

# Good Works Of A Bad Religion

*Evangelistic Message*

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Well, hear me this evening, friends, as I tell you a story many of you can relate to. I promise you, friends, this may be one of the most interesting stories you have ever heard. Listen to this true story, friends.

A missionary to Mexico shared this following story. He said you could stand on a cliff in Mexico and gaze down in the riverbed of Mexican workers. These people work down in the riverbed in their corn patch and there they grow their corn and when their corn is ready to harvest, they shuck it and after it dries out, they'll take it and grind it into cornmeal and make tortillas and then take these tortillas down to the open market and there sell the tortillas for a few pesos and put them away. Come back out to their house and there they will live off of lizards. They'll go out among the rocks and catch these huge long lizards and they'll eat those lizards and save that money for a special day, a special day when they will start a pilgrimage to a wooden statue of Jesus Christ up in the mountains. The terrain to that statue is so bad that most of the people will have to crawl on their hands and knees a couple of miles, and by the time they get to that statue, they are bleeding all over.

Standing beside the statue is a priest and that priest is saying, "Now, you love God, give to him because you show your love to God by giving." And those people will reach into their little bags and purses and pull out those pesos stained in their own blood and drop that money in a slit in the top of the head of that wooden Jesus. Then the priest prays and when he is finished, the priest will holler, "You have not given enough! Look, Jesus is sad, he's crying!" And all the time there will be another priest hidden in that hollow statue and with a little hand pump he will pump water to where it comes out of human-made tear ducts and that statue is crying, and there those people will give all they have, crawl down that mountain and go back to eating lizards, growing their corn to make more tortillas to get more pesos to go and give to a dead god that cannot move or hear.

Listen to me, friends, the title of my message this evening is, "Good Works Of A Bad Religion," because any religion that tells you you can get to heaven by good works is a bad religion. Don't be fooled, friends, by something just because you were born into a family of a certain religion. Don't be fooled by something that's just tradition in your family. But there are people today who belong to churches who have gotten out their pocket knives and have carved out for themselves a god they can live with but the trouble is, he's not the God of the Bible.

Let me tell you three things, friends, about us and then I'll tell you three things about Jesus. First, most folks think they can work their way to heaven. Secondly, most folks think they are good enough for heaven. Thirdly, but good people don't go to heaven, only forgiven people get to go there. Jesus said in Matthew's Gospel, "Not every one that sayeth unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Listen to me, friends, only a born again believer in Christ Jesus can have the power to do the will of God in his or her life. You can't live it in the flesh. You can't live as a Christian on your own. You need power from above. You must be born above and washed in his blood.

Like those Mexican workers who served a wooden Jesus, a statue that couldn't speak, good works couldn't help them. They believed it was by their sacrifice of climbing that mountain to give their pesos that they worked so hard for, that those things and those good works, that would be enough to get them into heaven and keep them out of hell. Good works of a bad religion won't help you, friend, if you die in your sins and you stand before God in your own good merits, in your own perceived goodness. You will go to hell.

Hear me now, Jesus has this to say to those who called him Lord with their lips but who never knew him, and more sad than that, he never knew them. "And I will profess unto you, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." My Bible says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." That means to suffer the second death in hell for sin.

Now, friends, let me tell you three things about Jesus. First, Jesus is a substitute for sin. My Bible says in Galatians this about Jesus, "Who loved me and gave himself for me." He died so I can live, friends. 2. Jesus is worth having. In Matthew 13:45-46 it says, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Listen, friends, Jesus is that Pearl of Great Price, worth selling all for and losing all for so he may be gained. A person who is saved has found Christ. He is the Pearl of Great Price. He's worth having, friends. 3. Jesus can save from sin. He shed his precious blood to cleanse me from my sins. Jesus said, "For this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." And in Romans 5:9 it states, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." And in Revelation it says, "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Jesus can save from sin, friend. Christ Jesus is the only remedy and refuge for sin.

I'm going to close this meeting, friends, with a favorite hymn that speaks of trusting in Jesus, trusting in Jesus alone for salvation. Your good works won't help you get into heaven, friends, but Jesus will. He will save all who come to him in sincerity of heart, in repentance, confessing they are sinners and own him as their Savior and Lord, but you have to understand, friend, good works of a bad religion won't help you. They won't help you at all. There is no way, no pathway to heaven but by Jesus Christ who died on a

bloody cross for sin. Jesus says so, he says, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." When he says, "I am the way," he is the only way. When he says he is the truth, that means his word is as good as gold. You can count on it, friends, when he says, "I am the life." That means eternal life is only found in Jesus. He is a perfect Savior. When he says "no man" – hear me now – no man, no woman, can come to his Father's heaven but by him, he means business, friends. He has rights and claims on followers of him. Your life is no longer your own. He must be a complete Master.

Listen, friend, if God's been dealing with you in this message and troubling your conscience, if God's Spirit has been troubling you, maybe it's time you come off your false foundation of good works and you come to Christ alone for salvation. Come unto him, a Savior, coming empty-handed and in humility of heart.

The good works of a bad religion will only send you to a devil's hell. If you want Christ as Savior and Lord, then you come to him now, friend. Put your trust in him as I sing.

"Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just to take Him at His Word  
Just to rest upon His promise,  
Just to know, 'Thus saith the Lord!'

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!  
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
Oh, for grace to trust Him more!

Oh, how sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just to trust His cleansing blood  
Just in simple faith to plunge me  
'Neath the healing, cleansing flood!

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!  
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
Oh, for grace to trust Him more!

Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just from sin and self to cease  
Just from Jesus simply taking  
Life and rest, and joy and peace.

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!  
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
Oh, for grace to trust Him more!"