



# GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#197)  
The results of good works.

# Good Works

⇒ They have RESULTS!

The QUESTION is: WHAT TYPE OF RESULTS DO YOU WANT? (And WHY?)

A question of values and priorities.

## WHAT type of results are you after ?

- IF your goal is to EXALT yourself...
  - ↳ You will have to pursue the world's type of works – whether: ✓ evil, or ✓ good (with sinful motives).
  - ↳ You may have some temporary "rewards," but you will FAIL in the long run. EXAMPLE:

Don't be like the hypocrites. ... They want everyone to praise them. ... They want people to see them. The truth is, **that's all the reward they will get.**  
Matthew 6:2b, 2d, 5b (ERV)

- IF your goal is to LOVE God and neighbor ...
  - ↳ GOD will be honored.
  - ↳ The neighbor will be built-up ...
    - ↳ But NOT in the way the WORLD does it.

**HOW does the WORLD "build up" people?**  
Here are some of the ways:

- ✓ Emphasizing SHORT-TERM results. ✓ IGNORING God.
- ✓ Reinforcing SIN. ✓ Promoting FAKENESS.
- ✓ Promoting and encouraging values that DISHONOR God.
- ✓ NOT dealing with REAL ISSUES.

Any "building-up" that goes contrary to the Bible is **NOT** an expression of LOVE. It's the world's perversion.

The God-honoring focus of GOOD WORKS!

### DOING WHAT IS GOOD FOR OTHERS (with a greater emphasis on God's people, the body of Christ). (Galatians 6:10)

- When we build up Christ's body with the good we do ...
  - ✓ Everyone benefits – including us.
  - ✓ The church grows!
- If we focus on doing good only for ourselves ...
  - ✓ Nobody else benefits.
  - ✓ We are acting like an "ingrown toenail" in the body of Christ... And the whole church suffers because of it!

**OUCH!!!**  
I can hardly walk!

Such an attitude is incompatible with following Jesus. In the long run, you might prove to be a fake, rather than a follower.

THIS is not the cure... REPENTANCE IS!

### WHEN OUR GOAL IS THE GOOD OF OTHERS, EVEN GETTING REWARDS TAKES ON A DIFFERENT SIGNIFICANCE.

- A SELF-FOCUSED PERSON will be filled with self-love. People become a means of getting rewards.
- A GOD-AND-NEIGHBOR-FOCUSED PERSON will be filled with God-and-neighbor-love. There will be humility, thankfulness, and joy that people have benefitted from the good.
  - ✓ This person KNOWS that it is only because of what God has done that it was even possible to do those good works!
- THEY KNOW THIS: For it is God who is producing in you both the desire and the ability to do what pleases him. (Philippians 2:13 (ISV))
- THEY WOULD EAGERLY DO THIS: They cast their crowns [rewards] before the throne, saying: "Worthy are You, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power..." (Revelation 4:10b-11a (BSB))

**We will look at some of the RESULTS of good works.**

- Many of the results mentioned in Scripture focus on us – the ones doing the good works.
  - ★ *This is to encourage us – especially when there seems to be no value in doing them.*

Everything I do seems to fail!

I feel so discouraged! Is it even worth it?

**YES!!**

**The value of knowing these results:**

- We often fail to see any beneficial results of our efforts – especially long-term results.
- At times, we may even suffer when doing good.
  - ➡ When things like these occur, sometimes it can be quite discouraging.

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**Since *all of life* is to be characterized by good works, results will come in many contexts.**

**THERE WILL BE GOOD RESULTS, EVEN WHEN WE DON'T SEE THEM.**

- ➡ We don't have to see the results... we just need to trust God, who guarantees this:
 

... nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.  
1 Corinthians 15:58b (NLT)
- ➡ To us, our efforts may seem wasted ... but not to God.
 

For God is not unjust. **He will not forget** how hard **you have worked for him** and how you have **shown your love to him** by caring for other believers, as you still do.  
Heb 6:10 (NLT)

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- ➡ Works that express love for God and neighbor actually have value in our lives (even though that isn't what motivates us).
- ✓ There is value in *learning* to do good: It's an expression of wisdom! Since this wisdom comes from God (not us), humility is also a part of it.
 

Who is **wise and understanding** among you? Let him show it by his good conduct, **by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom**. ... But the **wisdom from above** is first of all pure, then peace-loving, gentle, accommodating, full of mercy and **good fruit**, impartial, and sincere.  
James 3:13, 17 (BSB)
- ✓ It also means we won't have a wasted life! Instead, it will be "fruitful."
 

Let our people learn to **devote themselves to good works** for pressing needs, so that they **will not be unfruitful**.  
Titus 3:14 (CSB)

(Also mentioned in James 3:17, above.)

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- ✓ It means we are "walking worthy" of the Lord and are pleasing to him!
 

... so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, **fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work** and growing in the knowledge of God, ...  
Col 1:10 (CSB)

**IMPORTANT CONTEXT:**

1. A connection to wisdom and increasing knowledge of God and his will – vs. 9 and 10b.
2. Done in *his* power – v. 11a.
3. Resulting in endurance and patience – v. 11b.  
(These are needed, because "fruit" often takes time to grow and become visible! *Don't expect to see immediate eternal results when you do good works!*)
4. Gratefulness in what God has done in your life – v. 12+.

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**SOMETIMES PEOPLE SUFFER FOR DOING GOOD.**

- ❖ **NATURAL HINDRANCES:** Suffering can have other causes (besides persecution). *Sickness is an EXAMPLE:*

[Ephroditus] was **sick** indeed, nearly unto death. ... he **nearly died** for the work of Christ ...  
Philippians 2:27a, 30a (BSB)

(The devil has *many* methods of trying to hinder good works.)
- ❖ **VOLUNTARY PERSONAL SACRIFICE:** Doing good may require some form of personal sacrifice – such as, time, effort, possessions, etc.
 

