

“The Benefits of our Works of Faith”
Hebrews 6:10-12
(Preached at Trinity, March 24, 2024)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citation will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. The context of the Book of Hebrews surrounds a church that is largely comprised of Christians converted out of Judaism. The Jewish community was hostile to these converts. They were shunned and despised. Many lost their property and their means of providing for their families.
2. In this context of suffering, some within this Hebrew church were abandoning the Christian faith and returning to Judaism. Although true believers will persevere through every affliction, the danger of apostasy is always before us. The author was concerned about their immaturity, their failure to make progress in the faith. He reminds them of the dreadful consequences for those who fall away.
3. After the stern warning, the author offers a word of encouragement and hope:
Hebrews 6:9 NAU - "But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way."
4. He speaks to them tenderly, pastorally. He calls them "beloved." Although they were not making good progress in the faith, there was still *some* evidence of fruit. There was still evidence that their salvation was genuine. Evidence that he refers to as "things that accompany salvation."
Genuine faith bears fruit. Works do not contribute to our salvation but are inseparable from it.
5. Last time I enumerated some of these things that accompany genuine saving faith. These believers were loving one another, caring for one another. They were bearing fruit.
Hebrews 6:10 NAU - "For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints."
6. With pastoral concern, the author expresses his desire for all of them to show forth the things that accompany salvation. They had been diligent in their love and care for one another. He presses them to maintain the same diligence until the end. Notice he uses the triad of graces we see so often in the New Testament – the graces of faith, hope and love.
Love in **Verse 10**
Hope in **Verse 11**
Faith in **Verse 12**
7. In **Verses 10-12** the author reminds us of some further benefits of the lively faith and the works it produces.

I. Our works bring the joy of God's approving eye –

Verse 10 - "For God is not unjust so as to forget your work"

- A. Some have misinterpreted this verse as teaching a works-based righteousness. That we can earn God's approval through our good works.
1. The Bible will not support meritorious works.
Ephesians 2:8-9 NAU - "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."
 2. Our salvation is entirely a work of God's grace.
Regeneration turns our heart towards Christ. He becomes our chief love.
- B. While we don't labor to gain God's favor there is great joy in pleasing Him.
1. We live our life in His presence. God sees. He knows. He is faithful. The author reminds us of the justice of God's reward. God does reward the saints, but we should always ask ourselves if we would serve Him if there was no reward.
 - a. This has always been Satan's accusation. That we serve God only for what we can get from Him.
Job 1:8-10 NAU - "The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." ⁹ Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰ "Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land."
 - b. Why do you serve God? Is it only because of what you gain from Him?
 - c. There is joy in Christ alone. He is sufficient. He is our crown, our joy.
 2. All of our works, all of our service is directed to Him.
Hebrews 6:10 NAU - "For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name,"
 3. While all attention is upon Him, there is the promise of reward. Christ has gone to prepare a place for us. Paul spoke of the crown of righteousness. We will not lose our reward. Our works do not gain our reward, but they do validate our reward.
1 Corinthians 15:58 NAU - "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord."
 4. Sometimes it may appear that God does not regard us. God answers this through the lips of Isaiah.
Isaiah 40:27-28 NAU - "Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God "? ²⁸ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable."

- C. His watchful eye is always upon us.
1. After charging His disciples to carry the Gospel to the world Jesus encourages them.
Matthew 28:20 NAU - "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
 2. In **Chapter 13** we are reminded of His sufficiency
Hebrews 13:5 NAU - "Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,""

II. Our works increase our faith.

- A. The author expresses it by way of the assurance of our hope.
Hebrews 6:11 NAU - "And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end"
1. Our hearts are comforted and assured by the outward evidence of God's saving grace. Our good works affirm God's work in us.
 2. Our Confession affirms this – **Chapter 16** under the heading *Of Good Works*”
“These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith; and by them believers manifest their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto, that having their fruit unto holiness they may have the end eternal life.”
 2. He calls it the “assurance of hope.” Hope is the sure expectation of the fulfillment of God's promises. Biblical hope is not a mere wish like the word is often used today. Rather, it is a sure expectation, an absolute certainty, an unfailing confidence.
- B. Those who diligently persevere in good works keep a vigilant eye upon eternity.
1. We hold confidently to the promises of God.
 2. Our works of faith increase our confidence in the Gospel.
Jesus is my Savior, my sins have been forgiven, Jesus loves me and gave His life for me. He is continuing to work through me.
Ephesians 2:10 NAU - "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."
 3. When our lives bear testimony to the saving work of Christ our confidence regarding our election is increased.
2 Peter 1:10 NAU - "Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble"
 4. It is evidence of the power of the Gospel working in us and through us.
1 Thessalonians 1:5 NAU - "for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction"

18th century English Baptist pastor and theologian John Gill wrote –
 “The preaching of the Gospel was accompanied with the powerful efficacy of the grace of God, working by it upon them; so that it became the power of God unto salvation to them; it came to them in the demonstration of the Spirit of God, and of power, quickening them who were dead in trespasses and sin, enlightening their dark understandings, unstopping their deaf ears, softening their hard hearts, and delivering them from the slavery of sin and Satan. It came by the power of the Holy Spirit to their souls, working and implanting his graces in them, as faith, hope, and love, and every other and he himself was received along with it, as a spirit of illumination and conviction, of regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, and of faith and adoption; all which gave full evidence of their election; and in much assurance.”¹

- III. A lively faith protects us from becoming sluggish in our Christian walk.
Hebrews 6:12 NAU - "so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."
- A. The Christian life demand diligence
Hebrews 6:11 NAU - "that each one of you show the same diligence"
1. The word for sluggish is the word that introduced this section.
Hebrews 5:11 NAU - "Concerning him we have much to say, and *it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing."*
 2. They had become spiritually slothful, sluggish. They had become sluggish hearers. Spiritual sloth results in sluggish, dull thinking. It results in the inability to comprehend the deep truths of the Christian faith.
- B. A lively faith results in diligence – Genuine faith perseveres.
1. This was the strong admonition in **Chapter 3**
Hebrews 3:6 NAU - "Christ *was faithful* as a Son over His house-- whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end."
Hebrews 3:14 NAU - "For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,"
 2. We saw it again in **Chapter 4**
Hebrews 4:14 NAU - "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession."
 3. Christianity is a lifelong battle
 The Bible describes it as fighting the good fight of faith
1 Timothy 6:12 NAU - "Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

¹ Gill, John, *The Baptist Commentary Series Vol.1, John Gill's Exposition of the Old and New Testaments Vol. 9*, (Paris: The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., 2006), 215.

4. The genuine Christian continues to be engaged in this struggle. He presses on until the end.
Hebrews 6:11 NAU - "And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end,"
 5. The Apostle Paul described his own Christian life on these terms.
2 Timothy 4:7-8 NAU - "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;"
 6. Those who turn back to their former lusts or who never departed from them demonstrate that they have never known Christ.
1 John 2:19 NAU - "They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us."
Matthew 10:22 NAU - "You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved."
Hebrews 10:39 NAU - "But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul."
- C. Pressing on is not a stagnant holding on.
1. Christian perseverance is an active laboring.
 2. Our good works keep us in this pursuit.
2 Peter 1:8 NAU - "For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Conclusion:

Remember, our good works are ultimately those works that He works through us.

Ephesians 2:10 NAU - "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

Philippians 2:13 NAU - "or it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure."