

Not Saved by Good Works but Unto Good Works

by Timothy Tow

Timothy Tow emphasizes that while we are saved by faith, we are called to live out our faith through good works in various aspects of life.

Scripture: Malachi 3:10, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:8, 1 Timothy 6:17, Titus 2:6, Hebrews 10:25

Topics: "Faith And Works", "Christian Living"

Description

Timothy Tow preaches on the importance of faith and good works in the doctrine of salvation, emphasizing that while Protestants believe in salvation by faith alone, good works are the fruits of that faith and are essential. He highlights the Apostle Paul's teachings in Ephesians and Titus, stressing the need for Christians to be zealous in maintaining and showing good works as a reflection of their new life in Christ. Tow urges Protestants to revive their commitment to good works, starting with daily devotion, family prayers, consistent church attendance, and faithful giving to support the church and missions.

Transcript

The doctrine of salvation of the Roman Catholics is we are saved by Faith and by good works. The doctrine of salvation of the Protestants is we are saved by Faith but unto good works. The words of St Paul in Eph 2:8,9 settles the issue, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

While Protestants are right in asserting we are saved by faith and not by good works, they have slighted the second part, the fruits of faith. It is like a grown up son while still staying in his father's house neglects to contribute to its maintenance which is required of him. Is it right for him to go scot free? No, he has an obligation to "good works."

That we are also saved unto good works is stressed by none other than the Apostle Paul, the Apostle of Faith. In the short Epistle to Titus, he calls to Titus no less than six times to shew himself a pattern of good works (2:6) and Christians to be zealous of good works (2:13), to be ready to every good work (3:1), to maintain good works (3:8,14). Negatively speaking, those who are inclined to Jewish fables and commandments of men are unto every good work reprobate (1:16).

When a man is converted, he is a new creature in Christ (II Cor 5:17). Instead of living the old life of self, he now lives for Christ. It is like a change of hobby. Now he is productive in Christ, zealous of good works and given to the maintenance of good works. Let us who are Protestants make amends to doing good works which we have subconsciously neglected.

In what areas of our daily life can we revive to doing good works? First is in our daily devotion. How low have we plunged from the good name of Bible-Presbyterian? As BPs we are not only to carry our Bibles to Church but also read a portion of it everyday. No, we are haphazard in our reading habits. We just leave the Bible on the shelf after Church and have nothing to do with it till next Sunday.

Let us repent by regularly reading a portion of it and meditating on it everyday. There are 1189 chapters in the Bible. We should strive to read three chapters of it plus a little and we would go through the Bible in a year. Dr John Sung read 11 chapters on weekdays and 13 on the Lord's Day. A man of one Book, he was a most powerful Bible preacher.

Apart from self devotion, we should have family devotions and prayers with our children especially. How grandpa and granddaughters feel blessed together as I pray for the salvation and culture of their souls each night!

To maintain good works involves our coming to Church every Lord's Day without a break. Church attendance is a loving duty as given in Heb 10:25. And when we attend Church every Sunday there is a portion waiting for us, viz., the peace that passeth all understanding breathed into our hearts from the Risen Saviour. Is it not your unhappy experience of a restless week when you miss going to Church on Sunday?

Public worship involves the whole family. If you want a fuller blessing, I urge you to attend Sunday School with your children. Our classes range from nursery to adults, to the oldest in the Church.

And when we appear before God, come not with empty hands (Ex 23:10). It is to our Church that we should bring our tithes (Mal 3:10). Bring into the storehouse that God may have enough for the maintenance of His House and missions around the world. And test Him if He will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing. But those who short-change God by holding back, rob Him (Mal 3:8). The result: "and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes" (Hag 1:6).

A most worthy cause whereby we can direct our good works is missions. Joining mission trips, only once just for the fun and adventure of it, is not counted. It is with a long term programme, visiting regularly that we will be blessed. Contributing to missions so that regular workers are maintained is another good work. Then you can help out by doing something good for Jesus everyday, e.g. giving out tracts, very conveniently, and so effective.

Last but not least, here is another exhortation to good works by the Apostle Paul, not only in Titus but also in Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (I Tim 6:17-19).

Let the rich realise that it is God who giveth them power to get wealth (Deut 8:18). They are not owners absolute of what they have but stewards, trustees. So they cannot spend at random but under God's

direction. Let those who have much give to the needy and those worthy of God's bounty. In so doing their good works will be noted by God. They are laying up treasures in heaven, preparing to meet their God in hope of the everlasting life.

A people zealous of good works are Lifers, who have learned how to give through many God-honouring projects, so that His Kingdom is spread far and wide to all ASEAN and to other parts of the world. Amen.

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