

WHAT ABOUT "WORKS"?

Titus 3:1-8

Introduction: There are various ideas about what "works" please God and how those "works" relate to one's salvation. Jesus explained that "works," such as keeping the Law, are not as important as being obedient to the Gospel and that "works" are not done to earn salvation or a crown and a place in heaven but "works" that please God are done out of gratitude and obedience. What kind of good "works" are pleasing to God?

I. GOOD WORKS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH OBTAINING AND KEEPING SALVATION (Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9)

1. It seems natural that everyone thinks that he/she can contribute something to his/her salvation.
 - The Bible makes it clear that salvation is completely by grace through faith in Christ only.
 - Believers in Christ are called redeemed, reborn, justified, sanctified, preserved, kept and rewarded in heaven, completely, entirely, totally by God's grace.
2. God's Word teaches that salvation cannot be by one's works because the best works by the best people are still totally unacceptable before God.
 - One's works must be profitable and beneficial to God and they are not.
 - One's works can never deserve anything because God is already owed perfect obedience.
 - One's works can never earn anything before God because God, Himself is the One who gives the grace and strength to do what is done "in His name." God equips.
 - One's works can never earn anything before God because there is no comparison between works and salvation and blessings which God bestows so freely.
 - **Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, without any works performed by anyone in any way.**

II. CHRISTIANS DO NEED TO DO GOOD WORKS WHICH PLEASE GOD (Ephesians 2:10; James 2:17-20)

1. Anybody can do right but to do good works which please God only certain people can do.
 - An unsaved person cannot do anything good in God's sight.
 - An unsaved person is not qualified to do anything which would please God.
 - Before one can do good that pleases God, one must be cleansed and sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ.
 - Only those indwelt by the Holy Spirit can do good works which please God.
 - Only those who have faith in Jesus Christ can do that which pleases God.
 - **Good works that please God are always the "fruit" of faith, never the "root" of faith.**
2. What good works can Christians do which please God?
 - Works which are done at the will and command of God.
 - Works which are done in faith, trusting God to provide what is needed.
 - Works which are done to bring God the glory, not one's self.
 - Works which are done out of love for Christ.
 - Works which are done with a willing heart.

3. What causes a Christian to want to do good works to please God anyhow?
 - God stirs the heart of the Christian to want to do good works.
 - Wanting to be like Christ causes a Christian to want to do good works.
 - One's faith in Christ causes one to want to do things which please God.
 - The Bible describes what pleases God, therefore the Christian learns what pleases God.

III. GOOD WORKS BENEFIT OTHERS

1. Good works which please God also bring honor to Him.
 - The Christian who does good works that please God will be recognized in heaven.
2. Good works benefit the Christian who is doing the good works.
 - The Christian's gratitude to God is deepened for salvation being given, not earned.
 - The Christian's faith is increased as God supplies what is needed to do the good works.
3. Good works benefit unbelievers and other Christians.
 - Unbelievers see the Christian's faith in action even though they don't understand.
 - Unbelievers are often brought to faith in Christ because of a Christian's doing good works.
 - Other Christians are often encouraged to also do good works because of seeing a fellow Christian busy doing good works that please God.

CONCLUSION:

1. What are some good works a Christian should be busy doing?
 - Works of love, joy, peace, devotion, contentment, faith.
 - Works of longsuffering, gentleness, goodness toward one another, patience, forbearance, thoughtfulness, forgiveness .
 - Whatever God wants.
2. Christians who do good works that please God, bring honor to God and cause the unbeliever to notice, therefore opening a door for the Holy Spirit to work in that unbeliever's life.
3. Good works have absolutely nothing to do with the receiving, keeping or ending of one's salvation but are needful for the Christian in order to bring honor to God and to be used by Him in influencing others as well as bringing spiritual growth to that Christian.
4. How busy have you been in doing the kind of good works that please God?