ARE WORKS NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?

—Scriptural Testimony—

- The Apostle Paul states that God created us to do good works:

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

- Saint James clearly states that works are necessary for salvation:

"What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith from your works, and from my works I will show you my faith. You believe that there is one God. You do well. The demons also believe, and tremble. Do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone? Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? Just as the body without the spirit is dead, similarly faith without works is dead also" (James 2:14-26).

- Saint John the Evangelist tells us to love others with our works and actions:

"My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1Jn. 3:18).

- In the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ addresses seven bishops, underlining to each one that He knows their works, and recommending that they pay attention to their works:

"I know your works… repent and do the first works" (Rev. 2:2-5)

Compiled by
Saint Nektarios Monastery
—Roscoe, NY—

“I know your works” (Rev. 2:9)

“I know your works” (Rev. 2:13)

“I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first” (Rev. 2:19)

“I know your works…be watchful…for I have not found your works perfect before God” (Rev. 3:1-2)

“I know your works” (Rev 3:8)

“I know your works” (Rev. 3:15)

- Jesus Christ further states that we will be judged according to our works, that He will reward each one of us according to our works, and that we must keep doing good works until the end of our lives:

“And I will give each one of you according to your works” (Rev. 2:23)

“And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations” (Rev. 2:26)

“Here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, ‘Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them” (Rev. 14:12-13)

“And the dead were judged according to their works” (Rev. 20:12)

“And they were judged, each one according to his works” (Rev. 20:13)

“Behold, I am coming quickly! And My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work” (Rev. 22:12)

- Saint John the Forerunner advised the people to do works worthy of repentance:

“Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father’ … Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire” (Mt. 3:8-10)

- Christ commands us to do good works unto the glory of God:

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Mt. 5:16)

- Christ commands us to do good to those who hate us:

"Do good to those who hate you" (Mt. 5:44)

- Christ tells us that we must keep all of His commandments. And His commandments include good works.

"Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:19)

- Christ commands us to be charitable:

"Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites … but when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly" (Mt. 6:2-4)

- Christ states that we need to do good works to enter the Kingdom of Heaven:

"Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Mt. 7:19)

- Christ states that we need to keep His commandments in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. His commandments include good works:

"**Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Mt. 7:22)**

"Therefore, whoever hears my words and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock… But everyone who hears My words and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand… and it fell, and great was its fall" (Mt. 7:24-27)

"If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" (Mt. 19:17)

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard… So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, Call the laborers and give them their wages'" (Mt. 20: 1-8)

“A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in my vineyard.’” (Mt. 21:28)

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them… After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five more talents, saying, ‘Lord you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord’… Then he who had received one talent came and said, ‘Lord… I was afraid and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’ But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant…. Cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness’” (Mt. 25:14-30)

- Christ tells us that we will be rewarded for even the smallest good work we do:

“And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward”(Mt. 10:42).

- Christ further tells us that He will render unto each person according to their works:

“For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His father with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to his works” (Mt. 16:27).

- Behold what Christ will say during HIs Second Coming:

“When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit upon the throne of HIs glory … Then the King shall say unto them on His right hand, ‘Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you have me to eat; I was thirsty and ye gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came unto me.’… Then He shall say unto them on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I hungered and you gave me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink; I was a stranger and you did not take me in; I was naked and you did not clothe me; I was sick and in prison and you did not visit me’” (Mt. 25:31-46)

- The Apostle Paul preached that we must do good works in order to be saved:

"Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance" (Acts 26:20)

- When referring to himself and the Apostle Apollos, Saint Paul says:

"I planted, Apollos watered … and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor" (1Cor. 3:6-8)

- Furthermore, he states that on the Day of Judgment each person's works will be tested:

"each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it… and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire" (1Cor. 3:13-15)

- And when instructing Timothy, the Apostle Paul tells him to command them who have the means to do good works:

"Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty… to do good, to become rich in good works… so they may lay hold on eternal life" (1Tim. 6:17-18)

- Likewise, the Apostle Paul directs Titus to be an example of good works:

"In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works" (Tit. 2:7)

- He also informs Titus that Jesus Christ died in order to purify his people and render them zealous for good works:

"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (Tit. 2:14)

- And in his same epistle, the Apostle Paul directs Titus to teach the Christians to do good works:

"Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work" (Tit. 3:1)

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works" (Tit. 3:8)

- In his epistle to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul tells the Christians that as long as they are in this life, they should do good works:

"Therefore, as long as we have time, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of similar faith" (Gal. 6:10)

- Behold how the Apostle Paul stigmatizes them who claim to believe in God without possessing any works:

"They profess to know God, but with their works they deny Him. They are repulsive and insubordinate, and unfamiliar with good work" (Tit. 1:16)

- The Apostle Paul clearly states that God will render unto each person according to either their good works or the evil works:

"in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render to each one according to his deeds: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath. Tribulation and anguish on every soul of man who does evil… but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good" (Rom. 2:5-10)

- Furthermore, the Apostle Paul states that people who carry out the commandments of God will be justified, not they who only listen to the word of God:

"for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified" (Rom. 2:13)

- In another verse, the Apostle Paul reaffirms that, after death, God will render unto each one of us according to the works we have carried out with our body:

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one of us may receive according to what he has carried out with his body, whether good or bad" (2Cor. 5:10)

- And elsewhere the Apostle Paul demonstrates that faith without works is of no use, and that in such an instance faith becomes faithlessness:

"For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. " (Rom. 2:25)

- Saint James goes so far as to say that it is a sin if we are capable of doing a good work and yet do not do it:

"Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17)

- The Apostle Peter similarly instructs the faithful to do good works:

"Beloved, I beg you, as sojourners and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that … they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1Pt. 2:11-12)

Yes! Good works are needed for salvation.