

Faith and works.



the grudge match of the ages!

The Five *Solae* of the protestant reformation.

The Five Solas are five Latin phrases (or slogans) that emerged from the Protestant Reformation intended to summarize the Reformers' basic theological principles in contrast to certain teachings of the Roman Catholic Church of the day.

"Sola" is Latin meaning "alone" or "only" and the corresponding phrases are:

- **Sola Scriptura:** by Scripture alone.
- **Sola Fide:** by faith alone.
- **Sola Gratia:** by grace alone.
- **Solus Christus:** through Christ alone.
- **Soli Deo Gloria:** glory to God alone.



According to Martin Luther, justification by faith alone is the article on which the church stands or falls.

The Five *Solae* of the protestant reformation.

***Sola fide*, also known as the doctrine of justification by faith alone.**

This is the Christian theological doctrine that distinguishes most Protestant denominations from Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, and some in the Restoration Movement.

The doctrine of *sola fide* or "by faith alone" asserts God's pardon for guilty sinners is granted to and received through faith alone, excluding all "works".

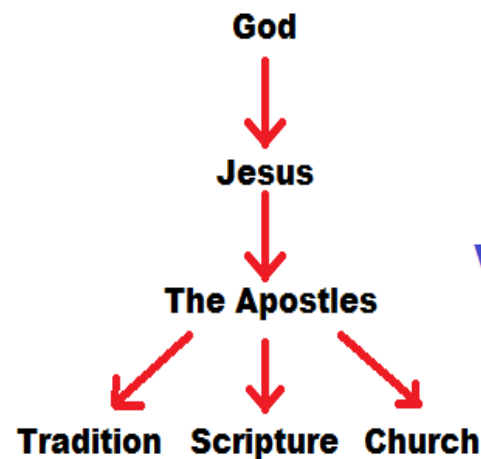
All mankind, it is asserted, is fallen and sinful, under the curse of God, and incapable of saving itself from God's wrath and curse. But God, on the basis of the life, death, and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ alone (*solus Christus*), grants sinners judicial pardon, or justification, which is received solely through faith.

The big difference is that some see faith as been passive, merely receiving Christ and all his benefits, while others believe that faith is active and that genuine faith is accompanied by action.

Justification by faith alone.

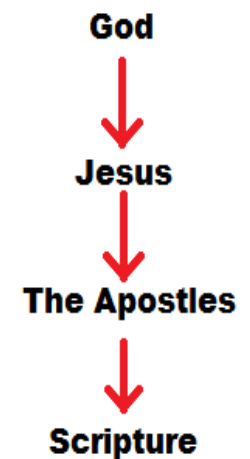
Sola fide, “Faith alone” is foundational to Protestantism, and distinguishes it from other Christian denominations.

- Historic Protestantism (both Lutheran and Reformed) has held to sola-fide justification in opposition to Roman Catholicism especially, but also in opposition to significant aspects of Eastern Orthodoxy. Protestants exclude all human works, except the works of Jesus Christ, which form the basis of justification.
- In the General Council of Trent the Catholic Church stated in canon XIV on justification that "If any one saith, that man is truly absolved from his sins and justified, because that he assuredly believed himself absolved and justified; or that no one is truly justified but he who believes himself justified; and that by this faith alone absolution and justification are effected; let him be anathema (excommunicated). "



CATHOLIC

VS



PROTESTANT

Faith and works.

There is a word in some Christian circles that has become a dirty word....

“WORK”

However there is no way of getting away from the fact that God’s purpose for us is not to sit around marking time until the 2nd coming of Jesus, there is work to do.



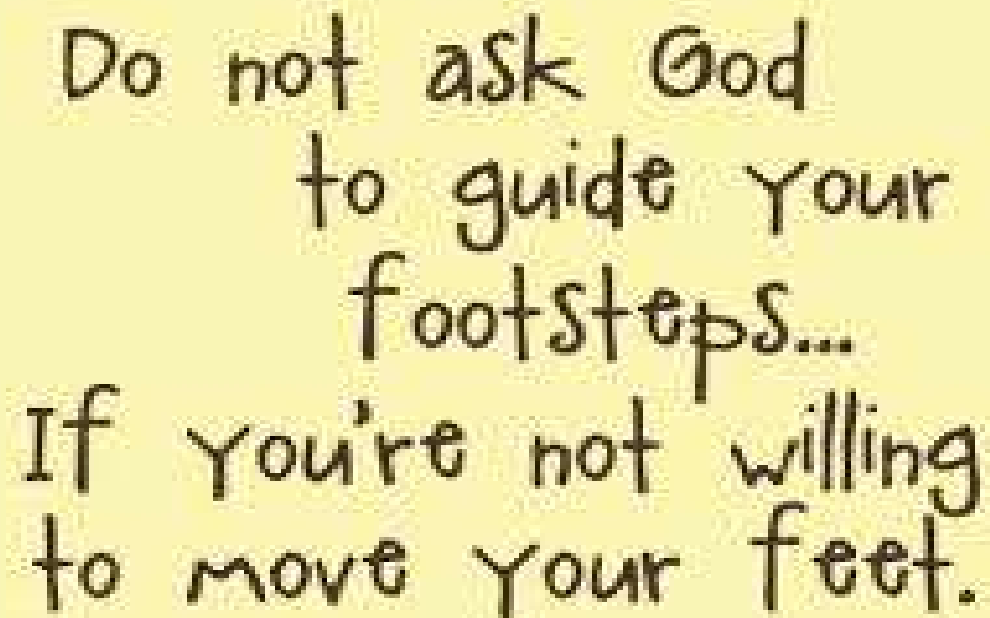
Faith and works.

The problem is that in an attempt to get people to realise that they cannot work for, or earn their Salvation

(it is a gift offered by God in His Grace)

The impression has been somehow created by some preaching the Gospel, that work or Christian service is not important, and that it is an optional extra for those who would like rewards in heaven.

James 2:14-17 warns us that a faith that is not displayed by works is a DEAD FAITH.



Do not ask God
to guide your
footsteps...
If you're not willing
to move your feet.

Faith and works.

James 2:14-17.

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?

Can such faith save him?

Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food.

If one of you says to him, Go, I wish well: keep warm and well fed, but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.



Faith and works.

James 2:18-22.

But someone will say, You have faith; I have deeds. Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder. You foolish man do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did....

NB: v24: *You see a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.*

Salvation will only be given to those who repent and obey God.



Salvation is not attained by works.

Titus 3:5.

He saved us not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:8-10.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-not by works, so that no one can boast.

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

We don't do good deeds to get saved, we do them because we are saved.

**GRACE
GIVEN
BY**

Christ must work through us.

John 15:4,5.

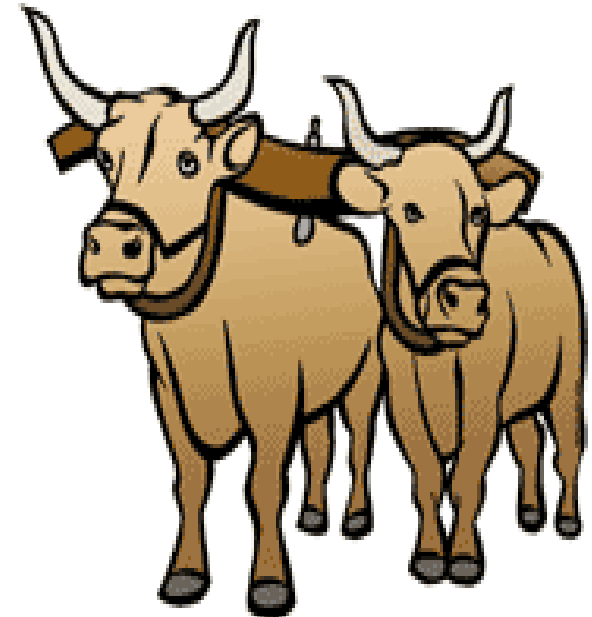
Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you except you abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abides in me and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Psalms 127:1.

Unless the LORD builds the house the builders labour in vain, unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.

Matthew 11:28,29. (KJV)

Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.



There will not always be opportunities to work.

John 9:4.

As long as it is day we must do the works of him who sent me.
Night is coming, when no one can work.



Galatians 6:9,10.

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Faith and works.

Are we justified by faith (Romans) or by works (James)? [Matt Slick](#)

Romans 3:20.

Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight.

Rom. 3:28.

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

For what does the Scripture say?

Rom. 4:3.

And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

Rom. 5:1.

Therefore, having been justified by faith.

Rom. 4:5.

But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.

Faith and works.

In James it says:

James 2:24.

You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.

James 2:26.

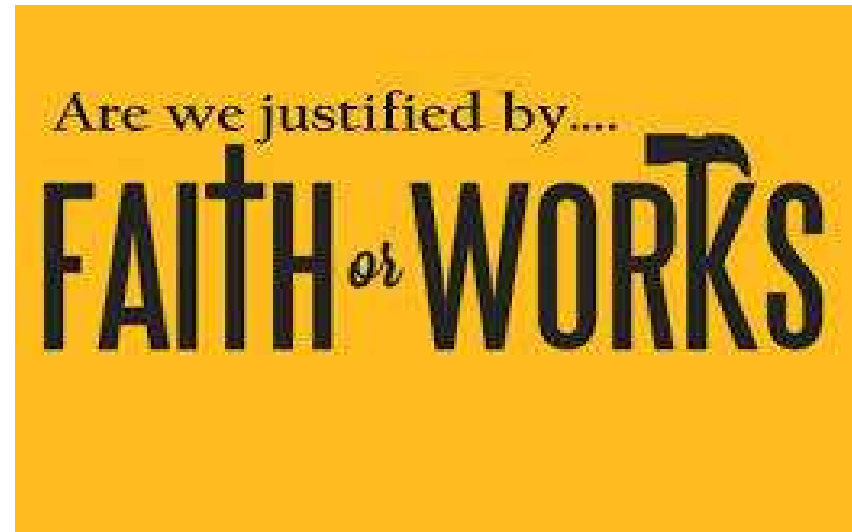
So also faith without works is dead.

Which is it?

Are we justified by faith or by works?

Does the Bible Contradict Itself?

It is a fundamental Christian belief that we are justified by faith. Justification means that God declares a sinner to be righteous. He does this by crediting, by reckoning the righteousness of Jesus to the sinner. This is done by faith. That is, when the sinner puts his faith in the sacrifice of Jesus and trusts in Him and not himself for righteousness, then God justifies him.



Faith and works.

Rom. 4:3.

And Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

But, if the Bible teaches that we are justified by faith, does it also teach we are justified by works as James seems to say?

Do we have a contradiction? The answer is no.

Context is Everything

It is erroneous to take a verse, read it without its context, and then attempt to develop a doctrine from that verse alone. Therefore, let's take a look at the context of James 2:24 which says that a man is justified by works. James, chapter 2, has 26 verses:

Verses 1-7 instruct us not to show favouritism.

Verses 8-13 are comments on the Law.

Verses 14-26 are about the relationship between faith and works.

Faith and works.

Notice that James begins this section by using the example of someone who says he has faith: verse 14. He then immediately gives an example of what true and false faiths are.

He begins with the negative and demonstrates what an empty faith is (verses 15-17). Then he gives an example of the type of faith that isn't much different from the faith of demons (verse 19).

Finally, he gives examples of living faith by showing Abraham and Rahab as the type of people who demonstrated their faith by their deeds.

James is examining two kinds of faith:

One that leads to godly works and one that does not.

One is true, and the other is false.

One is dead, the other alive, hence,

James 2:20.

Faith without works is dead.

I cannot overemphasize the need to get this exactly right. Works are not really what we DO so much as what God manifests through and in us because we are looking at what He did in Jesus Christ.

Faith and works.

James 2:19.

You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

James says the demons believe in God, that is, they have faith, but the faith they have is useless. It does not result in appropriate works, it is only a mental acknowledgment of God's existence.

Two words are worth introducing here: **Ascentia** and **Fiducia**.

Ascentia is the mental assent--the mental acknowledgment of something's existence. The demons acknowledge and believe that God exists.

Fiducia is more than mental acknowledgment. It involves a trust in something a giving over to it, a complete believing and acceptance of something. This is the kind of faith that a Christian has in Christ. A Christian, therefore, has fiducia, that is, he has real faith and trust in Christ and not simply an acknowledgment that He lived on earth at one time.

