

# BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

T H E B O O K O F

EPHESIANS

*How to live the Christian life*

**EPHESIANS: HOW TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE – PART 12**  
*“Salvation and Good Works” - Ephesians 2:10*

*“<sup>1</sup>And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup>among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.<sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup>and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus..<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not of works, lest anyone should boast.” -Ephesians 2:1-9 (NKJV)*

*“<sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” – Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)*

1. What does it mean that we are His workmanship? What is workman ship?
2. What does it mean that we are created in Christ Jesus for good works?
- 3.

## **KEY BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR EPHESIANS**

To gain a better understanding of the Book of Ephesians, consider the following background information:

1. **Authorship: The Apostle Paul** - Traditionally attributed to the Apostle Paul.

2. **Date of Writing: A.D. 60-63** - Likely written around A.D. 60-63 during Paul's Roman imprisonment.
  3. **Place of writing: Rome** – Paul wrote the book/letter of Ephesians from a Roman prison
  4. **Audience: Ephesian Christians at Ephesus and surrounding area** Addressed to the Christian community in Ephesus, a major city in Asia Minor. Ephesians is considered a same 7 churches
  5. **Purpose: How to live the Christian life** To strengthen the faith of believers and address issues of unity and spiritual maturity.
  6. **Themes: Grace, the church, and holy living** - Key themes include grace, the church as the body of Christ, and the importance of living a holy life.
  7. **Structure: Ephesus is divided into two main sections** - Divided into two main sections: doctrinal teachings (chapters 1-3) and practical applications (chapters 4-6).
  8. **Cultural Context: Ephesus was center of commerce and religion** - Ephesus was a center of commerce and religion, known for the Temple of Artemis.
  9. **Significance: Mystery of the gospel and inclusion of Gentiles** - Emphasizes the mystery of the Gospel and the inclusion of Gentiles in God's plan.
  10. **Spiritual Warfare: Ephesians' emphasis on the spiritual battle** Concludes with a call to spiritual readiness and the armor of God (chapter 6).
- 

### Application Questions

1. **Why does Paul keep emphasizing that salvation is totally God's doing? What is his practical aim?**
2. **If someone said, "I've accepted Christ as my Savior, but I haven't decided yet to make Him my Lord," what would you say?**
3. **What is Paul's practical point in stating that God prepared beforehand the good works that we should do?**
4. **God is sovereign and yet we are responsible. How do we maintain the proper biblical balance here?**

*"<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."*  
 – Ephesians 2:8-10 (NKJV)

is much confusion concerning or part in salvation. Some may be inclined to think/believe that works have no role in salvation, while others may believe that it impossible to separate saving faith from works in some way. The question if not really what we think. What does the Bible say? Our doctrine/theology and practice should be based on what the Bible says because that has eternal ramifications for our soul. Try your hand at the

following true or false statements concerning salvation and good works. These may indicate some of the confusion that exist on the subject. Be careful! These may be tricky!

Good works have no role in salvation	[ ] true	[✓] false
Works are required for salvation	[✓] true	[ ] false
Some of our works were required for salvation	[ ] true	[✓] false
Our works do nothing to earn or maintain our salvation	[✓] true	[ ] false
Salvation is by grace, which precludes (or excludes) works	[✓] true	[ ] false
God's requirement for salvation is faith in His Son	[✓] true	[ ] false
Works are the product of faith	[✓] true	[ ] false

In the faith vs. works debate, the two sides maintain that either we are saved by faith (and faith alone), or we are saved by works (or, more commonly, works added to faith). Which side is correct? What is the biblical relationship between faith and works?

### 5 Statements of the Relationship Between Faith and Works:

1. **Works are required for salvation—but Scripture is clear that those works are Christ's, not ours - Jesus fulfilled the law (Matthew 5:17). In fact, *"the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith"* (Galatians 3:24 sacrifice on the cross reconciled us to God (Romans 5:10), and as He died, Jesus proclaimed that the work was finished (John 19:30). Now we are invited to enter into *"Anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works"* (Hebrews 4:10).**
2. **Our works do nothing to earn or maintain salvation** - It was the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ that justifies sinners (Romans 3:24). *"Know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, . . . because by the works of the law no one will be justified"* (Galatians 2:16). We begin by faith, and we continue in faith: *"Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?"* (Galatians 3:2-3).
3. **Salvation is by grace, which precludes** (*prevents, impedes, stops, excludes disqualifies, prohibits, bars, rules out*) **works** - Grace is, by definition, unearned, and Scripture makes it clear that *"If by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace"* (Romans 11:6). *"It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast"* (Ephesians 2:8-9).
4. **God's requirement for salvation is faith in His Son** - One of the grand themes of the Bible is that we are justified, or declared righteous, by faith (Genesis 15:6). Faith is the only means of making sinful human beings able to stand before a holy God. No amount

of law-keeping or good works can accomplish it (Titus 3:5). If our works could save us, then Christ died for nothing (Galatians 2:21).

