

Sterilifidianism



terilifidianism is a Christian theological position which holds that faith alone brings salvation – regardless any good deeds. The word was coined by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in order to “*more properly name[]*” monergism (or, in Coleridgian idiom, “*Antinomian Solifidianism*”).¹

Although the word can be used to describe the “*belief in the sufficiency of a ‘barren’ faith*”,² Coleridge contrasts sterilifidianism with Pelagianism as the two extremes between which lies “*the Gospel Medium*” (as interpreted by John Bunyan, whose *Pilgrim’s Progress* Coleridge was reviewing). Coleridge expands on his views: “*It is indeed Faith alone that saves us; but it such a Faith as can not be alone. Purity and Beneficence are the Epidermis, Faith~Love the cutis vera of Christianity. Morality is the outward Cloth, Faith the Lining; both together form the Wedding-garment given to the true Believer by Christ [...]*”.³

Perhaps this professed moderation, accompanied by the propagandistically anti-moneristic nature of sterilifidianism as a word, could reveal Coleridge on the verge of an Eastern Orthodox version of synergism. But it would take Kallistos Ware to discuss such a speculation.

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1 George Whalley (ed.), *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge 12: Marginalia 1 (Abbt to Byfield)*, Princeton University Press, 1980, p. 814.

2 According to the definition found in *Oxford English Dictionary*.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 814-815. For more references, see p. 814 n24(1).