The Christian Courier

February, 1996

Send correspondence to: 1034 S. 140th St., Seattle, WA 98168
Writers are responsible for their own articles.

Does Grace Exclude Works?

Ephesians 2:8-9

Eph. 2:8-9 , "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*"

In the first of these two articles on the above subject, we saw from the scriptures the meaning of the grace of God and its purpose.

Let us now turn our attention to the thought of excluded "works," as mentioned in the text, "... *not of works lest any man should boast.*"



Grace and Obedience

Paul taught that the purpose of "grace" was to result in obedience. Rom. 1:5, *"By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:"*

This does not sound as though Paul is excluding obedient works through the grace of God, but rather, affirming the necessity of those works.

Acts 11:23, "*Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.*" What was this "grace" that Barnabas saw at Antioch (vs. 21)? "*And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.*"

"*Obedience to the faith*" and "*turned unto the Lord*" are active principles, they are not passive. They require action on the part of the penitent. This requires works ie. obedience. "*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*" (Luke 6:46).

Acts 13:43, "*Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.*" What was this "grace" which these people were urged to "continue" in? Read from verse 16 through verse 41, and you will find it to be the gospel of Christ.

Also, please note that these were Gentiles, Jews, and religious proselytes (converts to Judaism), not yet converted to Christianity. They were urged to "continue" in the "grace" of God. Surely this meant study of the scriptures, attention to the preaching of the apostles, and obedience to its commands (vs. 48).

In continuing in the "grace" of God, they were to see how this "grace" brought salvation (Tit. 2:11), and its results (Acts 13:48). All this required "works" to be "continued" in, obedience to be worked according to God's grace.

"Not of Works"

But our text states "... *not of works, lest any man should boast.*"

Is this a contradiction? Do the scriptures teach that salvation requires obedience (works), and then tell us that we are not saved by works?

What sort of works?

Prior to the coming of the grace of God all mankind was concluded to be in sin (Gal. 3:20). This included Israel, who had been given the law of Moses (Rom. 11:39), and the Gentiles, who had "*no hope, and* [were] *without God in the world.*" (Eph. 2:12.

Small wonder, then, that Paul said we are saved by grace, *"... not of works, lest any man should boast."*

Rom. 3:27, *"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith."* Eph. 2:8, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"* Grace excludes boasting which concerned the works of Moses' law.

We have nothing of which to boast. If Jews, we cannot boast of works of the law, they are excluded; if Gentiles, we were without God and had no hope in the world. Nothing here to boast of!

What, then, are the excluded works? They are the works of the law of Moses! (Eph. 2:9).

Further Proof

(1) Rom. 3:28, *"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."*

(2) Rom. 6:14, *"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."*

(3) Rom. 11:5, *"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."*

(4) Rom. 11:6, *"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."*

(5) Rom. 11:7, *"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."*

(6) Rom. 3:20, *"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."*

(7) Gal. 5:1, *"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."*

(8) Gal. 5:3, *"For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."*

(9) Gal. 5:4, *"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."*

Works of Moses' Law are Excluded

By the above, we can truly see what works Paul excluded when he wrote, *"... not of works lest any man should boast."*

None of this excludes acts (works) of obedience to the grace (gospel) of Christ. The words of Christ and of his apostles are replete with instructions concerning works that are required for salvation, but that is another study.

Calvinism (salvation by grace without works) is just another of the fertile imaginations of man, and does not come from the word of God.

Your brother in the faith,

J. D. Logan
3708 Mission Rd.
Stockton, CA 95204

Confidence Toward God

In 1 John 3:20-21, we read of a good conscience, or confidence, toward God. *"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."* This confidence is a wonderful blessing, and leads to yet another blessing in verse 22, *"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him ..."* We will finish verse 22 as we close this study.



It is important to realize that this good conscience is not a simple matter of choosing the things we want to do, and deciding they are good. Proverbs warns us, Prov. 14:12: *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."*

So we must have a foundation other than what seems right to us in order to have confidence toward God. Otherwise our confidence is misplaced. We are simply fooling ourselves.

Praise be to God, this foundation of a good conscience is spelled out in the same passage as the blessings of the good conscience. Let's return to 1 John 3, and read verses 18-19, *"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall **ASSURE OUR HEARTS** before him."* Then John spells out the point of the consequences of if our heart condemns us or if it doesn't. So the foundation of our good conscience is in obedience to God's command of loving. Loving in deed and in truth.

