

IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD “WORKS”?

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Religious zealots, accepting the false doctrine of salvation of faith alone or at the point of faith before and without any further acts of obedience, or by grace alone, and misunderstanding such passages as Eph.2:8,9 and Rom.4:2-5, have taught that no works of any kind have anything to do with one’s salvation, that no works of any kind can have anything to do with one’s salvation by grace through faith.
2. Thus we raise the question: Is obedience to God “works”? If not, why not? If so, then is not obedience to God a work necessary to one’s salvation? What does the Bible say about it?
3. That is really our question: Does God require one to obey him in order to be saved? And if so, is not this obedience to God “works”? And if it is, is not this works necessary in order to be saved?

II. DISCUSSION

A. FIRST, SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ABOUT OBEYING GOD, WORKS, AND WORKING.

1. When one obeys the commands of the Lord is he **working**?
2. Are such **actions of obedience** considered “works”?
3. Of course, we recognize:
 - a. That such acts of obedience are NOT “**works**” of the Law of Moses.
 - b. That such “**works**” are not “**works**” of man’s wisdom.
 - c. That such “**works**” are not “**works**” of disobedience.
 - d. That such “**works**” are not “**works**” of merit whereby one earns his salvation.
 - e. From various passages of scripture that they are nevertheless “**works**”.
4. Think! When “**works**” are commanded or praised in the N.T., what are they?
 - a. They are “**works**” of **obedience** to God, aren’t they?
 - b. They are “**works**” or **righteousness** that God has commanded (or in some way required) and thus are **essential** to pleasing God and to receiving salvation from past sins and or eternal life or both.

5. Obviously, men of faith do those “**works**” when they obey God in fulfilling his requirements for the purpose he required them.

B. FURTHER, ON THE MATTER OF “WORKS” CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WITH ME.

1. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what are the “good works” of 2Tim.3:16,17?
2. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what are the “works” of Jas.2:24?
3. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what are the “good works” of Mt.5:16?
4. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what are the “works” of Rev.2:5,19?
5. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what are the “works” of Tit.2:14?
6. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what are the “works” of Heb.10:24?
7. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what is the “work” of Jas.1:25?
8. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what is the “good work” of 2Tim.2:21?
9. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what is the “good work” of Heb.13:21?
10. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what is the “good work” of Col.1:10?
11. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what is involved in “your work of faith” in 1Th.1:3 and 2Th.1:11?
12. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” when what is involved in “the work of the Lord” in 1Cor.16:10?
13. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what is involved in doing “good” in 3Jno.11?
14. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what is involved in working “good” in Rom.2:10?
15. If obeying God’s will is not “**works**,” then what is involved in working “out your own salvation” as mentioned in Phil.2:12?
16. If obeying the Lord is not a “**work**” necessary to one’s eternal salvation, then what is the meaning of Heb.5:8,9?

III. CONCLUSION

1. Moreover, for the benefit of those who still insist that salvation is by faith, by faith alone, or at the point of faith without any further acts of obedience, that no work of any kind has anything to do with one's salvation, and that faith is not a work, what about Jno.6:26-29 which identifies faith as "the work of God"!
2. How is faith "the work of God"?
 - a. It is not God's work because God does the believing.
 - b. It is "the work of God" because God planned and willed that man believe on Jesus Christ his Son in order to be saved.
 - c. It is "the work of God" although man believes!
 - d. It is "the work of God" because God commands it. Cf. Jno.8:24; 1Jno.3:23.
3. Since it is "the work of God" when man believes, and yet is not a work whereby we earn our salvation, or not a salvation by works, it should not be difficult to see that when God commands (or teaches us in some other way his requirements) and we obey them, they also are "**works**" of God!
4. Therefore, when God commands repentance and baptism unto the remission of sins and we do them for that purpose, we are working the works of God! See Ac.2:36-38; Ac.17:30; Mk.16:15,16; Ac.9:6; 22:16; 10:5,6; 10:33-48; Cf. Tit.3:4-7; Heb.5:8,9; Mt.7:21-23.
5. Very definitely obedience to God certainly involves "**works**", "**works**" which one cannot be saved without. Cf. Jas.2:14-26.