

## IS IT POSSIBLE TO EARN ETERNAL LIFE?

Bypassing favorite opinions, impressive church doctrines and heated debates, let us appeal directly to the Word of God for our answer to this, the single most important question of a lifetime. And the Biblical writers have recorded clear statements to the effect that we have NO capability whatever to participate in the earning of eternal life. Carefully examine these references:

". . .The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:7,8).

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. . ." (Romans 7:18)

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. . ." (Isaiah 64:6).

The Bible evaluation of man is God's view. Dare we question Him? This is not a matter of whether or not we SHOULD do good works; rather, it is a simple matter of our inability to merit eternal life. In sharp contrast to much religious thinking, the Bible insists that man cannot prove himself worthy of eternal life. How, then, can we have this great treasure? The Apostle John answers.

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:11,12)

". . .Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ["everlasting life" and "eternal life" are translations of identical Greek words] (John 3:15,16).

Paul was certainly right in announcing ". . .the GIFT [emphasis mine] of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). When Christ died, was buried, and rose again, He did so to secure eternal life for those who would trust in Him. He earned it in our behalf since none but He possessed that ability. Eternal life becomes ours the moment we receive Him as Lord and Savior. Jesus said:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

*Lloyd A. Larkin  
Baptist Mid-Missions, Emeritus*