

## **The Wednesday Word, January 27, 2021: More About Grace Alone**

Have you noticed that certain people, when we talk about salvation by grace alone retreat to their works? They say, “Yes, it’s true that we are saved by grace through faith, but the Book of James says we also need works.”

But James doesn’t teach that a combination of faith and works are needed for salvation. Those who use that argument are missing the point. Good works result from the gospel but cannot in any way be added to the gospel.

It is Finished!

Consider this, if we are saved by grace, then leave it be! Don’t mix anything with it. Salvation is by grace ... not by grace plus works ... it’s by grace ... grace alone!

If we are in any way depending upon our works, then we cannot appeal to the grace of God. Grace and works, can never be mingled. Salvation must either be all of works (i.e. *keep the commands of God perfectly*) or else it’s all of grace.

God's way of salvation excludes all our works. Salvation is "Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9-9) Right standing and acceptance before God is a matter of grace, pure grace.

God’s plan of salvation is actually a man ... the Lord Jesus Christ. We rest on Him and His accomplishments alone and have no confidence in our attainments. The gospel helps us see that since we cannot be saved by our own works, we must be saved by Christ's works for us. He is our only hope.

Listen to me, if a friend paid your entire debt, how much would you pay? Nothing! Likewise, salvation was obtained by Christ apart from us altogether. Faith receives it as gift. How much then do we pay?

Nothing!

The blood of Christ blots out our sins like a cloud (Isaiah 44:22).  
Our iniquities are hurled into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19).  
Our sins and iniquities are no longer remembered (Hebrews 8:12).

We have no merits, but the Lord Jesus has boundless qualities which He imputes to us. We are full of sin and, by rights, should be punished, but Christ has been punished instead of us.

How sub-standard are our works! We dare not bring them before God as evidence that we should in any way be blessed. Our works? ... that would be a wretched addition to make to the

Finished Work!

The gospel truth is that all the merits of Jesus are our merits. They are imputed (reckoned) to us: all the sufferings of Jesus are our sufferings. As Spurgeon said, "You stand before God as if you were Christ, because Christ stood before God as if He were you."

I'll finish with an old yarn which I sometimes use in preaching. It's just a yarn yet it's helpful. It goes,

An Irish man dies. Of course, St. Patrick (not Peter) meets him at the Pearly Gates. Patrick says to the man, "You need 10,000 points to make it into heaven. You tell me all the good things you have done, and I'll give you a certain number of points for each item, depending on how good it was. When you reach 10,000 points, you get in."

"Okay," the man says, "I was married to the same woman for 50 years and never cheated on her, even in my heart."

"That's wonderful," says St. Patrick, "that's worth three points!"

"Three points?" he says.

"Well, I attended church all my life and supported its ministry with my tithe and service."

"Terrific!" says St. Patrick. "That's certainly worth a point."

"One point!?!"

I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for homeless veterans."

"Fantastic, that's good for two more points," he says.

"Two points!?!!"

Exasperated, the man cries, "If I ever get in there, it will have to be by the grace of God!"

"Congratulations 10,000 points! Come on in!"

Salvation is by grace ... not by grace and works ... just grace ... grace alone!

And that's the Gospel Truth!