



# GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#194)  
Good works as an *obligation*.

1

**THE ATTITUDE OF A JESUS-FOLLOWER.**

Lord, Master, I claim to be saved.

Help me to live a life that *proves* my claim is true!

After all, if my claim *is* true, then you have embedded within me both the *desire* and the *ability* to live that way.

I don't want to live in a way that *denies* you, my Lord and Savior!

2

**APOSTATE CHURCH-GOERS TEND TO HAVE A DIFFERENT ATTITUDE ...**

**WE LOVE JESUS AND WE TAKE PRIDE IN [OUR SIN\*]!!!**



\* As you can expect, apostates will deny that their "preferred sin" is actually sin.

3

Unfortunately, the "Jesus" they claim to "love" is not the "Jesus" of the Bible.

**THE BIBLE SAYS (ABOUT UNREPENTANT SIN) ...**

Don't you know that **wicked people won't inherit the kingdom of God**? Stop deceiving yourselves! People who continue to commit [examples sin listed here\*] **will not inherit the kingdom of God.**  
1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (GW)

Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins,\* for **the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him.**  
Ephesians 5:6 (NLT)

\* A wide variety of sins (representing *all* sin) are mentioned in the context of these verses.

**IT ALSO DEFINES "LOVE."** → **Loving God means obeying his commands.**  
1 John 5:3a (ERV)

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**IT'S JESUS WE LOVE. YOU DIDN'T QUOTE JESUS!**  
Jesus *never* said anything against [our sin\*]!  
\* [Which they don't acknowledge as sin.]

**Jesus said ...** "Anyone who **loves** me will **obey** my teaching.... Anyone who does **not love** me will **not obey** my teaching."  
John 14:23b, 24a (NIV)

**He also said** he had more teaching that the Holy Spirit would relay to his apostles. **This teaching is in the verses we quoted.**

"I have a lot more to tell you, but that would be too much for you now. When the Spirit of Truth comes, **he will guide you into the full truth.**"  
John 16:12-13a (GW)

Paul, who was called by God at a later time, also communicated what God had to say. → ... God gave me **the work of telling you his entire message.**  
Colossians 1:25b (GW)

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# Last time:

**We looked at:**

- ⇒ When God saves us, he turns us into **new creations**.
- ⇒ If we are saved, we have an obligation to "put on" the **new self**.

**Did you notice...**

- ⇒ "**New creation**" focuses on God's sovereign work in our lives.
- ⇒ "**New self**" focuses on human responsibility.

**THESE TWO WORK TOGETHER!**  
God brings them together;  
so if one exists, the other also exists!

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Since "NEW CREATION" and "NEW SELF" work together...

**IF:** ⇒ We are **SAVED** [= NEW CREATION]

**THEN:** ⇒ We are going to **want** to do **GOOD WORKS!** [= NEW SELF]

We've learned about our past: UNSAVED with *sinful* works.

Now it's time to learn about **GOOD WORKS** so we can live-out our **SAVED** condition!


Everything we do is to be an expression of good works; so our focus will be on basic *principles* that can guide us.

As we develop a renewed mind (Romans 12:2), we learn ways to apply these principles.

**NEWBORN CHRISTIANS WANT to grow!**  
*But they don't know how until they've been told how!!!*

**They have become NEW CREATIONS!**  
 They were dead in sin... but have now become alive – *born again*.

I WANT TO GROW, BUT I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!!



For you have been **born again**, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.  
 1 Peter 1:23 (NIV)

**They now have NEW SELVES!**  
 And they need to learn how "new selves" live!

*They need to "take off" the old self and its practices and "put on" the new self and its practices. [Last week, we saw this in Ephesians 4 and Colossians 3.]*



I'M BEGINNING TO GROW!

**TYPICAL PRACTICES OF THE OLD SELF**

Therefore, **rid yourselves** of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.

**GROWING THE NEW SELF**

Like newborn babies, **crave** pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may **grow up** in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.  
 1 Peter 2:1-3 (NIV)


**This is the reason we have commands telling us to do good works!**

**WE'RE GROWING**




*The commands are instructions to teach us how to live as a new self.*

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your **good deeds** and glorify God on the day he visits us.  
 1 Peter 2:12 (NIV)



The old self may have a tantrum, because it doesn't want the new self to grow. It wants to **control** you.

*But if the new self is ALIVE, it will want to grow. It's those who are DEAD who don't want to grow.*



**Here are some of the COMMANDS that teach us about our need to do good works!**

⇒ We need to be devoted to good works. They are to be the primary focus of our lives.

This saying is trustworthy. And I want you to emphasize these things, so that those who have believed God will take care to **devote themselves to good deeds**. These things are excellent and profitable for the people.  
 Titus 3:8b (BSB)

- This passage tells us that there are certain facts that need to be stressed. WHY? Because *people who believe these facts will be careful to devote themselves to good deeds!*

★ **WHAT ARE THESE TRUSTWORTHY FACTS WE MUST STRESS?** ★

★ **TRUSTWORTHY THINGS THAT NEED STRESSED.** ★  
(They will influence our attitude toward good works.)

1. The effects that **being re-born to new life will have** on the old way we used to live (= the "old self") – Titus 3:1-7.
2. The effects that **God's grace has on a person's conduct** – Titus 2:11-15. Paul focuses directly on the relationship between God's grace and our conduct (i.e., good works):

For **the grace of God ... teaches us to say "No"** to ungodliness and worldly passions, **and to live** self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ... [Jesus Christ] gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, **eager to do what is good.**

Titus 2:11a, 12, 14 (NIV)

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❖ **What will be the result of learning these things?**

- ✓ Our works will benefit others who are in need.
- ✓ We won't have a wasted life – unproductive or unfruitful.

