

HC Q&A 86- Salvation Leads to Good Works

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: There are 3 main sections of the Catechism: Your **sin**, your **salvation**, and your **service** to God (or **guilt**, **grace**, and **gratitude**). We now come to the section dealing with service or how you show gratitude for your salvation.

We will start our *examination of how you are to serve God* by seeing the basis and benefits of good works first.

Our headings are:

The **Basis of Good Works**

The **Benefits of Good Works**

Our goals are: **That you will recognize you are only able to do good works because of your salvation, that you will recognize the benefits of good works, and that you will then do good works.**

Q&A 86 We have been delivered from our misery by God's grace alone through Christ and not because we have earned it: why then must we still do good?

A. To be sure, Christ has redeemed us by his blood. But we do good **because Christ by his Spirit is also renewing us to be like himself**, so that in all our living we may **show that we are thankful to God for all he has done for us**, and so that **he may be praised through us**. And we do good so that we **may be assured of our faith** by its fruits, and so that by our godly living our **neighbors may be won over to Christ**.

The Basis of Good Works – Jesus Christ

1. Doing good works is a consequence to your salvation; you do good works because you are saved.

You do not do good works in order to be saved! **But there are 2 groups that butcher this doctrine!**

2. Roman Catholics and Arminians argue you need to do good works to be saved or you need to do good works to help save you.

They might say: “You must go to church. You must help people dying in Ukraine. You must be kinds to animals. You must pray to God. You should buy flowers for your wife. You must give your tithes. You must help dig a water well in Africa.” If

you do these things, **God will save you**, or if you do these things, **they will help God to save you**.

But the Bible teaches no other work than the active and passive obedience work of Jesus Christ can earn your salvation. This is why you hold to **covenant theology**.

Jesus kept covenant law for you, so **his obedience is counted as yours**, and he took the punishment you deserved for breaking the covenant, **so his death is counted as yours**. So there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1. **You did nothing to remove your condemnation. Jesus did!**

Those who hold that good works help earn salvation reject the clearly taught doctrine of predestination – the teaching that you were chosen in Christ – before you did anything good or evil - for salvation before the world began.

Do you see how bad doctrines rob God of his glory and praise? Instead, the Bible teaches you **are not only predestined for your salvation**, you are even **predestined to do good works**. (You have more reasons to praise God!)

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.

Good works are not hindered by your belief in predestination. Predestination **guarantees good works!** Nothing done for Christ is unrewarded.

3. Antinomians argue Christ has freed you from the law and therefore you don't have to do good works as part of his law.

Antinomians are people who believe you are not bound to keep the 10 commands today.

They essentially argue (especially the **“health and wealth” gospel people**) you keep God's law based on **how much reward you want**. To them, good works are not required, but appreciated.

(No wonder they rarely carry out ecclesiastical discipline.) This is a lie.

The fact is, Christ did not free you from the law. Christ freed you from the

curse of the law. This is a most important distinction. You are still bound to obey the law – to do good works.

Galatians 3:13 Christ has **redeemed us from the curse of the law**, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),

4. Does the Bible prove you only do good works in response to your salvation?

a. Yes, you are only able to Worship only after you become part of God's family.

Law 1-4.

1Peter 2:9 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;

Your greatest good work is worship.

You could help feed thousands of poor people, remain faithful to your spouse, protect your boss' property, and speak against abortion and perversion, but if you don't worship, you are ignoring your most important duty on earth – the greatest good work of all.

b. You are only able to work for your neighbors after your salvation. Law 5-10.

Titus 2:14 [Christ] gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, **zealous for good works.**

Romans 6:13 – And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and **your members as instruments of righteousness to God.**

You were chosen for salvation and heavenly appointment, and you have to respond in obedience.

Matthew 7:17 "Even so, **every good tree bears good fruit**, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

The Benefits of Good Works – Your Redeemer, You, Your Neighbor,

1. What are the benefits from doing good works in response to your salvation?

2. Through your good works you bring glory to your Redeemer.

a. The highest goal of God's salvation is not to save you, but to bring glory to Jesus Christ. So you are therefore to give yourself to God's service – to his law. Christ bought you and you belong to him. You express that love for Christ through **worship and work.**

Your happiness is not your greatest goal!!!

b. If you don't worship and work for Christ you show you do not truly know his love. You are not a Christian. You need to become one.

c. If you only work and worship Christ Jesus partially, then it shows you don't love him as much as you ought to. Most are in this 2nd category.

1Corinthians 10:31 - Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God.**

1Corinthians 6:19 Or do you not know that **your body is the temple** of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore **glorify God in your body** and in your spirit, which are God's. For you were bought at a price; **therefore glorify God in your body** and in your spirit, which are God's.

d. If you are lacking in good works will make people laugh at the Lord and hurt him. Strangers will think Christ's salvation on the cross was useless or that it was not as important or valuable.

Do you see the call to live a good life, not just a call to good doctrines? Get this into your heart!

3. Through your good works you bring blessings to yourself and you show you believe in Jesus.

2Peter 2:10 - Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

The Holy Spirit uses your good works to strengthen your faith. Every time you do a good work, your mind must draw back to Christ's work for you. This nourishes your soul.

If you don't practice your cooking, you forget the recipes, and the rewards of not practicing are not good. Your families may be presented with many burnt offerings at

dinner time.

Or if you don't practice your computer programming you will forget the codes.

But the more you practice good works, more the Holy Spirit is able to shine his light on you and bless you.

You show you are God's children "by the serious and holy pursuit of a good conscience and good works." (Canons of Dort Chapter 5, Para 10).

The Belgic Confession reminds you that if you have true faith, you will "live a new life."

4. Through your good works you bring good to your neighbor.

a. Doing good work as a Christian surely will add weight to your evangelism.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, **that you may prove what is that good** and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Romans 14:18 For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and **approved by men.** 19 Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things **by which one may edify another.**

Matthew 5: 16 14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they **may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**

b. Your evangelism – your good work – will lead men to salvation.

1Peter 2:12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, **glorify God in the day of visitation.**

Even if the hearer rejects the Gospel, **his condemnation brings glory to God.**

5. A Christian lacking in good works is a nuisance to the church of Christ and a robber of his neighbor.

If you do not do good works – if your life is devoid of good works - your non-Christian observers see Christianity as only a Sunday religion and **you will hurt the salvation of a prospective convert.**

The **Gospel becomes more powerful when it is accompanied with its effect in your life.**

So **to bring good to your neighbor, live a godly life in words and actions.**

Conclusion:

Good works show your obedience to Christ. Good works show you have faith in Christ. Good works show you are a Christian who is thankful for his salvation. Good works honor your Savior. Good works bring great rewards to you – in heaven and sometimes on earth. Good works are necessary to show the non-Christian you are a Christian and you add impact to the Gospel.

A Christian is like a flower that cannot stop displaying its beautiful petals and attracting honey bees.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. If you are struggling with doing good works, don't panic. That struggle is a lifelong struggle with which every Christian can identify. **But you still have to do good works.** Not because a task is difficult does it mean God will excuse you from doing it.

2. Pray for God's help to go good works.

3. Read your Bible daily and remind yourself of the greatness of Christ's active obedience for you throughout his life.

Reflect on his passive obedience for you on the cross. See your covenant keeper's blood pouring down his face...and see the crown of thorns stained with blood... Reflect on your covenant keeper's humiliation...his physical suffering...his rejection by the religious leaders of the day...his abandonment by his family...his denial by his own friends...He did it all for you!

Don't these things make you want to work for him?

Further, if you are not a Christian, you may have tried to do good works to save you. You hoped your good works would please God and you hoped they would satisfy your conscience. (Your good work means nothing if no one knows your name in heaven. You became disappointed because you now realize your good words did not satisfy your heart...and you are not pleasing God. But there is hope. Plead Christ's good work—his life and his death – as yours. God will accept you as his child, guaranteed.