



Work-Walking in the New Year

By

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“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. 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

Christians often focus more on what they “get” than what they “give.” We get a lot from God. We are “saved” by grace through faith. That is not from ourselves. God gives it to us. We don’t work for it. We don’t deserve it. God gives it and we receive it.. Nobody can boast about being saved. God’s does it all and gets all the credit for doing it all. We are saved because of what Jesus Christ did on the Cross not because of anything we did, do or will do. Salvation is not based on our works. It’s all based on God’s grace.

What we often forget is the next verse – “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” God saves us with a specific purpose in mind – serving Him through good works. We are not saved “by” good works, since there’s no way a sinner can perform any works that are “good” in God’s view, but we are saved “for good works.” So how does that work? Let’s look at “work-walking” in the New Year – keeping this important point in mind. Work-walking has *nothing* to do with being saved. Salvation is by grace through faith. Work-walking is about serving God *after* salvation.

Work-Walking

Work-walking is simply doing what God “prepared beforehand” for us to do. In the context of Ephesians 1 we know that God chose us “before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.” (Ephesians 1:4-6).

What we see clearly in all the words leading up to Ephesians 2:10 is this – God fully invested Himself in us to prepare us to serve Him, forever –

- God redeemed us and forgave us “according to the riches of His grace, which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence”
- God “made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself”

- God's purpose is "that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him."
- God has given us an inheritance, "being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things in according to the counsel of His will"
- God has "sealed" us with the "Holy Spirit of promise," who is the "guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory"
- God saves us by grace through faith .. not by works which we have done

If we believe that Paul's letter to the Ephesians is inspired by the Holy Spirit and is part of Holy Scripture, there is no wiggle room around what the Spirit is telling Christians about what it means to be a Christian. God had a purpose for what He has done in the lives of everyone who is a disciple of Christ and that purpose is to be to the praise of His glory. How does God want Christians to be to the praise

of His glory? To understand that “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” God wants us to “walk” in the “good works” that God “prepared beforehand” that we should do.

Good Works

What does God want you to do in the New Year? What “good works” did God prepare beforehand that you should “walk in them”? Do you think there’s a way for us to know what God prepared beforehand for us to do to be “to the praise of His glory”?

I believe a reasonable answer to the last question is – **Yes**, there is a way for us to know what God prepared beforehand for us to do to be “to the praise of His glory.” Some Christians struggle to know what God’s will is for them, but doesn’t it make sense that God would reveal His will to every Christian based on what we’ve read in Ephesians 1 and 2? Why would God choose us from before

the foundation of the world to be saved by grace through faith “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them,” only to keep His will for our lives a secret? Does that make any sense? Is that a logical conclusion you can reach based on what we’ve read?

No! That would make no sense at all – it lacks logic to think that God would keep His will for our lives a secret when He has clearly stated that He chose us from before the foundation of the world to be to the praise of His glory and created us in Christ Jesus for good works which He prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. We need to believe God before we believe anyone else, including ourselves.

God is Perfect – people are imperfect ... we are imperfect. You may have people in your life who tell you that God can't use you – wouldn't use you. You may have told yourself that God can't use you – wouldn't use you. **That's a lie.** If you have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, God says clearly that He created you "in Christ Jesus for good works," which He "prepared beforehand" that you should walk in them.

You can and should be and do everything God prepared you "beforehand" to be and do. If God is for you, which He is, who can stand against you? If you believe God has gifted you to do something unique for the praise of His glory, do it! If you believe God has called you to do something unique for the praise of His glory, do it! Serving God is His purpose for our life, and because it is His purpose, we know that what happens to us during our life on earth is part of His purpose.

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

Romans 8:28-30

Who do you believe can stand between God’s will for your life and your performing His will for your life? Can anyone defeat God? Can anyone defeat God’s elect?

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the

right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: 'For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:31-39

God has revealed His "will" for your life. You can read all about it in Holy Scripture. He has prepared great things for you to do and has gifted you to do them. Maybe God wants you to work with orphans, maybe with widows, maybe with atheists, maybe with Muslims, maybe with a children's class at church, maybe a student group at a local college, maybe with co-workers, maybe with neighbors, maybe with friends, maybe with family, maybe where you live, maybe half way

around the world. What does it matter who or where? If you are doing “good works” that God prepared beforehand that you do for the praise of His glory, you are in the perfect place – right in the middle of God’s will for your life.

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