

## **Grace vs. Works**

### **Romans 3:19-31**

When I was growing up, I remember hearing about grace in church. I didn't know what it meant, way back then, to be saved by grace. And most people who believe themselves to be Christians do not know what the word grace means.

They do not know what saved by grace means. They prove it over and over again when they leave You Tube comments.

And then there are people who believe themselves to be Christians who don't know what the definition of works are in the Bible. And listen, this is not difficult but people out there, especially false preachers telling lies, are making simple definitions of words difficult.

### **The Definitions of Grace and Work**

For example, "believing" happens in your mind, heart, and soul, WITHIN. Believing happens within. But there are false preachers teaching that believing means to take action. You don't get to change simple definitions of words. You aren't the authority over the dictionary. Changing definitions of words makes you a liar.

The definition of grace is the freely given, and unmerited, favor and love of God. Grace is not earned. By definition is it freely given. Again, it is free. You don't earn something that is free. If you earned it, then it's not free. Grace is free.

If someone makes you mad because they did you wrong, and you give them grace, this means they didn't earn it or deserve it. You gave them grace. They deserved your wrath, but you GAVE them grace.

#### **""Ephesians 2:8-9**

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.""

This verse specifically, specifically, specifically talks about you being saved. "For by grace are ye saved through faith."

When we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that happens from within, it's not some action we physically take. Faith, believing, trusting in Jesus are all the same thing to be saved. If we are saved by grace, it's free to us. We don't earn it by doing good or being good. If we earned it, it's not grace. And we're only saved by God's grace meaning it's free to us.

But people want to earn salvation themselves making themselves high and lifted up, and thinking they are something they aren't. They think they are good enough to get to heaven. They aren't good enough to get to heaven.

The Bible says, "And that not of yourselves." You aren't good enough for heaven. You've sinned. You're a sinner.

"It is the gift of God." Salvation is the gift of God. He wants to give you the free gift of salvation. What is that gift exactly? It's everlasting life. It's free. You only receive it by God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Salvation is Not of Works**

Verse 9 right there, specifically says "not of works" lest any man should boast. Since it's only by grace, it can't be of works. Working for something means you deserve it. Grace is free. Working for something isn't free. You can't work to earn salvation. If you think you're going to do some work to earn salvation, you do not get salvation.

The definition of work is toiling and laboring. It is exerting effort to produce or accomplish something. Believing in your mind is not a work. You aren't toiling and laboring. You aren't exerting effort to produce or accomplish something. Some people would argue that believing is a work. The Bible says it's not a work done by you.

What is the definition of good works? Remember, we're talking about grace versus works. We are clearly saved by grace and not by our good works.

What are good works?

By definition, good works are a person's exterior actions and deeds that align with moral teachings. Good works are actions that follow God's commandments. That's what it means to do good works.

God commands children to obey their parents. When I ask my daughters to help clean the house, they do it. That's work. That's good work. God commands us to go out and preach the Gospel. That takes work. We go out preaching the Gospel. We do good works. It takes work.

Coming to church is work. Studying the Bible is work. Reading the Bible is work. Repenting of sin is something you do. And it takes a lot of work. It's very difficult to resist sin, turn from that sin, and do something else so that you don't sin. For example, it can be very difficult for people to stop doing drugs. It can be very difficult for people to stop drinking alcohol.

## **Repenting of Sin Does Not Equal Grace**

But it's something they do. They must take action. It's work. It's hard work.

""**Jonah 3:9-10**

Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? 10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.""

"And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way." That right there, the perfect word of God, the holy Scriptures, say that turning from sin is work. We are not saved by not sinning because we've already sinned and we continue to sin.

Can we turn from certain sins? Yes we can. And we should turn from sin. But we can't completely stop sinning. Hopefully, you will do better and better in your life but as long as you are in this flesh you will sin. Stopping sin is hard work. God says so.

Getting baptized in water is a work that you do. It's not something God did for you. He commands you to get baptized in water after you have been saved. It's a commandments that requires you to do some work or take action yourself. It's a good work that you do.

### **God Saw Their "Works" That They Turned From Sin**

And we know for sure that we are not saved by our works. We are saved by grace through faith, which is free.

""**Titus 3:5**

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;""

We are not saved by any works that we do. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done." Getting baptized in water is a work of righteousness that we do. God doesn't get baptized in water for us. We do it. It's a work of righteousness that we do. But we aren't saved by getting baptized in water because that's not what Jesus did for us.

He died. He was buried. His soul was not left in hell. He arose from the dead. He paid for all of our sins. Our good works don't pay for our sins.

For example, I can go soul winning all day long every day the rest of my life and that won't forgive me of one sin. Not one. I can go soul winning all day long. And then go out and party all night long and sin the entire night. That soul winning I did doesn't atone for my sin that I do that night. Not even a little. Understand that.

Now look closely there at that verse. "But according to his mercy he saved us." If God has mercy on us, that means we didn't do something good. We did something bad and God has mercy on us. We don't earn salvation from doing good. We've already done many, many things wrong.

For example, if we put my life up on the screens there and you saw the worst parts of me, you would for sure think I am headed for hell. And I should be. If we take your life, the worst times,

the worst sins, and we put it up there on the screen, we would all think that you're headed for hell. All of us deserve hell.

The good things we do can't pay for the bad that we've done.

For example, let's say you go out and do good all week. For almost the full 7 day week you do good. You got out soul winning all 7 days. But let's say the last 5 minutes, you go speeding down the road at 100 mph and you hit a person crossing the road and you kill them.

### **You Did Wrong And Doing Right Doesn't Reverse It**

You go into court and you ask the judge to let you go free and clear because you did good most of the week. That judge is only judging you on the fact that you killed a man because you were breaking the law. You broke the law. You get the penalty. You need mercy because you did wrong.

We need God's mercy. We need God's grace. Grace, again, is the freely given, and unmerited, favor and love of God. He gives us everlasting life because we believe in Jesus Christ. Not because we repent of sin, get baptized in water, go to church, read the Bible, or help people in need.

The Bible clearly explains grace vs. works over and over again. But yet, people will still contact me often and tell me that I'm preaching lies about being saved by grace through faith alone in Jesus. They will say, you must get baptized, you must repent of sin, you must keep doing good works to get to heaven. They have no idea what grace means. No clue.

Watch this Scripture closely. I want you to see this.

#### **""Romans 4:1-3**

What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.""

How did Abraham receive God's righteousness? Abraham believed God. He believed. Continuing in the next verse.

### **Don't Work for Salvation but Believe on Jesus Christ**

#### **""Romans 4:4-5**

Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.""

Now to him that worketh. If you want to work for heaven. If you want to work for salvation. What does the Bible say? "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

You are in debt to God, obviously. You've sinned. The penalty for sin is death. If you want to work to overcome death, you are in debt. And you will never pay that debt except through hell. If you want to work for it, you owe a great debt.

Grace and works are opposite. Grace means you don't deserve it. It's free. Work means you think you deserve it, and you believe you are earning it. Getting baptized in water is a work and that will never earn you heaven because you can't earn heaven. You can't work for heaven to purchase heaven.

I can't go out and work an hour and purchase Buckingham Palace in London that's supposedly worth \$4.9 billion. Getting baptized in water to earn heaven is an even more extreme example than that. And it's not even an hour of work for you.

### **To Him That Worketh Not**

Verse 5 says, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." But to him that worketh not but believeth on Jesus Christ. But to him that worketh not. But to him that worketh not. His faith is counted for righteousness.

Faith is not work. Faith is believing IN Jesus Christ and not IN yourself or any works that you do.

If I told you I have to get baptized in water, repent of my sins, go to church, read the Bible, study the Scriptures, ask forgiveness every time I sin, follow the commandments, be kind to everyone, love everyone, and partake of the Lord's Supper every time, am I believing in myself and what I'm doing or am I believing IN Jesus and what He did?

Of course I am believing in myself and my works that I'm going to do. Some people who have totally lost it will say that all the things I just listed aren't works. Well, then what are they? Did all those things happen in my mind? Did I just imagine them or did I do them? It's work. Those are good works to do. But they don't earn you heaven. Heaven is too great. Our works are not.

### **Getting Baptized Doesn't Happen In Your Mind**

Those works we do aren't alive. They don't breathe. They are dead works. They do nothing to get us to heaven. You can't call upon your water baptism to save you? It doesn't have a name. You don't call upon your Bible reading to save you. "Oh great December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Bible reading, can you hear me? Please save me Bible reading."

Right? That's just silly. We call upon Jesus Christ to save us. We put our faith in Jesus Christ. He's alive. He can save us. I want you to see this as I could go on and on with Scriptures explaining how we are saved. It's only by the grace of God. It is not of works.

**""Galatians 2:19-21**

For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.""

