



New Creation

Nov 19: Created For Good Works

Series Summary: As a believer in Jesus, all who have professed Christ should know you are saved by faith in Him, with a confidence of eternal security. Yet, for many, there still lies a tension between what is read about their faith in the scriptures compared to what they see play out in their habits and day-to-day living. It's possible that many still struggle with a disconnect between their understanding of the Gospel in faith and its practical application. To fully understand the difference the Gospel has the potential to make in every area of our lives.

Big Idea: We are not saved by our good works, but once we believe in Jesus we are now expected to do good works. What does it look like to live out these good works, and where does this desire stem from?

Schedule:

- Video Teaching
- Small group
- Smores in the rec space

LIVE TEACHING

Series Lead in: As a believer in Jesus, all who have professed Christ should know you are saved by faith in Him, with a confidence of eternal security. Yet, for many, there still lies a tension between what is read about their faith in the scriptures compared to what they see play out in their habits and day-to-day living. It's possible that many still wrestle with a disconnect between what they know about

the Gospel in faith, compared to their understanding of the Gospel in its application. To fully understand the difference the Gospel makes in every area of our lives.

Today, we will discuss how the Gospel is not only about what Jesus has saved us from (sin and condemnation), but just as importantly, what He has saved us to. How do we ultimately embrace New Creation living until we meet Jesus? We do it by actively pursuing God's purpose for which we were saved.

CREATED FOR GOOD WORKS

The core of our new identity is tied directly to a new purpose, given to us by God Himself.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

We are God's Handiwork: This emphasizes that our new life is a divine act of God's creation. Just as God created humanity the first time, our salvation is a new miraculous creation, making us unique and made with a specific purpose in mind.

Not by Works, But for Works: We don't perform good works to get salvation; we perform them because we have salvation.

Our purpose is clear. This new life in Christ is a commission. Good works are not an optional add-on to the Christian life; they are the very reason for the new life.

"Prepared in Advance": This is profound. God has predetermined the character and direction of a believer's daily walk. These are the unique acts of service, kindness, justice, and faithfulness that align with the character of Christ. To "walk in them" means living a life that naturally aligns with the unique purposes God has laid out for us. Our lives are a divinely prepared path.

TRAINED BY GRACE

The power to live this life of good works comes from grace, which also acts as our **Divine Trainer**. This isn't about human effort alone; it's about submitting to the active instruction of God's grace.

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. **12** It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and

Savior, Jesus Christ, **14** who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Grace Appears, Teaches and Trains us for New Creation Living (v. 11-12): God's grace, made manifest in Jesus Christ, does more than just save us; it educates us. It is the curriculum for the Christian life. This "education" has two parts:

1. The Negative Discipline (Say "No"): We must renounce ungodliness (a lack of reverence toward God) and worldly passions (desires centered entirely on the present world system).
2. The Positive Discipline (Live "Yes"): We must actively live self-controlled (towards self), upright (towards others/society), and godly (towards God) lives. This triad of actions forms the ideal Christian behavior.

The ultimate result of this purification is a people zealous to do what is good. Our old, misplaced zeal (like Paul's pre-conversion) is now rightly directed toward God's purposes. Living the "new creation" life is characterized by this active, passionate pursuit of good works.

Takeaway: There is a necessary tension in the Christian life: we are saved by grace, but we must work out that salvation by submitting to the training of grace. When you feel spiritually stuck, remind yourself of your identity as God's Handiwork and intentionally choose to walk in the good works God has prepared for you - because regardless of how you feel, God has given you the ability to live a life that produces good works. This active obedience solidifies the reality of your new-creation identity.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

When you feel spiritually stuck, remind yourself of your identity as God's Handiwork, and intentionally choose to walk in the good works God has prepared for you. This active obedience solidifies the reality of your new-creation identity. With this in mind, it's essential to factor the spiritual attribute of hope. In our small groups, we will discuss how our faith and hope in what is and what will be can impact our ability to hold fast to New Creation living.

What is the difference between doing good works to try and be saved, and doing good works because you are saved?

Note/Theology: A reminder that we are not saved by our good works (Eph 2:8-10). However, we do good works once we are a new creation to show our worship as a living sacrifice to Jesus.

Read Hebrews 10:23 as a group

The main command here is to "hold unswervingly to the hope we profess." What do you think it means to hold unswervingly to the hope we have in Jesus? How would you put that in your own words?

Leader Notes: Define hope as a confident expectation, not wishful thinking. Encourage students to name a specific promise seen in scripture (e.g., forgiveness, eternal life, Jesus's return, the Spirit's presence) that anchors them.

What does it look like if we have a hope that does "swerve"?

Read Romans 5:1-5 as a group

According to Romans 5:2, we "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." What does "the glory of God" mean in this context?

Leader Notes: This may be a deeper question for your students, but let them work through it. "Glory of God" here refers to the believer's future participation in God's divine perfection (being fully transformed and resurrected). This joy is a spiritual discipline.

How does this future with Jesus, and the joy it comes with, help you through difficult stretches in life?

Leader Note: Leader, feel free to give your own personal example if you have one. It could be beneficial to have your students see this joy lived out through you.

Paul says we "rejoice in our sufferings, because suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." Why would a non-believer view this verse as strange?

Note: For unbelievers, this seems counterintuitive, but for a Christian, beneficial. They think “why would I view sufferings and struggles as a good thing, even if it builds perseverance and hope?” Non-believers would only view struggles as a detriment with nothing positive coming from it. It's ironic how non-believers want peace and paradise, but reject Jesus.

How can a non-believer benefit from seeing us living out this verse? In other words, how can a non-believer benefit from seeing me rejoicing in Jesus even though I may suffer and struggle at times?

Leader Notes: Acknowledge the hard truth in this situation. Suffering doesn't automatically produce good things; it does so when endured with faith. Encourage that the focus remains on the sanctification process. This links to walking by the Spirit—the Spirit sustains us through the suffering.

Why is hope the final product in this chain rather than the starting point?

Leader Notes: The hope in v. 2 is the initial, objective certainty of salvation. The hope here (v. 4) is the subjective, deeply tested confidence derived from experience. We know God is faithful because we've seen Him sustain us through trials, confirming the initial promise.

How does this hope spur us along to live out good works and a fruitful faith?