

**Ephesians 2: 10; “We are His Workmanship”, Message # 14 in a series entitled –  
“The Exceeding Greatness of His Power”, A Bible Study prepared  
by Pastor Paul Rendall on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019,  
for those gathered at his home.**

This evening we want to think about what it means for you to be God’s workmanship, and your walking in good works which God prepared beforehand. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” We see here that 1<sup>st</sup> of all – that Paul is declaring that our great salvation is not our work but God’s work, and we need to see it that way; we are His handiwork. 2<sup>nd</sup> – We have been created in Christ Jesus for good works, and we should be going about to do them. And then 3<sup>rd</sup> – God Himself has prepared these good works beforehand, that we should walk in them. A very interesting wording here. Let’s see if we can understand it better.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – Paul is declaring that salvation is not our work but God’s work, and we need to see it that way.**

We need to see first of all that we who are Christians are God’s workmanship in the sense of our physical creation. We must begin at the beginning for our spiritual salvation, our spiritual re-creation, must not be separated from our physical creation. They are linked together because God has a purpose in our salvation that goes back before we are born, and even to the way that we were physically made. We are God’s workmanship in our physical creation; when we were woven together in our mother’s womb. Turn with me over to Psalm 139, verse 13. “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb” “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.” “My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.” “Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.” “And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.”

We find here what a magnificent work is the creation of a man or woman. You have not evolved out of the primordial slime, but you, as an individual person, and all of your inward parts of your body, were formed out of, and in connection with, the physical substance of your mother, as He covered you there with His hand, while this good work was going on, during the 9 months gestation time, until your arrival into this world came to pass. See the great and awful wickedness of people who want to interfere with God’s working and take the life of a child in the womb, in their having an abortion. See the wickedness, I am saying, of a woman’s playing God, and thinking that because the baby is in her womb, that she has the right to say whether it lives or dies.

No, this baby is only hers by the express permission, purpose, and creation of God. Children are the gift of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is a reward. (Psalm 127: 3) Every child is God’s handiwork, and as such ought to be treasured and respected, no matter who the earthly father is; the heavenly Father is the One who gave the permission and ordained that that child be there. He obviously is not the author of any sin which any man commits, and He abominates rape and incest, and sex outside of marriage. But the giving of a child under such circumstances is intended to show forth God’s handiwork, even so. How many children born under such circumstances have turned out to be those who glorified God, it should be evident. And so the value of God’s handiwork in the creating of the child, and the giving of the child, is established.

And so, we need to see, that even though there may be consequences that are undesirable to the mother, as to who the father might be, it never warrants the act of murder to attempt to deal with them or correct them; that is, those consequences. Rather, a submission to the will of God, and a love for the child, who would otherwise be unloved. God watches the reactions and actions of mothers very closely in this regard, and He will reward those who have faith in Him, and punish those who commit the act of murder in abortion. No, the child being formed in the mother’s womb, is a separate

entity from the mother in His sight, and that child is a distinct person from their mother, having a life of their own, during the whole of their time in the womb. And to see it any differently is to violate the reality of the truth, that God is author of their individual life. Their life is not the mother's life, although it is temporarily connected together with the mother's life for that time in the womb. Every individual person is God's unique handiwork. Your frame was not hidden from God when He made you in secret; when He skillfully wrought you in the lowest parts of the earth; meaning the womb.

God's hands were, as it were, all over you being formed and created in the womb. God has a purpose from the very beginning, from even before He begins the work in the womb. His work in the womb is directly connected to the purpose that He has for you, in creating you. Look over at Jeremiah chapter 1, verses 4 and 5. "Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.'" So, you can see, can't you, this important truth that even before Jeremiah was born, he was set aside to God's purpose of what He wanted Jeremiah to become; a prophet to the nations. And in that regard, God formed him in his mother's womb, thinking of how He would use Jeremiah later on, when he grew up; that he would become His man to minister and preach to the nations. And so it was. He was God's workmanship, even from the womb.

