

Living a Fruitful Life The Fruit of Good Deeds

Intro: In our recent lessons we've been looking at various ways that we may bear fruit for the Lord. We can do that through the cultivation of godly character. Second we can do that through edifying speech. Third we can bear fruit through what the Scripture simply calls "good deeds."

Even today people will sometimes say, "I did my good deed for the day." Such an idea is thoroughly Biblical; and the Scriptures often discuss this important topic. Let's consider some things the Scriptures tell us.

Good deeds are not attempts to earn heaven by good works.

Sometimes people may feel that good deeds are like merit points that earn them a place in heaven. Such a view misunderstands the Bible teaching on grace and faith.

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. (Eph. 2:8-9)

The Scriptures are clear on this point. Our good deeds cannot erase our sins. We are lost people in need of salvation and we can't work our way back into God's good graces by works, nor can we repay God for our salvation through our good deeds..

Good deeds are the result of God's work in us.

Paul likens the church to the first creation of God. Just as God said to the humans, "Be fruitful and multiply," so God likewise seeks fruit from his new spiritual creation. Essentially, the command is the same, "Be fruitful and multiply!"

Just as God created within the creation the capacity for fruit-bearing, so He works in us to produce fruit as well.

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. (Eph. 2:8-10)

Good deeds reveal our appreciation for the redemption we've received through Christ.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; 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. (Tit. 2:11-14)

If our lives have been saved from eternal destruction, surely we can extend a hand to save another life.

Good deeds are acts that meet pressing needs.

And let our people also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, that they may not be unfruitful. (Titus 3:14)

We can see a good example in the NT, when the Gentile Christians took up collections for the survival of the needy saints in Jerusalem. Such good deeds Paul called their “fruit.”

Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain. (Rom. 15:28)

Good deeds are a tree of life to the dying.

Solomon in the Proverbs expressed the value of fruitful deeds.

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls. (Prov. 11:30)

I, like many preachers before me, once misunderstood this verse to be talking about evangelism in the reference to winning souls. We even have a song based on the idea: “I want to be a soul winner for Jesus.” That’s important; but probably not what Solomon was talking about.

In the first place, the Jews were not evangelists with a gospel to preach; and the proverbs were originally addressed to the Jews. A more accurate understanding of the text points us in a different. It affirms that the good deeds which righteous people do bring life to the dying and thus by those deeds saves or wins lives or souls.

Good deeds bring glory to God.

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Mt. 5:16)

Once it is clear that our good deeds are the result of our salvation and God’s work in us, then it makes sense that He is the one glorified by good deeds. Doing good for one’s own self-glorification is a polar opposite of what a true disciple does. His actions are calculated to honor God alone, not bring credit to himself.

Good deeds will cause us to be remembered with love and gratitude by others.

Often at funerals I remember the scene of Acts nine:

Now in Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity, which she continually did. (Acts 9:36).

And Peter arose and went with them. And when he had come, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them. (Ac. 9:39)

Conclusion: Knowing the great value of such deeds, Paul prayed this prayer for the Colossians: so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of

God; (Col. 1:10) And so should we pray, that our lives will show the fruit of good deeds every day.

Let us use our meetings as an opportunity to promote and encourage good deeds:

and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Pick out someone and find out what you may do to meet a pressing need of theirs; and then “do your good deed for the day.”