

## “Of Good Works” part 5 WCF 16.2.2, Good Works Manifest Thankfulness

2021.10.17 Sabbath School Lesson

Hopewell ARPC, Culleoka, TN

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### WCF 16.2 (TPH p928)

II. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith;<sup>a</sup> and by them believers manifest their thankfulness,<sup>b</sup> strengthen their assurance,<sup>c</sup> edify their brethren,<sup>d</sup> adorn the profession of the gospel,<sup>e</sup> stop the mouths of the adversaries,<sup>f</sup> and glorify God,<sup>g</sup> whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto,<sup>h</sup> that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>a</sup> James 2:18, 22

<sup>b</sup> Psa 116:12-13; 1 Pet 2:9

<sup>c</sup> 2 Pet 1:5-10; 1 John 2:3, 5

<sup>d</sup> Mat 5:16; 2 Cor 9:2

<sup>e</sup> 1 Tim 6:1; Titus 2:5, 9-12

<sup>f</sup> 1 Pet 2:15

<sup>g</sup> John 15:8; Phil 1:11; 1 Pet 2:12

<sup>h</sup> Eph 2:10

<sup>i</sup> Rom 6:22

Ps 116:12 What shall I render to the LORD

For all His benefits toward me?

<sup>13</sup> I will take up the cup of salvation,  
And call upon the name of the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> I will pay my vows to the LORD  
Now in the presence of all His people.

<sup>15</sup> Precious in the sight of the LORD  
Is the death of His saints.

<sup>16</sup> O LORD, truly I am Your servant;

I am Your servant, the son of Your maidservant;  
You have loosed my bonds.

<sup>17</sup> I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving,  
And will call upon the name of the LORD.

<sup>18</sup> I will pay my vows to the LORD  
Now in the presence of all His people,

<sup>19</sup> In the courts of the LORD's house,  
In the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

<sup>1</sup>Peter 2:4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, <sup>5</sup>you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

<sup>6</sup>Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

*“Behold, I lay in Zion*

*A chief cornerstone, elect, precious,*

*And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”*

<sup>7</sup>Therefore, to you who believe, *He is precious*; but to those who are disobedient,

*“The stone which the builders rejected*

*Has become the chief cornerstone,”*

<sup>8</sup> and

*“A stone of stumbling*

*And a rock of offense.”*

They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

<sup>9</sup>But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup>who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

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**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

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So, let's go ahead and get started and start with prayer.

We thank you and praise you. Our God for your mercy to sinners that you have made us right with yourself. Only entirely through what your son has done. He is been perfectly obedient and is in himself righteous and that you have given him to be our righteousness, through faith.

He has suffered the due penalty for what our sin deserved you have given him to wipe out our guilt through faith. In him, we thank you that instead, of leaving us to ourselves, which would have been righteous. And just that, you have not only given him to be our right standing our righteousness before you.

But you have made him our king, our deliverer, our life, the one who's character, now, you are working out in us as your spirit, makes us like him. And we pray that as we think about good works. You'd grant us to do. So believing in him and rejoicing over the good that you do in us for that as all the goodness that we have.

So help us. Now, as we study to understand the passages that we look at and cause them by your spirit. We pray also to bear fruit in our lives. We ask for Jesus's glory. And in his name, amen.

So the paragraph we are on as a whole and if you if you want to look at it in the context of the the confession, as a whole, you can grab one of the red books and find the confession in the back. And this this chapter on page 928, the paragraph as a whole is, these good works done in obedience to God's commandments are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith, and by them, believers manifest, their thankfulness strengthen, their assurance edify their brethren adorn.

The profession of the gospel, stop the mouse of the adversaries and glorify God whose workmanship. They are created in Christ Jesus. Their unto that having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end eternal life. So last week, we began in James chapter 2, considering just the first part.

These good works done in obedience to God's commandments and we saw that in James chapter 2, it talks about doing God's commandments but it gave a couple of names to the law that made us rejoice over the difference that Jesus has made in our interaction with the law that it is for us.

A royal lawful law of the king who has delivered us and taken us to be his subjects that it is for us a law of liberty. It is a law that both now by the Holy Spirit's use of it liberates us from being ruled by ourselves and also describes the liberty from sin into which the Lord Jesus has brought us.