We need to see also, now, that God is the author of spiritual salvation. His creation of the body is His workmanship. His creation of the soul and joining it together with the body is His workmanship. And the salvation of both soul and body is also His workmanship. He is the Heavenly Workman who brings about the salvation of the soul, first; the soul which is even of more value than the body. The soul of any person takes place only by God's workmanship, in His time and His way in relation to the gospel. We see this portrayed for us very graphically, in the words of the apostle Paul if you will turn over to Galatians chapter 1, verses 11-17 with me. "But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man." "For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ."

"For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it." "And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers." "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus." I want you to take notice here of the great contrast between what Paul did and what God did. What did Paul contribute to his salvation? Nothing! He did not receive the gospel by being taught it, even. It came to him through revelation of Jesus Christ.

He was advanced in the religion of Judaism beyond many of his contemporaries, but that availed him nothing in relation to his salvation. But look at what God did for Paul. Verse 15 – "When it pleased God, who set him apart from his mother's womb, he says, God called him through his grace, and revealed His Son in Paul. What is that? It was God's workmanship of regeneration; of sending His Spirit into Paul's heart to make a great change in him, so that he would see Christ as being the only One who could save him from his sins and change his heart so that he would resist the idea that he was a very great sinner and needed to be re-created in the image of Christ; to have Christ revealed to him in all His glory. And this is exactly what happened on the road to Damascus. Paul saw the risen Christ, and had a vision of tremendous glory in relation to Christ's Lordship, so that he would begin to trust in Him and follow him, and to do God's will in relation to Him, the One who loved him and gave Himself for Paul. And such is the case with us as well, even though the majority of sinners who are saved do not have nearly the dramatic conversion that the apostle Paul had. Each and every believer is God's workmanship in their creation in the womb, and in their re-creation in their spiritual salvation.

**2<sup>nd</sup> - We have been created in Christ Jesus for good works, and we should be going about to do them.**

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.” These good works are works which are done according the definition of good works in the word of God, and according to the spiritual light that we have been given to understand God’s word according to the Spirit’s working in our heart. Because of the grace and Spirit given to us by Christ, after our believing in the gospel, we are given many opportunities to do good to other people around us. Turn over with me to Matthew 5: 13-16. “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?” “It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.” “You are the light of the world.” “A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.” “Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and gives light to all who are in the house.” “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

So light shining is referring to the light of truth shining to you and in you by the Spirit of God is supposed to so shine before men that they will see your good works and glorify the Father in heaven. This is not a boastful shining, but a humble, sincere shining that will glorify your Father in heaven. That is, that they will give credit to the Father for having bestowed this grace upon you, to help them to understand His help by grace. Here we see that Christians, since they have been given spiritual light, leading to their believing the gospel, as a part of their New Birth, their being made a New Creature in Christ, they experience the shining of the Holy Spirit’s illuminating rays into their heart and mind, day by day, revealing the truth of God’s word to them. And they will come to understand over time, that they have the responsibility to further shine this same light which has been given to them, to others around them. And the best way that this can be done, is for people around you to see your good works and thus glorify God. That is, that they will praise God for what they have seen you doing, in your good works, and hopefully they themselves will learn from you and believe in the gospel, themselves, and be saved.

Good works being done by you the Christian should lead other people around you who do not know God, to come to have a better understanding of what God Himself is like. God is good and kind, even to evil and ungrateful men. God in His great love and mercy through the preaching of the gospel to you, brought salvation to you. You ought to be able, then, to do good works which will lead the unbelieving people around you to consider the love and mercy of God towards them as well. God, in the forgiveness of any person’s sins forgives them a great debt. And you, knowing this, ought therefore to be salt and light to others around you; to be able not only to forgive those who have sinned against you, but to proclaim by your works, that you have the life of Christ in your soul.

