

February Questions / Answers

1. “Why does the Bible say you are rewarded for works in Matthew 16:27 when you are saved by faith without works?”

- Do you realize that you are able to find a Scripture (actually many) that says you are rewarded for works (good and bad), but ZERO Scriptures that teach you are saved by faith without works?
- The text says: *“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works” (Matthew 16:24-27).*
- The fact that accountable people will be judged based upon their works/deeds; is an undeniable and clear fact (**Matthew 25:31-46, John 5:28-29, Romans 2:1-11, Romans 14:11-12, II Corinthians 5:10, Galatians 6:7-8, Revelation 20:12, and Revelation 22:12**).
- Another undeniable fact is, you are not saved by faith without works (**Luke 8:1-15, Romans 6:1-23, Ephesians 2:1-10, Philippians 2:12, Colossians 3:1-17, James 2:14-26**, etc.).
- There will be those who pervert Scriptures to teach faith only and other errors. Don't fall for that (**II Timothy 2:14-18** and **II Peter 3:15-18**). Don't follow the blind leaders (**Matthew 15:14** and **Ephesians 5:6-11**). If you look at the Scriptures above, in context, you will see that your conclusions are false. Let me help you learn the truth. Please!
- Now there is another subject matter concerning “good works” that we should think about. That is, our “good works” should be visible (**Matthew 5:14-16** and **Philippians 2:14-16**), but not just to be visible (**Matthew 6:1-18, Matthew 23:1-11, Luke 16:15, and John 7:18**). The balance is found in being a good example (**Titus 2:7-8**) without really trying to be such. If you just live right you will accomplish this (**I Peter 2:9-12**).

2. “If I don't forge my own path, will God? Or will time, culture, and circumstance simply forge a path for me—a path I did not choose?”

- Questions such as these have many possible layers to them. You can get into philosophical debates with such things. The word of God tells me not to do that (**Colossians 2:4-8, II Timothy 2:23, and Titus 3:9-11**). Therefore, I will simplify your questions and answer them in a manner from which the wording of the Scriptures will apply rather than the language you have used.
- Spiritually, there are only two paths (**Matthew 7:13-14** and **Luke 13:23-24**). Those are the two paths that matter to anyone concerned about their soul.
- You, and you alone, control which of those paths you are on (**Acts 2:40**). From the beginning of the existence of mankind (**Genesis 1-3**), God has given human beings freewill (**Deuteronomy 5:29, Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Joshua 24:14-16, Ecclesiastes 7:29, Philippians 2:12, and James 1:13-16**).

- Man has always been given the freedom to take what God wants done and refuse to do it (**Psalms 78, Proverbs 1:24-25, and Hebrews 12:25**).
- Regarding our physical lives, chance plays a large role (**Ecclesiastes 9:11-12**).

3. “The 10 commandments were given to Moses, is it so difficult to live by those simple instructions of love? it's obvious in the New Testament that as Jesus Christ kept the Sabbath, so should we follow His lead.”

- You need to be very careful when trying to use the Law of Moses. There is a place for things covered in the Law of Moses (**Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:1-13**), but be cautious. When you justify yourself by the Law of Moses you are doomed (**Galatians 5:4**). It was and is a Law that cannot save (**Acts 13:38-39**).
- As Gentiles, we are not, nor were we ever under the Law of Moses (**Romans 2:12-15 and Ephesians 2:11-17**).
- The Law of Moses was for the nation of Israel (**Leviticus 26:46, Deuteronomy 4:44, Joshua 8:31-32, and Malachi 4:4**).
- No one, Jew or Gentile, is under the Law of Moses now (**Luke 16:16, Romans 7:1-6, Hebrews 8:1-13, and Hebrews 9:15-10:22**). We are under the “Law of Christ” (**Galatians 6:2**), the perfect law of liberty (**James 1:25**).
- The New Testament Law of Christ does not instruct us to keep the Sabbath. The religious observation of the Sabbath passed with the Law of Moses (**Colossians 2:10-18**).
- Jesus observed the Law of Moses because the Law of Moses was still somewhat in effect while He was living (**Matthew 5:17-19**). Even after the death of Christ, anyone could observe any day as a tradition as long as it did not cause another to stumble (**Romans 14:1-15:7**).
- The issue of individuals holding to certain parts of the Law of Moses is not a new problem. When Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch they found certain individuals who were binding circumcision and telling others that they needed to keep the Law of Moses (**Acts 15:1-5**). The Apostles, the church of Christ in Jerusalem, and the Holy Spirit wrote those individuals commanding them to cease teaching those doctrines (**Acts 15:6-35**). Circumcision, in the flesh, identified the difference between Jews and Gentiles (**Acts 10:45**). It was a fleshly distinction, which is no more valid (**Romans 2:28-29, Galatians 2:1-5; 5:6, Philippians 3:3-15, and Colossians 3:10-11**).
- When God wanted something He commanded under the Law of Moses to continue in the Law of Christ, He said so (cf. **Romans 13:8-10**).
- Understanding this... If you are holding to parts of the Law of Moses, you are not going to be saved by the grace of Christ (**Galatians 5:4**).
- Consider this study for some further things to look at: <http://www.wordsoftruth.net/wotvol11/wotbulletin07312011.html>

4. “What determines a scriptural song?”

- We err if we practice what we cannot read in the Scriptures (**Matthew 22:29**). So, we have to use the Scriptures to know what is pleasing to our Lord (**Isaiah 8:20, Luke 4:4, John 5:39, Acts 17:10-11, II Timothy 3:15-17, etc.**).
- Christians are to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (**Ephesians 5:19**).

- We are teaching those around us when we sing songs, hymns, and spiritual songs (**Colossians 3:16**). Therefore, we must be sure that we are teaching the truth, without adding or removing things from the will of God, when we are singing (**Deuteronomy 4:2, Proverbs 30:5-6, Mark 7:1-9, Galatians 1:6-9, Ephesians 4:15-16, I Timothy 1:3-7, I Timothy 6:3-5, Titus 2:1, and Revelation 22:18-19**).
- Additionally, when considering the songs we sing together, we must consider whether or not the song is clear and understandable for various reasons (**Psalms 47:7, I Corinthians 14:15, II Corinthians 3:12, etc.**).

5. "What is the difference between malice and guile?"

- One context in the Scriptures mentions both of these words together (**I Peter 2:1-2**).
- In addition to **I Peter 2:1**, the English word "malice" appears in the KJV in these verses: **I Corinthians 5:8, I Corinthians 14:20, Ephesians 4:31, Colossians 3:8, and Titus 3:3**.
- In addition to **I Peter 2:1**, the English word "guile" appears in the KJV in these verses: **Exodus 21:14, Psalms 32:2, Psalms 34:13, Psalms 55:11, John 1:47, II Corinthians 12:16, I Thessalonians 2:3, I Peter 2:22, I Peter 3:10, and Revelation 14:5**.
- Malice, as is used in **I Peter 2:1** means: "badness, i.e. (subjectively) depravity, or (actively) malignity, or (passively) trouble: — evil, malice(-iousness), naughtiness, wickedness. AV (11) - malice 6, maliciousness 2, evil 1, wickedness 1, naughtiness 1; malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injurewickedness, depravitywickedness that is not ashamed to break laws evil, trouble" (Strong's # 2549).
- Guile, as is used in **I Peter 2:1** means: "to decoy; compare 1185); a trick (bait), i.e. (figuratively) wile: — craft, deceit, guile, subtilty. AV (12) - guile 7, subtilty 2, deceit 2, craft 1; craft, deceit, guile" (Strong's # 1388).
- The difference is in the meaning of the two words. Malice basically is ill-will while guile basically is deception. In **I Peter 2:1** you must set aside the desire to do evil and all dishonesty to be able to grow spiritually.
- An example of malice is found in **Acts 8:13-24** [the word translated "wickedness" is the same Greek word translated "malice" in **I Peter 2:1**].
- An example guile is found in **Matthew 26:1-5** [the word translated "subtilty" is from the Greek word translated "guile" in **I Peter 2:1**].