And do not neglect to **do good** and to **share** with others, for with **such sacrifices** God is pleased.  
Heb 13:16 (BSB)

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- ❖ **PERSECUTION:** It doesn't always happen. But if it does...
 

But even if you should **suffer** for **what is right**, **you are blessed**. For it is **better**, if it is God's will, to **suffer** for **doing good** than for doing evil. But if you **suffer as a Christian**, do not be ashamed, but **glorify God** that you bear that name.  
1 Peter 3:14b, 17; 4:16 (BSB)
- ✓ We can focus on Jesus, who is our example. *He shows us how to respond!*

For God called you to **do good**, even if it means **suffering**, just as Christ **suffered** for you. He is **your example**, and you must **follow in his steps**.  
1 Peter 2:21 (NLT)

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- ✓ God can use the persecution to benefit us.

But even if you should **suffer** for **what is right**, you are **blessed**.

1 Peter 3:14b (BSB)

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have **suffered** a little while, will himself restore you and **make you strong, firm and steadfast**.

1 Peter 5:10 (NIV)

- ✓ Even if we were to die, we are blessed! [Example from an "end times" situation, where persecution will be severe.]

"**Blessed** are the dead—those who **die** in the Lord ... they will rest from their labors, for **their deeds will follow them**."

Revelation 14:13b (BSB)

**In all these situations, suffering is not the final result. Even now (in this present life), it is not the only result.**

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## When we do good works ...

### GOD responds...

- **God will graciously provide what we need –**
  - > NOT so that we can hoard it,
  - > BUT so that we can provide others with what they need!

And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over **to share with others**.\*

2 Corinthians 9:8 (NLT)

\* [i.e., "for every good work"]

- **If we prove faithful in doing God's will NOW**, God will entrust us with greater responsibilities IN ETERNITY.

To the one who is victorious and **does my will**\* to the end, I will give authority over the nations ...

Revelation 2:26 (NIV)

\* [= "my works"]

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## When we do good works ...

### PEOPLE respond...

- **Others who see your good works may express thanks to God** – even people who are *not the recipients* of your good works! This could include thanks for:

- > What you are doing.
- > What God is doing in your life.

↪ **BOTH** of these are evident in the *context* of this verse:

**We always thank God** for all of you and pray for you constantly. As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your **faithful work**, your **loving deeds**, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 (NLT)

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- **People who DON'T appreciate your good works NOW... they will honor God LATER, because of them.**

"You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house.

In the same way, **let your good deeds shine out** for all to see, so that **everyone will praise your heavenly Father**."

Matthew 5:14-16 (NLT)

★ **Note the motive: It's for GOD's glory, not our own.** ★

Live decent lives among unbelievers. Then, although they ridicule you as if you were doing wrong while they are watching you **do good things**, **they will praise God** on the day he comes to help you.

1 Peter 2:12 (GW)

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- **Salvation may be one of the results of your good works (and sound teaching)** – other people's salvation, as well as your own!

Keep a close watch on **how you live** and on **your teaching**. Stay true to what is right for the sake of **your own salvation** and **the salvation of those who hear you**.

1 Timothy 4:16 (NLT)

- ✓ Paul could point to people who were the result of his good work. (It wasn't for boasting, the way false teachers often do.)

Aren't you the result of my work for the Lord?

1 Corinthians 9:1b (GW)

- ✓ It was specifically because of what Christ was doing through him... and he willingly admitted that fact.

I will talk only about what Christ has done with me in leading the non-Jewish people to obey God. They have obeyed him because of what I have said and done.

Romans 15:18b (ERV)

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## So WHAT can we conclude?

(We've learned many things about works.)



ALL people have an obligation to do good works, and to do them in a way that honors God.


Only genuine followers of Jesus can fulfil this obligation – and this is because God *empowers* them to do so. (Everyone else remains a slave to sin.)



Scripture teaches us *how* to identify good works. (We do not have to *guess* what is good.)

This requires a willingness to develop a "renewed mind" (Romans 12:2) – which changes our values and perspective on everything in life.


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**3**

God's people are *learning* to do good works, as they let God's Word influence their thoughts and actions. It's a *growing* process; so in this present life, their works won't always be perfect and consistent.

In addition to the encouragement of *Scripture*, we, as the "body of Christ," need to encourage *each other* to do good works.




**4**

Good works have value; they are beneficial.

People who love God and neighbor will delight in how the works honor *God* and benefit *other people*; but *they also* share in the blessings.

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Is there anything *missing* in what we've learned?



Only if we have been *unwilling to apply it* in our lives.

Israel was guilty of this.

★ **BUT WE DON'T HAVE TO FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE!** ★

So My people come to you as usual, sit before you, and **hear your words**; but they do **not put them into practice**.

Ezekiel 33:31a (BSB)

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Living the way of the world is just not worth it!

"As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age.


The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom **everything that causes sin and all who do evil**.

They will throw them into the **blazing furnace**, where there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.

Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear."


Matthew 13:40-43 (NIV)

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**OUR MISSION!**

**GOD offers us a much better mission!!**



**OUR MISSION!**

**DOING WHAT WE WERE CREATED FOR!**

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

**WITH THE ABILITY AND DESIRE TO DO IT!**

For it is God who is producing in you both the desire and the ability to do what pleases him.

Philippians 2:13 (ISV)

**HAVING THE FORGIVENESS THAT COMES WITH THE GOD-GIVEN CHANGES!**

"I will put my laws in their hearts. I will write my laws in their minds."

"I will forget their sins and never again remember the evil they have done."

Hebrews 10:16b, 17b (ERV)

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