

BLESSEDNESS OF THE TRUTH: THE DOING OF GOOD WORKS

Intro: This Lord's Day is apologetic in character. It defends the truth that we are justified by faith only on the basis of the satisfaction and righteousness of Christ. -It defends this truth over against all attempts to falsify this truth by an admixture of a person's good works.
-It does this **1.** by emphatically denying that our good works can have any part in our justification, **2.** by emphasizing that the reward of our good works is of pure grace, and **3.** by repudiating the accusation that this doctrine does make a person careless and profane. Why is this apologetic so necessary?

I. THE PLACE OF GOOD WORKS.**A. What good works require:**

1. LD 33 gives us a three-fold description of good works: proceed from faith, done accord. to God's law, for God's glory.
2. Demanded is perfect conformity to God's law. Not what we think is good, not what we desire. God tells us
3. The Christian does and must do good works: Eph. 2:10; Rom. 6:13,22; Phil. 2:12,13; I Pet.2:9; I Cor. 15:58
4. Yet these works are not perfect. What does Paul say of himself (Rom. 7: 19,24)? Isa. 64:6

B. The significance:

1. We cannot be perfectly righteous here below when we do good works (contrary to the teaching of perfectionism).
2. Our good works can never justify us before God or be part of our justification (contrary to the Federal Vision).
3. Our good works not perfectly meet God's standard, and even if they did, could not earn anything for us.
4. Therefore our righteousness can in no way be through our works.

C. What is their place?

1. Good works are God's work in us, "working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure."
2. Good works is the **fruit** of our salvation, not the **basis!** Good works is part of our sanctification, not justification!
3. Good works are absolutely necessary in the believer's life: they give evidence of a true, lively faith (James2:17).

II. THE REWARD OF GOOD WORKS.**A. Scripture teaches a reward of works: (over a hundred texts could be given)!**

1. Ps. 19:11 teaches that in the keeping of God's law "there is a great reward."
2. Matt. 6:4 Jesus tells us to do our alms not for others to see, but "thy father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee"
3. Matt. 19:29 all who suffer loss for Jesus' sake "shall receive a hundredfold and shall inherit eternal life."
4. I Cor. 3:14 "If any man's work abide which he hath built upon, he shall receive a reward."
5. I Cor. 15:58 "always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
6. Rev. 22:12 "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be."
7. These texts show clearly: God rewards obedience, in this life with grace, favor and love, and in the one to come: glory.

B. The reward that we receive:

1. Cannot be of merit! The roman Catholic Church would teach that works merit, and it is even possible to have extra merits!
2. But this is entirely impossible:
 - a. Even a perfect creature could not earn anything of God.
 - b. Much less can our imperfect sinful works earn anything before God.
3. The reward received is the reward of grace. These works are the fruit of his grace giving us new life, and the strength.
4. God gives these rewards as an incentive to his children to walk in these works.

C. What is the reward?

1. In this life, joy and happiness in the way of obedience, experiencing God's favor and love.
2. In the life to come, glory. He takes us when we die to be with Christ, to a distinct place: heaven.
3. In heaven we will see Christ, and rule with Christ, singing his praises forever.
4. When Jesus returns, we will dwell with Christ in the new heavens and new earth. We will be given positions of honor.

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS IN OUR LIVES.**A. Justification by faith alone may not lead to carelessness.**

1. This is a charge often leveled against those who confess that salvation is by grace alone.
2. Romans 6:1 refutes this error.
3. The child of God the idea of "sinning that grace may abound".
4. The very suggestion is of the Devil. He hates the truth of salvation by grace through faith.
5. Satan would destroy the sovereignty of God. Satan desires to cause pride to well in our hearts.
6. Man would like to think that he has some input and therefore credit for his own salvation.

B. Justification by faith alone keeps us humble.

1. Eph. 2:8-10 There is no boasting.
2. We are God's workmanship, created unto good works.
3. All the glory goes to God who chose us, redeemed us, sanctifies, and will glorify us!
4. What a privilege to be a child of God, what a joy to be his workmanship.

C. Justification by faith alone makes us thankful.

1. After Paul testifies how wretched a sinner he is, he sings: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."
2. But our thanksgiving is NOT just a matter of words, but a life of thankfulness demonstrated in godly living.
3. This is our experience: serving with thanksgiving in all of our walk.
4. What conclusion must there be when good works are not seen in one's life? The young man went away sorrowful.
5. What is needed is repentance and faith.