

Galatians 2; Lord's Day 32

WHY MUST WE STILL DO GOOD WORKS?

- I. The question.
 - A. The question arises because the Catechism has condemned all positions which make good works a condition to being saved.
 - B. In the opposite ditch are various shades of Antinomianism which says that there is no necessity for good works at all.
 - C. But if good works are not necessary for salvation, which is “merely of grace,” then what is the place of doing good works?
 1. The Heidelberg’s question indicates the conviction that Scripture demands that those saved in Jesus do good works.
 2. God’s law does show us our sin, but it also shows us how God wants us to express our gratitude for gracious salvation.
- II. The answer: Scripture is not indifferent to good works. The “must” is essential and absolutely necessary.
 - A. Scripture teaches that the absence of good works indicates that they have no part in the kingdom of God.
 - B. God gracious salvation (from regeneration to glorification) gives us a new life, so Paul can say that he lives (Gal. 2:20).
 1. The life which the believer lives is the rich life of fellowship with God. It has its source in God, for God alone has true life.
 2. We live because Christ lives; we so belong to Jesus that His death and resurrection is ours (Rom. 6:6).
 3. On other hand, we live “in the flesh” (our sinful human nature) struggling, fighting sin, repenting, watching and praying.
 - C. As a result of this life we are dead to sin, so instead of being able only to sin, now we are able to do good (Rom. 6:13,17).
 - D. And God continuously works in His children so they will and do His good pleasure (Phil. 2:12,13).
 - E. When the Catechism teaches that good works are essential, it does not mean that good works merit.
- III. Why we do good works.
 - A. First, we are commanded to do so. God requires that we give our all to Him all the time (cf. Canons III,IV-17; V-14).
 - B. Second, we love wants to do what our Loved One wants; we delight to please our Father.
 - C. Third, we are so grateful for the free salvation given to someone so undeserving.
 - D. Fourth, we desire to glorify God (Matt. 5:16; John 15:8). Without holiness one cannot see God (Heb. 12:14).