Faith and works.

- Justification by faith alone has been opposed by Roman Catholicism, which says that a combination of our faith and good works provides for our justification. One impetus for this understanding has been Rome's fear that the doctrine of justification by faith alone would encourage people to live immoral lives. Rome fears that this doctrine might lead some to think that the casual acceptance of Jesus without any change in one's life is the kind of faith that justifies.
- In order to meet such objections, the Protestant Reformers were careful to outline the biblical definition of faith in their writings. True faith always leads to a changed life. The definition of biblical faith given by the Reformers showed that faith is not merely a casual acceptance of Jesus, faith has three essential aspects: *notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia*.
- **nōtitia**: notice, acquaintance (KNOWLEDGE)
- **assēnsus**: agreed with, assented to, approved (BELIEF)
- **fiducia**: trust, faith, confidence, credit (COMMITMENT)

Faith and works.

Apparently, there were people who were saying that they were Christians but were not manifesting any of the fruit of Christianity.

Can this faith justify? Can the dead 'faith' that someone has which produces no change in a person and no good works before men and God be a faith that justifies? Absolutely not. It is not merely enough to say you believe in Jesus. You must actually believe and trust in Him. If you actually do, then you will demonstrate that faith by a changed and godly life. If not, then your profession is of no more value than the same profession of demons: "We believe Jesus lived."

Notice that James actually quotes the same verse that Paul uses to support the teaching of justification by faith in Rom. 4:3. James 2:23 says, "and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'and Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.'" If James was trying to teach a contradictory doctrine of faith and works than the other New Testament writers, then he would not have used Abraham as an example.

Two kinds of belief - Ascentia and Fiducia.

Ascentia is the mental ascent, the rational acknowledgment of something's existence. The demons acknowledge and believe that God exists but do not act based on that belief.

Fiducia is more than mental acknowledgment. It involves a trust in something, a giving over to it, a complete believing and acceptance of something. This is the kind of faith that a Christian is supposed to have in Christ. A Christian has to have fiducia; not simply ascentia or an acknowledgment that Christ lived on earth at one time. Therefore, we are justified by faith. That is, we are made righteous in the eyes of God by faith as is amply demonstrated by Romans. However, that faith, if it is true, will result in deeds appropriate to salvation.

Eph. 2:8-10. *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 should walk in them.*

Even healing requires obedience.

John 9:1-7.

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Neither this man nor his parents sinned, said Jesus, but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.



Even healing requires obedience.

John 9:1-7.

While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. Go, he told him, wash in the Pool of Siloam"
(this word means "Sent")

So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

Faith in Jesus was demonstrated by his obedience in going to the pool of Siloam and washing the mud off his eyes.

Remember "Naaman"



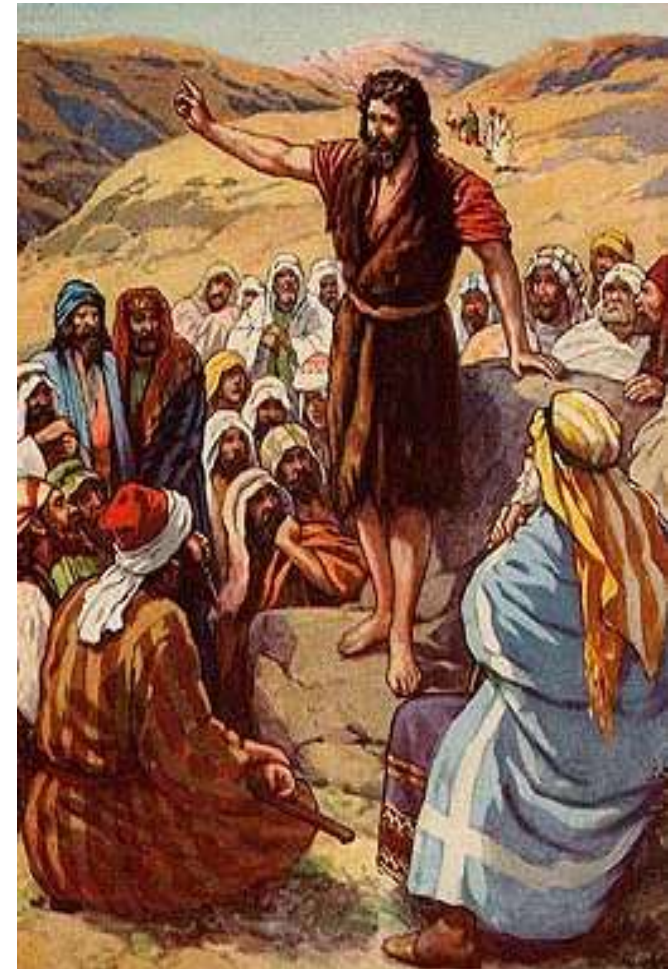
Works are evidence of repentance.

