

The Missing Factor in Many Christians' Good Deeds

As Christians, we are called to do good works—to pursue justice. Many of us have heard the Golden Rule, to “do unto others as you’d have done to you.” Scripture teaches us to treat others the way we want to be treated (Matt. 7:12).

As we work for justice and exhibit mercy, many will be drawn into the kingdom—both those we help and those who see our good works (Matt. 5:16). The Spirit of God helps us shine brightly as we follow His commands to help the poor, free the captives and work for justice.

Good works are to be part of our ministry, but they cannot become more important than loving Jesus. Simply doing good deeds, without acknowledging God in the midst of it, will not please Him.

“Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ But then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice evil’” (Matt. 7:22-23).

In working for justice, we commit ourselves to opposing oppression, helping the lowly and seeking to change systems of injustice (governmental and otherwise) that keep people in chains.

Light is more powerful than darkness, and as Christians, we are to shine Christ’s light into places that are influenced by evil and oppression, setting captives free (Is. 61:1).

But to shine this light, we must be filled by it. That’s why we live a life of prayer and fasting—placing our cold hearts

in front of the bonfire of God's love. In the overflow, God's justice flows through us.

Anyone can do good deeds, but we are partnering with our King, the one who is justice and truth. "He who remains in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit," Jesus says in John 15:5, "For without Me you can do nothing."

As we seek the Lord, He will give us wisdom about doing good works His way, so that Jesus—not man—is exalted. Prayer is the most important work. As we hear God's voice, we are empowered to partner with Him to eliminate the many injustices in our nation, family and world.

Listening for God's voice is what helps keep us humble. God's Word is full of verses like Micah 6:8, that show His delight in good works that are based in humility and mercy:

He has told you, O man, what is good—and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

The world is crying out for justice, and we, as believers, know the only Man who can bring it: Jesus Christ. It's our privilege to partner with Him in this work.

The evidence of injustice is all around us—from abortion to police shootings and racial strife; homelessness, fatherlessness, and corporate greed; sexual exploitation and political corruption—but God has an answer.

The eager expectation of the creation waits for the appearance of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, now fittingly, but by the will of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom. 8:19-21).

Freedom is coming—now in part—and soon in fullness. As God's children rise up into their calling, many who are under the sway of injustice will be released in this age, and in the next age, when Christ returns, justice will cover the entire earth.

As we work for justice now, many will encounter God's light—but justice must flow from intimacy with God in fasting and prayer, which prepares our hearts to help others. We cannot rely on our own strength and wisdom, but must seek the one who has all power, authority and knowledge. This is what glorifies Him.

For further study in this area, we recommend *7 Commitments for Spiritual Growth* by Mike Bickle and *False Justice* by Stuart Greaves. {eoa}

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