

13 Things a Lost Person Cannot Do

by Curtis A. Pugh

That the lost sinner must cast himself wholly on the mercy and grace of God must be obvious to those who read and believe the Scriptures. But the Bible knows nothing of such foolish man-made ideas as "praying the sinner's prayer", or "making a decision for Christ", or "inviting Jesus into your heart" or "going forward to receive Christ." No New Testament preacher ever used such terms or tactics! To tell spiritually dead sinners that there is something they can do to bring about their salvation is damnable heresy for by its false hope sinners are taught to trust in what they have done rather in Christ who has done all.

Consider these thirteen spiritual things an unsaved person cannot do:

1. HE CANNOT THINK AS GOD DOES:

*"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, **so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.**" (Isaiah 55:8-9)*

2. HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND GOD:

". . . thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself . . ." (Psalm 50:21)

*"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; **what canst thou do?** Deeper than hell; **what canst thou know?**" (Job 11:7-8)*

3. HE CANNOT SEE SPIRITUAL THINGS:

*"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again **he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" (John 3:3)*

4. HE CANNOT KNOW HIS OWN HEART:

*"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: **who can know it?**"(Jeremiah 17:9)*

5. HE CANNOT PROPERLY DIRECT HIS OWN PATHS:

*"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: **it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.**" (Jeremiah 10:23)*

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12)

6. HE CANNOT FREE HIMSELF FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW:

*"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, **Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.**" (Galatians 3:10)*

7. HE CANNOT RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT:

*"Even the Spirit of truth; **whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not . . .**" (John 14:17)*

8. HE CANNOT HEAR (receive & understand) GOD'S WORDS:

*"He that is of God heareth God's words; **ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God.**" (John 8:47)*

*"But the natural (unsaved) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: **neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.**" (1Corinthians 2:14)*

9. HE CANNOT BIRTH HIMSELF INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD:

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God." (John 1:13)

"For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:15-16)

10. HE CANNOT PRODUCE REPENTANCE AND FAITH IN CHRIST:

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

". . . for all men have not faith." (2 Thessalonians 3:2)

"For unto you it is given . . . to believe on him . . ." (Philippians 1:29)

". . . if God peradventure will give them repentance . . ." (2 Timothy 2:25)

". . . to them that have obtained like precious faith with us . . ." (2 Peter 1:1)

11. HE CANNOT COME TO CHRIST:

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him . . . Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." (John 6:44, 65)

12. HE CANNOT BELIEVE ON CHRIST:

"But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep as I said unto you." (John 10:26)

13. HE CANNOT PLEASE GOD:

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. . . . So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."(Romans 8:5, 8, 9)

SO THEN, MANKIND IS SHUT UP TO THE FACT OF HIS OWN TOTAL INABILITY TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT HIS LOST CONDITION.

In the light of these things which a spiritually dead (lost) sinner cannot do, how then do we account for the command of God to all men to repent? The Bible does state that God ". . . now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). What do we do about the counsel of God to men which says they are to believe on Christ? Would God command and instruct men to do that which they cannot do?

We answer an emphatic "Yes!" Our proof is the holy Law of God given to Moses on Mount Sinai. While there was nothing wrong with God's Law, no man is able to keep those commandments (1 Timothy 1:8; Romans 8:3). No man ever kept the Law of God and yet God was right to give it to man and command its keeping! By that Law we see ourselves as sinners (Romans 3:20). That was the purpose of the Law!

While God requires repentance (the will to turn from sin) and faith (the will to believe in Christ), no man is able of himself to do either. Thus, as with the Law, man is forced to see that there is nothing good in him and that he cannot repent and believe savingly in Jesus Christ.

Throughout the Bible God's children recognize their own inability to do anything to save themselves. In addition to the portions previously quoted in this tract, consider the following statements:

*" . . . I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth **no good thing**: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Romans 7:18)*

"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9:24)

*" . . . I am shut up, and **I cannot come forth**." (Psalm 88:8)*

*"**Turn us. O God of our salvation . . .**" (Psalm 85:4)*

*" . . . **Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God.**"(Jeremiah 31:18)*

*"But we are all as an unclean thing, and **all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags**; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And **there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee . . .**" (Isaiah 64:6, 7)*

" . . . Salvation is of the LORD" (Jonah 2:9).

Those who think that they can properly repent of their own ability and savingly believe of their own faith fall into error. They trust in their own ability and not in the saving work of Jesus Christ! Is not this true of those who boast of their past sins and their turning from them? Do they not claim that they did it themselves? Repeatedly we hear this in their popular "testimony meetings." Some are willing to share the glory and admit that they had a little help from God, but even this is wicked confidence in the flesh. And do not some religionists boast of their faith as if it was some great thing worthy of reward? Faith (confidence) in my faith or in my turning to God is not *" . . . the faith of God's elect."* (Titus 1:1)

Paul wrote concerning true children of God, *" . . . We . . . worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and **have no confidence in the flesh**."* (Philippians 3:3). To trust in anything done in the flesh (human nature and strength) is to have *"confidence in the flesh."* To trust in your prayer, your baptism, your goodness, your faith or any experience you may have had is to have confidence in the flesh and not to trust in Christ. The faith and confidence of the true believer is in Christ! Those born of

God trust not in rituals, sacraments, good works, their own repentance or their faith in Christ, but rather in Christ alone!

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith . . ." (2 Corinthians 13:5). Are you trusting in your faith or are you trusting in Christ? What is the object of your faith? Do you really see that all your *"righteousnesses are as filthy rags"*? (Isaiah 64:6). Have you seen that you deserve Hell? Are you willing to take your place as a sinner and if God sends you to Hell will you say He is just, fair, and righteous to do so? Or do you think yourself unworthy of eternal punishment?

Consider these words from the old English Baptist *Gadsby Hymnal*.

*O beware of trust ill-grounded;
'Tis but fancied faith at most,
To be cured, and not be wounded:
To be saved before you're lost.*

Have you never been wounded by the Word of God so that your sins have been laid bare? Have you never been lost--that is, have you seen yourself as hopelessly lost and a Hell-deserving sinner? How can you think yourself saved if you have never been lost? Jesus said, *". . . I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance"* (Mark 2:17). If a sinner, surely the Scriptures cited in this tract have shown that you are helpless to do anything about your terrible lost condition!

Salvation is free and comes, *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us . . ."* (Titus 3:5). Look to Jesus Christ, who has done all things necessary and possible, *"for he shall save his people from their sins"* (Matthew 1:21).

May God give you grace to see yourself as He does, and may He give you the twin gifts of *". . . repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Acts 20:21) so that you are *". . . not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul"* (Hebrews 10:39).