

ground.”

Conclusion

The works of faith (fruit of the Spirit) are contrasted with the works of the flesh in Scripture (**Galatians 5:16-21**). The Christian will stand before God and give account of his life and every man's works shall be manifest (**I Corinthians 3:10-15, 4:5, II Corinthians 5:11, Colossians 3:24, Matthew 16:24-27**). Our good works will follow us into the Kingdom of God, as tin cans tied to a dog's tail follow the dog. **Revelation 14:12-13**, *“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”* According to **Revelation 22:11**, whatever condition we die in is the condition we stay in throughout eternity. Only in Christ, through regeneration, can we perform good works, that is, God working through us by His mercy and grace. The invitation is given in **Revelation 22:17**, *“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”* The warning is given in **Revelation 14:18-19**, *“And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.”* Where will you spend eternity?

“By obedience to the commands of God, we evidence the sincerity of our holy profession. By this our faith is declared genuine before men. . .Whoever pretends to believe in Jesus and is not habitually careful to perform good works, his faith is worthless, barren, dead. By a good conversation, in which our light shines before men, we edify our brethren, silence opposers, and preserve the Gospel from those reproaches which would otherwise be cast upon it, as if it were a licentious doctrine.”

-Abraham Booth

“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

Colossians 1:10



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**“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”
Acts 16:31**

The RICHIES

OF GRACE

"hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11

Robert W. Reed

June 2007

Good Works

“This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.”

Titus 3:8

+ Glorifying God +

The expression “good works” is found in the New Testament at least thirty times either in the singular or plural form. Five times the expression is used in the book of Titus alone. After salvation comes service and glorifying God in our life. Holiness and sanctification is very much a part of the Christian's life.

“The adornment of good works, the adornment in which we hope to enter heaven, is the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ; but the adornment of a Christian here below is his holiness, his piety, his consistency. If some people had a little more piety, they would not require such a showy dress; if they had a little more godliness to set them off, they would have no need whatever to be always decorating themselves. The best earrings that a woman can wear are the earrings of hearing the Word with attention. The very best ring that we can have upon our finger is the ring that the father puts upon the finger of the prodigal son, when he is brought back; and the very best dress we can ever wear is a garment wrought by the Holy Spirit, the garment of a consistent conduct. But it is [amazing], while many are taking all the trouble they can to array this poor body, they have very few ornaments for their soul; they forgot to dress the soul.” -C. H. Spurgeon

This article will discuss three aspects of good works: their importance, purpose, and examples of good works. We must not fail in giving good works their proper place. The Christian is not saved by good works (**Ephesians 2:8-9**) but is saved for good works (**Ephesians 2:10**). In this, we must preach the whole counsel of God.

THE NECESSITY OF GOOD WORKS

The relationship between faith and good works is clearly seen in Scripture. After regeneration, the Christian's life here on earth is a reflection of their eternal state. In **Titus 3:8** we are told that everyone who believes in God is to maintain good works. As one author put it, "The foundation of all good works is believing in God, Who is the object of faith and they that believe are enjoined to maintain good works." Good works are simply the fruit of salvation. Martin Luther said, "Good works are faith incarnate", that is, they are the manifestation of faith as Christ was the manifestation of God. The doctrine of the gospel clearly presents good works flowing from faith. God Himself has joined these two together and what God has joined together let no man put asunder. Justification and sanctification are closely associated together with one another. We must not undervalue holiness, **Hebrews 12:14**, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord". Again, those who believe in God are to maintain good works.

In **Titus 2:14**, the believer is to be zealous of good works. Grace is not the enemy of good works for both are mentioned in the context. In **verses 11-12**, grace teaches holiness which purifies God's people to good works. In **Ephesians 2:10**, the believers are called God's workmanship, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Many times we quote **verses 8-9** and never mention **verse 10**. The word workmanship means to compose. We get our English word poem from the Greek word poiema which is translated "workmanship." We are God's poem. A Christian is a person in whom God has worked. One author put it this way, "God set a visible mark on His people, it is the badge by which we are known, not greatness, worldly splendor, riches, or outward excellency."

THE PURPOSE OF GOOD WORKS

According to **Matthew 5:14-16**, good works are to glorify God, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The first occurrence of the expression reveals the reason for good works in the life of the Christian. Pharisees acted to be seen of men (**Matthew 6:1-3, 5, 16-18**). All that we do as a believer should be for the glory and honor of God without selfish motives. Our good works should be of such character that even the ungodly will know they proceed from God, **I Peter 2:12**, "Having your conversation honest

among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." Our position in God's kingdom is clearly defined in **verses 9-11**, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;" We are not of this world and our life should be pleasing to our Lord in every way. As John the Baptist declared in reference to Messiah, "He must increase, but I must decrease." **John 3:30**.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD WORKS

There are many examples of individuals in Scripture who performed good works. Mary of Bethany is commended by the Lord for her good work in **Matthew 26:10**, "When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me." The context (**verses 1-13**) reveals that she knew what true worship and true sacrifice were. She gave what really cost because of her love and devotion to God. According to **verse 13**, Her deed of anointing Christ was to be made known to the world, "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." The Lord Jesus Christ proved Himself to be the true Messiah by His works in **John 10:37-38**, "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." His earthly ministry was centered around doing good (**Acts 10:38**), "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." In **John 8:39** Abraham is known as a follower of God by his works, "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." Dorcas was a woman of faith and full of good works (**Acts 9:36**) "Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and deeds which she did." The apostle speaks of the Thessalonians work of faith and labour of love in **I Thessalonians 1:2-3**. If someone examined our works would they add up, and would we be known by them as a believer? If our good works are in order, we do not need a tee-shirt or bumper sticker advertising our Christianity. John Bunyan said, "The man who is fullest of good works is fittest to live and fittest to die: I am now at any time, ready to be offered, saith fruitful Paul (**II Timothy 4:6**). Whereas he that is barren is neither fit to live, nor fit to die, to die he himself is convinced he is not fit, and to live, God Himself saith he is not fit, cut it down, why cumbereth it the