

## Your Works *or* God's Works?

*The Father's part, Christ's part and our part in the finishing the plan of God*

Freed R. Coulter—July 28, 2018

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services! Today we're going to cover *works*: God's works, our works, Satan's works, and are works necessary for salvation?

Most of the Christian world out there does not believe in works. Yet, we will show you that they have their works, God has His works and we have our works. I think you're going to find it very fascinating and very interesting.

Psalms 19 is a very interesting Psalm, because in a way it is a mini-reflection of the plan of God, His creation, what He's done and why He's done it.

Psalms 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His **handiwork**." *The work of God!* Now think about this. By speaking to create, *God works*.

Verse 2: "Day after day they pour forth speech, and night after night they reveal knowledge." *Absolutely true!* The sounds coming from outer space are voluminous!

Verse 3. "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth and their words to the ends of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun" (vs 3-4).

You have the sun, then you have the solar system, and that's kind of enveloped in a power structure of magnetism, many different forms of magnetism to keep everything there:

- to keep it all working
- to keep the sun burning
- to keep the planets in their circuits going around the sun
- to keep the earth turning
- to keep the moon moving

*Everything that there is; That's all God's handiwork!*

Verse 5: "Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices as a strong man set to run a race, its going forth is from one end of heaven, and its circuit is to the other end. And there is nothing hidden from its heat" (vs 5-6). *That talks about the creation of God!*

Here's another creation of God: His Law, His commandments. Did He not speak them? *Yes He did! He created them!*

Verse 7: "The Law of the LORD is perfect,

restoring the soul..." *That's what we need! We need our lives restored in the Spirit of God and in the Truth of God so that we can go forward on to eternal life!*

"...the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the LORD are pure... [nothing wrong with them] ...enlightening the eyes" (vs 7-8). That's how the simple are made wise: *with the Word of God through His commandments and Spirit!*

Verse 9: "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether."

Think about that for just a minute! You go back to Rev. 16 when God gives the seven last plagues the angel says, 'True and righteous are your judgment O God.'

Verse 10: "More to be desired than gold, yea, much fine gold..." *Everybody desires to be rich have money have fame and power all of those things, but all of that is vanity!*

What we are called unto are the *true riches*, greater than fine gold. As a matter of fact, gold will be under our feet in New Jerusalem. That shows you the value of gold in relationship to God.

Verse 11: "Moreover by them Your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.... [that goes all the way back to Rev. 22] ...Who can understand his errors? Oh, cleanse me from *my* secret faults... [that is another *work of God*, with Christ and the Father together] ...and keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins..." (vs 11-13).

How can that be unless you have the Holy Spirit of God, which your mind tells you, 'Hey, that's not such a good idea, better not do it?'

"...do not let them rule over me..." (v 13). *Don't let the sins rule over me!* We have found out as we've been going through the series in Second Corinthians, *we are to rule over sin and bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*

"...then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer" (vs 13-14). *Quite a Psalm, isn't it?*

Now let's look at Psa. 111<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>. This is one of the key Psalms, and when you read it

properly—and it's translated properly—it gives you a great understanding about:

- God's plan
- what He is doing
- why He's called us
- why He hasn't called the world, yet

Psalm 111:3:<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup> "**His work is glory and majesty...**" Think about that because that describes the whole plan of God in creating His family. 'Glory and majesty', and that includes New Jerusalem and the new heavens and new earth.

"...and His righteousness endures forever. He is made **a memorial** for His wonderful works..." (vs 3-4).

What is that memorial? *The Sabbath Day!* The one commandment of the ten that says 'Remember the Sabbath Day to keep **it** Holy.' Interesting that that's the one the world immediately forgets.

Little do they realize that in forgetting it, ignoring it, doing *their own* works, having *their own* religions, and all of this sort of thing, ***they're cutting themselves off from God and cutting themselves off from the knowledge of why they're here and what God is doing!***

"...the LORD is gracious and full of compassion. He has given food to those who fear Him; He will always be mindful of His covenant" (vs 4-5).

***God never forgets His covenant, nor does God ever break His covenant!*** It is human beings and those who are supposed to be in covenant with God that break the covenant, forget the covenant and walk away from it!