5. **Works are the product of faith** - Those who have true faith in Jesus Christ will be *“eager to do what is good”* (Titus 2:14). John the Baptist called for *“fruit in keeping with repentance”* (Matthew 3:8). The book of James emphasizes the nature of true saving faith as that which results in good works: *“Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead”* and *“As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead”* (James 2:17, 26). Grace through faith saves, and that faith is *manifest* in works. If

nonexistent.

The faith vs. works debate, then, is really no debate at all. Both faith and works are integral parts of the Christian life. Biblically, faith is the cause of salvation, while works are the evidence of it.

In understanding the debate between faith or salvation and good works there are some helpful and important verses/passage of scripture that we need to not only hear but gasp in understanding:

- **Titus 1:16** - *“(Speaking of false professors/teachers) They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.”* What does this tell us about good works? What might this have to do with salvation and good works?
- **Titus 3:1-7** – *“Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, <sup>2</sup>to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. <sup>3</sup>For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. <sup>4</sup>But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, <sup>5</sup>not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”* What does this tell us about good works? What might this have to do with salvation and good works?
- **Titus 3:8** - *“<sup>8</sup>This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”* What does this tell us about good works? What might this have to do with salvation and good works?
- **James 2:14-17** - *“<sup>14</sup>What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? <sup>15</sup>If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, <sup>16</sup>and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does*

*it profit? <sup>17</sup> Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.” What does this tell us about good works? What might this have to do with salvation and good works?*

- *James 2:18-19 – “<sup>18</sup> But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! <sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?” What does this tell us about good works? What might this have to do with salvation and good works?*
- *James 2:21-24 - “<sup>21</sup> Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? <sup>22</sup> Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? <sup>23</sup> And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God. <sup>24</sup> You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.” What does this tell us about good works? What might this have to do with salvation and good works?*
- *James 2:25-26 – “<sup>25</sup> Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? <sup>26</sup> For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” What does this tell us about good works? What might this have to do with salvation and good works?*

## 2 Quotes to Consider:

- 1. **William Wilberforce**, British politician and Abolitionist instrumental in abolishing slavery in Britian, defines Christianity this way, “*Christianity is a scheme for making the fruits of holiness the effects, not the cause, of our being justified and reconciled.*” – *What do you think he is saying? What does this have to do with the role of good works and salvation?*
- 2. **Justin Dillehay**, pastor and frequent contributor to “*The Gospel Coalition*” says, “*Good works are the fruit, not the root. Or to tweak the analogy, good works are what goes on in the house, but they’re not the foundation of the house.*” – *Interesting! What do you think he is saying? What does this have to do with the role of good works and salvation?*

Ephesians 2:10

-10 succinctly deal with the subject of salvation and good works, and the role of good works and faith through grace. Paul is

grace through faith, apart from any works on our part. It is all the gift of God, so that He

**KEY THOUGHT:** Genuine salvation is entirely of God and it inevitably results in a life of good works

Sometimes it is said that there is a conflict between Paul and James over the matter of justification by faith versus works

**READ: Romans 3:21-28** – *“<sup>21</sup>But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup>even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; <sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, <sup>26</sup>to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. <sup>27</sup>Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. <sup>28</sup>Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”*

- (1) According to these verses how are we clearly saved?
- (2) According to these verse how are we clearly not saved
- (3) Do these verses in any way diminish or downplay the role or important of “work”? In what way(s)?

**READ: James 2:18-26**

*“<sup>18</sup> But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! <sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? <sup>21</sup> Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? <sup>22</sup> Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? <sup>23</sup> And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God. <sup>24</sup> You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. <sup>25</sup> Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? <sup>26</sup> For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”*

- (1) According to these verses what is the relationship between faith and works?
- (2) In your opinion, is James saying or emphasizing that we are not saved by grace/faith, but rather by works? Explain! What is he saying?
- (3) Do these verses go against or contradict Paul emphasis especially in our passage in Ephesians 2:8-9 of salvation by grace through faith alone? Explain your answer!

Both men are saying the same thing from different angles to address different issues

### **Understanding Paul and James in Their Approach to Salvation and Good Works:**

- **Paul was attacking the Pharisaic idea that our good works will commend us to God**  
- He argues that no one can ever be good enough to earn salvation. God justifies guilty sinners through faith in Christ alone.
- **James was attacking the view that saving faith does not necessarily result in good works** - He shows that genuine faith always produces good works.

That is precisely what Paul is clarifying in Ephesians 2:10. While salvation is entirely of God, so are the good works that follow salvation. God has ordained the entire process. Just as we cannot claim any glory for ourselves in our initial salvation, even so we cannot claim any glory in our subsequent good works. God is behind the entirety of our salvation from start to finish. Thus He gets all the glory

Note five things from verse 10

### **5 Things Paul is Showing Us in Ephesians 2:10 Concerning God's Work in Salvation and Our Good Works:**

1. **Genuine salvation involves a new creation that is entirely God's doing**
2. **Genuine salvation inevitably results in a life of good works**
3. **God prepared these works before He saved us**
4. **Although God sovereignly ordained these good works before time began, we are responsible to walk in them**
5. **The good works that we walk in should be done in a corporate context**

these truths that Paul is emphasizing in our passage in Ephesians

*<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”*  
– Ephesians 2:8-10 (NKJV)

### **GENUINE SALVATION INVOLVES A NEW CREATION THAT IS ENTIRELY GOD'S DOING**

Paul says, *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus...”*

- **“His”** is emphatic in the Greek, underscoring the point that Paul has been making throughout chapters 1 and 2, that our salvation was ordained by God from eternity and that we had nothing to do with it. We were dead in our sins, but God raised us from the dead (2:1, 5). Just as God created the universe out of nothing by the word of His power, so God created us in Christ Jesus by His mighty power.

- The Greek word translated, “*workmanship*,” occurs in only one other place in the New Testament, where it is translated, “*what has been made.*” In Romans 1:20, Paul writes, “*For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*” Paul is referring to the original creation. Just as God powerfully brought that creation into existence for His purpose and glory, so it is when He saves a soul. “*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come*” (2 Cor. 5:17).

If you think that I have been emphasizing this point too much in the past few weeks, it is only because Paul emphasizes it repeatedly in these first two chapters. He knows how prone we are to take some of the credit for our salvation

**Why is it a problem and what might possibly be the ramifications for us to boast in our own salvation?**

- (1) *Indicates wrong theology/doctrine*
- (2) *Indicates a mis-reading/misinterpretation of Scripture/the Bible*
- (3) *Indicates we may never have been truly saved*

**Why is it a problem and what are the ramifications for us to boast in our own good deeds after salvation?**

- (1) *We take and tread upon the glory from God*
- (2) *We claim the glory for ourselves and set ourselves up against God*
- (3) *We indicate a gross mis-understanding and misinterpretation of who we are called to be in God’s Word/the Bible and a lack of grounding in God’s Word*

- But Paul is saying that the entire process is from God.
- It comes from His eternal, sovereign choice to save us and from His mighty creative power.
- Just as the physical creation cannot claim any grounds for boasting in its beauty, so our salvation or in our good works.
- “*In Christ Jesus*” (see the same phrase in 2:6, 7) shows that everything God has done for us comes through Jesus Christ. Apart from Him, we have nothing.
- In Him, we have every blessing in the heavenly places (Eph. 1:3). He gets all the glory.

***“Many Christians confuse making a decision to accept Christ with genuine salvation”***

***What do you think that statement is saying? What is the difference between “making a decision to accept Christ” and “genuine salvation” do you think?***



- Certainly, everyone who is genuinely saved receives Christ or decides to trust in Him.
- But, not everyone who makes a profession of receiving Christ or trusting in Him is genuinely saved.
- When God genuinely saves someone, that person becomes a new creation in Christ. God changes his heart of stone for a heart of flesh that is obedient to Him (Ezek. 36:26-27).
- He changes the bent of our lives from hostility towards God to submission to Him (Rom. 6:17-18; 8:1-13).
- While genuine believers do sin, they hate it and fight against it.
- If there is no change of heart, then the person needs to question whether he has been created anew in Christ Jesus.

### GENUINE SALVATION INEVITABLY RESULTS IN A LIFE OF GOOD WORKS

Listen to verse 10 of our passage again. Paul writes, <sup>10</sup> *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*”

*What do you think about the view that a person may be truly saved and yet live a life of sin? What you say to this?*

1 John 3:4-9, <sup>4</sup> *Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.* <sup>5</sup> *And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.* <sup>6</sup> *Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.* <sup>7</sup> *Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.* <sup>8</sup> *He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.* <sup>9</sup> *Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.*”

➔ C. H. Spurgeon, said, \_\_\_\_\_ good works are not the cause

*What do you think Spurgeon is saying?*

➔ John Calvin said \_\_\_\_\_ (set apart for good works) *What is Calvin telling us about salvation and good works?*

➔ We are not saved *by* good works, but we are saved *for* good works. Those different prepositions make all the difference in the world! Good works are the evidence of salvation, not the cause of it. If there are no works or change of life to follow salvation, then it should be questioned whether the person is truly saved.

Jesus taught this very plainly. In warning about false prophets. Just listen to His words in Matthew 7:15-17 said, <sup>15</sup> *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup> You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.”*

- According to these verses how do we recognize a true believer vs. a false one?
- a good picture
- does this comparison mean and how are they similar?
- In this passage what is the importance

Paul makes the same point in Titus 1:16, in a warning about false teachers. He says, <sup>16</sup> *“They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.”* He goes on to show the relationship between saving grace and good deeds. ***What is the relationship between saving grace and good works***

<sup>11</sup> *“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, <sup>12</sup> teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.”* -Titus 2:11-12

Paul explains (Titus 2:11-12) that we should desire good works. Then he adds down in verse 14 (of Titus 2), <sup>14</sup> *“Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.”*

Throughout the book of 1 John, the apostle emphasizes the same point against the backdrop of false teachers. In 1 John 3:7-10, he writes, <sup>7</sup> *“Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. <sup>8</sup> He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. <sup>9</sup> Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.<sup>10</sup> In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.”*

The Book of James (especially, 2:14-26) makes the same point, that genuine saving faith manifests itself in good deeds. If a person claims to have faith but has no resulting works, his claim is suspect.

What are these good works for which we were created? Charles Spurgeon summarizes them as, *works of obedience, works of love, works of faith, and acts of common life* (*Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* [Pilgrim Publications], 31:152-153). By *works of obedience*, he means obeying the commands of Scripture. *Works of love* includes both love for God and love for man. *Works of faith* refers to all that we do in reliance

upon God and His promises. By *acts of common life* he meant whatever we do at home, at work, traveling, or on a sick bed, that we do all to the glory of God. In other words, the entire focus, to please Him.

creation is made for good works. Also,

## **GOD PREPARED THESE WORKS BEFORE HE SAVED US**

*“<sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” – Ephesians 2:10*

Concerning these good works, Paul adds, *“which God prepared beforehand....”* What does he mean? The only other use of this verb is in **Romans 9:23**, where after writing that God prepared vessels of wrath for destruction, Paul states, *“And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory.”* So Paul taught that God not only predestined our salvation, but also the works that follow.

We already saw in **Ephesians 1:4** that God *“chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless....”*

sovereign plan does not stop with salvation, but also includes a life of godliness, leading to final glorification (Rom. 8:29-30; 2 Thess. 2:13-14).

But *why* does he add this phrase, that God prepared these good works beforehand? It seems to me that there are two practical applications.

## **2 Practical Applications of the Idea that God Prepared These Good Works Beforehand That We Should Do:**

- 1. If God not only planned my salvation before the foundation of the world, but He also planned my good works, I have no grounds to boast in anything that I do for the Lord** - When you understand it properly, there is no more humbling doctrine than that of predestination. In *The Institutes*, John Calvin argues that a main practical application of the doctrine of sovereign election is humility, because it gives all the glory to God and none to us (III:XXI:1, pp. 921-922). He also argues that it makes us feel how much we are obliged to God and it is our only ground for assurance (*ibid.*). So when we recognize that God predestined both our salvation and our sanctification, it humbles our pride.
- 2. The fact that God prepared these works shows that we are not to engage in our projects and good deeds, but rather to seek God for what *He* wants us to do** - Some of the false teachers in our day tell people to dream their own big dreams. They promise that God will help you succeed in whatever you want to do. But that puts us in control of our lives and God merely becomes our helper to achieve our goals. That is completely

backwards! Rather, we should never engage in any service for the Lord without first waiting on Him as to what *He* wants. If He is directing, then we should follow. He is the Lord and we are only His servants, seeking to do His sovereign will.

Some wrongly conclude from the doctrine of predestination that we can then sit back and do nothing. If God has ordained it, it will happen whether we do anything or not. But this is fallacious, because God not only foreordains the ends. He also foreordains the means to those ends.