If we back up just a bit further at this point, we see **HOW** we can love in deed and truth. Verses 16 & 17, *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"*

Now, please understand. I am in no way trying to undermine the importance of a good conscience toward God. A good conscience toward God is vital. One reason Jesus died for us is that the sacrifices of the old law could not make us perfect as pertains to the conscience (see Heb. 9:9). He died to purge our conscience (Heb. 9:14). Confidence toward God is vital, and wonderful.

And what greater confidence have we than the promise of 1 John 3:14, given if we are obedient to the command of love? *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."*

Let's return to our opening scripture, 1 John 3:20-21, and this time finish verse 22, as it completes our thought. *"For if heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, **BECAUSE** we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."*

In Christian love,
Bro. Terry Warford
22023 29th Avenue South
Des Moines, WA 98198

Proof and Facts Concerning the Church of Christ and Who Built it

There have been many writers on this subject, and many that have never made the proof-but that is no reason that it can't be made-that Christ built this church. Hundreds of years have passed and gone, millions of people have died and passed on not knowing if the church of Christ was ever built. False teachers who have taught falsehoods day after day and year after year have come and gone. Many good, honest people have been deceived by them, and many more will follow their pernicious ways and be led far from the truth as it is laid down in God's word.

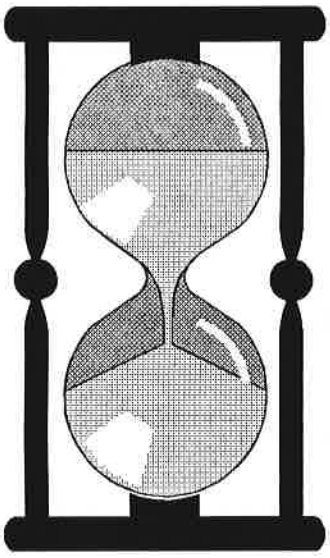
The question comes to us, why will good and honest folks be so easily deceived when they have God's word right in front of them to read and study for themselves? We have prophecies from the days of the early prophets telling us of the church, the place of its establishment, and the exact place of its beginning. We also have prophecies almost telling us the exact date of its beginning, telling us exactly where the first gospel sermon would be preached and even telling us that repentance and remission of our sins which was to be preached would be preached in Jerusalem. (Luke 24:47).

The house of God was to be built in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-4), the word or the gospel was to go forth from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3), and God added people to the church for the first time at Jerusalem (Acts 2:47); then why will people doubt the word of God and not accept what it has said? Why not all of us submit to God's will and just be Christians, not Baptists, Methodists, Mormons, Catholics, Holy Rollers, Nazarenes, Assemblies of God, etc.? There are many more so-called churches (with which God has never had one thing to do) that are claiming that they have salvation in them, and not one of them can substantiate the fact that they can come in or closer than 100 years of the date that Christ built His church. Many of them don't date back more than twenty or thirty years, and they make the claim from the pulpit that God is with them. That they feel it within themselves. Yes, all of them are making the claim that the church which they are members of is just as good as the one that Christ built, but friends, if that be true, the one that Christ built is pretty rotten. The foundation of hundreds is tumbling down, and the big churches that man has built are consuming their fruits.

We hear a great deal of talk of the works of these big churches today, accomplishing much for their members, to be sure, but what are they good for? God's word tells us that every plant that our heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up and cast into the fire and burned (Matt. 15:13; John 15:6). Friends, are you one of those plants, or are you the one that Christ planted? You had better make sure as you can. Take God's word which is the measuring rod and the standard by which to go, and compare your life to it. It matters but little what Brother Jones, Smith, some priest, Jehovah's Witness, or anyone else may tell you. Unless he can read it from God's word, just brand him as a fake until he makes the proof. The way is so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein (Isa. 35:8). And a fool says within his heart, there is no God (Psa. 14:1). Are you a fool? No one wants to be a fool, but I fear that there are many that are becoming fools today because of many, many false doctrines that are being taught all over the world today. Dear reader, don't listen to me nor any other man's doctrines, but listen to what the word of God tells you.

Brother R. C. Clements
It Is Written, February, 1956

Precious Memories



***It Is Written*, February 1956** Brother W. A. Nelson, Somerton, AZ reported that they had a member added Dec. 18, 1955. Brother J.D. Johnson reported that they had been meeting in the Community Building in Chula Vista, CA, thanked those who had come to meet with them, and invited anyone to come meet with them there. The new editor, Brother L. R. Pamplin, expressed his thanks to Brother Burleigh Hunt of the La Habra, CA congregation for the nice art work on the masthead.