Verse 6: "He has declared to His people the power of His works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations." *Think about that in relationship to the Church!* This is actually a prophecy of the Church.

Verse 7: "The works of His hands are **truth and justice**; all His precepts are sure. They stand fast forever and ever; they are done in **truth and uprightness**" (vs 7-8).

I want you to consider everything that we have covered here as we come down to v 9: "He sent redemption unto His people; He has commanded His covenant forever; Holy and awesome is His name."

- What does all of this mean?
- How is it going to be understood?

Verse 10: "**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom**; a good understanding have

**all those who do His commandments**. His praise endures forever."

God is doing a fantastic and tremendous work. Yes, we're few and we're scattered; that's because we're the firstfruits. God is going to use us, as we will see in the coming Feast of Tabernacles:

- to rule the world
- to increase His family
- to increase what He is doing in greatness
- to increase the majesty of Truth and righteousness

*That's going to be something!*

Now let's get an overview and then we'll get into the details. Sometimes it's good to come to the details and then go to the overview; other times it's good to look at the overview and then come to the details. That's what we're going to do now.

***There are eight major places***—there may be some other minor ones found here and there—***that talk about the finished work of God***, which also means Christ. What is the first one?

We bring this up because Protestants say that if you give this little prayer and you say you believe in Jesus, and you say you repent of your sins, *then you are saved for all eternity* and everything is finished. That there is no work to do, you just believe and be nice. Well, ***that is as unscriptural as a comic book!***

We will find that there are **eight steps to finishing God's plan**, and that's from Genesis to Revelation and many spots to fill in between that, that's true.

We won't go through all the six days of creation that God did re-creating the earth and making it ready for mankind. Remember, He says He made a memorial for it, and here is the memorial. Now what are you to do with a memorial? *You are to remember it!*

### **Step #1—The Re-Creation of the Earth**

Genesis 2:1: "Thus **the heavens and the earth were finished**, and all the host of them. And by *the beginning of* the seventh day **God finished His work**, which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work, which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work, which God had created and made" (vs 1-3).

There it is! ***He finished it!*** You have to have a finished product if you're going to do and carry out a plan as vast as God's. Each step must be finished; all eight steps must occur.

Remember: seven is *complete*, eight is a *new*

*beginning*. But eight is also one. So, here we have the first finish that God did. Let's come forward with this and see what He has.

### **Step #2—The Ministry of Christ**

Everything goes through to the birth of Christ and His ministry. There's a lot to be finished in the plan of God. Let's see what Jesus said in relationship to His ministry and what He was doing. Jesus said to His disciples when they wanted to bring Him food:

John 4:34: "Jesus said to them, 'My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me, and **to finish His work.**' *It's joint, together!* What was said when man and woman were created? *Let Us make man in Our image after Our likeness male and female created He them!*

### **Step #3—The Gospel**

So, He tells the disciples, v 35: "Do not say that there are yet four months, and *then* the harvest comes. I say to you, look around. Lift up your eyes and see the fields, for they are already white to harvest."

Then He makes it clear—and that's for us—that we are entering into the labor of many, *many*, **many** down through the generations from Christ to us, down through the generations from the beginning to the disciples so that we enter into *their work*.

Verse 36: "And the one who reaps receives a reward, and gathers fruit unto eternal life; so that the one who is sowing and the one who is reaping may both rejoice together." When are we all going to rejoice together? *At the resurrection!*

Verse 37: "For in this the saying is true, that one sows and another reaps. I sent you to reap that in which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor" (vs 37-38). *That's certainly true!*

- How did we get the Bible? *It was all finished a long time before we ever came into this world!*
- What do we do with it? *We carry on with it the way God wants us to do it!*

John 17—Protestants turn here and say this shows that Jesus finished the work. I'm going to show you that doesn't include everything because other things are yet to come.

John 17:1: "Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You; since You have given Him authority over all flesh, in order that He may

give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send" (vs1-3).

Why did He pray that? *Because at that time when He was praying He was still in the flesh!* The Father was the only *true* God. Jesus was God manifested in the flesh until after the crucifixion death and resurrection.

Verse 4: "I have glorified You on the earth. **I have finished the work that You gave Me to do.**"

What work was that? *That was the work of preaching the Gospel! That was the work of preparing the apostles!* But He had something else to finish. This does not count the crucifixion, yet. Yes, it is the night before the crucifixion, but He had to go through it. Remember when He went into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray and ask God for the strength to go through what He knew He had to go through.

