
“Works: Their Source & Scope”

- I. Introduction: 2 Guiding principles for Chapter 16
 - a. Fruits come from trees, not vice versa
 - i. Genesis 1.2, 9-13 (Let there be...Let them produce/bring forth)
 - ii. God has created us unto good works, so we cannot boast
 - iii. We have the Holy Spirit as a deposit – a gift, so we should expect fruits of the Spirit
 - iv. These things God has made cannot boast that of themselves produce anything. Yet, it is rightfully said that *they produce them*. They are called into being and then beckoned to produce according to their call. WORD – EFFECTUAL BY SPIRIT – PRODUCES
 - b. What happens *for* us is the basis of what happens *to* us and *in* us.
 - i. We do based on who we are.
 - ii. Born in Adam, dead in trespasses and sins, enemies of God, slaves to the flesh in rebellion against God, unrighteous – guess what? We do evil deeds.
 - iii. Christ’s work on our behalf – Our Justification – Our Regeneration - Our Sanctification & Good Works – And Glorification/Resurrection unto life
 - iv. So good works are the fruit of our union with Christ by the Spirit and therefore cannot merit our salvation. They are the fruit of our salvation not the ground.
- II. We are weak, but He is strong (WCF 16.3)
 - a. We are part of the new creation – new creatures with different natures – like the land, we owe our ability to produce from the Spirit (**PT m** Ez. 36)
 - i. If the Spirit has made us and is within us, we will produce the fruits of the Spirit.
 - b. Where do bananas come from? How long do they last? (**PT m** John 15)
 - i. Fruit’s life comes from trees – not itself
 - c. So, it is the Spirit to whom we owe our good works = fruit of the Spirit (**PT n** Phil. 2).

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- III. Yet we are still diligent to work!
- a. The Law's function:
 - i. Covenant of works = eternal life upon perfection (condemns after the Fall)
 - ii. Revelation of God's character & will: to love as we have been loved (our new desire)
 - b. So work & stir up the grace of God in us.
 - i. Working out our salvation (PT o Phil. 2)
 - ii. Be not slothful (PT o Heb. 6)
 - iii. Making our calling sure (Pt o 2 Pet. 1)
 - c. So, we actively work and act like that which we have been made.
 - d. Hodge: "It is not the system which regards sin as so great an evil that requires the blood of the Son of God for its expiation, and the law as so immutable that it requires the perfect righteousness of Christ for the sinner's justification, which leaves to loose views of moral obligation."
 - e. CONCLUSION: We agree it is the Spirit that works life in us, but we do not by that rationale cease to work unless called by some direct motion of the Spirit – Our works are in accord with who we are now. This is our desire. Our new heart. It is in retrospect that we conclude it is by the Spirit (like faith itself).
- IV. The Law is the limit – nothing more, nothing less (WCF 16.4)
- a. Supererogate - more than required – 2 errors:
 - i. Bringing God down – He requires perfection – the expression of Himself in love of Him and neighbor – you cannot go beyond this perfect Being (**PT p** Luke)
 - 1. Even if it were possible to keep the Law!
 - 2. Everything we do would fall under love of God and neighbor = Law!
 - ii. Lifting ourselves up (**PT p** Gal) & the previous point.
 - 1. Calvin: "let us not boast of voluntary liberality when we are bound by necessity."

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- V. Works & merit – Grace & gift
- a. Grace & works are not always opposed in Scripture (as we've seen Phil. 2, etc.)
 - i. Saved unto good works
 - ii. New creatures – new actions
 - b. Grace/faith in Christ ARE OPPOSED to works in merit for eternal life/satisfaction for sins:
 - i. Rom. 3.20 (PT q)
 - ii. Rom. 4 (PT q)
 - iii. Eph. 2 (PT q)
 - iv. Titus 3 (PT q)
 - v. All of these passages: not just “by grace” or “by faith,” but also “NOT BY WORKS”
 - c. EVEN after our conversion:
 - i. Again – unprofitable servants (Luke 17)
 - ii. Again – proceed from the Spirit who gave/gives us life (**Gal. 5 PT s**)
 - iii. Our works are still imperfect (**PT t** Is. 64, Ps. 130)
 - d. Conclusion: It is not that God makes us righteous so that we can now earn our own salvation.
 - i. Rom. Catholics agree we are saved by grace through faith.
 1. Rom. 4:5 – “justify”: to *make* or to *declare* righteous?
 - ii. Roman Catholic position: But this grace infused into us is enough to actually perform good works in order to be accounted righteous someday.
 - iii. What we are saying is that we have already been declared righteous in Christ; THEREFORE we do good works – a testimony to who we now are – not the basis by which we are declared righteous.

Augustine: “I do not say to the Lord, ‘Despise not the works of my hands.’ ‘I have sought the Lord with my hands and am not deceived.’ But I do not commend the works of my hands, for I fear lest, when Thou look upon them, thou may find more sins than merits. This only I say, this I ask, this I desire: despise not the works of thy hands; see in me thy work, not mine. For if thou see mine, thou wilt condemn it. If thou see thine own, thou wilt crown it. For whatever good works are mine are from thee.”