

# CARTHAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

MARCH 1, 2020

*Founded by Christ---Grounded in His Word---Committed to His Love*

## **Am I Doing Enough??? By Ben Hogan**

Self-examination is a wonderful thing that God's Word frequently challenges followers to practice throughout their walk (Psalm 119:59; Lamentations 3:40; Matthew 7:5; I Corinthians 11:28; Galatians 6:4). In many ways, examining ourselves as to how close we are to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit can be an invaluable habit to our spiritual well-being. However, I am afraid that too many Christians walk about with an overwhelming fear of the life to come. We examine ourselves and find flaws, sins, failures, and shortcomings. Often, we allow these things to keep us from the hope we SHOULD have in our home of Heaven. Biblical hope is the balanced combination of earnest desire and expectation. Many Christians have the earnest desire for Heaven, but few have the expectation that such a blessing could be reserved for THEM. The problem is, you cannot have biblical hope of Heaven without the expectation of it.

There is a tremendous benefit for the Christian who examines whether or not they are following God's Word, using their talents, and pleasing our Father. However, when we take our salvation given to us SOLELY from the grace of God...and twist it into something that we earn from meritorious works...we have REJECTED God's plan for salvation. God did not send His Son to free us from the Law of Works so that we could abandon His Law of Liberty to go back again to works. God did not send His PERFECT Son into an IMPERFECT world for us to act as if we are righteous enough in and of ourselves to deserve, earn, or work our way to salvation. The truth is, we are INCAPABLE of working our way to salvation.

Highlighting what Paul says in Ephesians 2:8-10 might help us understand the relationship between grace and works. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Paul is telling Christians that salvation is a GIFT from God...not something earned, merited, or deserved. He is telling them not to boast in their good deeds, but to praise God for "His rich mercy, great love, and kindness" mentioned prior to verse eight. This grace-filled gift of salvation should then compel the Christian to be a part of His workmanship and do good works. Not only did God give us the gift of salvation, but Paul also explains that it is God who "prepared" the good works for us to do. To those who boast in their good deeds, works, and actions...the only reason those deeds, works, and actions are GOOD, is because of the God who "prepared them beforehand." Therefore, it is OBVIOUS that Paul would say that we should walk in them.

"Am I doing enough to be saved?" "Am I doing enough to go to Heaven?" These questions are undoubtedly going to arise in our hearts, but we have to be reminded that WE CANNOT DO ENOUGH TO EARN THESE THINGS. When it comes to these questions, it is not what WE DO; it is what CHRIST DID. This does not mean we do not have to DO anything, but it does give the honor, glory, and credit of our salvation to whom it should belong...Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, NOT us. We are told to be doers of the word and not hearers only (James 1:22). We are told that faith without works is dead (James 2:14-20). We are also told that we are justified by works and not only through faith (James 2:24). However, without Christ DOING this life PERFECTLY, it would not matter what we do. Without God preparing those good works beforehand, we would not know what was good or right in the first place. We could work and serve God every second of our lives, but it still would not be good enough to merit Heaven.

The problem arises when we allow those times of self-examination to disqualify ourselves when Christ has not done so. As long as we are walking in the light as He is in the light and confess our sins, we can KNOW that we have the hope (desire + expectation) of Heaven (I John 1:7-9). We are to examine ourselves, but we are also to TRUST in the promises of Christ. Paul highlights this in II Corinthians 13:5-6, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? —Unless indeed you are disqualified. But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified." Paul readily condones examining oneself but says that if you indeed are a Christian (a part of the "we") ... you should KNOW that Christ is in you and that by no means could you possibly be disqualified. The only ones disqualified are those who are not in Christ. If we are IN CHRIST...then His deeds, His actions, His merit, and His works apply to US. Praise God for that fact! He would never disqualify His Son, and if we are in His Son, He will never disqualify us.

