1:2**.
    1. This has two possible meanings:
      - a. Foreknown creature *activity*. But, **PSA 14:2-3**.

- b. Foreknown creature *identity*. **ROM 9:10-13.**
    - 2. There are only two other passages in the N.T. that connect foreknowledge and election. Both of them relate foreknowledge to identity, NEVER activity. **ROM 8:28-33; 11:2-6.**
    - 3. The elect (not their works or resolve) are thus FOREknown. By contrast, the wicked (the non-elect) are NEVER known. **MAT 7:23.**
  - E. The work of the Son in the covenant is to establish righteousness for the sheep.
    - 1. This He did by His obedience unto death. **GAL 3:13; HEB 5:8-9.**
    - 2. The sheeps' sins were exchanged for His righteousness. **ROM 5:19; 2CO 5:21.**
    - 3. Again, the will of the Father is the active power here. **1CO 1:30.**
  - F. The work of the Spirit in the covenant is to apply the blood in power to the elect. **TIT 3:5; ROM 8:11.**
  - G. The objects of grace in the covenant: the sheep. **HEB 13:20 c/w JOH 10:14.**
    - 1. Here are seven outstanding facts about the sheep.
      - a. They were chosen before the foundation of the world. **EPH 1:4.**
      - b. There is a definite and specific number of them. **2TI 2:19.**
      - c. They are all personally chosen by name. **JOH 10:3, 11, 15-16.**
      - d. Their names are written in heaven. **HEB 12:22-24.**
      - e. They were written before the foundation of the world. **REV 17:8.**
      - f. They are the *only* ones eternally saved. **REV 17:14; 21:27; ROM 8:29-30.**
      - g. They can never lose their eternal salvation. **JOH 10:27-29.**
    - 2. The miracle of grace is not that some are chosen, but that any are!
- V. The difference between death and life is not man, but God!
- A. Under the impossible *do and live* nature of law-works (**GAL 3:10-12**), we were in bondage, “But...God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,...” (**GAL 4:3-5**).
  - B. Inheritance by law eludes man, “...but God gave it to Abraham by promise” (**GAL 3:18**).
  - C. Our nature so alienated us from God that we could not put ourselves into any position of acceptability to Him. “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (**ROM 5:8**).
  - D. A dead Redeemer, though, would be of no value to anyone, since He could not complete the work He was sent to do. “...But God raised Him from the dead” (**ACT 13:30**).
  - E. This redemptive work would be no help to us if it were not somehow applied to our nature to deliver us from sin's bondage. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)” (**EPH 2:4-5**).
    - 1. This quickening refers to being *born of God* and occurs when one is *dead* in sin; therefore, it cannot be the sinner who causes it.
    - 2. “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (**JOH 1:13**).
  - F. The good news of what Christ has done for His sheep would elude us if it was not revealed or if we could not receive it. “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God....Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God” (**1CO 2:10-12**).
  - G. Perhaps the words of the Lord Jesus best answer the question, “Who then can be saved?” “...With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible” (**MAT 19:26**).