The law is equal to God's commandments to us. Get baptized is a commandment from Jesus Christ who is God. Go to church is a commandment from God. Thou shalt not steal is a commandment from God. Thou shalt not bear false witness is a commandment from God. We have broken God's commandments.

James 2:10 says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." God's law is ONE LAW. If you break one, you broke the whole law. One law in the book broken means the whole book is broken. You are dead to the law. For the wages of sin is death. One sin. Break the one law. Penalty is death. "Through the law I am dead to the law."

**Nothing Else Required to Be Saved Because Jesus Did It All For You**

I am crucified with Christ. I have believed in His death, His burial, and His resurrection. Not in myself and not in my works. Christ liveth in me. The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God. He gave Himself for me so that I can live. Look closely at verse 21.

There's nothing else to being saved but God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. It's not difficult. It's easy. It's simple.

"I do not frustrate the grace of God." There are people out there everywhere frustrating the grace of God. Do not do that. It's free to you. Simply believe in Jesus Christ only for salvation. Nothing else. If you believe you have to be baptized in water to be saved, you frustrate the grace of God.

"For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." If you could follow the laws of God, the commandments of God, to get to heaven, then Jesus Christ didn't need to come and die on the cross to save you from all your sins. The work you do doesn't forgive sin. That's why Jesus had to come and die for you. So put your faith in Him only.

Don't frustrate the grace of God by adding any works to salvation. NOT OF WORKS. Some people will say that baptism in water isn't a work. What is it then? Don't be silly. Don't be foolish.

What is it then if it's not a work? Is it believing in your mind? Some people tell me that. Okay, let's all believe in our mind that we're getting baptized in water right now. Does that count? No, it doesn't count because we didn't physically do it. No work will get you to heaven. One good work won't do it. A billion good works won't do it.

## **Only By Grace And Not of Works**

### **""Romans 11:6**

And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.""

That right there tells you that grace and works are the exact opposite. The dictionary tells you the same. By definition, grace is free, unmerited, not earned but given. Work is not free, merited, earned and not given freely. Work is work. Grace is grace. Exact opposites.

If you are saved by grace, then it is no more of works. Otherwise grace is no more grace. If it takes repenting of sin to be saved, then grace is no more grace. Then you aren't saved if you have only ever believed in your own works. You are only saved by grace.

"But if it be of works, then is it no more grace. Otherwise work is no more work." And that's what this world is doing. That's what many Baptist churches out there are doing. They are adding works, such as baptism in water and repenting of sin, to salvation, and then grace is no more grace. And then sin leads to death and death leads to hell.

If our good works saved us, we could boast about our good works. "Look at me. Look how great I am. Look how great my water baptism was. Look at how I went under that water. Look at how I came up out of that water with my hair glistening. Did you all get a picture of that? Did you see that?"

"Did you see my greatness?" Repenting of sin is a work. You literally repented of doing wrong. You did wrong. But now you think turning from that sin is saving you? You just did wrong. You should instead be saying, "Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner." You are a sinner. But somehow your work of repenting of sin is now so great that it saves you? You just sinned again.

## **Jesus marvelled Because of Their Unbelief**

### **""Mark 6:6**

And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.""

It's absolutely mind boggling how people can think that repenting of sin is saving them. You just sinned again and again and again. And now you go teach others how to be disobedient to the word of God? You just sinned again. Repent of the unbelief.

**""Romans 4:20**

He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;""

That's Abraham. God made a promise. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Simple promise. Abraham didn't stagger at the promise God made Him. Others stagger at it. "Well, that's too good to be true." No it's not. God said it. It's true. Abraham didn't stagger. "But was strong in faith."

Now don't miss that last part. When we believe in God, when we are strong in faith, we give all the glory to God and not ourselves. Grace glorifies God. Works glorifies you. Your works leads to you boasting. Grace doesn't lead to any boasting but instead glorifies God. He did it all. Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain. He washed it white as snow.

Not you. Not me. Jesus.

## **The Lord Doesn't Save Us Because of Our Righteousness**

**""Deuteronomy 9:6**

Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.""

I could go on and on with Scriptures. There are entire books written explaining that we are only saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ and His work. He did all the work. We believe in Him. I'll leave you with just one more.

**""2 Timothy 1:9**

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, ""

The Bible is very clear when it comes to grace vs. works. "Who hath saved us NOT according to our works." Not according to our works. Is that hard to understand? No, it isn't. "But according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus."

GIVEN NOT EARNED. Grace not works. Exact opposites. The Bible is very clear. We are only saved by grace. And you better believe that because you are only saved by grace.

Let's pray.