And so now when we obey the commandments were obeying, them is those who have been made righteous in Jesus and have been made new and enabled finally for the first time ever to obey him from the heart with gratitude. And so, the law is something that reminds us of our liberty and that, the Lord now employs in making us experience, and enjoy that liberty, more, and more.

So, and the first sentence or clause there, I guess is the correct word and the first clause. There we learned. Part of what the law is, or sorry. What good works are obedience to God, to God's commandments, that our fruits. And evidences of a true and lively faith. And we did go on in James 2 to see how those who have Jesus have a whole Jesus, not only the one who has made them right with God, but the one who has made them to begin, loving, God and obeying God, as a fruit of organ, we had, we had to do some definition work.

I won't reach the whole class but a bunch of us weren't here if you need to direction to find the the lesson transcript and recording, I can help with that. So this week we're on, and by then that is by the good works, this obedience to God's commandments that God has produced in those who he has made righteous through Jesus as fruit of their living faith of their genuine faith.

And by good works believers manifests. Well, what does manifest mean he can probably see part of it, at least in the first part of the word mana, many to manifest, something is to show and to make plain and the idea behind that part of the word is in many ways.

But by them, believers manifest, display show there. Thankfulness and strengthen their assurance. That's as far as we will. Hope to cover this morning. We have a lot in the worship service. This this morning. Praise God. So we're going to try and end a few minutes early. So the first proof text we have as psalm 116, which is actually a very familiar psalm to many of you.

Even if you do not yet know that it is a very familiar psalm because it is a psalm from which we sing as we are coming up to and the table for the Lord's, Supper and departing from the table for the Lord's. Supper and we've just put the last half or so of the psalm on your sheet.

If you have your Bible, you can turn to the beginning of the Solomon. It's a, it's a psalm about being delivered from death and the suffering that is in part as a result of enemies that have been attacking. And yet it focuses especially on how the Lord delivers has delivered the singer from death.

That's a psalm of response to God's saving us. So just knowing the psalm as a whole, what it's what it's about helps us understand the purpose of these paying of the vows and well I think we'll read it with that introduction. What shall I render to y'all who for all has benefits towards me?

I will take up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of Yahweh. I will pay my vows to Yahweh. Now in the presence of all his people precious in the sight of Yahweh is the death of his saints. Oh y'all by truly I am your servant. I am your servant, the son of your made servant, you have loosed, my bonds, I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call upon the name of Yahweh.

I will pay my vows to Yahweh. Now in the presence of all his people and the courts of Yahweh's house and the midst of you Jerusalem, praise Yahweh. Well one of the things that we see here is at least in the Westminster. The pastors who were gathered to put together this summary of the scriptures is an understanding of the first great commandment being, the first great commandment.

Usually, when you hear people talk about good works, they are thinking amendments five through 10. So what are some of the Don't still don't commit adultery. Not bear. False. Witness don't have it. Don't cover it. We got five and six left. Honor. Father and mother. Don't murder. We got them all.

Now, I'm sorry. Honey though. The with futures to use and images of now, we are in the first table, right? And the first table is when the psalmist is rejoicing over God, having made him righteous and delivering him from death, giving him this great salvation. He says, what shall I render to the Lord to Jehovah to Yahweh for all his benefits to me?

He focuses on the first table. So the second great commandment that summarizes those six that we heard popcorn style minute ago. What is the second great commandment? Love your neighbor as yourself. Well, what's the first great commandment?

Okay, not very synchronous. It's kind of like asking a question at my table and getting eight simultaneous, but non-synchronized answers, which is love the Lord. Your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. And that too is a summary, isn't it of those first four commandments worship? Only God worship, only in the way he has said, worship in a manner appropriate to who he is and especially worship in the day that he has consecrated for the, for his public worship.

And that's what that's what is being flushed out here? What, shall I render to you all way for all his benefits toward me? I'll take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of Yahweh. I'll pay my vows to you, always now in the presence of all his people.

So the holi assembly is in particular site. He repeats that in verse 18 and goes on to say that that point in the courts of this house in the midst of you. Oh, Jerusalem, praise, Yahweh precious. In the sight of Yahweh is the death of his saints. He's he responds and then there's this very interesting.

Oh, y'all way truly. I am your servant. I am your servant. The son of your maid servant. You have loosed my bonds, you have taken me as your slave. I rejoice to be your slave, the fact that I am your slave, a low slave, the son of a slave.

Not even very high in the slave pecking order, you know, one of the kids slaves at the other slaves like to boss around and yet I belong to the Lord, instead of myself, that's liberty, right? So it's not like James invented, a new idea and James chapter 2. This is how those who realize the privilege and the honor of being conscripted into the service of the redeemer are taught to think by the whole of the Bible that doing whatever I want is actually a horrible slavery.

But being delivered from slavery to myself and my sinfulness and living for me. And according to my rules, that's liberty. And so, I'm so glad to be taken as the Lord's servant as the son of his made servant, you have loosed my bonds. He says, I will offer to you.

The sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call upon the name of Yahweh. Well Romans 12 at the beginning is not on our sheet here but it helps us connect these two things because there is a question at in verse 12 of Psalm 116. What shall I render to Yahweh for all his benefits toward me?

What is the logical response or inappropriate, right? Good way to respond to the God who has saved me, and it's at that point. He says, well, keep the first great commandment keep the first tablet of of the 10 commandments keep or the first side, there's probably two copies of the law front and back each and a covenant agreement.

But we've referred to the first table, keep the first keep the first keep the first table. Well, the apostle in Romans 12 is using similar language when he said, when he says, I urge you by the mercies of God, and the word. Bye is actually being used in two ways.

There one is, the mercies of God, our part of what urges, it's a response to the glorious salvation that he's fleshed out and Romans 1 through 11 but it's also independence which is something that he's also taught us about in Romans 1 through 11. I urge you by the mercies of God, to offer, your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your and some translations say spiritual worship.

But the word actually talks about or is a word from which we get the English word logic, it is a logical appropriate response that that comes from now considering your body, not your own and he uses the word for body there. He uses the word from which we get the word courts.

So it's really talking about your flesh. He's done that earlier and Romans, Romans 6, talking about offering your body and all the parts of who you are, although it's not limited to body there as slaves unto God for righteousness, the God who has liberated us. So Psalm 116 asked the question, what shall I render toward Yahweh for all his benefits towards me?

This is the sacrifice of thanksgiving that we keep both tables of his law. Although the first great commandment love the Lord your God. This first four commandments in the ten, our primary and

When Honay said don't use images of Jesus, that's true that that's that's second commandment second, commandment don't worship in any ways that you devise, when the Lord repeats, the, the ten commandments in Deuteronomy chapter five. He's just given us in Deuteronomy chapter four. The logic of why to worship without an image and he says, because I didn't give you myself by.

And by images, when you were at the mountain, he says, in Deuteronomy 4, you heard a voice. I gave you to gave myself to you by words. And in other words, we have a God who's actually given himself to us and most of the kids, I think it probably tell us in one word, in whom has God given himself to us.

Who saves us from our sins? Yes, Mr. Ruth. Jesus, absolutely. And in fact, God is a spirit as many of you catechism kids if we telling us, not too many minutes from now. But God has also added to himself a body and a soul. When the second person of the trinity, the eternal son became a man.

So when, when you're in the children's, catechism, very early on, you say, can, can you see God and you're supposed to say? I cannot see God, but he always sees me. You could also say, I can see God, the son one day and I'm really looking forward to it because he is not only God, but as also a man and I have been bought with the blood of God, but of course, we would not do that in a children's catechism.

Remember when Philip asks Jesus to see the father, Jesus says, have I been with you so long and you still don't know me. And then he says, if you have seen me, you have seen the father and answering the question that way. Jesus is telling us that when we see him, we have seen older is to see of God.

So if we're applying Deuteronomy 4 to the second commandment, we'll say, God has given himself to me in Jesus Christ. He's not given me pictures of Jesus, but I'm going to rejoice over the fact that the living God has given himself to me by having him only in the ways that he has given himself to me and not trying to have him in ways that he hasn't.

Because when we come up with, I other ideas of God or other ways of knowing him or having him, we're actually in engaging something that is produced by us rather than God having given himself to us now, that's not just important for loving the Lord. It's important for loving one another in Hebrews, 10.

It tells us that one of the reasons not to stop assembling together, which has been a big issue in the church and the last year and a half so that we would stir one another up to love and good works.

