

CHRISTIANS ARE TO DO GOOD WORKS

Titus 3:4-7

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Everybody needs to be thoughtful, helpful, kind and loyal to one another but some have taken the "good works" mentioned in the Bible to mean that good works are necessary, even essential to one being saved. That is NOT what the Scriptures teach, it is not the teaching of the law, it is not the teaching of works, it is not the teaching about crowns in glory that await believers. The Gospel causes good works and the example of Jesus Christ produces good works. Christians are to do good works, not for salvation nor to keep one's salvation, but to follow Jesus' example.

I. GOOD WORKS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH OBTAINING OR PRESERVING SALVATION

1. Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9
2. Under the influence of Satan, people have taught that one must earn his/her salvation rather than to receive it freely.
 - Every person seems to think that he/she can do something toward his/her being saved.
 - Every person without the Lord Jesus Christ is damned and under the wrath of God - lost.
 - Some think they are too good to be saved by Grace alone, through faith alone and without contributing something to their being saved.
 - Many are not saved because they refuse to accept salvation as a free gift of Grace through what Jesus has and continues to do.
3. The scriptures teach very clearly that salvation is, in its entirety by grace alone, through faith alone, in the Lord Jesus Christ alone.
 - ***"...The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord...)***
Romans 6:23
 - God chose salvation to be by His grace without any human works, good or bad.
 - Redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ is a free ransom and purchase of the believer's soul out from under the curse and penalty of God's Holy law.
 - All who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are born again and given new life in Christ by grace alone.
 - Believers in Jesus Christ are justified freely by God's grace through what Jesus Christ has done.
 - Being "sanctified" is the work of God's free grace.
 - Believers are kept by grace alone and grace in no way depends upon one's works.
 - The Believer's reward in heaven is the reward not of one's works, but Jesus Christ's works as the believer's substitute and it is all given as the free gift of grace of God.
4. Common sense, as well as God's Word, teaches that salvation cannot be by one's works because nothing people can do will ever gain merit before God.
 - All the works of unbelievers, no matter how good, are utterly abhorrent to God.
 - Even the best works of the most earnest, sincere believers are like filthy rags before God.
 - Works that are recognized by God are those that are profitable and beneficial to Him alone.
 - Job 22:2; 35:7; Psalm 16:2
 - Works by the believer can never earn anything from God because absolute, perfect obedience is already due to God.
 - It is God who gives one the grace and strength to perform for Him in what the believer does in the first place.
 - Works can't help because there is no way to compare the works one does by the great salvation which God gives.
 - Can sin be washed away by doing good? Can heaven be purchased by tithing?

5. Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, without any works performed by the believer.

II. EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS

1. Romans 6:18; Galatians 5:24; James 2:17-20
 - God has said that His people are to walk in good works and what God says will happen.
 - Christians are not to just talk about good works, they are to do good works.
 - It is the responsibility of Christians to carefully keep up good works because good works are opposite of things of the flesh, good works are opposed by Satan.
2. Who can and will perform good works?
 - In God's eyes, the unsaved cannot do anything good in His sight.
 - Every person has the nature to avoid doing good works. (Romans 3:12)
 - Only a "good" person can do good. (Matthew 12:35)
 - Only one who has been saved by God's Grace is considered "good" in God's sight.
 - Before one can do good in God's eyes he/she must be purified and sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ and the Grace of God.
 - Until one's "hands" have been cleansed, all he/she touches is defiled.
 - Until one's heart has been purified and sanctified, all that he/she does is unclean.
 - Only those who have the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ can do good works acceptable to the Lord.
 - Ezekiel 36:25-27
 - Only those who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can do anything that is good and pleasing in the sight of God.
 - Even the believer can never do any works that are absolutely good and righteous.
 - The works of the believer can be accepted by God by what Jesus Christ has already done.
 - God does accept and is pleased by the poor works of His Children when performed by faith and a sincere heart, all for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. What good works must the Christian be careful to maintain?
 - Many think that good works God wants is for one to separate him/herself from the rest of the world living in isolation, obeying self-imposed rules and that the outward appearance pleases God.
 - What God really requires of His Children is an inward, heart obedience first.
 - Joel 2:13; Romans 14:17
 - Good works must be in accordance with the command will of God.
 - Doing something which God has not required is not a good work in His sight.
 - Observing traditions, religious customs, legal requirements.
 - Good works must be done in faith. (Romans 14:23)
 - Abel worshiped God in faith and Cain tried to worship without faith.
 - Good works must be done to glorify God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)
 - In Jesus' day the religious leaders prayed, fasted, tithed, etc., all to be seen of others and to get praise from them. All they did disgusted God.
 - Good works must come from being motivated by love for the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Love for the Lord Jesus is the basis of obedience and cause for all good works.
 - John 14:15; 2 Corinthians 5:14; 1 Timothy 1:5
 - Doing things to be seen of others is evil.
 - Doing things out of fear of punishment is evil.
 - Doing things for gain is evil.
 - Only that which is done for God's glory and out of love for the Lord Jesus is good.

