

The Law and the Gospel

John Colquhoun (1815)

Chapter 12-Part 1 (Lesson 18)

The Nature, Necessity, and Desert of Good Works

Christians are called to do good works. Faith alone in Christ alone is what saves us. However, living a life of good works is the call of God to those that have been _____.

“The Christian life has two dimensions: the first is faith, and the second is good works. A believer should live a devout life and always do what is right. But the first dimension of the Christian life-faith-is more essential.”-Luther

Good works are _____. In fact, Paul says that we were “created in Christ Jesus for good works”. If this is such an important element of Christianity, we had better have a good grasp on what constitutes a “good work” then according to God.

“Good works are such actions or deeds as are commanded in the law of God as a rule of life.”

Good works are the _____ of God that He has given to His church from the hand of Christ, their Mediator.

Good works do _____ gain us favor with God. Good works do _____ help to justify us before God. However, good works do “justify the believer’s profession of faith before men”. (Matthew 7:20)

A life of good works and holiness of life are the same thing. If a person is striving for _____ they will be striving to live a life of good works before God.

“Holiness of life, or the constant practice of good works, proceeds from that holiness of heart which is imparted to elect sinners in regeneration and sanctification, and it consists in their conformity of life to the law as a rule of duty.”

When the Scripture talks about doing good works it is talking about more than the external performance of some duty. Remember the law is to govern the _____ man (mind, heart, will, and action). Here Colquhoun gives six elements that are necessary for a work to be considered truly good according to Scripture.

1. **Our good works must be actual _____ from God-** *“They must be such as are required in the law of God and are performed in obedience to His holy will, expressed in the precepts of His law.”*

“The law of God is the revelation of His sovereign will, and therefore it is the authoritative rule of our obedience.”

2. **Our good works must be built upon the right _____ foundation-** One must understand and believe the gospel first before the works that they do can be considered “good” in the sight of God. (_____ must be right)

“Good works cannot stand but on a good or an evangelical ground-namely, the doctrines, offers, invitations, and promises of the gospel.”

- 3. Our good works must _____ from gospel principles-** Not only must we know truth, but good works must flow from a heart that has been redeemed. (_____ must be right)

“They must flow from such evangelical principles as these: a soul regenerated by the quickening Spirit of Christ, a mind enlightened with the saving knowledge of Christ and of the truth as it is in Him, union with Christ and with God in Him by a living faith, communion with Christ in His righteousness and fullness and with God in Him, a conscience sprinkled with His justifying and peace-speaking blood, and a heart sanctified and comforted by His Holy Spirit.”

- 4. Our good works must be performed with right _____ -** What is driving you to perform these good works?

He gives 5 such motivations: the astonishing love and grace of God in the gospel, the sovereign authority of God, our deliverance from condemnation, the hope of the gift of eternal life, and following the perfect pattern set before us by Christ.

- 5. Our good works must be performed both _____ as well as _____ -**
We must strive to obey God’s commandments with our whole being.

They must be performed with faith in Christ, hope in Christ, and love for Christ. There must also be gratitude and humility at work in our hearts as we strive to do that which pleases our Father.

- 6. Our good works must be performed with the proper _____ in mind-** What is the goal of your doing these good works?

“They cannot be accounted good works, except our chief or ultimate end in doing them be the glory of God in Christ.”

In humility we all must realize that our good works in this life will _____ be perfect because of indwelling sin. But this fact should not sway us from striving to live a life of good works, relying on God’s grace and for His glory.

“The depravity that remains in the hearts of believers hinders, indeed, their works from being perfectly good, but it cannot prevent them from being truly or spiritually good and ‘acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.’”