- He was the One Who prophesied it
- He was the One Who willingly laid down His life to give it

He knew how absolutely excruciating, excoriating and devastating and unto death that this would be. He gave the prophecies that He would be more disfigured—His body—than any other man. So, *He knew!* But He had to finish this first. We've got:

1. creation
2. the ministry
3. the Gospel
4. crucifixion

### **Step #4—The Crucifixion**

John 19:30: "And so, when Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, '**It is finished.**'...."

That was a short separate part of the work of God. Yes, it was one terrible hideous day, but glorious from the point of view of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ Himself, the Creator of all mankind to save us from our sins.

What we're looking at is the framework of the various *stages of completion* that God is going through *to finish the work*.

### **Step #4—The First Resurrection**

We will see that at the resurrection that will finish another phase of the work of God.

Revelation 10:7: "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound *the trumpet*, **the mystery of God shall also be completed.**..."—*finished!*

Everyone in the first resurrection is going to be raised from the dead at the sound of the trumpet. That's *the finished complete work* beginning with repentance and baptism. That's *the finished and complete work of Christ* after He gave His life as the perfect sacrifice to make that happen. To be put in the grave three days and three nights and then be raised from the dead, and then go to the Father in heaven above.

And Jesus' work of ministry continued from that time continuously *down to the first resurrection* when the saints will be resurrected when *the mystery of God for this part of His plan is completed or finished*.

Revelation 11:15: "Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.'"

Whenever there is a completion there is also *a new beginning!* Isn't that true? Yes, indeed! We know that Jesus was given the sealed scroll, and in it were the seven seals, the seven trumpet plagues and the seven last plagues.

#### **Step #5—The End of this Age**

Let's see what happens with this. The seventh trumpet finished one major phase, *the resurrection of all the saints!* After that there's still a short period before we come back to the earth to take over the reins of government on the earth and so the seven last plagues have to be poured out.

Revelation 16:16: "And he gathered them together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. Then the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, '**IT IS FINISHED**'" (vs 16-17). *Amazing! That's quite a phase that was completed!*

#### **Step #6—Satan is Put Away and the Millennium Begins**

We know when the saints come to the earth and Satan is put away, that's Day of Atonement. Then the Millennium begins. Well, the Millennium has a beginning and an ending.

#### **Step #7—The Millennium Ends & the Second Resurrection**

Revelation 20:5: "(**But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed**.)...."—*finished! Quite a thing, isn't it? Yes, indeed!*

#### **Step #8—A New Beginning**

Remember that eight is *a new beginning*. What do we have here in Rev. 21? *A new beginning!*

Revelation 21:1: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I, John, **saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven**, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from heaven say, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men... [men and women made perfect] ...and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them *and be* their God'" (vs 1-3). *This goes all the way back to the beginning!*

Verse 4: "And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and *there* shall not be anymore death, or sorrow, or crying; neither shall *there* be any more pain, because the former things have passed away.'.... [ended] ...And He Who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'.... [a new beginning] ...Then He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.' And He said to me, '**It is done....**'" (vs 4-6). *That's finished!*

All this part of the plan of God; has been finished. So, with #8 that signals *a new beginning*. Think about that and how that fits in with everything that God does. There are other details given in Rev. 21 & 22; we'll cover that during the Feast of Tabernacles.

### **CHRIST'S WORKS**

What about our works for salvation? Everyone wants to know, what should they do *to do the work of God!* *or Do a work for God!* However most people *don't really believe* when they are told. This is the same thing here. So, let's look at what Jesus told them. *This is part of the work of Jesus*, because all of this has to do with Christ. Everything we do must be from God the Father and Jesus Christ. Not from ourselves to God, *but God to us!* Then we come back to God and to each other.

John 5:17: "But Jesus answered them, '**My Father is working** until now, and **I work.**'"

He said this on the Sabbath, because He healed the man on the Sabbath. Was that a work? *Yes it was, a spiritual work!* On the Sabbath there are *spiritual works* that we do. When we come together in fellowship that's a *spiritual work!* When we hear sermons and listen, change, grow and overcome *that's a spiritual work!* To bring messages on the Sabbath and so forth is a *spiritual work!* Notice how the Jews completely misunderstood.

