

Good Works
(Ephesians 2:8-10)

Introduction:

1. According to vs.8-9, "grace" and "faith" play important roles in our salvation.
 - a. "Grace" is certainly involved.
 - 1) We cannot save ourselves.
 - 2) Salvation is a gift from God.
 - 3) Any great works that we might invent will not save us.
 - b. "Faith" is also involved.
 - 1) We receive salvation through our faith.
 - 2) Faith includes obedience to the conditions that God has revealed in His Word.
2. In vs.10 we read about the role of good works in the lives of those who have been saved.
 - a. We are God's workmanship.
 - b. We are created in Christ unto good works.
 - c. God has ordained that we should walk in good works.
3. Since tomorrow is Labor Day, perhaps this is a good time for us to focus our attention on the fact that God wants His children to do good works.

Discussion:

- I. THE SCRIPTURES REPEATEDLY INSTRUCT US TO DO GOOD WORKS
 - A. From Titus 2:14 we learn that those who have been redeemed by Christ are to be *"zealous of good works."*
 - B. Titus 3:8 teaches those who have believed in God to *"be careful to maintain good works."*
 - C. Not only are we to do good works ourselves, but Hebrews 10:24 teaches us to *"consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works."*
 - D. In addition to teaching us to do good works, . . .
- II. THE SCRIPTURES REVEAL A NUMBER OF PRINCIPLES THAT SHOULD MOTIVATE US TO DO GOOD WORKS
 - A. In this regard, 1 Thessalonians 1:3 mentions a *"labor of love."*
 1. God's love should motivate and inspire us to do good works.
 2. Our love for God and our fellow man should also be a driving force behind the good works that we do.
 - B. A second principle is the fact that our labor is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).
 1. Sometimes our good works may not produce the results that we desire.
 2. Nevertheless, if we have done the Lord's will, our labor is not in vain.
 3. Realizing this should motivate us to be steadfast in doing good works.

- C. A third principle is that God will not forget our good works (Hebrews 6:10).
 - 1. God is aware of our good works, and He won't forget them.
 - 2. In all the messages to the 7 churches of Asia in Revelation 2-3, the Lord said, *"I know thy works."*
 - 3. God is aware of our good works, but He also knows when we fail to take advantage of opportunities to do them.
 - D. A fourth principle is that our good works will influence others (Matthew 5:16).
 - 1. While we want our good works to have a positive influence on others, there is a warning that we must heed.
 - 2. (Matthew 23:5) Jesus warned against doing works to be seen of men.
 - 3. Our good works need to be seen by others so they can be influenced for good, but we must not do our good works for the purpose of being seen by others.
 - E. These are just a few of the principles revealed in the Bible that should motivate us to do good works.
 - F. Let us briefly consider . . .
- III. THE TIME TO DO GOOD WORKS
- A. To know when we should do good works, let's look to the example of Christ (John 9:4 - *"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work"*).
 - B. We must be ready at all times to take advantage of opportunities that are presented to us (Galatians 6:10).
 - C. Now is the time to do good works because there will be plenty of time for rest in heaven (Revelation 14:13 - *"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them"*).

Conclusion:

- 1. At the judgment, we will be rewarded on the basis of our works (1 Corinthians 3:8b - *"every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor"*).
- 2. With this in mind, consider what is written in these passages:
 - a. (John 6:27) *"Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you."*
 - b. (Hebrews 4:11a) *"Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest."*
- 3. Since the Bible has so much to say about Christians doing good works, we conclude that they are important to God.
- 4. Let us take advantage of opportunities to do good when they are presented to us.