Matt 3:7,8.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptising, he said to them: You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

Acts 26:20.

First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.



Works are evidence that we know God.

Titus 1:16.

They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him.....

1 John 2:3,4.

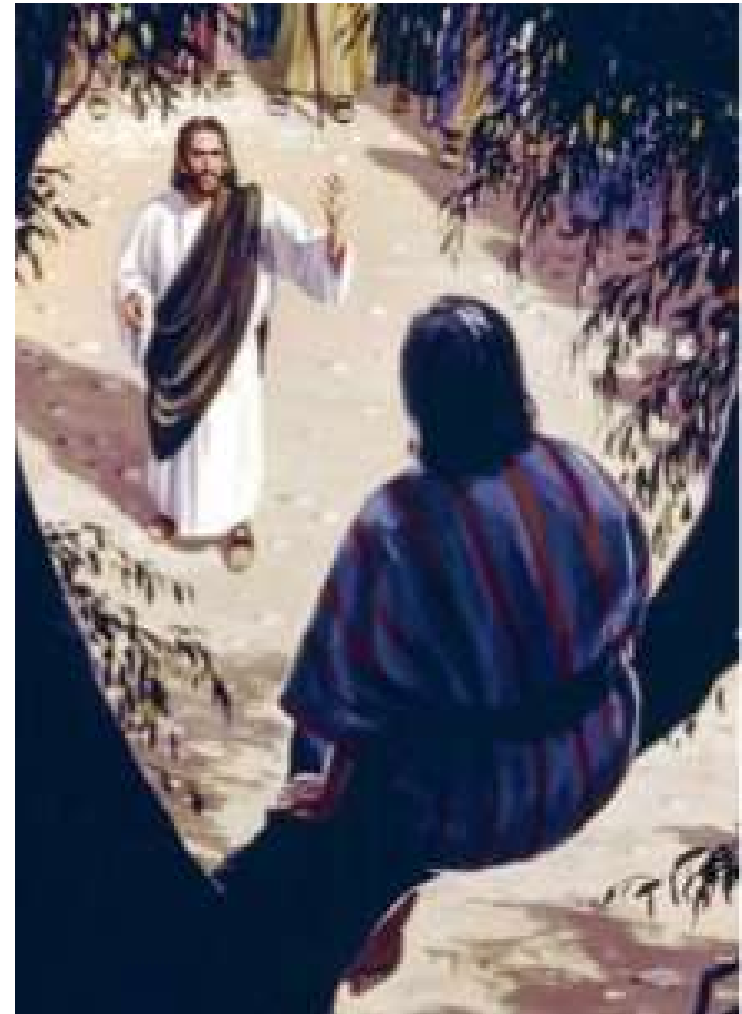
We know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commands.

Whoever says I know him but does not do what he commands is a liar and the truth is not in that person.

Zacchaeus is a prime example of how entering into a relationship with Jesus Christ changes your behaviour.

Luke 19:7-10.

Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount. Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to this house.....



The absence of works shows we don't know God.

The rich young ruler.

Luke 18:20-24.

You know the commandments: Do not commit adultery, ..do not steal, do not.. all these things I have kept since I was a boy” he said.

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in Heaven. Then come follow me.

When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth.



The absence of works shows we don't know God.

The Rich man with the poor man at his gate.

Luke 16:19-31.

