

Salvation & Works

by Ronny Milliner

There are some denominational churches which teach that man is saved only by God's grace and that man has nothing to do in order to be saved. They think that if man does anything then he would be "earning" his salvation. They bring up Ephesians 2:8-9 which reads, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no man should boast."* They misapply the passage because of a misunderstanding of what "works" are under consideration. There are different types of works in the Bible.

It is true that some works will not save us. They are **the works of men**. Gamaliel spoke of a work or plan of men in Acts 5:38-39. He said it would be overthrown. These words are the ideas, teachings, schemes of men's reasonings. Jesus said the doctrines of men make worship vain (Matthew 15:9). Proverbs 14:12, *"There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."* These works of men, though they seem right to men, will not save us.

There are also **works of darkness** (Romans 13:12) and **works of the flesh** (Galatians 5:19-21). Certainly these are Satan-inspired. These are things which our Adversary wants us to engage in so we will be his followers and not God's. These works will keep one from inheriting the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:21).

Then there are also **boastful works**. These are the ones under consideration in Ephesians 2:9. The Pharisees were guilty of these works. Jesus said, *"But they all their deeds to be noticed by men;..."* (Matt. 23:5). These works are not acceptable to God because they are done with the wrong attitude.

The Jews sought to be saved by **the works of the Law, the Old Testament**. But these works will not save, for Paul said, *"nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified"* (Galatians 2:16).

But then there are some works which save. There are **works which justify** (James 2:24). There are **good works** which we are to do (Matthew 5:16). These are **works or commands of God**. Jesus said believing was a work of God (John 6:29). Repentance is a work of God. It is something which He has commanded us to do (Acts 17:30). Baptism is also a work of God; something He has commanded us to do (Acts 10:48). We have a part in our salvation. Peter said, *"Save yourself from this untoward generation"* (Acts 2:40).

Have you done the works God has given you to do in order to be saved? Obey Him without delay!

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Types of Works

1. *Works of Men, Acts 5:38-39*
2. *Works of Darkness, Romans 13:12*
3. *Works of the Flesh, Galatians 5:19-21*
4. *Works to be Seen of Men, Matthew 23:5; Ephesians 2:9*
5. *Works of the Law, Galatians 2:16*
6. *Good Works, Matthew 5:16*
7. *Works That Justify, James 2:24*
8. *Works of God, John 6:29*