

We Are His Handiwork

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Date: 24 May 2026

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[0 : 00] Whenever I hear that song, I always think about a time some years ago when I used to preach in nursing homes.! When we sang that song, Faces came alive.

It's like, you know, a lot of the older folks would just be sitting there and you wonder if they're hearing or listening or with you. And you sing In the Garden or Amazing Grace or a number of hymns and they would come alive.

I also learned that folks in that condition also respond to preaching.

So I learned to give my heart out to preaching in those instances. Because that connected to you in a way that just doing a devotional or...

I mean, I just thought, well, see what happens. And anyway, power of song, power of the word.

Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to the book of Ephesians chapter 2.

[1 : 12] We finish this section today. Lord willing, we finish this section today. Chapter 2, we're looking, finishing at verse 10. This section where Paul is teaching about salvation and how God has given us salvation.

We see in this text, Paul really diagnoses the whole issue of salvation. What we're saved from, how we're saved, why we're saved, and what we're saved to.

So this morning we get to the to part. We know what we're saved from, what we're saved to. The purpose for which we're saved. Often forgotten or often not considered carefully.

And again, Paul really gives us a lot to think on here when we come to this. I want to go ahead and read the whole text.

We have the whole context. Ephesians 2 verses 1 through 10. Right? The first three verses talking about what we're saved from. Verse 4, why we're saved. Verse 5 and 6, how we're saved.

[2 : 25] Verse 7, the purpose. And then verses 8 and 9, those solas, right? Grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone.

And then verse 10 that we'll focus on today. The ultimate goal of salvation, the result of salvation, our works. So if you're able, please stand.

So read from Ephesians 2, 1 to 10. Chapter 2, verse 1. And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formally walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Among them, we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ.

[3 : 49] By grace you have been saved. By grace you have been saved. And raised us up together with him and seated us together with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

In order that in the ages to come, he might show the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved. Through faith. And that, not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not as a result of works that no one should boast. For we are his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus for good works.

Which God prepared beforehand that we may walk in them. So it reads.

[4 : 56] Let us pray for spiritual insight. Father, we pray that you grant us to have open eyes to see truth, to see with understanding, to see with insight.

Again, help us with Paul and his wording, his precision. Help us, Lord, to follow his thought and to rightly divide, Lord, to understand his intention.

Grant us your spirit, Lord, to see what is it about works. What do you intend about works? What are good works? And how do they interact with our faith?

How do they interact in our lives? How are we to look at it? This we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Please be seated. Some time back, I had a close friend that I was meeting with.

And he had recently discovered grace. He had been under a system of legalism. He had grown up and been accustomed to a kind of church that was very legalistic, very should-oriented, right?

[6 : 16] Very, you've got to measure up, you need to do these things, that kind of thing. And he had discovered grace to the extent that he'd been freed of that legalism.

He had really just discovered the grace of God. Met people like that? Maybe you're a people like that. And so he was enjoying his freedom in Christ.

But then, as I met him again, in reaction to the legalism, he swung completely the other way to license, freedom.

Freedom in the sense of it doesn't matter if I sin because I'm always forgiven. Sin doesn't really matter, right? I'm under grace. And I was very concerned about this.

And I asked him, you know, have you prayed about this? No. If God wants me to change, it's up to him. I said, okay, that sounds like a cop-out. Have you not read the scriptures and seen the importance of works, right?

[7 : 23] Not legalism, but, you know, have you not seen? Oh, I mean, Jesus calls us to obey.

Desirements about obedience. That kind of thing. No, no. Are you not disturbed by this?

No. Is your faith passive then? Is your faith inactive? He said, yeah, God will change me if he wants. I was really concerned.

There's two extremes that are unhealthy. One is focusing on works. A lot of Christians grow up in a system of Christianity that has a lot of rules and standards and that can kind of swing to the extent of, you know, you really have to do this.

Almost like Roman Catholicism. You know, you've got to do these works. Right? They're not. So it becomes about duty.

They do take the commandments serious. So that's good. It becomes about duty and shoulds. You know, you should, should, should do this. But that kind of focus tends to build pride.

[8 : 35] And it also builds a kind of a, an understanding of the Lord that I need to obey to, to be accepted by him.

I need to measure up to be okay with God. And I think that's kind of where that comes from. The other extreme.

So you've got legalism. The other stream is, is license. Right? So this kind of absolute freedom, this, there's no duty, no requirements. It does take grace serious. That's good. It comes to the extent of, you know, I can't do these things anyway.

