

“O the Things We May Do”

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

A. Eph. 2:4-10

1. Over the door to the operating theater of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Hospital of Philadelphia are these words: “Think not the beautiful doings of thy soul shall perish unremembered. They abide with thee forever, and alone the good thou doest nobly, truth and love approve. Each pure and gentle deed of mercy brings an honest recompense, and from it looms that sovereign knowledge of thy duty done, a joy beyond all dignities of earth.”
2. We were created by God to do kind deeds and to do good works. We are often the hands, the feet, and the mouth of the Divine in this world. We are re-born in Christ to become the means whereby the Almighty answers many needs and prayers in this world.

B. Ecc. 11:1

1. The Arabs have a similar proverb which is probably in imitation of this verse: “Strew thy bread upon the surface of the water and on the dry land, and thou shalt find it in the end of days.”
2. The caliph of Bagdad had a son who was drowned while bathing in the river. He offered a large reward to anyone who should recover his son's body. After seven weeks, a swimmer discovered the boy alive in a cavern in a precipitous mountain pass through which the river flowed. The caliph learned that the boy had been kept from starvation by loaves of bread floating on the water, on which were stamped the name of a devout man of Bagdad. The caliph summoned the man and asked him what had induced him to throw bread into the water. He replied that he had done so every day for a year in order to test the truth of the proverb. The caliph thereupon rewarded him with governorship over five villages in the vicinity of Bagdad.
3. “How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a weary world.” (William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*). A small noble act, like a lone candle, seems to shine more brightly in a darker place. It is more precious and more dearly appreciated.

C. What kinds of things can we do?

1. Many believe that for a deed to have a profound and powerful effect, it must be a great and glorious work.
2. Where is that written? Certainly not in the word of God - Matt. 10:42
3. What deeds have had the most effect on you? - Prov. 15:23; Isa. 50:4
4. Soup Ministers - It started with a hot plate 16 years ago, which turned into a Crock-Pot, which turned into 17 Crock-Pots. Dale Dunning, whose Jusst Sooup Ministry serves over 1,000 quarts of soup a week to feed the hungry and homeless in Sussex County; he has served more than 2 million meals. Can you make soup? Then make some and use it as excuse to visit the sick or weak or weary or shut ins

5. Christian Home Care - Not an organization, an individual; do you have ability to give care to someone who is having trouble caring for themselves; can you clean house? Go help someone whose health keeps them from caring for their own home. Can you do minor home repairs? I'm not talking about making a career out of it, or allowing yourself to be taken advantage, but without being asked, go do a good deed for its own sake
6. Prayer Warriors - You can't get out and do these things? Can you pray? Prayer warriors are devout believers who continually wage war on their knees. They measure their daily prayer time not in minutes but in hours. They send a lot of "knee-mail." A prayer warrior is a Christian who prays often as an intercessor. The term prayer warrior doesn't appear in the Bible, but the origin of the image is most likely Ephesians 6:10-18, in which Christian believers are exhorted to spiritually wear the garments of a warrior—armor, belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, and sword—and then to be "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" (v. 18). Hence the image of a warrior who employs prayer as his field of battle

I. THE ROLE OF GOOD WORKS

- A. Good works are not the source of our salvation - Eph. 2:8-9
- B. Good works are the evidentiary product of our salvation - Eph. 2:10
- C. But everyone faithful to Christ will walk in good works - Titus 2:14
- D. One can do good works and still be lost - Matt. 7:22-23; Acts 10:2, 11:14

II. GOD CREATED US IN CHRIST TO WALK IN GOOD WORKS

- A. Good works are defined by God - Heb. 13:21
 1. He has already determined what they will be - Eph. 2:10
 2. He has made them clear to us - 2Tim. 3:16-17
 3. He has made it clear where we are to begin - John 6:28-29
- B. Good works must be evident and visible - 1Tim. 5:25
 1. To God - Matt. 6:2-4
 2. To people - Matt. 5:16; 1Peter 2:12
 3. But our motive is that they are not done to be seen, but that they are seen to glorify God when they are performed; they do not bring attention to the doer but to the Divine
- C. Good works are influential - Matt. 5:13-14; 1Cor. 9:22
- D. Good works are not pointless - 1Cor. 15:58
 1. By them, God is accomplishing His work in this world - Heb. 13:21
 2. Rest comes to those who labor now - Rev. 14:13; Heb. 4:10

II. TO WALK IN GOOD WORKS, WE MUST BE:

- A. Consistent in our practice of good works - Titus 2:7; Phil. 3:17; 1Tim. 4:12
- B. Zealous in good works - Titus 2:14; Heb. 10:24
- C. Ready for every good work - Titus 3:1; Gal. 6:10
- D. Full of good works - Acts 9:36, 39

Conclusion:

A. "While you are waiting for good things to happen to you, you can do good things for other people. You don't do kind deeds expecting kindness in return. You don't do kind deeds because you deem the recipient worthy. You do kind deeds because it's who you are, and because you understand the powerful difference your gentle hand makes in this dreary world. We hunger after the sweet nectar of happiness without understanding that it is harvested from the flowering field of good deeds." (Richelle E. Goodrich)