

## Good Deeds and the Transformed Life

**Reading:** Galatians 6:7-10.

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Shortly after World War II came to a close, Europe began picking up the pieces. Much of the old country had been ravaged by war and was in ruins. Perhaps the saddest sight of all was that of little orphaned children starving in the streets of those war-torn cities.

Early one chilly morning an American soldier was making his way back to the barracks in London. As he turned the corner in his jeep, he spotted a little lad with his nose pressed to the window of a pastry shop. Inside, the cook was kneading dough for a fresh batch of doughnuts. The hungry boy stared in silence, watching every move. The soldier pulled his jeep to the curb, stopped, got out, and walked quietly over to where the little fellow was standing. Through the steamed-up window, he could see the mouth-watering morsels being pulled from the oven, piping hot. The boy salivated and released a slight groan as he watched the cook place them onto the glass-enclosed counter ever so carefully. The soldier's heart went out to the nameless orphan as he stood beside him. "Son ...would you like some of those?" He asked the lad. The boy was startled, "Oh, yeah... I would!" the lad replied.

The American stepped inside and bought a dozen, put them in a bag, and walked back to where the lad was standing in the foggy cold of the London morning. The soldier smiled, held out the bag, and said simply: "Here you are." As he turned to walk away, he felt a tug on his coat. He looked back and heard the child ask quietly: "Mister... Are you God?"

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This story is an illustration of what Jesus said in the sermon on the mount. In Matthew 5, Jesus said to His disciples;

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16b. NIV
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It also has application from the verse that we'll be focussing on this morning in Gal 6:10, where it says this;

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Galatians 6:10. NIV
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It's an illustration of what it looks like for a Christian to do good to all people, whenever we have the opportunity.

Today is the launch of a partnership between GBC Corinda and Compassion. We're seeking to partner with like-minded churches in the Philippines, to reach out to children, to those in need. To those in need of not only of physical and educational assistance, but also in need of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As people of God here in Australia, what does God's word, the Bible, tell us about why and how we are to minister, how we are to show good deeds to these people?

Today I'd like us to see this:

**Big Idea: God is Glorified when Christians who are Rich in Good Deeds Show Compassion and the Gospel to Others.**

**Good Deeds Flow out of a Life Transformed by the Gospel.  
Good Deeds Reflect the Character of God and Glorifies Him.**

**1. Good Deeds flow out of a Life Transformed by the Gospel.**

This point addresses the question where do these good deeds come from.

Returning to our verse for today, Galatians 6:10.

**Therefore**, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Galatians 6:10. NIV

Let's look at this verse more closely. The first word in the verse is Therefore, and as it's been said, whenever you see a therefore in the Bible, you have to see what it's there for! We need then, to look back to what's already been written before the – therefore...

A reminder then, about the book of Galatians, and what's going on in this book. The book of Galatians addresses a problem that had come up between Jewish Christians and non-Jewish Christians. Basically, the question that was being tossed round was this, that to follow Jesus, to be a Christian that pleases God, you must trust in the death of Jesus Christ AND you must also obey the law that was given to Moses. In other words, to be in favour with God it's grace PLUS works of the law.

Well, Paul in this letter to the Galatian churches responds to this and says NO! Paul points out that we're saved, we're made right with God through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and not by adding on anything else. In other words, to be in favour with God, it is grace plus nothing.

This is what Paul writes in verse 16 of Galatians chapter 2;

Know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified. Galatians 2:16. NIV.

So, we're made right with God, we're justified with God purely through faith in Jesus Christ.

This is because it's through the death of Christ that we're made right with God, and nothing that we can do can improve the situation, or make it any better, it's all of Jesus.

However, out of this faith in with Christ, there's a change, there's an evidence of faith, called fruit of the Spirit. The last two chapters of this letter to the Galatians, describe what a life that's been transformed by the Gospel looks like. The life of someone who's heart has been reached by the Gospel, and as a result has been filled with the Holy Spirit. Well, it's that life that starts to bear fruit of the Spirit.

An apple tree produces apples because it's part of its DNA. So then, someone who has been saved, someone who has been transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and has the Spirit within, they then, start to produce the fruit of the spirit. They start to produce fruit like the list of fruits listed in Ch 5:22

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control. Gal 5:22-23b. NIV

This changed life, starts to increasingly show marks of God's character shining through our lives, as we are bit by bit, are further transformed by the Gospel as we grow in the knowledge of God.

There is more love, more joy, more kindness, more gentleness, more self-control. Gone is the life of the flesh and its habitual practices of the list of the flesh in Ch 5:19-21.

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions <sup>21</sup>and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. Gal 6:19-21b. NIV

Through the gospel, the lives of believers in Jesus Christ's death are transformed. Gone is the continual practice of our old flesh nature. We've been transformed into a new nature, through faith in Christ. We've been sealed with the Holy Spirit. With that comes a transformed nature, with that comes a desire to please God.

So, this Life that has been transformed by the Gospel, has evidence of this transformation that's seen in good works, in good deeds.