Our people must learn to devote themselves to **doing what is good**, in order to **provide for urgent needs** and **not live unproductive lives.**

Titus 3:14 (NIV)

- ✓ Here is another way to say it (= a different translation):

Our people must learn to use their lives for **doing good** and **helping anyone who has a need**. Then they will **not have empty lives.**

Titus 3:14 (ERV)

**NOTE THE FOCUS.** Works that are the *result* of salvation are *other-people-focused*, not *self-focused*. Sometimes they *may* benefit us; but we do them *whether or not we benefit* from them. (We may even have to suffer because of them.)

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⇒ **These good works are to encompass all of life. This means everything we do (or say) is to honor God.**

And **whatever you do in word or deed**, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, ...

Colossians 3:17a (NET)

"In Jesus' name" means we do it *as his representative* and *for his honor/glory*.

So whether you eat or drink, or **whatever you do**, do everything for the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NET)

- ✓ When we live this way, we don't have to be afraid of people finding out about our works. We can give credit to God!

"But anyone who lives by the truth comes to the light, so that his **works** may be **shown to be accomplished by God.**"

John 3:21 (CSB)

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**ATTITUDE ISSUES – How should we do our good works?**

In some of these verses, we will see that good works are often *linked* to other godly characteristics.

⇒ **EAGERLY: Do the best you can, because you are actually doing it for Jesus!** He will be paying you.

Whatever you do, **work** at it with all your heart, **as working for the Lord**, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are **servicing**.

Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV)

{ The principle in this verse applies to any situation in which a person is working for someone else. }

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⇒ **CONSISTENTLY: Your actions should match what you say and teach.** It can have *eternal significance* for both you and others.

Don't be like the religious leaders in Jesus' day, who did not practice what they taught (Matthew 23:3)!

- ✓ In the following verse, Paul focuses on the "human responsibility" aspect of communicating the Good News (and living consistently with its message). Salvation is by God's grace; but when God saves someone, he normally accomplishes it with people.

Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will **save both yourself and your hearers.**

1 Timothy 4:16 (NIV)

- ✓ Here is Paul's response when some people claimed that he would not actually do what his letters said he would do:

What we say by **letters** when we are absent, we also are in **actions** when we are present.

2 Corinthians 10:11 (NET)

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⇒ **FOCUSED: Stay focused and do it well!** It won't be a waste of your time!

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always **give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord**, because you know that your labor in the Lord is **not in vain**.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (NIV)

- ✓ When we do *everything* in a way that honors God (1 Corinthians 10:31), then it's his work we are doing!

⇒ **THANKFULLY: Do it with a grateful heart.** Consider what God has done for *us*. We have an opportunity to follow *his* example by doing good for *others*! (We will also be doing it for *Jesus*.)

And **whatever you do in word or deed**, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, **giving thanks to God the Father through him.**

Colossians 3:17 (NET)

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**Three other issues.**

**1. Works that please God are an expression of love. (They are also connected to faith and truth).**

Rather, **serve** each other through **love**.  
Galatians 5:13b (GW)

... your **work** produced by **faith**, your **labor** motivated by **love**, ...  
1 Thessalonians 1:3b (CSB)

Dear children, let's not merely say that we **love** each other; let us show the **truth** by our **actions**. Our **actions** will show that we belong to the **truth**, ...  
1 John 3:18-19a (NLT)

✓ The *work* of opposing false teachers is *also* an expression of *love* (1 Timothy 1:5; context vs. 3-7). Our goal is *their* repentance and salvation, and *other people's* protection from error and destruction.

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**2. We are to "work out" our salvation... because God is enabling us to do so!**

★ **GOD IS AT WORK IN AND THROUGH US!** ★

... continue to **work out your salvation** with fear and trembling. For **it is God who is producing in you** both the **desire** and the **ability** to do what pleases him.  
Philippians 2:12b-13 (ISV)

- Unfortunately, many people mistakenly think that "working out" your salvation is the same as "working for" your salvation. They also tend to ignore verse 13, which tells us that God is the one who enables this "working out."
- The salvation that is already in us expresses itself with good works – flowing out from us, and into the lives of other people.

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**3. Jesus knows our works. We can't fool him.** This can be an encouragement or a warning, depending on what our works are. **Examples from the book of Revelation:**

- ✓ **At Ephesus:** Praised for works they were doing (2:2); rebuked because of works they had begun to neglect (v. 4-5).
- ✓ **At Thyatira:** One group praised for their works (2:19); another group to be destroyed if they don't repent of their sin (v. 20-23).
- ✓ **At Sardis:** A good reputation among people; but their deeds were seriously flawed... like an empty shell... dead or dying (3:1-2).
- ✓ **At Philadelphia:** Weak, but faithful; encouraged by Jesus (3:8).
- ✓ **At Laodicea:** Lukewarm, superficial; thinking they were "everything," when they were actually "nothing" (3:15-16).

**Whether we are a genuine follower of Jesus, or a fake... Either way, we can be assured of this: Jesus says...**

I will repay each of you according to your deeds.  
Revelation 2:23b (BSB)

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**YOUR (OUR) MISSION!**

⇒ **APPRECIATE** the importance of good works!  
They are an expression of a living salvation!

The more we let Scripture influence our thinking, values and conduct ...  
... the more we will succeed in living this life.

**To be continued next time.**

**God has a lot more to say** – to encourage us and to teach us how to do good works. He has even *prepared* the works for us to do (Ephesians 2:10)!

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