Verse 18: "So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had loosed the Sabbath, but also

*because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.”

Sidebar on *loosed* the Sabbath: There are those Protestants who believe He abolished the Sabbath. But Jesus himself said He *did not* come to abolish the Sabbath; *He came to fulfill!* To fulfill the meaning of the Sabbath is to do healing on the Sabbath. That’s all part of *the work of God*.

And remember what we read back there in John 4, that *He wanted to finish the work that the Father had given Him to do!*

“...He had loosed the Sabbath, but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, **the Son has no power to do anything of Himself...**’” (vs 18-19).

Now let’s understand something here very clearly:

- Did Moses or any of those before him who walked with God do their own thing?
- What did Moses do?
- Did he figure out and design these laws for himself to give to the children of Israel? *No! God gave them to him!*
- What did Moses do? *Everything you read in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy!*

When Moses *spoke*, it was God Who said, ‘*Speak to the children of Israel and say...*’ So, God gave all the commandments; likewise here.

Verse 19: “Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder. For even as the Father raises the dead and gives life, in the same way also, the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son’” (vs 19-22).

*There’s a time for judging, and there’s a time for saving!* Remember that.

Verse 23: “**So that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father Who sent Him.**”

Then He says that He had this word from the Father, v 30: “I have no power to do anything of Myself...” That means *out from within His own physical being!* ***It had to come from the Father!***

“...but as I hear... [what the Father tells Him] ...I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father Who sent Me” (v 30). *Exactly as Moses!*

Now remember, Moses made one fatal mistake. God told him to *speak* to the rock and water would come out. Previously God told him to *strike* the rock and water would come out. Moses got so mad at the people, because they were coming after him wanting water, *water, water!* So, he got mad and he *struck* the rock.

God still sent the water, but then God told Moses ‘Because you didn’t obey Me and *struck* the rock when I told you to *speak* to the rock, you cannot go into the promise land.’

Of course, Moses is going to be in the Kingdom of God. But look at how important, in particular, that it is to follow the instructions of God. That’s the whole lesson here; ***it has to be done God’s way!***

This is about the man who was born blind. This is one of my favorite chapters in the Bible; John 9:1: “Now, *as Jesus was passing by*, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?’” (vs 1-2).

Think about that question. How can an infant in the womb sin to cause blindness? *Can’t be done!* That’s what you call one of those stupid questions. We all ask them from time to time.

Verse 3: “Jesus answered, ‘Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; rather, *this blindness came* so that **the works of God...** [and only the works of God can do this] **...might be manifested in him.**”

This was so great that the scribes and Pharisees didn’t believe that this was the one who was born blind, and even his parents came and testified. ‘Yes, this is our son, but how he can see now, we don’t know.’ Then the scribes and Pharisees said that Jesus ‘broke the Sabbath, therefore, He can’t be from God. We’re disciples of Moses.’ So, you see the problems that come up.

(go to the next track)

Let’s continue on about the works of God, the works of Christ, then we’ll get into our works and how we are to do them and how they count, and whether works are important or not.

John 10:23: “And Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon’s porch.”

That was at the time of the dedication of the temple. This was not the dedication of the temple per se, but the Feast of Dedication commemorating the laying of the foundation of the temple after the

Babylonian captivity (Ezra 6 & 7).

Verse 24: “Then the Jews encircled Him and said to Him, ‘How long are You going to hold us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.’ Jesus answered them, ‘I have told you, but you do not believe....’” (vs 24-25). *We’ll see belief, faith and works are all part of the same equation.*

**“...The works that I am doing in My Father’s name, these bear witness of Me”** (v 25).

- all the preaching
- all the teaching
- all the healings
- all the miracles

Verse 26: “But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and no one shall take them out of My hand. My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one has the power to seize *them* from My Father’s hand. I and the Father are one” (vs 26-30).

Sidebar: What was the prayer of Jesus in John 17? *‘That they may all become one Father as you are in Me and I in You. That they may all be one!’* That’s the whole plan and purpose of God. That’s why there’s work to it.