There's no good in me, you know, so let go and let go. But again, the concern is that's passive. That's not an act of faith.

It does not take the command seriously. And again, you're concerned if there's no disturbance or prayer about that. And you begin to wonder, can that kind of person even be transformed if they don't care?

[9 : 38] You know, I'm forgiven. So it doesn't matter. So we understand kind of that, that swing. Right? Grace teaches us, even grace teaches us, Paul tells us in Titus, to deny ungodliness and to live in a godly manner.

I mean, grace teaches us, not law. Grace teaches us there's a way to live. Right? That it does matter how I live. So we're in a section, right?

We come to verse 10 where it's going to talk about works. So how does faith interact with works? Right? How important are good works?

Why do we do them? Why not do them? Right? What's the right understanding? It's a biblical grasp of that. So we're going to look at that in verse 10.

First, remember the context. What leads Paul to this subject of good works? Well, remember, we're coming out of God's work in salvation.

[10 : 45] He's rescued us. Verse 1, he's rescued us from being dead. Right? To verse 5, being made alive. So from being dead to made alive.

He saved us, verse 2, from being driven by our flesh. Right? And the world, conforming ourselves to the world, that natural thing. He saved us from being driven by our flesh to being raised together.

Verse 6, with Christ. Right? That raised up together with Christ has to do with no longer a slave to sin. Right? We were a slave to sin. And now, having not just been made alive, but being raised, that picture is a victory over sin.

We're no longer slaves to sin. We can say no to sin. And then, again, verse 2, saved from being dominated, not just by the flesh and the world, but by the devil.

By the enemy. Right? Who, you know, that we're walking according to the prince of the power of the air. We've been saved from that. 2, verse 6. Right?

[11:52] Being seated together with Christ. So, dead to life, driven by the flesh to raised up with Christ and no longer a slave to sin.

And then, third, dominated by the devil to the devil has been disarmed. And that's the picture of us being seated together with Christ. We're raised up with him.

Right? So, his victory over the evil one. Once he's seated, right, at the right hand, right, what happens to the devil? He is, you know, Revelation 12, he's kicked down.

He's kicked down. Right? There's war and then he's kicked down. And now his time's limited. So, I understand that. But it also applies to us. Since Christ is seated, we're seated with him.

And in that sense, that's why the devil has no authority over us. That's why we can resist him and he flees. It's not that I'm powerful, but that I'm with Christ. Right?

[12:50] He looks at, the demon looks at me and he sees the Holy Spirit. So, he's not, you know, okay. Not that I'm a fearful thing, but I, when I take the word out, I take the sword out, there's nothing the devil can do.

He can trick me, but if I have the word, then he can't trick me. Right? So, that's why. Because we're seated with Christ. I love the imagery that Paul uses, that salvation is being made alive, being raised up, and being seated with Christ.

And there's pictures in that. So, that's God's work of salvation. We saw in verse 8, last time we looked at the grace alone. We're saying by grace alone.

In other words, the cause, the source of our salvation is grace. Grace. God initiates. God starts it. God saves. All of our salvation due to him.

By grace alone. Through. The wording's important. Through faith alone. Right? Through the reception. Faith is not the cause, but it's how I receive salvation.

[13:55] It's the instrument through which salvation comes. And then in Christ alone. Right? Everything's in Christ. In Christ. In Christ. So, he is the one who has saved us because of his work.

Right? And then, of course, it's solely day of glory to the glory of God alone, based on the scripture. So, we got our solos. So, that's what we looked at last time. So, now we come to verse 10.

We are saved from those things. Now, what are we saved to? Right? God's brought us out, rescued us out of that. Now, where are we?

Aren't you just in lumbo? You know, some Christians think I'm saved. I've got my fire insurance.

Right? I'm just kind of can cruise now. I don't really. It doesn't really matter what I do. I'm forgiven. That's that kind of over grace thing.

No. We're saved for a purpose. For a reason. God wants to use us. God has changed us for a reason. So, now we're saved to. One thing we can say is to good works.

[14:57] Unto good works. But the question is. Because last time we looked at it, we're saved by grace alone. Not works. Right? Through faith alone.

Not merit. So, if works do not save us, then how do faith and works interact? How do faith?

We may have that discussion in James. We'll get to that. But how do they interact? What is Paul saying here? How do works come out of this?

So, I want to make two clarifications from verse 10. All right? They say, well, it's just one. We're spending time on one verse today. Yeah, we're spending time on one verse today. Because there's a lot in that verse.