- All good works must be done with a willing heart. (2 Corinthians 8:12)
 - If what a Christian does does not come from a willing heart, it is not accepted by God.
 - If what a Christian does for his/her Christian family, for the Church and for the spread of the Gospel does not come from a willing heart, it is not accepted by God, no matter how good it may appear to others.
- 4. What is the source and cause of good works by the Christian?
 - It is God. (Philippians 2:13)
 - Every Christian has the will and ability to do the will of God ONLY because God is inside the believer working His grace and power giving one the "want to" and strength.
 - Hebrews 13:20-21
 - Good works are the result of one being united with the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Ephesians 2:10; John 15:4
 - Having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ causes the Christian to do what God calls good works.
 - James 2:17-20; 25:27
 - The Christian's heart is cleansed by the blood of Jesus and prepares him/her to do good works. "Faith without works is dead; and works without faith are dead also."
 - God's Word causes Christians to do good works.
 - Faith comes by hearing, so obedience in faith comes by the written, preached, read and heard Word of God.
 - To do good works acceptable to God, one must never neglect the Word of God.

III. CHRISTIANS DO GOOD WORKS BECAUSE THEY ARE GOOD AND PROFITABLE TO OTHERS

1. Good works cannot obtain salvation in any degree nor can they atone for sin, make peace with God or justify one's soul nor produce righteousness. Christ alone does these things for the believer.
 - Good works do not go ahead of the believer to prepare his/her eternal reward in heaven - good works follow the believer into heaven as a tribute to the grace of God.
2. Good works are ordained by God as a means by which the believer can honor Him in this world.
 - Ephesians 2:10
 - Christians live their lives with an eye to the glory of God, living in a way that demonstrates their deep gratitude to Him for His love, mercy and grace, therefore honoring God before others.
3. Christians are to do good works because it is good for them personally to do so.
 - It lifts up God and the Lord Jesus.
 - It reflects one's profession of faith in the Lord Jesus.
 - It shows that one has been indeed saved by the grace of God.
 - It shows others that one's faith is real - James 2:18
4. Christians are to do good works for the good of others.
 - Good works benefits others.
 - Matthew 25:31-40; Philippians 2:4-5
 - Good works sometimes helps bring others to the Lord Jesus in faith and salvation.
 - 1 Peter 3:1-3
 - Some have been saved because they saw a Christian friend or relative as an example of what it means to be a Christian.
5. Christians doing good works often set an example for others to follow. (1 Timothy 4:12)
 - Unbelievers see.
 - Children see.
 - Weak believers see.
 - Young believers see.

CONCLUSION:

1. What good works should Christians be careful to do?
 - Works of love, joy, devotion, contentment, faith, all to the honor of God.
 - Works of gentleness, goodness and patience toward others.
 - Works of faithfulness, meekness as one's way of life.
2. Christians are to give themselves first to Christ and then to one another.
3. Christians are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, saved by God's grace and kept in His love.
4. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 19-20