Loving one another. We're not going to be able to love one another well, because we won't be stirring one another up to that, we can scarcely harm each other more than to come together and each influence the other with ideas of Jesus, or impressions of Jesus, or idea of God, that as not how God himself has given himself as given himself to us.

Anyway, that the response required a little more flushing out, but let us continue on the theme of expressing our thankfulness first. Peter 2, I think the apostle by the spirit has in mind. Psalm 116 and other places Now. The proof text or the verses. I've put them almost all here because they didn't include versus five through ten.

So first, Peter two versus four through 10. Now, we want to render unto God. We want to respond to how good God is meant to us. How good has God been to us? He's given us. Jesus. Jesus has obeyed with the obedience that we could never do, and that's counted as ours, if we believe in him.

Jesus has died for our sins and taken them away if we believe in him. And so, how are we to respond to him? Well, we want to offer thanksgiving in his courts in the assembly of his people. Where do you find those courts? That's an important question. The woman at the well wanted to know, should we worship on the mountain?

Should we worship in Jerusalem? And Jesus said, no, sometimes people asking either or question and all the mathematicians, say yes and hahaha, it's an or question so that it's one of those too. Well, sometimes the answer is no, it's neither of those two options. God is a spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit.

And so here's one of the ways that we respond with thanksgiving First Peter 2 beginning in verse 4, coming to him that is to Jesus as to a living stone rejected indeed by men but chosen by God and precious. You also as living stones are being built up a spiritual house or a spiritual temple, a holy priest hood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Therefore, it is also contained in the scripture, behold, I lay in Zion, a chief cornerstone elect precious and he who believes on him will, by no means be put to shame, therefore, to you, who believe he is precious. But to those who are disobedient, the stones which the builders rejected has become the chief, cornerstone and a stone of stumbling and a rock of a fence.

They stumble being disobedient to the word to which they also were appointed. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priest hood, a holy nation, has owned special people that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his mar light. Who wants were not a people but are now the people of God who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Now we are going to get into other other kinds of good works, but I think it's a helpful correction to us that this primary good work of loving the Lord. Our God, with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, worshiping. Him only worshiping him in the way that he has said to worship.

Only worshiping him and a manner that is appropriate to who he is and worshiping him in that holy assembly on his holy day, that he has set apart for that. It's when we read someone 16 or we read first, Peter 2 and we say, how is this about good works?

I think it exposes us that worshiping God. And offering thanksgiving to him is not really seen by even the church culture in our day as the primary good work. But it is the primary good work in the scripture and the Lord helping us love one another. Well part of that loving one, another is going to be stirring one another up to that good work in particular.

It is what he has saved us for. Jesus was rejected and he died for our sins. Like we're going to hear about in the sermon this morning. Praise God. And he himself is the chief cornerstone of this new of this new spiritual temple, and everyone of you who believe in Jesus Christ are a living stone too, that are being built into him and upon him and God's purpose for saving people through his son, to build this church is that, that church would worship him.

This is the plan of God. It's not just to save sinners. Praise God. It is to save sinners but it's to save sinners. In order to glorify himself in his son and those whom, he has built into his son. The plan of God is his glory, in his son, as the redeemer forever and ever, that's the primary thing.

And when we think about good works, it is not what we are saved by. We're saved by Jesus and thats part of how Christ is glorified but they are what we are saved unto and chief among them is to be a worshiper who responds to God in Jesus and worships God through Jesus.

So by good works believers manifest, their thankfulness and especially by this the greatest of the good works, the worship of God. Well that's all we have time for will aim to take sections. See and D. Next Lord, stay aboard. Willing. Let's go ahead and pray.

O Lord we thank you that you have saved us by Christ that you gave your son to be rejected by men that he would endure such humiliation. And even that on the way and as part of to the cross to bear in his body, the penalty for our sin and to purchase us by his blood.

And when we realized what you have done for us in Jesus Christ, one of the great questions of our hearts is, what shall we do? I'll do we express thankfulness to you and we thank you for the answer of your word that we do it by good works by loving you with all our hearts.

So mind and strength by loving our neighbor as ourselves. We pray Lord that you would make us to remember the love that you have demonstrated for us that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. We pray that your spirit would bring that home to our hearts so that we would love him because he first loved us and we pray that you would help us to love him in the way that he says.

But keeping his commandments where we ask it all in his name. Amen.