Now, we could teach it real fast. But I always feel the benefit is for us to dig. And when we dig, we understand a little deeper. Right? We understand a little more firmly.

[15:51] We connect dots a little bit better. That's, I think, important. And Paul gives us so much detail. It's just, you know, it seems silly to skip to.

If we ever get to Romans. Oh, my. I don't know if we'd ever finish that. I'm scared of Romans. It's big. No. Okay. So, okay.

So, two clarifications. Verse 10. So, the first part of verse 10. You know, we are his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus for good works. So, first clarification is that good works are the result of salvation.

Not the requirement. Right? They're the result. They're the fruit. We are his handiwork. We're his workmanship.

Created for good works. We don't create those. He creates those. Right? Sourced with him. Again, right? We don't save ourselves. He saves us.

[16:51] We receive that. Same thing with good works now. That's, he's made us. His work. And he's made us to work. Right? So, we're a new creation.

So, first clarification. Right? So, that's, it's the result. Works are the result of salvation. Not the requirement. They don't. Works don't save me. Works don't do that.

Works are the result. They're the fruit. And then secondly, the second part of the verse. He talks about which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. So, second clarification would be that good works.

Are prepared for us. Not what we produce. They're not our product. Right? We bear fruit. We don't produce fruit.

The vine produces the, you know, we, we, we abide in the vine. The vine produces. I'm just the branch. Right? I'm not, if I, if I, Jesus says apart from the vine, I can do what?

[17:54] Nothing. Nothing. Right? So, if I become detached from Christ, the vine, I can't bear fruit. I can't. Not, not good. Right? So, that's the picture of, he's prepared.

The works are prepared. That's interesting. Right? The works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. So, we'll, we'll look at that. That works are a preparation issue that God has, has made somehow that, that, that, that we don't produce, but we bear.

Okay. So, let's look at the first one. God, good works are the result of salvation, not the requirement. Um, so first, he says we are his workmanship.

Or another translation is handiwork. His making. His product. And notice verse 10 starts with that little word for again.

Uh, he's explaining what he said before. Right? We're, we're, we're saved by grace, not by works. Verse 9, not by works.

[19:05] Right? For we are his workmanship. So, it's, we're his workmanship. We're not our workmanship. It's not our work that matters. It's his work. So, um, so we're his work, his product, his handiwork, his making.

We are created. All right? Created in Christ Jesus. Created out of nothing. Because what were we before? We were dead.

We were dead. In terms of, in reference to God, we were dead. In reference to spiritual life, we were dead. In terms of seeking God truly for his glory, we were dead.

We might seek God for our reasons, but we're dead in terms of real spiritual life. So, we've been created. Now we have a new life.

That's why we called it a new creation. We did not make ourselves. He makes us. What we are now was not there before.

[20:10] Right? We're a new creation. Something is brand new for us. We're a new creation. We're not an improved creation. We're not a better version. Right? We're not the 2.0.

We're brand new. And this is we're created in Christ Jesus. Right? We're his workmanship, which is created in Christ.

So, created in Christ. What's that? So, there's that in Christ again. Right? In Christ. Everything's in Christ. We've been blessed. All the spiritual blessings in Christ. We've been adopted in Christ.

We've been redeemed in Christ. We've been saved in Christ. Etc. Etc. Grace in Christ. All these things. So, created by means of Christ.

Created by applying all that Christ did for us to us. So, his death applies to us.

[21:14] Which pays our debt. His life applies to us. The life that he lived before the cross was a righteous life. A perfect life.

A blameless life. Right? A spotless life. And so, that righteousness, when we give him our sins, he gives us his righteousness. His spotless. His spotless.

That's why we're justified. That's why we're saints. We've been forgiven. Wipe clean. But then we've been given his righteousness. So, we're justified.

So, we have that exchange with him. So, we're created in Christ. In other words, that we're new because of all that he did. So, look at the next words then.

We're created in Christ for what? For good works. We're his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus for good works.

[22 : 13] That's the reason. That's what we're saved to. That's what we're made alive and seated. Raised up and seated. We're all that for the purpose of good works.

A new creation with new works. We're created in Christ for a goal. For an intent. For a design. For a result. And the result is good works.

Free. So, what are good works? What do you mean by that? So, works. Doing things. Right? So, the key word there is the word good.

And in Greek, what does that word mean? What's good? Right? It's not us how we define it. What Paul... And Paul could have chosen from a number of words. And he chose one word that has a particular meaning about good.

