

THE BIBLE VIEW

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You Cannot Work Your Way to Heaven

Bill Brinkworth

It seems natural to many people, that if they do good works and deeds, God will be pleased and let them into Heaven. Although there are many scriptures encouraging people to be less selfish and concentrate on meeting the needs of others, nowhere is it mentioned that those good deeds will get anyone to Heaven. The Bible declares that there is nothing we can do but trust Christ as Saviour to have a heavenly home.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

The only payment God will accept for all of a sinner’s iniquities is the sacrificial death of God’s only son, Jesus. No one can achieve Heaven for what they have done, but for what Christ had done for them. Jesus is the only way to Heaven. His death is the only “payment” for sins God will accept.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6

Although good works will not get anyone higher than the coffin lid, a Christian is to do good works. He is to do them, not to earn Heaven, but to be a good Christian example. We should be a blessing to others because we love the Saviour, and want to be obedient to His commandments. When we shine our Christian “light” others may see God’s goodness and will also turn to Him.

*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
Mat. 5:16*

“This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.” Titus 3:8 Also: Heb. 10:24, I Tim 2:10, I Tim. 5:10, I Tim. 6:18, II Tim. 3:17, Titus 1:16.

“I am not a Christian because I am strong and have it all figured out. I am a Christian because I am weak and admit I need a Saviour.” — *Unknown*

Good Works of a Christian

Luther

A tree bringeth forth and giveth fruit, and not the fruit bearing a tree. None is made a Christian by good works, but by Christ’s finished work on the cross.

If a Christian does good works, he shows love to his neighbor. He is not made a Christian or righteous for doing so.

“If one thinks he can get to Heaven by good works, although the Bible never teaches that, how many good works must he do? Is it ten, one hundred, ten million? Then the big worry, has he done enough? From the beginning to the end of God’s Word one will never find how many good deeds are required to get to Heaven because it is not the way!” — B. Brinkworth

Do What You Can

Bill Brinkworth

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” Eccl. 9:10

When J.’s daughter approached her to make her a lacey collar to put on her dress like the other children had at church, J. was troubled. She could not afford to buy the fancy collar that was so popular for the girls to wear at the time, and she had never made anything that intricate before.

Her daughter encouraged her to make one. “They have how-to books, Mom. You can get the fiber at the store,” the daughter suggested.

It is so hard for anyone, especially a mother, to turn down a child’s requests. After begging God to help her do such a project, she went to the store, bought a knitting needle, and the necessary thread. After carefully following the

directions, and working some of the night, the accessory for her daughter's dress was completed.

The next morning her daughter proudly wore the dress collar to school. God had allowed J. to do something she never imagined she could do.

Later, a young girl approached J. with what the young child thought was a collar like all the other girls had. She boasted she had one like the other children, but it was only the lining from some clothing and looked nothing like what the other girls were wearing. J. was burdened to make one for that girl also. After some long hours and hard work, J. presented the dress accessory to the girl. The girl was ecstatic over the love and concern that J. would make her something.

J.'s lifetime ministry had started all because she saw the need of others, and allowed God to enable and use her to meet it. Her hands were kept busy over many following decades as one sewing need after another was shown to her. All must have been encouraged that someone thought enough of them to give her own time, and often at her own expense, to meet their needs. She was showing many what love in action was. What a good Christian testimony she was to so many.

Not everyone is called, burdened, or qualified to be a preacher, Sunday school teacher, music director, or some other prominent ministry in church. However, everyone can do something to meet the needs of others and be a good,

Christian testimony. Everyone, in church and all around us, have needs.

Over the years I have seen many that wanted to serve the Lord and to make a difference in the lives of others. They have used their skills and abilities to fix cars for widows, keep the bus ministry rolling, watch children for single parents, sing in the choir, visit those that are house-bound due to illness, and so many other helps. They saw a need and put their Christianity in action and gave a most valuable gift — themselves.

The requirement to be a blessing and an encouragement to others is not so much skill, but a willing heart, and compassion to see and meet the needs in other's lives. Everyone needs help from time to time. Helping others is one is one way to show the love of Christ to those that may have never seen Christian love in action.

It is easy to talk about loving people, but the world needs more that are willing to show it. Helping others is one way one can be the Christian example the world needs to see. Whatever need you see, put your hand to the task and help. *“And of some have compassion, making a difference:” Jude 1:22*

“It is amazing how much God can accomplish through an imperfect person who has put all his imperfections completely at God's disposal.” — *Author Unknown*

Tabitha

Bill Brinkworth

“Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. 37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber. ... 39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.” Acts 9:36-39

The biblical Tabitha, popularly known by the Greek version of her Hebrew name, Dorcas, was missed very much when she died. Although there is much more to be told about her, there is one reason she was missed so much.

Tabitha was missed because she used her abilities and talents to help others. The many that mourned her loss were among the poorest of that time — the widows. That group she ministered to, and others I am sure, were most likely those that could not pay her back, yet those were ones she cared for and helped.

All Christians need to make a spiritual difference where God has allowed them to reside. We are to show others the way to Heaven and how to please God. If we do not tell them what God’s Word says, who will?

However, we also must remember that every person has physical needs. We can be used to meet those needs with the talents, resources, or love for others that God allows us to have.

Tabitha did just that. She may not have been a great orator, or may not have known a lot of scripture to recite, but she did know how to help others.

We need to be concerned about the souls of those around us, but we also can make a difference and build a relationship with folks so they can see the love of Christ through us. Are you in your own, little world and keeping all you have to yourself, or are you a “Tabitha” making a difference around you?

“So many make the doing ‘good deeds’ their main priority. Although that is important, people can be well fed, have their physical needs met, but still go to Hell. We must have the proper balance in meeting spiritual and physical needs!” — *Bill Brinkworth*