

The Wednesday Word, October 11, 2023: Seven Gospel Mercies - Part 4

In preceding Wednesday Words, we discovered that, because of the gospel, we have forgiveness, acceptance as being righteous, adoption, a new heart and a spirit of repentance.

Today we consider another Gospel Mercy,

6) **Good Works.**

One of the great gospel mercies is that God gives us power to do works that please Him. We read in Ephesians 2:10, "*We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained that we might walk in them.*"

Now remember this,

Forgiveness is not by works.

Acceptance as being righteous is not by works.

Adoption is not by works.

The new heart is not by works.

A spirit of repentance is not by works.

However, now that we have all these things, we are released to do good works.

One of the reformers said it like this, "We are saved by faith alone but the faith which saves is never alone." In other words, he was saying that we are called to a life of good works. And the welcome news is that God has uniquely tailored good works for us to enjoy doing for Him.

Let's make this personal. He uniquely forms you: there is no one else like you. That means there are certain things only you can do for Him. There are people, for example, you can reach with the gospel that I could not get near.

In addition, consider the wonderful way in which the Lord orders and arranges our lives. First, He prepares good works for us to do. Next, He gives us the desire to do them; then He equips and empowers us to perform them and finally, He is pleased with us for actually doing them.

What a deal!

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and your labour of love which you have shown towards His name in that you have ministered to His people and do minister" (Hebrews 6:10). Consider how excellent this really is!

He plans the works,

He promotes them to us,

He prepares us to do the work

He then is pleased with us as we get involved with His plan.

What an amazing Father He is! Some people labour under the guilt of feeling that they can only please God if their works are perfect. The truth is, only one man pleased God because His works were perfect. (John 8:29). His name was and is Jesus. Faith has united us to Him and now His

works are reckoned as ours. I'm already a perfect worker in Christ Jesus. If you are a believer, you can say this too. If we start from this vantage point then we are setting ourselves up for a guilt-free life! If on the other hand, we see God as demanding perfection from everything we do, we are going to destroy ourselves.

Someone says, "But what if I should mess up when I'm trying to do good works? Take for example, when I am trying to witness to someone. Won't God punish me for that?" No, a thousand times no! There's grace love and mercy flowing towards us through Christ Jesus.

"But what about my failures?" you ask

Any and all failures we take to the Blood and, by faith, see Christ as our substitute. Guilt can never trap a believer who thinks like this. However, I think I hear someone say, "But brother, aren't you afraid that people will abuse the kind of freedom you seem to be advocating?"

No, I'm not!

While I'm aware that there are some people who might misuse this truth, I don't see any point in ceasing to proclaim it. Some years ago, a cousin of mine was killed when a snow-laden tree fell on her. Does this mean that all trees and forests should be cut down? Also, when I was a teenager, a young boy from our village, in Northern Ireland, drowned while swimming in the sea! Does that mean that we should drain the ocean? Sometimes trees and oceans can cause terrible things to happen. So it is with some people! I'm advocating, however, in spite of the dangers of potential abuse, that we believers go ahead and live in the gospel and enjoy the wonderful freedom afforded to us by His gospel mercies. What a marvellous thing it would be if all believers everywhere enjoyed being saved!

And that's the Gospel Truth!