It's an act or deed that benefits. So, it's good in that it benefits others. It's useful to others. No, in other words, it's not intrinsically good to me.

[23 : 12] It's good because of the effect it has to others. It's good works because it benefits them. It helps them. It improves them somehow. It supports them in some way.

It's beneficial, useful, helpful. It's good. It's good. So, any kind of act that's done out of love. I love... So, think about in our church, we do...

We are called to do the one anotherings. Right? Love one another. Bear with one another. Right? Serve one another. I think there's like 23 of them. Right?

All these one another's. Because there's no one way to do it. There's all kinds of it. And they apply in different ways. So, receiving one another, welcoming... You know, there's all kinds of one another's.

But they're useful. And they're helpful to others. Because it's come from love. Right? So, we're called to good works a number of times in the scriptures.

[24 : 16] So, Colossians 1 talks about bearing fruit in every good work. That we're bearing fruit.

We're continually bearing fruit in every good work. So, fruit is related to good works. Titus 3. Where Paul calls us to be careful to engage in good works.

Be careful to engage. Hebrews 10.24 talks about one of the one anotherings. Right? Stir up one another to love and good deeds. Good works. So, we're going to be stirring each other up to that. Right? Which is why it's so important that we gather together. Because you can't stir up one another to love and good deeds if you're not together. Right? So, that's part of our one anothering. Right? In fact, all the one anotherings, I think, for the most part, cannot be done effectively if we're not together. If we're not... Right? Because we embrace one another. We welcome one another. I mean, you can do that over the phone.

[25 : 18] I guess you can do that over the phone. Can you do it by text? I don't know if you can do it by text. Or email. Or whatever. Right? Social distancing thing. Right? Which is like not biblical. So, we gather.

In fact, Hebrews 10.24 talks about don't... Right? Don't not gather. But rather, gather for the purpose so that you can stir up one another to love and good deeds.

And then, you know, you have other passages. You have Matthew 5. Jesus talks about being a light. Right? Let your light shine. Why? Right? Let your light shine. And in fact, he says it very carefully.

He says, let your light shine in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify the Father in heaven.

So, in other words, you're careful. You do good works. But you're careful to do them in such a way that you don't get credit. You do good works that are visible that they may see your good works.

[26 : 23] But not glorify you, but glorify the Father. So, right? So, we prayerfully, humbly learn to do service in loving one another in such a way.

Right? That it's very humble. That it's honoring to the Father. People look up instead of at you. So, that's what Jesus said. Paul said to Timothy, 2 Timothy 3.

He said, you know, the Word is powerful. The Word is great. It teaches us. And it equips us for every good work. That's one of the purposes of the Word.

To equip us for good work. So, there's no question that good works are something God intends. That God has created us for. And that God calls us to do.

So, let's look at a passage here. 2 Corinthians 5. The result of salvation is a new walk.

[27 : 21] Right? Of living for God in a transformed life. And it involves these good works. 2 Corinthians 5. Paul talks about being a new creation. So, let's look at how he says it.

2 Corinthians 5.14. He says, For the love of Christ controls us. And that's what drives. It's the love of Christ for me that drives me. Because we have concluded this.

That one has died for all. Therefore, all have died. And he died for all. Why? That those who live might no longer live for themselves.

But for him. Who for their sake died and was raised. So, the purpose of Christ's salvation of us. Purpose of Christ dying for us.

Is not just to forgive us. But so that we might live differently. Right? So, from now on. Therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh.

[28 : 19] We no longer thus. We regard him thus no longer. Therefore. Here's the verse we remember. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ.

He is a new creation. If he is. There's that in Christ again. If anyone is in Christ. Right? Is in the realm of the faith.

And having been graced by God. If he is in Christ. What happens? He's a new creation. What happens? There's a process. The old is passing away.

The new has come. All this is from God. Who through Christ reconciled us to himself. And gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

So, look at that. So, Christ came to reconcile us to the Father. Now, he's turned that over to us.

Now, it's our ministry. To reconcile others to the Father. To show them what.

[29 : 15] To share with them what we've learned. Share with them God's love for us. Share with them how my life has changed. Right? And we testify to them. And draw them to Christ.

So, Paul clarifies here. Why did Christ die? You know, typically folks would say. If you ask them. Typically folks say. Well, he died to forgive you. Well, that's true.

That's not all he did. He didn't just die to change. He died to forgive you. So that he could transform your life. He could absolutely transform your life.

It's not just a blank slate. But a new creation. So the old. That your failures. All that. The old way that you live. That's all gone.

