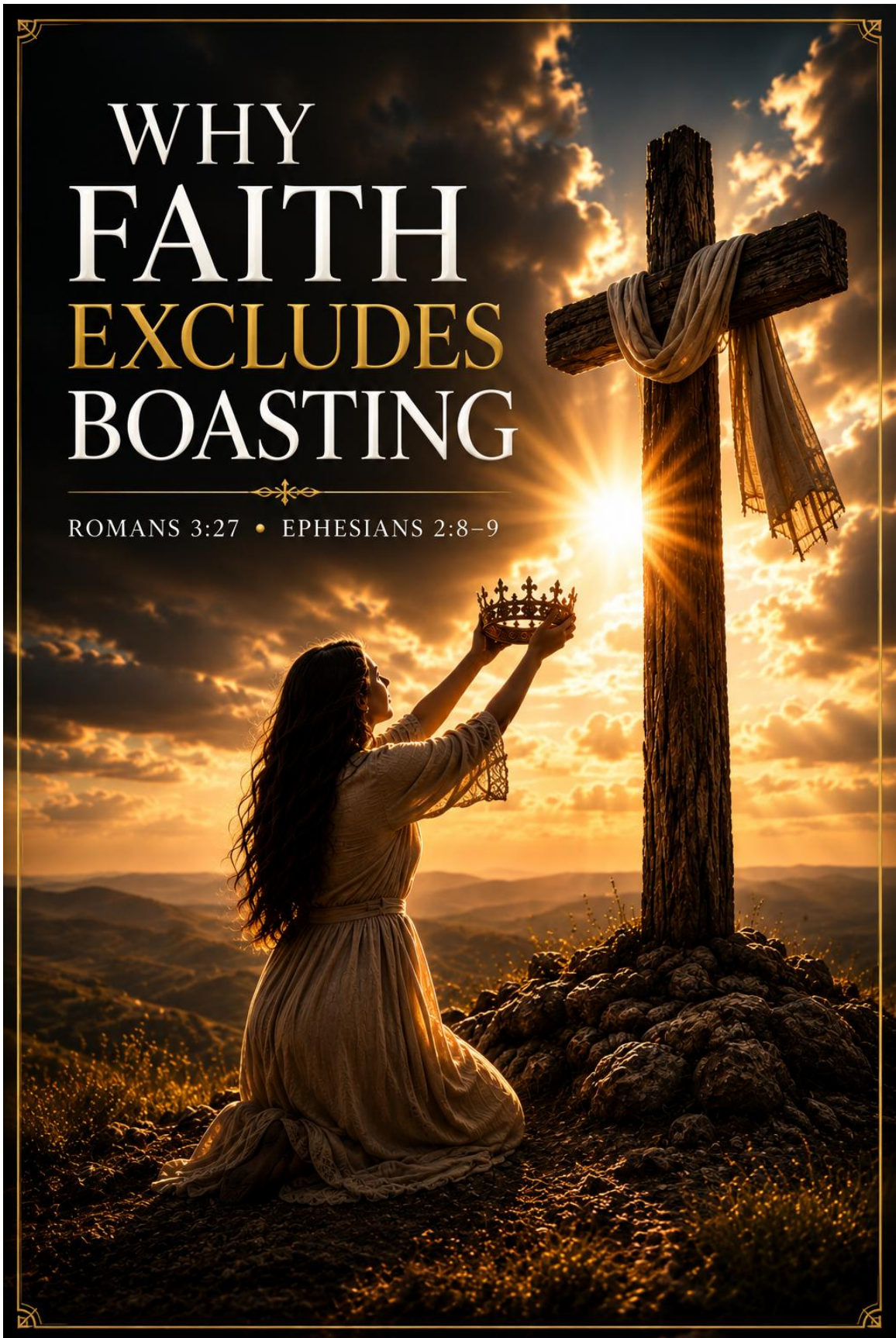


WHY FAITH EXCLUDES BOASTING

ROMANS 3:27 • EPHESIANS 2:8-9



Why Faith *Excludes* Boasting

Paul does not merely contrast faith with works; he consistently contrasts faith *and* grace with works because “works” are the ground self-boasting; “I did...I don’t do” (See Luke 18:14-18). In Romans 3:27 Paul asks, “Where then is boasting? It is *excluded*. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.” The contrast is deliberate: works produce boasting; faith *excludes* it. Ephesians 2:8–9 makes the same argument: “By grace you have been saved through faith...not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Once again, works are excluded because they provide a basis for human boasting in / of self.

If the decisive difference between the believer and the unbeliever ultimately lies in the sinner's autonomous response, then the sinner still possesses grounds for boasting of self - “*I did...you did not*”. Paul, however, relentlessly attributes salvation to God: God chose, predestined, called, made alive, raised, seated, and saved. Grace is the source of salvation; faith is the God-appointed instrument through which that grace is received; works are the excluded basis. Faith in Paul’s writing is therefore not presented as an independent human contribution that completes what grace merely makes possible, but as *the means* through which God's saving grace accomplishes its purpose. That is why boasting is excluded—not simply because works are absent, but because the entire saving accomplishment belongs to God from beginning to end.

This refutes the typical Arminian / Synergist claim “We don’t say our faith is a work, we simply chose to accept God’s gift” (or similar). Regardless of their claim to the contrary, or whatever way/s they claim grace was necessary or assisted their choice, the same boast of self remains in their doctrine because it is still ultimately, a *self*-generated response - “I chose to accept, I chose to cooperate, I chose to submit...” Every one of those statements points back to self rather than to God's distinguishing grace *alone*. The decisive question remains and it reveals the true boast: Why do you believe and others do not? If the answer is not God and grace alone, the boast of *self* remains. That is the heart of Paul’s claim that faith *excludes* all boasting of self and leaves only this: “As it is written, let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.”