

Repentance from Dead Works

- Heb. 6:1, “not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death...”
 - o The margin of my bible says “or from useless rituals”
 - o YLT - “reformation from dead works” others say “useless works, dead formalism”
- **Please Read: James 1:26-27**

Religion- The word carries negative connotations. What is the relationship between religion and theology? We understand that theology is the study of God. In contrast, religion has to do with the practice of faith; that is, the way in which we worship God and express our faith.

Our goal as Christians is to maintain a good balance between doctrine and religion thus avoiding the extremes. Too much emphasis on theology (knowledge of God), we can become dry and lifeless- with a lot of head knowledge. Yet too much religion (the practice) at the expense of theology we are in danger of becoming religious fanatics.

Yoke of Slavery

- Sinful humanity is inherently self-righteous and full of pride- Cain and Abel- *Gen. 4:1-7*
 - o Cain brought the works of his hands- Isaiah 64:6 states- “self-righteous filthy rags”
- The religious leaders of Jesus’ day (traditions and rules of men)- *Mt. 15:1-9; Lk. 11:54*
- **Please Read: Gal. 3:1-5; Col. 2:16-23** *Beware of falling into legalism*
 - o Paul having been a Pharisee knew all about legalism- *Gal. 2:15-16, 21*
- The believers in Galatia were being corrected for slipping back into legalism and religion
- Many are sincere in trying to earn and deserve God’s favor; serious mistake- *Pr. 14:12*
- No amount of zeal or works will please God, only faith- *Heb. 11:6*
- **Please Read: Romans 10:1-4**
- All the religions of the world follow a similar premise- good works outweigh bad works
 - o Even secular thinking follows it- I’m a good person and I try not to hurt anybody

Purpose of the Law

God is a Holy God and His righteousness demands absolute perfection. God practices what He preaches. Jesus as the Son of Man was tempted just as we are yet never sinned-*Heb.2:18; 4:15*

- The rest of humanity was born into sin due to Adam’s fall- *Ro. 3:23; chapter 7*
- Sinful Humanity is incapable of meeting God’s perfection- *Hebrews 7:11, 18-19; 8:7-8*

The purpose of the law was to frustrate humanity, reveal their inability to live the perfect life that God requires. Thus reveal the need for a Savior and lead us to Jesus- *Gal. 3:18-25*.

Two Kinds of Works

Someone might ask, “Well doesn’t God care about good works?” Yes, when it’s done in the right order. When attempted before one is born again it’s an exercise in futility- *Ps. 127:1*.

Matthew 19:25-26, “When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, ‘Who then can be saved?’ Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”
Mt. 7:13-14 ‘Narrow Gate’

- A sinner sins because they have a sinful spiritual nature- *Mt. 12:33-35; Col. 2:11-15*
- That’s why we’re not to judge unbelievers, it’s their nature to be like the devil- *John 8:44*
- Every human being on earth belongs to one of two families – *1 John 3:4-10*
- The Work of God for unbelievers is repentance and faith in Jesus

Acts 20:21, “I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.”

John 6:28-29, “Then they asked him, ‘What must we do to do the works God requires?’ Jesus answered, ‘The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.’”

Acts 17:30, “In the past God overlooked such ignorance (idolatry), but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.”

- This is what repentance looks like; ‘God have mercy on me a sinner!’- *Luke 18:9-14*
- Can’t buy our way into heaven; sin carries a spiritual crime ‘Death’- must be born again

Christian Good Works

We don’t become Christians by good works, but only by God’s grace and our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ- *Acts 4:12; Romans 10:9-13*. Saved unto good works not by them- *Eph. 2:8-10*.

- Same way we got saved, is the same way we are to live for Jesus- by grace through faith
- Had a JW quote James 2:17, “*Faith without deeds is dead*”- but who is James addressing
- The Jehovah Witness was implying that good works is what God requires- not for sinners
- How can a bad tree (sinful nature of a sinner) possibly produce good fruit!
- Christian good works/fruit comes from a recreated born again spirit nature
- Why then do Christians still deal with sin in life- process of sanctification- *Ro. 8:9-14*
- Spiritual growth of becoming like Jesus is a process- from glory to glory- *2 Cor. 3:17-18*

Colossians 1:10

And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.

By Grace

- So what is Grace? First we must understand it originates from a person
- **Please Read: John 1:1-17** *Jesus, the Word of God is the Grace of God*
- The Word of God, Jesus Christ is the Grace of God

John 1:14, 16-17, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

Acts 20:32, “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

- The Grace of God is the Power of God

Eph. 3:7, “I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.”

1 Cor. 15:10, “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them- yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

2 Corinthians 12:9

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

Rom 1:16, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.”

Acts 4:33, “With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.”

Acts 6:5, 8

They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit. Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.

- God's grace is the power of God at work in us who believe
- The grace of God is God's ability in us to do what we don't have the ability to do
- In James 4:6 we see that God gives grace to the humble
- In Jesus' Name we can receive all the grace and power we need from the Father

Heb. 4:16, “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

- The Gospel message is all about receiving the gift of God's grace- not works- **Ro. 11:6!**
- Titus 2:11, *"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men."*
- **Please Read: Romans 5:6-21**

Acts 14:3

So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.

- Notice the very last verse in the Bible
- Rev 22:21, *"The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen."*

So what are the works that God desires from us, what is the path, the right way back to God. Simply believe on Jesus. So as Christians how are we to live for God and do what pleases Him? Continue to serve God in the same manner you first received Him, by His Grace through Faith in His Word.

As believers in Jesus Christ we function in His kingdom by God's grace through our faith in God's Word! Deriving power for living by the Spirit released through faith in the Bible. Not by fabricating and manufacturing a moral system based on our discretion, or even trying to obey the Bible, but attempting to do so in our own strength- which is foolishness!

- **Please Read: Romans Chapter 4**