Verse 31: “Then the Jews again picked up stones so that they might stone Him. Jesus answered them, **‘Many good works I have showed you from My Father.** For which of them are you about to stone Me?’ The Jews answered Him, saying, ‘We will not stone You for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, are making Yourself God.’ Jesus answered them, ‘Is it not written in your law, “I said, ‘You are gods’?”’” (vs 31-34). *It is, Psalms 82.*

There it is right there. Psalms 82 say that ‘You’ve made us a little lower than God,’ and the New Testament shows that through Jesus Christ and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and the grace of God, that we are going to be the sons and daughters of God. *As God, not equal in power, but living forever!*

Verse 35: “If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and **the Scriptures cannot be broken**).”

Think about that for minute! Why? *Because they are truths from the God of Truth to bring us the knowledge of true salvation to those whom He calls!* **“...the Scriptures cannot be broken.”**

Many times they been misunderstood, but that doesn’t mean that they are able to be broken.

Everything in the Word of God is going to be ***fulfilled to the maximum***; you need to understand and realize that. And realize also that the Word of God is ‘sharper than any two-edged sword and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and is able to cut through to the morrow: to the spirit and to the soul. ***The Word of God cannot be broken; the Scriptures cannot be broken!***

Verse 36: “Why do you say of Him Whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?” *Yes, He was the only begotten Son of God that was begotten in the particular way that Jesus was!*

Verse 37: “If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me.”

- works are important
- works must be part of faith
- works must be part of belief

Verse 38: “But if I do, even if you do not believe Me, **believe the works**; so that you may perceive and may believe that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Him.’ Then they again sought to take Him; but He escaped out of their hands” (vs 38-39).

Jesus had fed the 5,000 and all of those who saw that said, ‘This is a Prophet of Deuteronomy spoken of by Moses. Let’s make Him King.’ Jesus knew that they wanted to make Him King, so He escaped out of their hands. They finally found Him on the other side and they came to Him.

John 6:25: “And after finding Him *on* the other side of the sea, they said to Him, ‘Rabbi, when did You come here?’.... [Jesus knew their attitude] ...Jesus answered them and said, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw *the* miracles, but because you ate the bread and were satisfied” (vs 25-26).

Here’s a great lesson, right here. Let’s summarize it this way: ***Always put God first!***

## **OUR WORKS**

Verse 27: “**Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures unto eternal life**, which the Son of man shall give to you; for Him has God the Father sealed.’ Therefore, they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, **in order that we ourselves may do the works of God?**” (vs 27-28).

*Everyone wants to do something for God, or do the works that God says you should do!*

Verse 29: “Jesus answered and said to them, **This is the work of God: that you believe in Him Whom He has sent.**” Isn’t that amazing? It is a:

- spiritual work
- spiritual belief
- spiritual faith
- spiritual obedience

*That is the work of God that **we are to do!***

Verse 30: “Therefore, they said to Him, ‘What sign will You perform, that we may see *it* and believe You? What work will You do? Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness, as it is written: “He gave them bread to eat *that came down* from heaven.”’ Then Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven; but My Father gives you the true Bread from heaven. For the Bread of God is He Who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.’ Therefore, they said to Him, ‘Lord, give this bread to us always.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I AM the Bread of Life...’” (vs 30-35). Now it gets into the *spiritual* application, **but they still didn’t believe!**

Now let’s see what James tells us concerning *faith*. James brings out some very important things, but especially concerning *faith*. He talks about helping a brother or sister who has need: they’re hungry and need food and need clothes. You take care of them; you do it! If you don’t do it you’re sinning. So he says:

James 2:17: “In the same way also, **faith, if it does not have works, is dead**, by itself.” *That’s a powerful statement! Faith without works is dead!* How do the Protestant say you don’t need to work? When it shows in the New Testament **we are all going to be judged on our works!**

Verse 18: “But someone is going to say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ *My answer is:* You prove your faith to me through your works, and **I will prove my faith to you through my works.**”

Let’s look at that for just a minute. **IF** you say you have faith and no works, **how are you doing the will of God? IF** you have no works, no works constitutes your work based upon your faith. **You say you believe but you don’t work and if you don’t work you really don’t believe!**

“... You prove your faith to me through your works, and I will prove my faith to you through my works. Do you believe that God is one? You do well to believe *this*. Even the demons believe and tremble in fear... [because they know their judgment is coming] ...But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that **faith without works is dead**? Was not Abraham our father justified **by works**...” (vs 18-21).