### **ALTHOUGH GOD SOVEREIGNLY ORDAINED THESE GOOD WORKS BEFORE TIME BEGAN, WE ARE RESPONSIBLE TO WALK IN THEM**

Listen to **verse 10** of our passage again. Paul writes, *<sup>10</sup>For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Paul says that God prepared these works beforehand *“so that we would walk in them.”* Bible Scholar and Theologian, Harold Hoehner says, *The purpose of these prepared-in-advance*  
 In other words, God has prepared a path of good works for believers which He will perform in and through them as they walk

He then refers us to **Philippians 2:13**, where after telling us to work out our salvation, Paul adds, *“for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”*

### **3 Things to Remember About Walking in Good Works:**

1. **Walking in these good works which God has prepared for us implies a lifelong process** - Once we are saved, the direction of our lives should be to walk on the path of obedience to God in everything.
2. **Walking in good works does not mean that we dabble in them in our spare time, when we don't have anything better to do -**  
 we get a little extra time on our hands. Rather, serving God becomes the bent of our lives every day in every situation. There is no division between the sacred and the secular for you serve God there (Col. 3:23-  
 with family, you serve God there. The same applies to church. Every Christian should be seeking to serve the Lord in accordance with his gifts and desires in every situation of life.
3. **Notice that the walk in good works closes the paragraph that began with our formerly walking in trespasses and sins, according to the course of this world (Ephesians 2:1-2) -** The contrast is stark and deliberate. Either you are walking in sin in accordance with this evil world or you are walking in good works in accordance with

sons of disobedience. But here it is God working His good works that He has ordained in us.

The application is, if God has saved you by His grace, He has saved you for a life of good works. If you are not engaging in these works, you need to confess your self-centeredness to save anyone so that they can live for themselves. He wants everyone who has tasted His grace to engage in a life of good works.

Thus, genuine salvation involves God creating something new. It inevitably results in a life of good works because God ordained such works before He saved us. But the fact that God foreordained these works does not absolve us of responsibility. We must actively engage in such good works. There is one final idea:

## **THE GOOD WORKS THAT WE WALK IN SHOULD BE DONE IN A CORPORATE CONTEXT**

-made

baptizes us into the one body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). We are individually members of this body, each with a role to perform. But we must work in coordination and cooperation with other members of the body. Paul uses three words in verse 10 that point us towards this corporate aspect of these good work. Listen again to **verse 10**. Paul says, ***10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.***

### **3 Words in Ephesians 2:10 That Point Toward the Corporate Aspect of Good Work:**

- WE** - \**We* Jews and Gentiles together, who make up the body of Christ (2:22), where Paul shows the blessings that have been poured out on us corporately as members of this new entity, the church. One real danger in the early church was that it would split along racial lines, with the Jewish and Gentile Christians separating from one another. Paul strongly opposed this tendency, writing that *neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither Jew nor Gentile, neither circumcised nor uncircumcised, neither barbarian nor Scythian, slave or free, but all of us who are one in Christ Jesus* (2:11) and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but *all of us who are one in Christ Jesus* (2:12) -racial and multi-cultural.

- WORKMANSHIP** - \**Workmanship*

carefully crafted to fit together so that the whole presents a beautiful picture that the individual words cannot convey in isolation. The corporate creation shows forth His nature and glory as the various parts work together in harmony.

- CREATED** - \**Created* This points us to the church as the one new man (2:15). We are the body of which Christ is the head. What was lost by the first created man, Adam, God is recovering through the new man, Christ and the church.

The practical application is that we need to learn to work together more closely in the local church. As members of the body, we need to think and work interdependently. Many times I hear of people who launch new ministries or mission endeavors independently of the local church. Often these people have been hurt by a local church. Rather than working through their differences, they just go out on their own, usually without any coordination or

place for independent mission or evangelistic agencies, I think that they need to be much more closely tied to the church. Together, we can reflect Christ to this community in a way that we cannot if we act independently of one another.

## CONCLUSION

In closing, there are two main applications.

### **2 Closing Applications from Ephesians 2:10:**

1. **Make sure that you are a new creation in Christ** - Have you *truly* been saved by His grace through faith in Christ alone? Spurgeon (*ibid.*, p. 150) pointed out that the only

of being creators; and the further you retreat from self-conceit the better, for it is God

to drive you to such despair as would be the means of your flying to Christ, and that is precisely what I desire. It would be greatly to your gain if you never again indulged a shred of hope in your own works, and were the point is, you cannot work *for* God until God first has done His work of saving grace *in* you.

2. **If you have been saved, the focus of your life should be, “Lord, what will You have me to do?”** - Paul asked God that question immediately after his experience on the

plan and walk in it.

So do you!