

THEOLOGY OF GOOD WORKS

PREPARED BY C. STEPHEN DAVID

Definition of Good Works: Any work done for the welfare of others with no selfish intention.

1. All Are Sinful

- ❖ **Ephesian 2:1-3**, “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”
 - Dead in trespasses and sins
 - Following the course of this world
 - Following the prince of the air
 - Sons of disobedience
 - Carrying out the passions of flesh, the body and the mind
 - By nature children of wrath

2. God Saved Us By His Grace and Mercy Through Christ’s Sacrifice

- ❖ **Ephesians 2:4-7**, “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” (Col. 2:13)
 - **What was our condition?** *Dead in our trespasses*
 - **What did God show?** *His richness of mercy, love, grace and kindness*
 - **How did He show?** *In Christ Jesus*

3. We Cannot Be Saved By Our Own Works, But Only By Grace Alone and Through Faith Alone in Christ Alone

- ❖ **Ephesians 2:8-9**, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
 - **How can we not be saved?** *By works*
 - **Why?** *So that no one may boast.*
 - **How are we saved?** *By grace through faith*

4. We Are Saved For Good Works in Christ Jesus

- ❖ **Ephesians 2:10**, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

God’s workmanship: *The result of His work*

The commission of God in Creation: *Be fruitful and multiply and subdue the earth (Gen. 1:28)*

The commission of God in Redemption (Creation in Christ): *Do good works*

Observe:

- Created in Christ Jesus for good works
- God prepared good works for us to do beforehand
- God wants us to walk in good works
- ❖ **Titus 2:13-14**, “...waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

Question: What’s the difference between good works done without Christ and good works done in Christ?

- Good works without Christ are done for salvation. Good works in Christ are done not to attain salvation but for receiving salvation by God’s grace alone.
 - Good works without Christ are done for selfish benefits. Good works in Christ are done for the welfare of others.
 - Good works without Christ are done for one’s glory. Good works in Christ are done for God’s glory.
- ❖ **Matthew 5:16**, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

5. Good Works in a Person is An Evidence of Salvation

- ❖ **Ephesians 2:8-10**, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Note: It is certain we cannot earn God's salvation by good works, but when we receive salvation it is sure that God's salvation in us produces good works through us.

What are the two signs of those who are saved?

- i. Knowing that they are sinners saved by grace, and that none of their works can save them, they put their complete trust in Christ alone for their salvation, which is given by solely God's grace in Christ Jesus.
- ii. After being saved by God's grace, they excel in good works.

This is precisely the concern of James in chapter 2:14 because those who claimed to have faith were not walking in good works in Christ Jesus: *“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?”*

According to James, faith without good works is what?

- It is dead (v. 17, 26)
- It is demonic (v. 19)
- It is useless (v. 20)

So what did James mean in these words? “You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone” (2:24) He is not speaking about genuine faith that inevitably produces works, but about intellectual faith which is dead, demonic and useless.

6. The Christian Life is a Life of Good Works

- ❖ **Ephesians 2:10**, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”
- ❖ **Titus 3:8**, “The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.”

Application: The Christian life is a life saved by the grace of God in Christ Jesus to produce abundant good works in Christ for the glory of God, the Father.

What are the good works that we can do in Christ Jesus?

- i. Preaching the gospel
- ii. Praying for others
- iii. Encouraging others

- iv. Showing hospitality to others
- v. Helping others (physical help)
- vi. Visiting orphans and the destitute
- vii. Being Gracious to Others (forgiving and doing good even to those who hurt us)

Recap:

1. All Are Sinful
2. God Saved Us By His Grace and Mercy Through Christ's Sacrifice
3. We Cannot Be Saved By Our Own Works, But Only By Grace Alone and Through Faith Alone in Christ Alone
4. We Are Saved For Good Works in Christ Jesus
5. Good Works in a Person is An Evidence of Salvation
6. The Christian Life is a Life of Good Works

Note: Prepared by C. Stephen David. This message is delivered to convocation of churches held in Word and Deed on October 10, 2016, and also to Ekklesia Evangelical Fellowship on October 30, 2016, and to Gachibowli Church on Novemeber 6, 2016.