

1 My thoughts and bible references regarding theology

Acts 13:48 - And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. (ESV)

I've been thinking about belief, faith, works, law and receiving the Holy Spirit! Please let me know what you think if you have the time.

I'm trying to get clearer on this. Please feel free to discuss it with me.

Romans 10:3-4 - For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

I enjoyed this video, but I still am of the opinion that keeping the law is not necessary, (but not prohibited, so long as it is pursued by faith and submitting to God's righteousness):

- Public Debate - Should Christians Keep The Law? - YouTube

What I like about the didache is that it still upholds righteous living and following God's Great commandments and precepts.

<https://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/didache-roberts.html>

I think it's important to live righteously out of love for God and one's neighbour, and out of faith. That being said, I think God does justify through faith, and I believe faith works. And working may indeed be called faith if the work is done in faith. I also think God likely saves through works because it may be their way of demonstrating faith to Jesus.

There's a false dichotomy between faith and works.

2 Justifying faith vs justifying works is misunderstood and is a false dichotomy

Because someone has bundled 'trusting action/seeking God in action' along with 'obedience' into works when it belongs inside faith.

- Obedience belongs inside faith because
 - God commanded it and complying is not really bringing anything to God which He hasn't told you to bring to Him.
 - * So it's just acting in faith
 - * If God commands you to wait a week before going into battle, is that considered work? No, it's faith.
 - Choosing to obey God's commandments even when no-one is watching (aside from God) is having faith in God.
 - * Therefore, there is a way of abiding by God's commandments which is faith and not works.
- Seeking God in action belongs in faith because
 - When someone wills to seek God, they act.
 - And **Hebrews 11:6** declares that faith is implied when someone believes God exists and rewards those who seek Him.
 - * And **Hebrews 11:6** declares that God rewards those who seek Him.

'Rewards from God for seeking Him' belongs in faith, or it's not faith anymore, even in regards to justifying faith.

Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Hebrews 11:24-26 - By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

2.1 The type of work that is good

John 15:5 - I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (ESV)

2.2 The type of work that's bad

'Working' for God is OK in some forms. It's a part of faith.

But what is wrong is trying to establish a righteousness of one's own apart from submitting to the righteousness of God.

James 2:18 - But someone will say, You have faith and I have works. Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

Hebrews 6:1 - Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

Dead works are works not done in service to God, but works done in service to God, He may accept.

Hebrews 9:14 - how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

We stop doing dead works to serve the living God, which I believe is obedience, which is really similar to work but it's obeying. Obedience gives glory to God.

John 13:34-35 - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (ESV)

Obeying Jesus' commandments are not 'dead works'.

Exodus 20:12-17 - Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.

Jesus said:

Mark 10:19 - You know the commandments: Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother. (ESV)

Obeying God by following the 10 commandments properly, in truth, is not performing 'dead works'.

Hebrews 9:14 - how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Service to God is obeying God through Christ's commandments. It's being a bond-servant of Christ.

John 14:12 - Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and **greater works than these will he do**, because I am going to the Father.

Whoever has faith in Jesus, the works that Jesus does, that person will do. Pisteuo = faith.

John 14:12 - Truly (G281 amen), truly (G281 amen), I say (G3004 lego) to you, he who believes (G4100 pisteuo) in Me, the works (G2041 ergon) that I do (G4160 poieo), he will do (G4160 poieo) also (G2548 kakeinos); and greater (G3173 megas) works than these (G3778 houtos) he will do (G4160 poieo); because (G3754 hoti) I go (G4198 poreuomai) to the Father (G3962 pater).

1 : 4100 pisteuo pist-yoo'-o
2
3 from 4102; to have faith (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or
4 thing), i.e. credit; by implication, to entrust (especially one's
5 spiritual well-being to Christ):--believe(-r), commit (to trust), put
6 in trust with.
7 see GREEK for 4102

If someone trusts their Lord then they do what their Lord does and has commanded.

Faith has an amount. I think even saving faith requires an amount. Sheer fear of God or love for Him is work which comes out of belief. But faith works, even saving faith works. Faith without work doesn't exist I think -

but the work can come from Jesus, I think. For example, with Lazarus - Jesus performed the work so the people watching could believe and have faith.

John 11:42 - I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.

And Jesus is able to save a person out of Jesus' own will, as he resurrected Lazarus.

John 11:43 - When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

But faith is like Peter stepping out on the water. Faith works. But I think sometimes to create faith someone just has to actually believe Jesus because Jesus performs the miracle / the work. The account of Jesus itself when it's read, and Jesus' words, are enough to inspire faith. Jesus calls persistent endurance a work. Therefore, faith comes by hearing the word of Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

I think **Ephesians 2:8-9** when it says 'through faith' doesn't actually exclude obedience (obeying Jesus), because I think obedience is intrinsic to faith.

When it says "not a result of works", I believe that something more like, even if works were tied into the faith, it's by grace. If a person's saving faith included works then that is fine.

I believe in all of theses:

- **sola fida** (by faith alone) AMEN!!
 - The justifying faith may include 'acts of faith', which is just visible faith.
 - Works done outside of faith **do not** qualify for justification.
- **sola gratia** (by grace alone) AMEN!!
- **sola scriptura** (by Scripture alone) AMEN!!
- **Solus Christus** AMEN!!
- **Soli Deo gloria** (glory to God alone) AMEN!! But the glory God gives us glorifies God.
 - When it comes to forgiving offenses of others, my understanding is that it is about forgiving others' offenses against 'you', thereby ultimately still going through Christ for forgiveness, since
 - **John 20:22-23** - And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit. (ESV)
 - **Proverbs 19:11** - Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. (ESV)
 - **Matthew 6:12** - and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
 - **Matthew 18:35** - So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.
 - **Mark 11:25** - And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.
 - **Ephesians 4:32** - Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.
 - **Matthew 10:8** - Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. (ESV)

Hearing God's word and believing it, and even acting on it, like Peter stepping out on the water, or like the woman at the well going in to town to tell people about Jesus, or turning from sinful things. And there is an amount of faith, and true belief is all that's required to be saved, but Faith is so tightly linked to Obedience like Faith is linked to Hope. True belief is enough because it accepts what Jesus says, as a child believes. But I don't think this discounts faith that increases through obedience.

Peter demonstrated obedience. A changed heart is essential to be saved, I think.

Hebrews describes faith as hope with belief in reward from seeking God.

Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

The whole chapter of Hebrews 11 also describes many 'acts' of faith. Belief and action are like a vector.

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