

The Family Catechism Of The Covenant of Peace Church

For the Week of 5/10- 5/16/2020

QUESTION 86: Since, then, we are redeemed from our Misery by Grace through Christ, without any Merit of ours, why must we do Good Works?

ANSWER: Because Christ, having redeemed us by His Blood, renews us also by His Holy Spirit after His Own Image, that with our whole life we may show ourselves thankful to God for His Blessing, and that He may be glorified through us; then also, that we ourselves may be assured of our Faith by the Fruits thereof, and by our godly Walk- may win others also to Christ.

EXPOSITION: This Question, with respect to the moving Causes of Good Works, is placed first, even before the Question relating to Man's Conversion, not because Good Works precede Conversion, but because the things which follow are in this way more strikingly connected with what precedes. Human reason argues in this way from the "Doctrine of Free Satisfaction": he is not bound to make Satisfaction, for whom another has already satisfied. Christ has satisfied for us. Therefore, there is no need that we should perform Good Works. We reply, that there is more in the Conclusion than in the Premises. All that legitimately follows, is: therefore, we ourselves are not, bound to make Satisfaction, which we grant,

1. In respect to the Justice of God, which does not demand a "double Payment"
2. In respect to our Salvation, which, in other respects, would be no Salvation

Yet we are, nevertheless, bound to render Obedience, and perform Good Works, for the reasons which are referred to, and explained in the above Question of the Catechism:

1. Because Good Works are the Fruits of our Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, which are always connected with our free Justification. **"Whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified."** **"Such were some of you; but you are washed; but you are sanctified; but you are justified,"** etc. (Rom. 8:30; 1 Cor. 6:11) Those, therefore, who do not perform Good Works, show that they are neither regenerated by the Spirit of God, nor redeemed by the Blood of Christ
2. That we may express our gratitude to God for the Benefit of Redemption. **"Yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."** **"That you present your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service,"** etc. (Rom. 6:13; 12:1)
3. That God may be glorified by us. **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."** **"That they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."** (Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12)
4. Because they are the Fruits of Faith that by which our own Faith, as well as the Faith of others is judged of. **"Give diligence, to make your calling and election sure;"** after

which certain copies add the words, by good works. “Every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit.” “Faith worketh by love.” “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long— suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” (2 Pet. 1:10; Matt. 7:17; Gal. 5:6, 22)

5. **That we may bring others to Christ. “When you are converted, strengthen your brethren.” “You wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may, without the word, be won by the conversation of their wives.” “Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” (Luke 22:32; 1 Pet. 3:1; Rom. 14:19)**

These Causes, now, must be explained and urged with great diligence, in our Sermons and Exhortations to the people; and here we may cite, as being in point, the whole of the sixth chapter, and the first part of the eighth chapter of Paul’s **Epistle to the Romans**, down to the sixteenth verse.

For a further explanation of the first Cause, we may remark, that the Benefit of Justification is not given without Regeneration:

1. Because Christ has merited both; viz., the Remission of Sins, and the habitation of God within us by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, now, is never inactive, but is always efficacious, and so brings it to pass that those in whom He dwells are made conformable to God.
2. Because the heart is purified by Faith: for in all those to whom the Merits of Christ are applied by Faith, there is kindled the Love of God, and a desire to do those things which are pleasing in His Sight
3. Because God bestows the Benefit of Justification upon none, but such as render true Gratitude. But no one ever renders true Gratitude except those who receive the Benefit of Regeneration.

Therefore, neither of these can be separated from the other. We must also observe the difference which exists between the first and second Causes. The first shows what Christ effects in us by virtue of his death; while the second teaches to what we are bound in view of the Benefits received