

Not Every Good Deed Is Good!

Every Christian wants to do good.

We know that we are **not** saved by our good deeds but we also know that our good deeds are a practical proof that our conversion is real.

2 Corinthians 5:10 [NIV] *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”*

Every Christian knows that we will some day stand before the judgement seat of Christ to receive the consequences of deeds done in our present life, whether they are good or evil.

For our deeds to be good they must pass three tests

What?

What we do is, of course, important for there are deeds which in themselves are wrong and nothing can make them right.

No circumstances can excuse what is an evil deed and make it good.

Why?

In religion and morals motivation is the major factor in the judgement of an act being acceptable to God.

Why we do certain deeds determines the moral quality of our action.

A deed which on the surface may be good if done for a selfish reason is actually evil.

Matthew 23:27-28 [NIV] *“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.”*

The appearance of righteousness and the ego of the Pharisees.

We need to ask the why of our actions.

Is it to give the appearance of righteousness for others to see?

Matthew 6:1-4 [NIV] *“Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”*

Such actions avoids wrong motivation for our deeds.

Proverbs 27:2 [NIV] *“Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips.”*

Avoid even letting anyone know what we have done.

We cannot often penetrate into the minds of others and the reason for their conduct, we can never be sure of the motive behind others' actions, but we can hope the motive was that of love for others.

1 Corinthians 13:7 [Amplified Bible] *“Love is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances.”*

How?

Any generous deed should be done in private and in a way to avoid making the recipient feel embarrassed.

Any favours done in an ungracious spirit are no favours at all but actual injury to the people receiving them.

We should seek to make the recipient of our good deed feel that we are the ones who are being favoured.

Acts 20:35 [NIV] *“... it is more blessed to give than to receive.”*

Those whom we serve, or receive from us their needs, should understand that their accepting our goods or service will allow us to be blessed by God, so to accept they are doing us a favour.

Matthew 25:40 [NIV] *“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”*

When we give to or serve others, God looks on such actions as having done Him a service and He will reward us.

Proverbs 19:17 [NIV] *“He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done.”*

God will never allow us to feel He owes us anything.

We are the ones who owe Him everything, the gift of life itself, the sustaining of our lives is what He does, our future is totally dependent on what God has done for us.

God owes us nothing, we owe Him everything.

Romans 12:4-11 [NIV] *“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord.”*

We have received gifts from God to benefit the rest of God’s people. It is our duty to express this love for the brethren in a practical way.

James 2:14-18 [NIV] *“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But*

someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.”

Our faith, the proof that our Christianity is genuine is found in the way we serve others.

2 Corinthians 9:6-9 [NIV] “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: “He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever.”

It should be scarcely necessary to point out that a contribution made grudgingly will not be accepted by God. A sour gift is no gift at all even if it is given to the poor.

Any religious work done under protest might as well be left undone.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5 [NIV] “And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God’s will.”

We have in this account of the Churches in Macedonia the perfect example of giving and good deeds.

First they gave themselves to Jesus Christ.

Then they gave themselves to others.

Our deeds to be good must have our hearts in them, and must be works of the Spirit, done in the Spirit.

They then will be an expression of God’s own Love and totally acceptable to Him our Creator.

Romans 5:1, 5 [J.B. Phillips Translation] “Since then it is by faith that we are justified, let us grasp the fact that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” ... “Already we have some experience of the Love of God flooding through our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us.”

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit causes the “fruit” of love to flow out from us to the rest of the world.

John 7:38-39 [NIV] “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”

The Love of God that we receive through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit cannot be stagnant it must flow out from us in the form of good deeds.

Good deeds must be God’s deeds if they are to be acceptable to God.

God’s deeds in and through us are deeds prompted and produced by the Holy Spirit in us.

Such deeds are “agapé” [God’s Love] love deeds, performed in the Spirit of outgoing love for other people irrespective of how they respond to that act of love.

Such a deed is a good deed.