We've seen, then, where good deeds come from. This leads us to our second point;

## **2. Good Deeds Reflect the Character of God and Glorifies Him.**

This addresses the question well what do these good deeds look like?

Look with me again at our verse in Galatians 6

Therefore, as we have opportunity, **let us do good** to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Galatians 6:10. NIV

What do you mean to "do good"? What does it mean to do good works?

So, what's in mind here is good in a general sense. Well thanks Luke, that's as clear as mud!

What do you really mean by that? What does that look like? Well it encompasses all good deeds, good works, whatever is for the good, for the betterment, for the advantage of others. You could sum up good works in three broad categories. There are spiritual, physical and social good works.

**Spiritually**; This might be helping someone in their spiritual walk with God, in their struggle with a particular sin, and your walking alongside them in this struggle [Galatians 6:1]. It might be bearing each other's burdens, helping each other through pain and difficulties that life brings [Galatians 6:2]. It could be praying with and for someone. It may be sharing the Gospel with a friend, a family member. These things are great. But it does go further.

**Physically**; As people of God, those of us transformed by the Gospel, we're to be marked with compassion. Jesus displayed this. On one occasion seeing the large crowd, He;

had compassion on them and healed their sick. Matthew 14:14b. NIV

We need to have compassion on at least our brothers and sisters in Christ, because as we do have compassion on these ones we do it as for the Lord Jesus [Matthew 25:40]. Feeding the hungry, those who are thirsty something to drink, inviting the stranger in, clothing those who need clothes, visiting the sick and those in prison. [Matthew 25:31-46]

Doing good had even a wider scope in NT times. **Socially**.

In NT times, the wealthy in society, including wealthy Christians, provided funds for a variety of community projects. These guys, often known as benefactors, provided funds beyond the scope of most people in the church. These funds included supplying grain in times of need through diverting supply ships to the city. But also involved community works like erecting public buildings and other utilities, refurbishing the theatre and widening roads.

With the wealthy Christian benefactors providing funds for these sorts of community projects, they silenced those who opposed the Christians in the community or were trying to paint the Christians as poor citizens. The wealthy Christians in doing things for the welfare of the general population, was viewed as a good work, good deed<sup>1</sup>, that also honoured God. [1 Peter 2:11-17; Romans 13:1-5; Jeremiah 29:4-7].

Now I'm not sure how many here of us are in the position to do these sorts of things today. However, the principle is that we're to seek to do things for welfare of general population, for the welfare of the city, society. While it may not be a big here in Oz, contributing to providing a toilet block in third world countries can make a huge difference to the society and welfare of the people there.

So, as we can see, the scope of good deeds is quite broad.

There are four characteristics that I'd like us to note about good deeds. These should flavour, should characterise, what our good deeds should look like.

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce W. Winter, *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens*, First-Century Christians in the Graeco-Roman World (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Carlisle, Cumbria: Eerdmans ; Paternoster Press, 1994).

Therefore, **as we have opportunity**, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Galatians 6:10. NIV

### A. Whenever we can.

**First**, notice it's **as we have opportunity**.

Every time we get the chance, whenever we can, we should be looking to take the opportunity to do good to others. Our good deeds then, is this something that just turns on & off at different times? Like timer that's set? Does it click on, on Sunday morning and lasts through to church finishes? Then by the time you've driven home it's gone off?

Well, no, it's our entire lives that provide the opportunity and privilege to serve, to do good to others. This means it shouldn't matter the season of life that we're in, that'd stop us from doing good. Whenever the opportunity arises, if it is in our capacity to do so we should be willing.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good **to all people**, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Galatians 6:10. NIV

### B. Whoever the person

**Secondly**, it's **to all people, whoever the person is**.

Our good deeds are not to be limited to people we like or are like us.

It doesn't matter who it is be it the awkward family member, neighbour, work mate, foreigner, someone from a different state or country, even people with different religious beliefs, they all should be on our list of people to help. It's to be ALL people.

But as the verse concludes

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, **especially to those who belong to the family of believers**. Galatians 6:10. NIV

But particularly, people who are fellow believers, fellow Christians they're to be the ones we need to do good for, even if they are the awkward ones.

It's the brother and sister in Christ without daily food and clothes. It's the widow without family to help. It's the orphan. [James 1:17; 2:14-17; 1 Timothy 5:3-16].

But it is also other churches. We see examples of churches supporting each other when in need, even giving generously even though they themselves were in extreme poverty [2 Corinthians 8:1-7]

### C. Compassionately Generous

**Thirdly**, we're to be generous.

In 1 Timothy 6, it says these words.

<sup>17</sup>Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup>Command them to do good, to be

rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. <sup>19</sup>In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

There's a lot that we could take out of these verses. Earlier in this book of 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, Paul, the writer, warns that having wealth can be a trap for the believer, in that it can take them away from Christ. [1 Timothy 6:9]. Paul goes on to say that HAVING money is NOT evil, but the LOVE of money IS [1 Timothy 6:10].