Now the new has come. Now there's a whole new way of life. To transform why and how we live.

That's why he died. That's what the gospel is about.

[30 : 12] The gospel is not just about. Jesus loves you. And died for your sins. And now you're okay. That's kind of the short. Abbreviated.

Not complete. Gospel. The gospel is. Yeah. That's the first step. That's the first. He's made you right with God.

But now. He has a plan. For your life. He wants to. He's going to use you. He has a plan to.

Wherever that goes. Wherever you're. Infected.

Infected. Invested. Engaged in your family. In your neighborhood. In your workplace. Wherever you're. You're. You're that light. Right.

You're that messenger. To share that with others. And you do that through. I mean.

[31 : 08] Discipleship. Is. Is a process. Isn't it? It's not. It's not a. Kind of go. And. Hit them with the gospel. And then leave. And hope. You know. You got to build trust.

You have to build a relationship. It's a life. That's what Jesus did. It's. It's gathering people. And. Investing in them. They're not going to believe you. Until they trust you.

So you've got to. Convince them. That you really care about them. And then you earn the right. To be heard. They begin to open up. And you. Okay.

Well this isn't about evangelism. That's my belief. That's what I think is biblical. That's how we do.

We do it like Jesus did it. And it took them a while.

Didn't it? It didn't just go out. Okay. I said I wasn't going to do that. But that's. But that is part of what this new creation is.

[32 : 03] Our life is different. We live for a different purpose. I don't live for me. I live for him. No longer live for ourselves. But for him. So. First clarification.

We have in verse 10 here. Where his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus. For good works. So good works are the result of salvation. They're the end result of salvation.

They're the reason for salvation. Right. They're the fruit of salvation. Not the requirement. So that leads us to the second part. Second part of verse 10.

Which God prepared beforehand. That we should walk in them. So he's still talking about good works. Created in Christ Jesus for good works. Now. These good works.

Which God prepared beforehand. That we should walk in them. So let's. Think about that. I think what. We could summarize that. As good works. Are already prepared for us.

[33 : 05] Not produced by us. I think it's really important to grasp this. Good works are already. In some way. Prepared for us. This is what Paul says.

They're already prepared for us. Right. They're not our production. And I think a lot of people think in terms of. You know. I gotta. I gotta bear fruit. Right. So that.

And they're thinking more. I gotta produce it. I gotta. I gotta. What's the fruit. Right. Love. Joy. Peace. Patient. Right. Right. And it's called fruit of what? The spirit.

Right. It's not the fruit bill. Right. You don't want that. It's the fruit of the spirit. It's spirit of power fruit. Right. So it's.

He's working through me. And I love the picture Jesus has in John 15. Right. I am the vine. You are the branches. My father is the. Vine dresser. Vine dresser.

[33 : 58] He prunes. Right. After we bear fruit. He. He's. We get all ugly again. Right. We get. He prunes us. We need to understand that too. But the important point of that is.

Right. Apart from me you can do nothing. Abide in me. If you abide in me and I in you. You will bear much fruit. You will bear it. I think that's so important.

To think of that terminology. I will bear it. So I'm just the vessel. I'm just the bread. I'm not the producing. I'm not stirring up the energy or the strength to do that.

It's not my good intentions. It's not my will to make that happen. It is I'm abiding. My part is abiding. That's my part.

That's it. And then watch the fruit. Abide in Christ. So. So. Am I abiding?

[34 : 54] Am I trusting? Am I staying? Am I drawing my strength and my fruit for. My energy from him. My. My. Abilities. My enablement.

And all that coming from him. Am I tied to the vine? That's my part. Not the fruit. The fruit. The fruit will come. And it comes in seasons. Right? Because the father.

You bear fruit. And then the father. Prunes you back again. Right? And we go through these dry seasons. And we think. Well I was chitling on. Last month was great. Now this month I'm dry.

And we forget that the father prunes. We're. As a church we're going through pruning. We've been going through pruning. Right? Well he prunes us that we might bear more fruit.

He prunes us to do new things. Do we trust that? Or do we need to make things happen?

[35 : 48] Do we get impatient with God's timing? Well we got to produce some fruit. Got to go make some things happen. Right?

I mean that's. That's how I've been thinking the last year and a half. Is this. I've challenged by the Lord to. Wait. Are you doing what you know I've called you to do? Okay.

Yeah. We're doing the things we know we're supposed to do. What's the next stage for us? Is it different? Is it new? Do we reach out in some new way? Do we. You know what.