The difference between Rom. 4 and believing God *without works* **and** James 2 believing God *by works* **are two different events.**

1. God said ‘count the stars if you are able and so shall your seed be.’ Abraham believed God, but it was impossible to count the stars. So, that belief—trusting in God because what He ask him to do was impossible—*that was counted as faith!*
2. Abraham was told to offer his son Isaac and he followed and believed *because that was something that he could do!*

So, **if** it’s something that God says you are to do **then you must do it otherwise you don’t have faith!**

Verse 21: “Was not Abraham our father **justified by works** when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar? Do you not see that **faith was working together with his works**...” (vs 21-22).

*Faith and works go together* like a hand and a glove. **You must have both! You must have belief!** That’s another noun form for *faith*. To believe is **faithizing!**

Verse 22: “Do you not see that **faith was working together with his works, and by works his faith was perfected?**”

Now let’s look at it this way concerning the Sabbath. Every single Protestant minister, Catholic priest and Orthodox priest knows that the seventh day is the Sabbath. *They know that!* That means *they believe that!* But do they obey it? **NO!** Therefore, **their faith is worthless!** Do you understand how that works?

- **IF** you believe and have faith
- **THEN** you must act upon that faith
- **IF** you believe that God is God, and you say you have faith in God and faith in Jesus Christ
- **THEN** you must do what they commanded and what you are instructed to do

Knowing that **faith is perfected by your obedience and obeying** in the *spirit* of the Law not just the letter.

Verse 23: “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Now, Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness’; and he was called a friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (vs 23-24).

You have faith and works; isn’t that what Jesus said? *If you don’t believe Me, believe the works!*

Verse 25: “Now, in the same manner also, was not **Rahab the harlot justified by works** when, after receiving the messengers, she sent *them* out a different way? **For as the body without the spirit is**

**dead**... [lifeless, nothing to it] ...**in the same way also, faith without works is dead**" (vs 25-26). *Think on that for a while!* So, for all of those who know whatever commandments of God there are, and you say you:

- believe in God
- believe that He is Lawgiver
- believe that the Scriptures cannot be broken
- believe and have faith

*Then you must have the works to back up and prove that faith! **Because faith without works is dead!***

- Does it take faith to keep the Sabbath? *Yes!*
- Does it take faith to keep the Holy Days? *Yes!*
- Does it take faith to keep the Passover; especially that? *Yes!*
- Does it take faith to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being? *Yes!*

All of that is based on faith, **but faith must produce action to carry out faith in an active way** rather than an idea in the head, which is dead.

Now let's use another example: Have you ever seen The Hoarders on television? *They hoard everything!* Some of them fill their houses from floor-to-ceiling in closets and everything, and there's hardly a trail to walk in to get from room to room. All that is in there and you talk to them and nearly everyone has said, 'Well, I intend to clean it.'

Look at the mountain of stuff that is in the houses! Some of it's beyond belief, not only in quantity but also in stench! Did *their intention* clean the house? **No!** It takes **work to fulfill the intention** to clean the house.

Same way here: **IF** you believe God, believe His commandments, and believe that the Scriptures cannot be broken, **you must act upon that!** Now you can take any of the other commandments that you have:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment: 'have no other gods before Me.'

*That's equated to the action of loving the Lord your God with all your heart,' etc.*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment: 'You shall not make for yourselves any graven image of any likeness of anything that's in heaven above, on the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow yourself down to them for the Lord your God is a jealous God and taking vengeance upon the children to the third and fourth generation, but giving blessings to those to a thousand

generations of those who love me and keep My commandments.' *That's the full second commandment!*

Added on to that Ezek. 14 **idols in the mind!** So, if you don't have them here out in the physical presence that you can see:

- How many do you have in the mind?
- How many are you getting rid of as we have covered in the series in Second Corinthians: **bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ?**

Everyone wants to live forever. But there has to be **the works of God** in our lives, because He's the One Who gives it. Remember, only those who **keep** the commandments—*that's work*—are going to have the right to eat of the Tree of Life. So, sometimes when you come to Scriptures like that, **reverse it!** **Those who don't eat of the Tree of Life are those who don't keep the commandments of God!** Very simple!