But in these verses before us, Paul points out in verse 17 that our hope should be in God and not in our wealth or possessions, because it can be quickly gone. We're not to be arrogant, because we're to remember that it's God who has blessed us and provided us with everything for our enjoyment.

It's in this section that Paul gives instructions to those who are wealthy.

Now before you turn off and say this doesn't apply to me. The reality is we ARE ALL wealthy. We may not be compared to others in this country. But compared to others on this planet, we are VERY wealthy. In Australia in regard to wealth, we are in the top few percent of the world's most wealthy people.

I've been challenged by these verses before me.

Just pause and consider this for a moment.

Do we think it harsh if I DON'T have the latest flat screen TV that my neighbour does, or I can't afford to go on the sort of holidays that I want, or send my kids off to that private school, or the internet is running slower than I'd like? First world problems...

Here in Oz, the bar, our expectations are high in regard to wealth.

I need to remember this

if we have food and clothing, to be will be content with that. 1 Timothy 6:8. NIV

I'm challenged by the quote from the great Reformer Martin Luther.

He once wrote that "there are three conversions necessary: the conversion of the heart, the conversion of the mind, and the conversion of the purse"

Of these three, it may well be that we find the conversion of the purse to be the most difficult.

Charles Spurgeon also wrote this, "With some (Christians) the last part of their nature that ever gets sanctified is their pockets."

With this in mind, look with me at verse 18,

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 1 Timothy 6:18.

Here, those who are rich in material wealth are encouraged to be rich in good works.

This is a call to observable good deeds, that flows out of a genuine faith in the God who gives.

The God who is calling us to be generous and ready to richly share what He has richly provided

In doing this we reflect the character of a God who richly gave.

We reflect the character of God who is kind to all [Luke 6:35-36].

In doing this we glorify God.

#### **D. Glorifying to God**

This is the **fourth** and last characteristic of good deeds that I want to highlight. We return to the opening verse from today.

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16b. NIV

Our good deeds, that flow out of a life that's been transformed by the gospel, glorify God.

Many people do good works in the world today. People are involved with charities of various sorts, helping in the community, giving money, donating time and talent to various people and various charities. What's the difference with Christians? What is the difference as people of God doing the same thing?

The motivation is the thing, the reason that we're to be doing it.

We should not be doing it for OUR ego, OUR honour, to make me LOOK good, or to be highly thought of.

NO, the motivation is so that God's name be honoured. So that HIS name be glorified, so that the news of the gospel will extend to everyone, that HIS kingdom be advanced.

As mentioned before, the good deeds we do can be social, physical or spiritual. Often, it's through social and physical good works that a conduit, a pipeline to enable to gospel to reach and touch lives is made possible.

It's in the good works, a picture of a kind and generous God can be seen. Like our opening illustration, when the lad got the bag of donuts, what did he think? "Are you God?"

For us, may we be an illustration of God to those in need around us, may we be this to those we may sponsor and partner with through Compassion in the Philippines.

It's our prayer that as help is given to address the physical needs, that through this conduit, through this connection, that the message of Jesus Christ will find fertile ground.

May we be Christians who are rich in good deeds, bringing compassion and the gospel to others, to the glory of God.

**Good Deeds and the Transformed Life**  
**(Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 6:17-19                      18<sup>th</sup> February 2018)**

Main Point: **God is Glorified when Christians who are Rich in Good Deeds Show Compassion and the Gospel to Others.**

Please select a few relevant questions from each section and ensure that most of the time is focussed on application.

**General Questions:**

1. What is the "Therefore", there for in Galatians 6:10?
2. What is the connection between Galatians 2:16 and Galatians 6:10? If so explain.
3. Is this important in relation to good deeds? Why or why not?
4. What do good deeds look like? [What three broad categories of these were discussed]
5. How were these seen in New Testament times?
6. What four characteristics should characterise our good deeds? Discuss in reference to Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 6:18; Matthew 5:16.

**Application Questions:**

1. What should be the root of our good deeds? Why is this so important?
2. Who in the network of people that we have contact with do we find the most difficult to show good deeds to? Why? Is this something that we can change? If so how? If not, why not?
3. How can good deeds be shown today in modern Australia?
4. Would you agree with the quotes from Martin Luther and Charles Spurgeon?

"There are three conversions necessary: the conversion of the heart, the conversion of the mind, and the conversion of the purse" Martin Luther

"With some (Christians) the last part of their nature that ever gets sanctified is their pockets."  
Charles Spurgeon.

Is this a fair assessment of where we are as Australian Christians in 2018?  
What things do we complain about? Do they really matter?  
What is the motivation of my good deeds?

5. Reflect on how and when you came to Christ. Was there a person or event that led to you hearing about the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Would you class this as a good deed?
6. When do we do good deeds, at every opportunity or only when it is convenient?
7. How can we do better as a church at showing good deeds towards each other?
8. How can we do better as a church at showing good deeds towards our community?
9. How can we do better as an individual in showing good deeds towards family, neighbours, work colleagues, others?