We still are who we are. Because we're. You know. We're designed to be what Christ has designed us to be. Like every other church is called to be. We're to be equipped. Right?

So that we do work together. So we build up the body of Christ. And we become a light in the community. And God. But is there something else? Right?

[36 : 44] Something specific now. So that's what we're praying about. But that's the fruit. Right? Again. That's. It's not about us producing. And I think.

We are raised. And we are. We live in a society. Where. Where every other thing is something we produce. And we earn.

Right? I go to school. And I got to earn good grades. Right? I got to work hard. And earn good grades. I didn't do that. Didn't. But anyway. That's what you're supposed to do.

Instead of skipping school. You're supposed to go to school. So. So that's what you're supposed to do. Get a job. Right? I want to earn money. I want to earn so that I can make a living.

Or as. If you're young. You get a job. So you can buy a car. Motorcycle. And. All the other stuff you want to buy. Right? Yeah. I know. That was fun. Live at home as long as you can.

[37 : 41] No. No. Because I need to just buy all these things. I can buy my 240 seat. And buy my 9. Kawasaki 9. Until God started taking those things away.

So. So you're earning though. Right? That's the mindset. Everything in our culture is that mindset. You earn it. You must produce.

Right? You must work. And. You can't wait around to work. Because you got to show up on time.

Right? So. Work.

Then we come into this whole Christianity thing. And it's different. It doesn't function like that. This is dynamic. This is God.

Working. There are lots of people that do church in their own way. And you can do that. You can build a church. You can. You can get a lot of numbers. You can do.

[38 : 37] I knew how to do all that kind of stuff. You can do that. That's just a matter of manipulation. That's just a matter of. You know. Humanistic pragmatism.

So you can do that. A lot of churches are still doing that. God convinced me early on. Do it. The first Corinthians one and two way. Right?

We have a foolish message. The gospel. It's foolish. Foolishness. Doesn't make. You know. And then he's given us a method that's foolish too.

Preaching. I mean that was outdated in the first century. But Paul says no. That's the. That's what we have to do. Because. Because then it shows it's God.

And not us. Because preaching isn't about manipulating. Preaching is just. Just declaring the truth. Right? With some forcefulness and some passion. And then.

[39 : 35] And then we have a foolish means. Right? Which Paul says in. In. In first Corinthians two. He says. We don't use persuasion.

We don't use. You know. Manipulation. We don't use. Philosophy. We don't use all these man methods. To get you to believe. We.

Wait. On the Holy Spirit. We preach. And then we wait. We don't get you to try to make a decision. We don't get you to try to.

You know. To try to reel you in. Like it's some kind of a. You know. When you're sailing. You know. Make the sail. Right?

That's not what we do. We're faithful with the message. And then we wait. On the Holy Spirit. For the results. That's exactly what he says. In. In first Corinthians two.

[40 : 33] Four and five. That your salvation. That your faith. Might rest on the power of God. Right? Not on the methods of men. Because I've been convinced of that ever since. And so.

It doesn't make big numbers. But. It does. It does. We do see genuine. Conversions. So.

Where was I? You're talking about motorcycles. Two teams. Talking about motorcycles. I can talk about motorcycles a little bit.

I don't want to do that. So. Prepared works. Boy. Where did I. I think you were on clarification.

Yeah. Yeah.

I'm on clarification too. I know. But then. Then. Things happen. You know. I tell. And I've told you this before. I pray. I pray. That God would give me. The. The words.

[41 : 30] Right? And the insight. And the boldness. And the power. And freedom. To preach. And then I pray. That he would restrain my words. And sometimes he does that.

And sometimes. I'm to blame. So. Sorry. Sorry. Maybe he wanted that. I'll just trust that.

So. Good works are already prepared for us. Not produced by us. So. We were talking about fruit in the vine. Okay. So. Prepared works. Prepared beforehand. Made ready beforehand.

Made in advance. So. That's what he means by. Which God prepared before. He prepared works. Beforehand. Already. In other words.

I thought. What does that mean? That he's prepared the works. Beforehand. For us. Well. It's like he's designed. These works for us.

[42 : 25] I thought. Maybe. Maybe it's like clothes. Right? Like a new set of clothes. He's designed a new set of clothes for us. That we're going to put on. Because later. He's going to talk about. In Ephesians. Like put off the old.

And put on the new. So maybe that's. Because that new. Is those new works. These are works. That God calls us. To walk in. They've already been.

