



## [Revelation 20:12-13](#)

(12) And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.  
(13) The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

## [Romans 14:11-12](#)

(11) For it is written:  
*"As I live, says the LORD,  
Every knee shall bow to Me,  
And every tongue shall confess to God."* (12) So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.  
*New King James Version*

Since all are to be judged according to their works, what if one claiming to be Christian has no works to show when [God](#) clearly expects them? [James 2:19-20](#) clinches the argument: "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe - and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that [faith](#) without works is dead?"

This entire issue is actually quite simple. No amount of works can justify us before God. Justification by faith in Christ's atoning blood makes one legally free to access God and to begin a relationship with Him. However, from that point on, works are absolutely required for sanctification unto [holiness](#) - to the extent that, not only is one's reward contingent upon them, but also [salvation](#) itself. Will God reward one who can show no works at all, or provide salvation to one whose faith is so weak it produces bad works? Such a person would be totally out of place, unfit for living eternally in the Kingdom of God.

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[Ephesians 2:8-10](#) makes this reality even stronger. Even though we are saved by [grace](#) through faith, the very reason we are created is for good works that God Himself prepared beforehand for us to walk in. [The gospel](#) of the [Kingdom of God](#) provides the reasons for which works are required - the major one being to prepare us for living in God's Kingdom.

God intended Israel's forty-year journey through the wilderness to prepare them for living in the Promised Land. However, even though Israel had the gospel preached to them and had godly leadership provided by the likes of [Moses](#), Aaron, and Joshua, in their stiff-necked unbelief they refused to submit in obedience to God's commands. They thus failed to receive the necessary preparation for using the Promised Land rightly, becoming an eternal example of why works of preparation are needed ([Hebrews 4:1-2](#)).

Can we learn a lesson from their examples? When God brings us out of spiritual Egypt, He is not done with us yet. In fact, a great deal of spiritual creating within us remains to be accomplished before we will be fit to live and occupy a working position in God's Kingdom. We are being created in Christ [Jesus](#), created in His image. Can we honestly say we are already in His image when we are merely legally cleared of [sin](#)? Absolutely not! As great as this is, it is not the end of God's creative process. God is not merely "saving" us. His purpose is far greater than that.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

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

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[Image of God](#)

[Justification](#)

[Salvation and Works](#)

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[Works, Christ's Emphasis Upon](#)  
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