What I want you to do—I've suggested this before so if you haven't done it, yet; go ahead and set aside and start it—go through Psalm 119. There you'll find the attitude of:

- repentance
- obedience
- faith
- love
- willingness and yieldedness to God

*If you love God, won't you do what He says? Yes, indeed!*

Matt. 19:16—here we have the case of the young rich man coming to Jesus. He apparently was a pretty righteous person, but let's see what Jesus told him.

Matthew 19:16: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master, **what good thing shall I do**, that I may have eternal life?'"

He wanted to do it. He probably figured that he pretty well was ready for eternal life by the way he was living. So, let's see what Jesus said.

Verse 17: "And He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God....'"

Jesus said that because He was in the flesh and was carrying human nature, which He had to have in order to be the perfect sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Unless He had *the law of sin and death* within Him, His sacrifice could not have covered the sins of all human beings.

“...But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments” (v 17). *There you go!*

- Do you believe that you must keep the commandments?
- How many of the Protestants want eternal life but don't keep the commandments?

You may keep some of them, but Jesus said you have to **live by every word of God; all** the words of God!

Verse 18: “Then he said to Him, ‘Which?’.... [I’ve almost got it made, that’s what I’ve been doing] ...And Jesus said, ‘You shall not commit murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother; and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself’ (vs 18-19).

And the Protestant come here and say, ‘Bingo! He didn’t say the Sabbath. Hallelujah!’ **NO!** *That was a Sabbath-keeping society!*

Verse 20: “The young man said to Him, ‘I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?’.... [*I really want eternal life and I’m willing to do anything*] ...Jesus said to him, ‘If you desire to be perfect...’” (vs 20-21).

Matthew 5:48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.”

Matthew 19:21: “Jesus said to him, ‘If you desire to be perfect, go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me.’ But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions” (vs 21-22).

What did he have in his mind? ***Idols! The idols of his possessions!*** That had kept him back from having faith. Everybody wants it, *but no one wants to do what God says to do!*

What are we to do? *That’s why there’s baptism!* Baptism is the ultimate giving up of self, so that you can receive eternal life. Why is that? When people die they’re buried, put in the ground, or burned up and put into an urn. Baptism is more than that. Baptism is counted as ***your part of the covenant with God the Father and Jesus Christ that you are pledging your life!*** That’s why you’re buried by full immersion in water; that’s your part of the covenant. ***You’re conjoined to the sacrifice of Christ!*** That’s the covenant! With that, you have pledged that you will let ***nothing***:

- no one
- no one in your family
- no one in the world
- nothing that you own

- nothing that you have

***will come between you and God!*** If anything comes between you and God, ***then you have to repent of it or get rid of it!***

- ***IF*** it’s in the mind, ***you have to repent of it***
- ***IF*** it’s something physical out there that you been doing, ***you must stop it***

That begins always with what? What’s the first thing in answering the call of God? ***Quit sinning and start keeping the Sabbath!***

So he had *the idols in his mind*, and he wasn’t willing to give them up. It’s easy to say you want eternal life. But you don’t know the cost of that. ***It cost Jesus Christ His physical life so that we can have eternal life!*** All of these things entail ***works***. Where do the works begin? ***In the mind!*** Do they not? *Yes!*

We will continue with this at another time. ***There’s a lot that we must believe, do and act upon continuously, because eternal life is forever!***

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 19:1-14
- 2) Psalm 111:3-10
- 3) Genesis 2:1-3
- 4) John 4:34-36
- 5) John 17:1-4
- 6) John 19:30
- 7) Revelation 10:7
- 8) Revelation 11:15
- 9) Revelation 16:16-17
- 10) Revelation 20:5
- 11) Revelation 21:1-6
- 12) John 5:17-23, 30
- 13) John 9:1-3
- 14) John 10:23-39
- 15) John 6:25-35
- 16) James 2:17-26
- 17) Matthew 19:17-21
- 18) Matthew 5:48
- 19) Matthew 19:21-22

#### Scriptures quoted, not referenced:

- Revelation 22
- Ezra 6; 7
- Psalm 82; 8
- Ezekiel 14
- Psalm 119

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *Second Corinthians*

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