Created by him. For us. So we're equipped. Okay? So. So. I don't think we have to stir up. Good works. In ourselves. We stir them up. In each other.

But we don't. Stir up new. New things. Right? They're already created in us. And I think that has to do. With our gifting. And it has to do. With our. Our personality.

Right? And where we are. Maybe in the. In the body. So our good works. Will. Change. And act different. As we. Interact with different people.

[43 : 21] Maybe that's the spirit's creativity. These works were prepared beforehand. So. I think what that means. Being prepared beforehand. Is that he's the source of our works.

So it's not for us to produce. It's. Good works are not something we produce. Or that we generate. He is the source of our good works. It's like he's the vine. And.

And why does he prepare them? He prepares them beforehand. That. For this reason. For this purpose. That we should walk in them. Do you have.

At the end of that. Verse 10. Do you have that. We should walk in them. In the word should. Should. No. Yeah. No. Yeah. Yeah.

I don't like the word should. It's not. Because. It. If you come out of that legalism. That. You hate that kind of word. It's not. It's not a translated word.

[44 : 20] It's implied by the grammar. So I. I prefer. That you. Might. Walk in them. It's the subjunctive. So it's. It's potential. So. It's that you might walk in them.

Or that you can. I like that. That you can. Walk in them. Right. That you're. That. That. That. That. You may. Not sure. It should. Sounds more. You know. You better. But more than.

You know. We're new creation. So we can walk in them. That we put off the old. That put on. The new. So. Like salvation. Right. We respond by faith.

Good works. Are. Our response to. They're our response to him. He's made us. He's created us. He's made us a new workmanship. A new handiwork.

He's already got them designed for us. So we walk in them as he. Produces them. So.

[45 : 18] That we walk in them. To walk means to conduct your life. Right. To walk. Paul uses that word all over the place in Ephesians. He likes this concept of walk.

In. Talking about our new lifestyle. Right. We go back to chapter two. Verse. Two. Verse two. Right. He talked about a walk that we had back then. We used to walk.

You formerly walked according to the course of the world. And according to the prince of the power of the air. Right. So that was your conduct of life. Now we have a new one. That we should. He's now got a new creation. We're alive.

And. He's created us to walk. That we can walk. In these new works. So he has transformed our life. Right.

Before we walked in sin. Now we have a new life. Where we walk. In newness of life. Just follow with me real quick. In chapters four to six. Remember the second half of Ephesians.

[46 : 13] Is the application of all this truth. Right. So chapter four one. He starts. The therefore. Therefore. Because all chapters one through three are true. Therefore.

I the prisoner of the Lord. Entreat you to walk. To walk. To conduct your life. In a manner worthy of the calling. With which you have been called. So walking there again.

Down to verse 17. Chapter four. Verse 17. This I say therefore. And affirm together with the Lord. That you walk no longer. As the Gentiles walk. In the futility of their mind.

Right. But that. Verse 22. In reference to your former manner of life. You lay aside the old self.

Which is being corrupted. Right. Verse 23. That you be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

Verse 24. That you put on the new self. Which is. And then he's going to talk about. What that looks like. Speaking truth. Laboring. Right. He's going to talk about all these different things.

[47 : 08] You put off. And you put on. Chapter five. Verse two. Walk in love. Verse. Chapter five. Verse eight. Walk as children of life.

Chapter five. Verse 15. Be careful how you walk. Not as unwise. But as wise. So. He's just going to follow this theme. You know. Walking being the way we conduct our life.

He's going to. He's going to come at it with different. Aspects of it. Walk. How we conduct ourselves. Sounds like a big task. Doesn't it?

I mean. If that was on us. If that's on our shoulders. This walking. Doing all these new works. If I thought. That's all up to me. I think I might try to choose that grace thing.

Right. That wears me out. If I have to do that. In order to feel like I'm a good Christian. In order to feel like I'm measuring up. Right. Wow.

[48 : 07] That would be a killer. So how does. How does all that. That. How do we do that? He already did it. Huh? He already did it.

He already did it. But he wants us to follow in it. Right. He wants us to follow. So my part. Right. So if I'm the type A. And I'm the. You know. I'm the. And you know.

20 years ago. And I felt better. You know. I got energy. Okay. Yeah. Let's go do it. Try. You know. Driven. Now. Not so much.

So how do we do it. Well. Romans 8. 4. Says this. Walk not according to the flesh. Your own strength. But according to. The Holy Spirit. That's how we do it.

I walk with the spirit. He's the power. He's the energizing. Right. He's the strengthener. He's the enabler. Same thing.