This is just the beginning of good works. Good works are something which each and every believer ought to be careful to maintain, or keep up. You see this in Titus chapter 2, verses 11-14 – “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who 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.”

So what are good works as they are described for us here? Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously, and godly, and looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. We live in light of Christ’s Second Coming and our receiving our eternal inheritance. It does not mean that Christ could come at any time, but rather that we know that Christ will be coming again in the Father’s time, of which no one knows the hour nor the day. But, He will come at the time in which the Father will send Him; a very particular time of His appointing. And indeed, it is our blessed hope, that someday Christ will return, and He will reward every man according to their works. We live our lives preparing for that blessed time, looking forward to that blessed time when He shall return.

It is indeed our blessed hope, that someday Christ will return and He will reward every man according to their works. If you have done good works, you shall receive a reward. Christ has redeemed us, He has redeemed us, He has bought us back out from every lawless deed, and He is

purifying for Himself a people who are zealous for good works. Titus chapter 3, verse 8 says – “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.” “These things are good and profitable to men.” How do we maintain good works? We keep looking for the opportunity to obey and to do good to all men. Titus 3: 1 – “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable gentle, showing all humility to all men.” When you have a good attitude toward authority, when you are ready to do a good work, when you are peaceable and gentle, you want what is best for people around you, and you will go about to do these good works in relation to them, as a Christian.

**3<sup>rd</sup> - God Himself has prepared these good works beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” So, in our salvation, we as believers in the gospel of Christ, are spiritually re-created when we are born again by the Spirit of God. This is how we enter the kingdom of God; the whole realm of our new endeavors, is to be united to Christ in His life. And the purpose of God in bringing us into this kingdom of grace, is that we would most certainly and definitely do good works for our Christ and our God, and be thinking of the needs of people around us, especially believers. This is called walking in good works here; the works that God has prepared beforehand. We have seen that this means that God, before you were ever born knew what He wanted you in particular to do, in order to glorify Him by the good works that you would do. But it also means that beforehand He providentially orders all these works that you come into; the opportunity to seize and do a good work, is made plain to you.

You should understand that God takes into consideration all of your inherent bodily strength and all of the spiritual strength that He will give to you, when He prepared the works beforehand that He would have you to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 10 and 11 – “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” “Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.” God had prepared Paul’s work of being a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. He led him into it by the working and leading of His Spirit, and Paul responded to the grace given to him, and the work set before him by living up to his calling, and doing his good work with zeal and faithfulness. This is what God is looking for from all of us.

This is called “sowing to the Spirit” in Galatians 6: 6-10 – “Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.” “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” “For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

Now this “sowing to the Spirit” is not your being saved by your good works, but it is the proof of your already having been saved. And as you continue to do these good works, it will fully justify God’s having shown you mercy in having saved you apart from the works of the law. As John Eadie says in his commentary on verse 10 of Ephesians 2 – “Good works are not the cause of salvation; they are only the result of it. Salvation causes them; they do not cause it.” “This workmanship of God – this creation in Christ Jesus – is their true source, implying a previous salvation.” “Thus runs the well-known confessional formula – ‘Bona opera non praecedunt justificandum, sed sequuntur justificatum.’” The law says—“Do this and live;” but the gospel says—“Live and do this.”

We can conclude our study by looking at some verses which I think really open up and explain this verse that we are studying tonight. Hebrews 13: 20 and 21 – “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete (or perfect in the sense of completion) in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory

forever and ever.” “Amen.” It is good to pray for ourselves and for one another this prayer: that Christ through the blood of His covenant, the blood by which He purchased all the blessings of salvation for us, that He would equip us; that He would make us complete in our obedience, and complete in our works, beginning them well and ending them well. May He so work in us the ability to do them to the for His glory and for the good of the people that we are trying to minister to, that He might be pleased. May we do His will with a cheerful and loving heart, so that He might be pleased with our works, and be glorified in our doing of them.