

# LESSON 9

## CHAPTER 16. “Of Good Works”

Spiritual Good versus Civil & Moral Good

**Good works never redeem, but always reward.**

I. Paragraph 1: Good works are grounded in Scripture.

- A. Only actions which God has commanded in Holy Scripture can be good works (regulative)
  - 1. To be accepted by God, these actions must be performed by persons in Christ, by faith, to glorify God.
- B. Works devised by man to please God, beyond those commanded in Holy Scripture, are not good works. (against Pharisaism, Catholicism, any works-based Gospel)

II. Paragraph 2: Good works are the visible evidence of saving faith

- A. Good works are the fruit and evidence of saving faith.
- B. Good works are from God for our enjoyment and His glory.
- C. Christians are predestined to good works.

III. Paragraph 3: God works in, good works out

- A. The Holy Spirit, alone, moves us to do good works.
- B. Do not resist His motivation, but stirred up the gifts of the Spirit in us.

IV. Paragraph 4: Against Supererogation (say what?)

- A. Supererogation is a Roman Catholic teaching that a person:
  - 1. Can perform meritorious work, over and above what God has commanded.
  - 2. These meritorious works can be transferred to relatives and friends! (Indulgence)
- B. Supererogation, while intended to please God (and make the Pope rich), is really evil.

V. Paragraph 5: Against Meritorious Works

- A. Our good works are not a means of salvation or eternal life because the debt is too big.
- B. Even our best works are tainted with sin, and, thus, can have no merit.
- C. We cannot take credit for good works because He moves us to do them.

VI. Paragraph 6: Only the works of believers can be good in God's sight

- A. ONLY BELIEVERS can perform a good work.
- B. Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate, purifies and presents our efforts to the Father, who is pleased with them and rewards us only for Christ's sake.

VII. Paragraph 7: The best works of unbelievers are never good

- A. Works of unbelievers may appear good, but are really sin.
- B. Works of unbelievers are not preparatory to grace.
- C. The failure of unbelievers to do civil good and attempt to please God leaves them under all the more wrath.

Questions for discussion:

How do our works relate to holiness?

In what ways does God love unbelievers?

How does our salvation relate to good works?

Who benefits from good works?

Book Suggestions:

Loraine Boettner, *Roman Catholicism*

*The Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church*