

NOT OF WORKS EPHESIANS 2:8-9

10 January 2025

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves.”

The bible teaches very clearly that our salvation was accomplished by Jesus Christ on the cross at Calvary. He did not leave anything for us to accomplish to complete that salvation.

- Works are good, but they do not contribute to our salvation to any degree. The bible gives several good reasons why works cannot play any role in our salvation.

I. SALVATION BY WORKS WOULD GIVE MAN AN OPPORTUNITY TO BOAST.

- a. Ephesians 2:9 “lest any man should boast.”
- b. Romans 3:27 “boasting...is excluded...by the law of faith.”
- c. Revelation 5:9 “Thou art worthy...for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.” Jesus Christ will receive all the glory and praise and honor for our salvation in heaven. No man will take any credit for their own salvation.
- d. Romans 4:2-3 “if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.” Abraham’s faith was counted for righteousness, not his works.
- e. Romans 9:30-33 The Jews “hath not attained to the law of righteousness” because “they sought it not by faith, but...by the works of the law.”
- f. Romans 10:1 The Jews didn’t submit themselves unto the righteousness of God, but tried to establish their own righteousness through good works. “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

II. SALVATION BY WORKS WOULD FRUSTRATE THE GRACE OF GOD. (Galatians 2:21)

- a. Mormons believe salvation is by grace through faith...AFTER you’ve done all that you can do.
- b. Catholics believe sacraments and ordinances are a necessary addition to Christ’s work on the cross.
- c. Romans 11:6 “If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.” Salvation is either by works or by grace. It can’t be a mixture of both.
- d. Romans 4:4-6 “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.” If you worked for your salvation, it’s not by grace. It was earned. Blessed are they “unto whom God imputeth righteousness WITHOUT works.”
- e. Salvation is a gift of God (Rom 6:23, Eph 2:8, 2 Cor 9:15). If you work for it, it is not a gift and it is not by grace.

III. SALVATION BY WORKS WOULD NULLIFY THE NEED FOR THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

- a. Galatians 2:21 “For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” If you could EARN eternal life, why did Christ die?
 - i. If you add works to Jesus’ cross-work, you’re saying that His offering was not good enough.
 1. Jesus offered Himself “once for all” (Heb 10:10). He cried “It is finished” (John 19:30).
- b. 1 Corinthians 1:18 “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”
 - i. If you say we must earn our salvation, you are saying Christ’s death was foolish.

- c. Romans 1:16 The gospel of Christ “is the power of God unto salvation to every one.”
 - i. The gospel of Christ does not include works. Christ’s cross-work is sufficient to save everyone that believes.

IV. SALVATION BY WORKS WOULD MAKE SALVATION AN EXCLUSIVE THING.

- a. 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord...is not willing that any should perish (Ezek 33:11), but that all should come to repentance.”
 - i. Jesus shed His blood for all mankind so that all may be saved.
 - 1. The only requirement is repentance and faith. (Not works)
 - ii. If all must perform works, some would not be able. They would be excluded from salvation.
- b. Luke 23:42-43 The dying thief was not able to perform any works, but Jesus told him, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.”
- c. Luke 18:9-14 The humble publican was justified when he sought God’s mercy. The proud Pharisee who boasted of his sinless life and his good deeds was not justified.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:

- a. Romans 3:21 The righteousness of God without the law is obtained by faith.
 - b. Galatians 2:16 justification is not by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.
 - c. Galatians 3:10 If you are trusting works, you are still under the curse.
 - d. Galatians 3:21 There is not a law that can give life or righteousness.
 - e. 2 Timothy 1:9 God saved us, not according to our works, but according to grace.
 - f. Titus 3:5 Salvation is not by works of righteousness which we have done.
 - g. Matthew 7:21-23 Many people will point to their works in the day of judgment. Jesus will tell them, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
- SOME VERSES SEEM TO INDICATE THAT SALVATION CAN BE EARNED BY WORKS.
 - This is due to the failure of the reader to interpret the verse in light of the context, the specific wording, and the rest of the bible.
 - Examples:
 - John 5:28-29 This verse speaks of people coming out of their graves, “*they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*”
 - Context: John 5:24, the good thing a person must do to be part of the resurrection of life is to hear Christ’s word and believe.
 - The obedience exercised for salvation is to believe (Romans 10:16).
 - John 6:27 Jesus says you must labour for eternal life.
 - Context: John 5:28 Jesus tells us that the work of God we must do is to believe.