



## [Ephesians 2:8-10](#)

(8) For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, (9) not of works, lest anyone should boast. (10) For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

*New King James Version*

Along with a multitude of other verses, [Ephesians 2:8-10](#) makes it abundantly clear that, though works do not save a person, they are nonetheless required by [God](#). Since works are required, understanding this aspect of the works issue comes down to comprehending *when* they are required and the *reasons* God requires them. While being called of God and led to [faith](#) in [Jesus Christ](#) and [repentance](#) toward God, every person is performing some measure of work to reach those states. Christ, after all, calls upon us to present fruit fit for repentance even before our [baptism](#) ([Matthew 3:8](#)). We work to bear fruit that provides evidence that we believe God by turning toward giving our lives to Him.

As a means of producing that fruit, we study God's Word diligently and meditate to grasp and arrange our accumulation of truth in its proper order. We begin to keep the [Sabbath](#) and perhaps to clean up our language and to tithe as well. We might also set in motion making many other changes in our marriages or our labors on the job.

Nevertheless, even though we may work to make many changes as a direct result of the new information God reveals, none of it will justify us before God. No change of conduct or attitude can erase the stain of our conduct before His calling. We cannot "make up" for what we have done in the past any more than a young man or woman can erase the loss of virginity once it is given away. We may do a multitude of works before baptism, but nothing can erase our past record before God - except the blood of Jesus Christ.

The works done at that time are good, even necessary, to give evidence of belief and repentance. Yet, what carries the day and provides forgiveness and entrance into God's

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presence is His grace in allowing Christ's sacrifice to prevail before Him.

There comes a time in Christian life, though, when works have a far different and exceedingly more important application. [Hebrews 12:14](#) says, "Pursue peace with all men, and **holiness**, *without which no one will see the Lord.*" Is this not our goal in life? Do we not want to spend all eternity working with and under God and our Lord Jesus Christ in God's Kingdom as He proceeds with His plans to expand his rule throughout all He has made?

Without holiness, we will not be fit for living within that Kingdom. We would be miserable round pegs in square holes, intensely disliking the pattern of life necessary for God's plans to be carried out. We would be as the demons are today, constantly fighting to impede God's work and making everybody else as miserable as possible. In God's mercy, He will not condemn any of us to that. We must be holy as He and His Son are holy. That is why we must work with the Father and Son now by yielding to Their purpose for us.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

[Is the Christian Required To Do Works? \(Part Four\)](#)

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