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5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

# The Wonderful Journey of Good Works

*<sup>8</sup>For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*<sup>9</sup>Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9 KJV)*

Notice it is by the grace of God, the unmerited, the undeserved favor of God, and his kindness that we are saved. But what does it mean to be saved? Salvation has the idea of being rescued from the power and penalty of our sin. The text tells us here, that it is through faith in Christ and it is not of ourselves, it is God’s gift to us. Notice verse 9 tells us that this deliverance from the power and penalty of our sin is not something we work for, but is God’s gift to us through our faith in Jesus Christ, our Savior, the deliverer, the rescuer of our sin and its penalty.

Why did Jesus save us? Ephesians 2 verse 10 tells us of the plan of his salvation.

*“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10 KJV)*

Verse 10 tells us we are his workmanship or as the NIV states, his handiwork or his new creation. And what did he create us to do? It’s hard to believe, but God created us as a believer in Jesus Christ to do good works. The NIV translation states we were *“created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

It’s true that we are not saved by our works. God’s gift to us is deliverance from the power and penalty of our sin through the sacrifice or atoning work of Jesus Christ. But it’s also true that He created us in Christ to do good works that He ordained that we should walk in or live doing.

In 2 Timothy chapter 2 verse 21 it states,

*“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.” (2 Timothy 2:21 KJV)*

If a man purges himself, that is he turns from his sin, God will use him as a vessel of honor, sanctified and set apart for God’s use. And notice what God wants to do with him. The King James version says he will be meet for the master’s use. That means he will be useful for the Master (which is God) to use, and prepared to do every good work. God

wants to prepare the believer to walk in good works in its many various forms. In 1 Peter chapter 4 and verse 10 it states,

*“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”* (1 Peter 4:10 KJV)

Notice that every man has received a gift, a spiritual gift from God. To do what with? To minister that gift to others. To be a good steward of the manifold grace of God. That means that God’s grace has come in various ways and serves people in various ways.

*“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”* (1 Peter 4:11 KJV)

If God has given someone a gift of speaking, then he should speak the very oracles or words of God. If God has given a gift to minister or serve others, he should do it with the ability that God has given him, with the whole goal that God in all things, would be glorified through Jesus Christ.

So the works that we do that God has ordained that we do, are being done through the ability that God has given. The whole goal is to bring glory to the Father in heaven.

So I encourage you today to:

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

If we ignore the good works that God has ordained that we should walk in, we have missed one of the biggest purposes of Christianity. Jesus said we will be known by our love, not by our theological creeds or persuasions. So it is not circumcision or uncircumcision that matters, but a faith that works by love.

*“For when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, there is no benefit in being circumcised or being uncircumcised. What is important is faith expressing itself in love.”* (Galatians 5:6 NLT)

## Questions

**1** Read Matthew 22:34-40 (NLT).

*“<sup>34</sup>But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees with his reply, they met together to question him again. <sup>35</sup>One of them, an expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question: <sup>36</sup>‘Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?’*

*<sup>37</sup>Jesus replied, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.” <sup>38</sup>This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup>A second is equally important: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>40</sup>The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.” - Matthew 22:34-40 (NLT)*

What is the most important commandment in Scripture?

**2** Read Hebrews 10:24 (KJV and NLT).

*“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:”  
- Hebrews 10:24 (KJV)*

*“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.” - Hebrews 10:24 (NLT)*

Has this lesson provoked you to love and good works? Has this lesson motivated you to acts of love and good works?

**3** If we ignore the good works that we are created for, are we missing out on the purpose God has for us?

### **We want to hear from you!**

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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DKM  
10065 Sun Ridge Circle  
Rogers, AR 72756 U.S.A.  
[delessons.org](https://delessons.org)

## Answer Key

**1** Read Matthew 22:34-40 (NLT).

What is the most important commandment in Scripture?

**love for God and love for your fellow man**

**2** Read Hebrews 10:24 (KJV and NLT).

Has this lesson provoked you to love and good works? Has this lesson motivated you to acts of love and good works?

**3** If we ignore the good works that we are created for, are we missing out on the purpose God has for us?

***“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:10 NIV)***