[49 : 04] That's why I love the vine thing. I just got to grab on to Jesus. If I'm holding on to Jesus. Right. And I'm seeking him. Relying on him. To give me the strength.

To lead me. Direct me. That's where it comes from. Okay. So. One more. One more. Thought here. Colossians 2. 6. Says this. As you have received. Jesus Christ. So walk in him. So walk in him. So we're to walk in Christ. As we have received him.

Okay. So how. How did I receive Jesus Christ? How did you receive Jesus Christ? By works? By grace. No.

By grace. Through faith. Walk the same way. By grace. Through faith. By his power. Trusting in him.

[50 : 02] Trusting in history. Waiting upon history. James 2. How do faith and works interact? So here's the James argument. Right? Love this. What good is it, my brothers?

If someone says he has faith. But does not have works. Can that faith save him? In other words. Is that faith. You know. The through faith kind of. If a brother or sister is poorly clothed.

And lacking in daily food. And one of you says to them. Go in peace. Be warmly. Be filled. Go on down to the other place. And get your help. Without giving them the things.

Needed for the body. What good. Is that? What. No. There's that good. That word good. Right? What benefit? What helpfulness is that?

What good is that? So. Faith by itself. If it does not have works. Is dead. Dead faith. But some will say.

[50 : 59] You have faith. And I have works. Show me your faith apart from your works. And I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one. You do well. Even the demons believe.

And. What? Shudder. Their faith has a work. Their faith has an effect. They believe God's one. They know God's one. They shudder. Right? But that's not saving faith. Do you want to be shown. You foolish person. That faith apart from works is useless.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works. When he offered up his son Isaac on the altar. You see that faith was active along with his works.

They were engaged together. And faith was completed by his works. Abraham already had faith. He already believed.

[52 : 02] Result. Works followed that. It followed his faith. His faith was active. His faith was alive. To walk in good works. To walk in good works.

Does not mean that we. In our own effort. Try to do good. It must start with faith. Right? By grace. Through faith.

A living faith. True faith will result. In fruit. Active dependence. Intentional abiding. Prayerful. Reliance on Christ. Any way you want to put it. It's faith. Active. Faith. Abiding. Faith. Praying. Faith. Active.

Faith. Intentional. Alright. So let's. I have a Luther quote. But you can read it. It's on the front of the outline. Luther did believe in works by the way.

[53 : 00] Some people say. Luther. Didn't. Didn't believe James was. Should be in the Bible. Because it talks about works. That was early Luther. He saw the point of it later.

Let me ask you a couple questions. Then we'll close. Do you see good works in your life? I'm not asking you if you're producing them. I'm not asking you if you're working at good works.

I'm asking you. Do you simply see them? In your life? Are they there? Do you see fruit? And when I'm asking both of those questions.

I'm asking. Do you see evidence of faith? Are they evidence of faith? It's one of the ways we know that we're truly saved.

It is. Have I been transformed? Am I doing things I didn't do before? Before I lied. Now I tell truth. Right? Before I stole.

[54 : 01] Now I give. I was a taker. Now I'm a giver. Right? It's got transformed. And if you don't see that. Why not? Does that disturb you?

Is your faith living? Is your faith passive? Do you ask God? And if you feel unable and incapable. Maybe God has been humbling you.

Do you ask God to do the willing and the working? Philippians 2.13. Do the will. And I pray that often. And I do.

Because he calls us to do. Right? And to work. But then he says. For God does the willing and the working. Within us for his good pleasure. So I like that verse better than the other one.

Right? Because it's. He does the willing and the work. So I ask him. Do the willing. Change my will to want to. Change my doing to doing. Right? You make that happen.

[55 : 03] So God expects every believer to trust. I mean it's just. We're believers. He expects us to exercise our faith. To walk by faith.

For good works. And then maybe ask yourself this question. Why do you live? What's the purpose of your life?

Could you think of that? What's the purpose of your life? Do you live for yourself? Or do you live for him? That's always a convicting one, isn't it?

Are you seeking to live for him? By grace. Through faith. That's the nutshell. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word.

Grant, Lord, these words of Paul. Which often make us wonder. Make us think. Grant them to saturate into our mind and our hearts.

[56 : 03] That we might really grapple with what this means. What our life looks like. That you have died for us so that we no longer live for ourselves but for you.

And so, Father, may that really resonate in our spirit. And that you work that into our hearts in any way you want to do that.

For our good. And for your glory. This is what we pray. In Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.