

## God's Works Come First

When speaking about the eternal salvation and the effectual calling of God's people from nature to grace, the apostle Paul was extremely plain and unambiguous. He said that it was according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given to them in Christ Jesus "before the world began" (II Tim. 1:9). It could not be stated any more plainly. If we miss his teaching on those subjects it is our own fault, for it was not because Paul was not plain enough in the language he used. The same may be said of Ephesians 1:3 and 2:1-10; Titus 3:3-8 and other places such as Acts 15:10-11. God's people are taught a great many things that they ought to do as born again followers of Christ and the apostles, but never are they told a single thing that they must do in order to "get saved" as many religionists express it. When, and not before, the Lord translates His people from the kingdom of darkness into the marvelous light of His love they are then rendered capable of acting in the spiritual realm, but as long as they are "dead in trespasses and sins," they are not capable in that respect. They can no more please God than the occupants of the graves can rise up, go to the well, and drink water. Until or unless God's people who are bound up in the popular religions of the world are blessed to see that eternal salvation is entirely by grace, they will never understand what their duty to God really is, nor can they be able to commit their all into His very capable hands. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8).---Elder Ralph Harris