

Key Teachings of the Christian Faith

Vision: Strengthen our faith by examining key teachings of Christianity

Glorify God By Your Good Works

1 Peter 2:11-12

11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. **12** Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may **because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.**

1. It is okay for our good works to be observed.

We are created to be observed. We are light, a city set on a hill.

Matthew 5:16

16 "Let your light shine **before men** in such a way **that they may see** your good works, **and glorify your Father** who is in heaven.

2. However, we must not be ostentatious.

Ostentatious - intended to attract notice and impress others

Matthew 6:1-6

1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men **to be noticed by them**; otherwise **you have no reward with your Father** who is in heaven.

2 "So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, **so that they may be honored by men**. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. **3** "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, **4** so that your giving will be in secret; and **your Father who sees *what is done*** in secret will reward you.

5 "When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners **so that they may be seen by men**. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. **6** "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and **your Father who sees *what is done*** in secret will reward you.

Is it wrong to pray in public?

Is it wrong to pray in a cafeteria before eating?

Of course not! If we believe this, we have missed the major thrust of Jesus' teaching.

To whom are we doing?

Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31b)

3. For a work/deed to be good, it must be dedicated to the Father.

A work or deed may be evaluated as good for many reasons. The deed may be kind, loving, humanitarian, considerate, merciful, right, just, or honest from many perspectives.

However, **if the deed is not devoted to our Father in heaven, it is tainted, polluted with impure motives. This is not good.**

4. He deserves all our adoration and praise. The whole of our lives should be continually dedicated to Him. We should live every moment only for His glory. Every minute of every day is His.

How can we be delivered from our bondages to sin, pride and vanity?

Pruning

John 15:1-8

- **Our Father in heaven is the gardener, the husbandman.**

You will never bear much fruit without going through the pruning.

Who will voluntarily give themselves to the pruning shears?

Intimacy

4 **“Abide in Me, and I in you.** (John 15:4)

he who **abides in Me and I in him**, he bears much fruit (John 15:5b)

Bankruptcy Conviction

We must be convinced of our bankruptcy, our inability to bear fruit pleasing to God **without Christ.**

for **apart from Me you can do nothing** (John 15:5c)

- **Never think of yourself more highly than you ought.**

Luke 17:5-10

5 The apostles said to the Lord, **“Increase our faith!”** **6** And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and be planted in the sea’; and it would obey you.

7 “Which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come immediately and sit down to eat’? **8** “But will he not say to him, ‘Prepare something for me to eat, and *properly* clothe yourself and serve me while I eat and drink; and afterward you may eat and drink’? **9** **“He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? **10** “So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, ‘We are unworthy slaves; we have done *only* that which we ought to have done.’”**

Does Jesus teach us this because Our Father in heaven is unkind?

When we arrive in the kingdom, will He tell us to prepare Him something to eat?

Quite to the contrary, we arrive to the wedding feast of the Lamb!
The Spirit says **come, for all things are ready.** (Rev 22:17, Luke 17:14)

Jesus teaches us **the heart of a true disciple**, someone **who loves Him** and understands that **all things should be devoted to Him.**

He alone is worthy of all labor, sweat, praise, breath and adoration.

5. Our good works are accepted, even respected, by God.

Genesis 4:4 (King James)

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had **respect** unto Abel and to his offering:

Our good deeds are spiritual sacrifices. If our works are not spiritually focused, they are not truly “good deeds”. As we saw earlier, **a work must be devoted to God to be good.**

6. God’s highest purpose has always been to have a holy, obedient people.

1 Samuel 15:22

Samuel said, "Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, **to obey is better than sacrifice**, And to heed than the fat of rams.

Jeremiah 7:21-23, Micah 6:6-8

What was the first commandment God gave to Adam? Was it to offer sacrifice?
No, the first commandment was a commandment of obedience.

Genesis 2:16-17

The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden **you may eat** freely; **17** but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil **you shall not eat**, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

- *God’s highest purpose has always been to have a holy, obedient people.*

Psalms 40:6-8

Jesus came not only to die but to live a perfect life. To display to all creation how God desires for a man to live.

How do we respond? How do we take steps to please Him to whom we owe all things?

for **apart from Me you can do nothing** (John 15:5c)

The Westminster Confession echoes this same truth.

Chapter XVI Section III

Their **ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ.**[\[12\]](#) And that they may be enabled thereunto, beside the graces they have

already received, **there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit, to work in them to will, and to do, of His good pleasure:**^[13] yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but **they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.**^[14]

- **We respond to Him by stirring up the grace He has placed within us, about us and among us.**

7. Stir up the grace of God that is within you.

2 Timothy 1:6 (King James)

Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that **thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee** by the putting on of my hands.

We have a responsibility to **stir up grace**. Grace may be present but dormant, asleep.

Ephesians 5:14,18b-21

¹⁴ For this reason it says,

“Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.”

... be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; ²¹ and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Isaiah 52:1-2 **Awake, awake ... Clothe yourself ... Shake yourself ... Loose yourself**

Philippians 2:12-13

So then, my beloved, just **as you have always obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation** with fear and trembling; ¹³ for **it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**

8. God is working in us so that He can display us before the rest of His creation.

2 Corinthians 3:2-6

You are our letter, written in our hearts, **known and read by all men; ³ being manifested that you are a letter of Christ**, cared for by us, **written** not with ink but **with the Spirit of the living God**, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

⁴ Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. ⁵ **Not** that we are adequate in ourselves **to consider anything as coming from ourselves**, but **our adequacy is from God, ⁶ who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**

Clearly, our adequacy is from God, not from ourselves.