**Assignments for this week:**

**Sunday AM: 3-1-2020:**

**Announcements:** Takota Anderson

**Greeter:** Sampson

**Opening Prayer:** Harold Chayer

**Lord's Supper:** Josh Clements

Charles Baker

Richard Lyons

Chandler Marks

**Scripture Reading:** Troy Risley

**Closing Prayer:** Carl Lucas

**Song leader AM:** Mark Marks

**Communion to Shut ins:** Miller

**Sunday PM: 3-1-2020:**

**Opening Prayer:** Gary Beach

**Closing Prayer:** Clay Johnson

**Song Leader:** Mike Lawson

**Wednesday: 3-4-2020:**

**Song Leader:** Nate Miller

**Devotional:** Damon Teel

**In Our Thoughts and Prayers:**

**Ron Gibson:** cancer

**Vicki Fieker's** husband Ron:

Health issues

**Robin Thompson** (sister of **Lindia**

**Kisling**): blood cancer

**Malcolm Scott:** preacher at the

Pea Ridge (AR) Church of Christ:

cancer/heart issues

**Sharolet Trease** (sister of Charlie

Baker): cancer

**Ben Quade** (brother-in-law of Bev

Baker) undergoing cancer

treatments.

**Priscilla Lorton:** Health issues

**Jo Shrum:** illness/falls

**Barb Durham's** sister-in-law's

sister: cancer and her (Barb's) sister.

**Kathy Brewer:** Health issues

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This realization should lead us to say like Peter, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in Heaven for you," I Peter 1:3-4. We have been given through God's abundant mercy: a living hope (desire + expectation), an incorruptible, undefiled, unfading, and reserved inheritance in Heaven. Thank God that we can KNOW we have salvation through the gift of His Grace (Ephesians 2), we can KNOW we have forgiveness through His blood (I John 1:7), we can KNOW we have an inheritance waiting for us (I Peter 1:3-4), and we can KNOW we have eternal life (I John 5:13). PRAISE GOD that these promises are given through JESUS' goodness and not my own.

**Birthdays for March:**

3: Addy Clements

4: Jo Shrum

6: Emily Anderson

15: Melissa Miller

15: John Johnson

15: Dennis Hartley

16: Pete Durham

18: Scott Brauburger

20: Barb Durham

23: Marla Block

28: Chandler Marks

29: Dora Paddock

**Anniversaries for March:**

3: Charles and Bev Baker

20: David and Nikki Lawhon

29: J R and Davan Sampson

**Elders:**

Dennis Hartley 417-674-0018

Larry Lawhon 417-310-2107

JR Sampson 417-674-0980

**Deacons:**

Takota Anderson 417-389-7449

Charles Baker 417-673-5237

Marty Block 417-388-2147

Josh Clements 417-850-0654

David Lawhon 417-388-1232

Steve Teel 417-359-6958

**Minister:**

John Johnson 417-434-0754

**Worship Times:**

10:20 AM Sunday

6:00 PM Sunday

**Bible Class:**

9:30 AM Sunday

7 PM Wednesday

**Address:**

3122 S. Grand Avenue

Carthage, MO 64836

**Phone:**

417-358-3661

**Website:**

carthagecoc.org

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**Supported Works:**

Fair Haven Children's Home

Search Program

Gary Reaves

House to House

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**Weekly Record:**

Sunday AM Worship: 85

Sunday PM Worship: 62

Wed. Night Class: 58

Contribution: \$2180

**Dates to Remember:**

3/1 TSYS @ Choteau, OK

3/8 Fellowship Lunch

3/14 Youth: games and pie

3/28 Sampson Anniversary

reception at Phelps House (2-4 pm)

**Fair Havens Children's Home Pantry List for March:**

Cake mixes, icing, pie fillings, microwave popcorn, cooking spray, pork & beans, spices, egg noodles, spaghetti noodles, spaghetti sauce, Manwich, trash bags (13 and 33 gallon), spam, shampoo, and taco sauce/seasonings.