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

Both died and the rich man went to Hades and was in torment while Lazarus was taken to Abraham's side.

The only thing pointing to the rich man's character was his lack of concern for Lazarus.

WHO IS LYING AT YOUR GATE?



We bring glory to God by doing good works.

John 17:4.

I have brought glory to you on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

Matt 5:16.

Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

1 Peter 2:12.

Live such good lives amongst the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

The letters to the seven Churches in Revelation have a common opening address in each one.

Revelation 2:2, 9, 13, 19 & 3:1, &15..

I know your works.

How can we say works are not important?



What has God given to prepare us for good works?

2 Timothy 3:16-18.

All scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Ephesians 4:11,12.

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.



Our motives in service are vital.

1 Corinthians 13.

If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love I gain nothing.

Philippians 1:15-18.

It is true the some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defence of the Gospel. The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But what does it matter, the important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached, and because of this I rejoice. Yes and I will continue to rejoice.



Our attitude in service is important.

Phil 2:5-7.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Jesus Christ: Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant.. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

1 Peter 4:11.

If anyone serves they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

When we serve in our own strength we grumble and complain and dishonour the Lord.

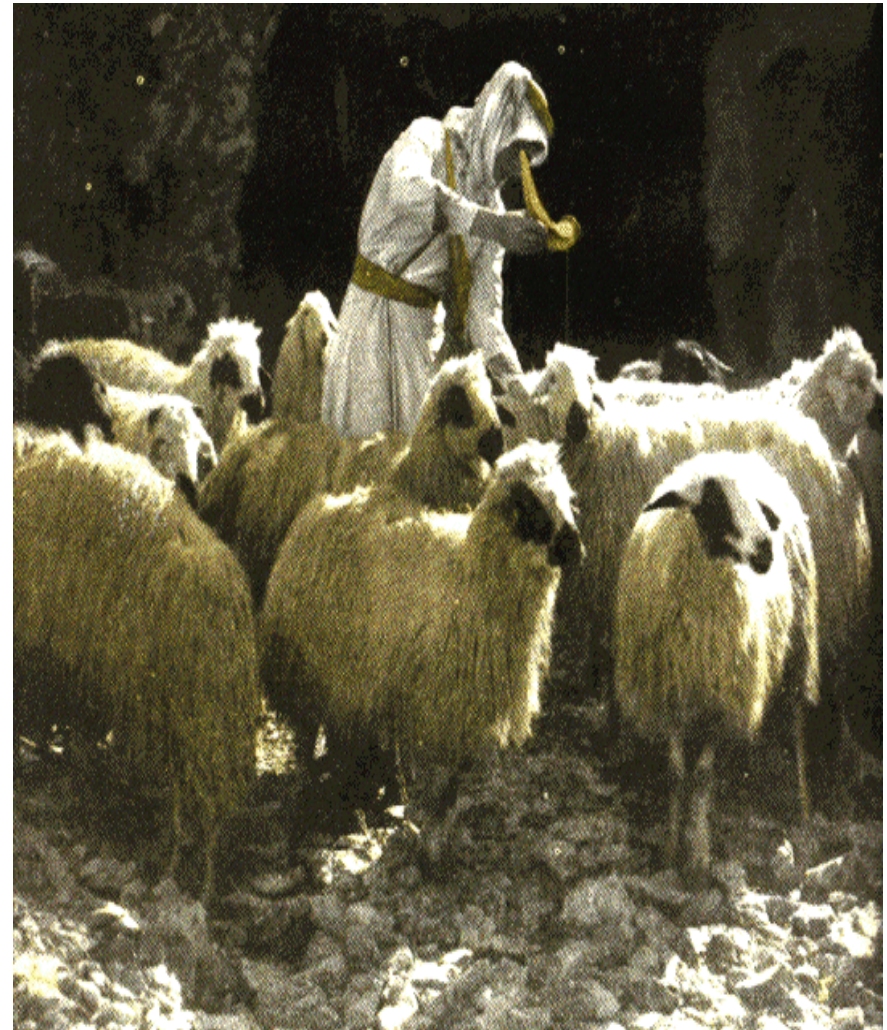
Luke 17:7-10.

When we have done everything we should do, we should still realise we are unworthy servants.

Our attitude is important.

Luke 17:7-10.

Suppose one of you had a servant ploughing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, come along now and sit down to eat? Would he not rather say, Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.



Jesus' example.

John 13:12-15.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. Do you understand what I have done for you? he asked them. You call me Teacher and Lord and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

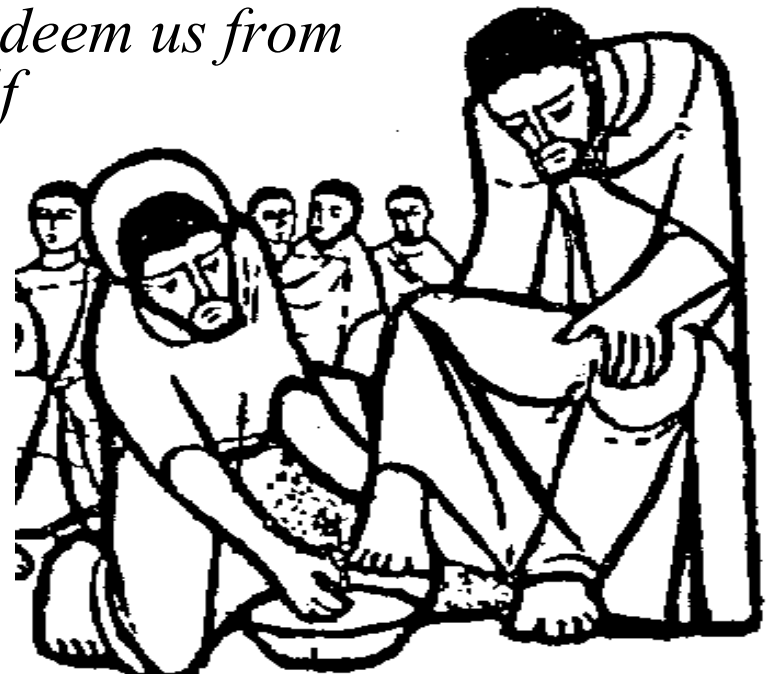
Good works must be encouraged.

Titus 2:14.

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from every lawless deed, and purify for himself a people for his own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Hebrews 10:24.

Let us consider how to provoke (SPUR) one another to love good works..



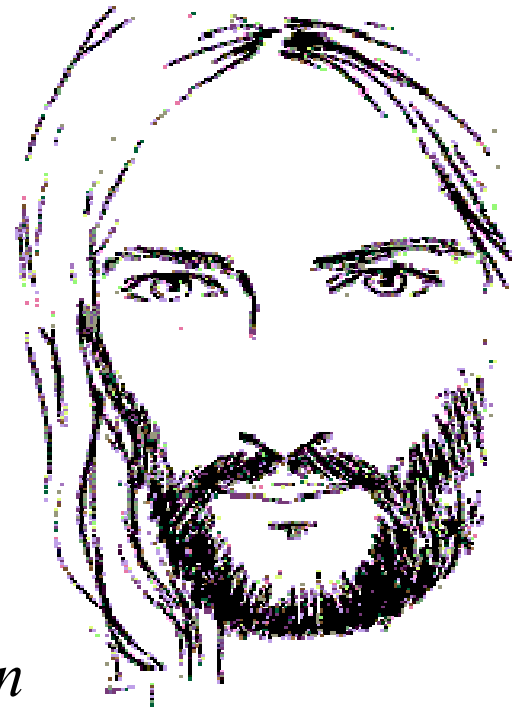
SUMMARY: Works cannot save us.

We must never lose sight of the fact that works or good deeds cannot save us, we must know Jesus.

Matthew 7 v21.

Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in Heaven.

Many will say to me on that day, Lord. Lord did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you away from me, you evildoers.



Good works are evidence that we are born again.

1 John 2:3-6.

We know that we have come to know him, if we obey his commands. The man who says I know him, but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him..... This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

SUMMARY: Works cannot save us.

Religion says: If I am good, God will love me.

**True Christianity says: Because God loves me,
He will make me good.**



The Christian does not think God will love us because we are good, but that God will make us Good because He loves us.

CS Lewis (1898-1963)

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