***The Christian Courier*, February 1976** The obituary was given for Brother Heino Stolnake, as well as a last article by him. The editors noted that "Brother Stolnake was a strong supporter of the Courier. He made many contributions to the paper by writing articles, while many brethren did not. Although he has passed on, his articles will remain with us." Brother Lloyd Treat noted that Brother Wilson of Antlers was still leading his family in the right way, was doing better, but was far from well. Brother Bill McCay reported their four week vacation "of the type that I would recommend to all who enjoy good preaching, good singing, and the wonderful fellowship of brothers and sisters in Christ." Donna Taylor was baptized November 23, 1975.

***The Christian Courier*, February 1986** Brother Lloyd Treat wrote of the passings of Brother Hays Morris, Brother Jay Durham's mother, and his wife's Son-in-law. Brother Paul Andrews announced that the Goshen congregation was having two week-long meetings that year. Lou, Phil and Jeff Freeman of Humble, TX announced that Brother Herman Taylor was baptized. The baptism of Brother Dan Kirk of San Pablo, CA congregation was announced.

Today

By Henry Matthew Ward

When I got mad and hit my child.
"For his own good," I reconciled;
And then, I realized my plight ...
Today, I taught my child to fight.

When interrupted by the phone,
I said, "Tell them I'm not home."
And then I thought, and had to sigh.
Today, I taught my child to lie.

I told the tax man what I made,
Forgetting cash that I was paid;
And then I blushed at this sad feat.
Today, I taught my child to cheat.

I smugly copied a cassette,
To keep me free of one more debt.
But now the bells of shame must peal.
Today, I taught my child to steal.

Today I cursed another race.
Oh God, protect what I debase,
For now, I fear it is too late.
Today, I taught my child to hate.

By my example, children learn
That I must lead in life's sojourn
In such a way that they are led
By what is done, not what is said.

Today, I gave my child his due
By praises for him instead of rue.
And now I have begun my guide:
Today, I gave my child his pride.

I now have reconciled and paid
To IRS on all I made.
And now I know that this dear youth
Today has learned from me, of truth.

The alms I give are not for show,
And yet, this child must surely know
That charity is worth the price;
Today, he saw my sacrifice.

I clasp within a warm embrace
My neighbor of another race ...
The great commandment from above.
Today, I taught my child to love.

Someday, my child must face alone
This world of fearsome undertone,
But I have blazed a sure pathway:
Today, I taught my child ... to pray.

Submitted by Audley Barnes
Comanche, OK

Cards and Letters



Aloha, OR

Greetings to everyone,

In early November, I was in the Los Angeles area for a few days. It was great to see everyone at the Bellflower church again.

Over Thanksgiving, Mom, Dad, and I were in Oroville California, visiting relatives. That Sunday we went to church in Chico, California. It's been years since I've been to Chico. It was wonderful to see everyone and all the families who were visiting that weekend.

My niece, Shelia, has been put on full bed-rest until she delivers my great-nephew. I ask for everyone to pray for her and the baby, that she may be able to carry 'til full term. Mom and I rotate days to go over and take care of Hailey, and help with the housework. Hailey is 16 months, and she sure keeps you on your toes. Little Hailey is recovering from pneumonia. She didn't want to be the only one sick, so she shared her cough and sore throat with me.

Other than the community cold, everyone at the Aloha congregation is in good health.

I would also like to ask for the prayers of everyone for my cousin, Bonnie Dougherty, who is having health problems. Bonnie is the youngest daughter of my Uncle Chuck Jared.

In December we were happy to see and visit with my sister Carol and her son Jeremy. She and her family have moved from Colorado to Arkansas.

We'd also like to say welcome back to Sister Dorothy Calhoun. It's good to have you home.

In Christian love,
Doris Jared
Salem, Oregon

Bellflower, CA

Dear Loved Ones in Christ,

It's been four months since I have written, and don't know when this will get in the *Courier*, so will try to catch up on the news. First, I want to mention the visitors we've had during this time.

Kelly McCay, and daughter Colleen, visited with Kelly giving us a wonderful lesson on Sunday, October 15th. It was good seeing old friends, and I think we were all shocked to see how Colleen had grown. Gerald, Natalie, Monica, and Heather Brockman visited on October 22nd. Gerald, as always, gave us a fine lesson from God's dear word. Tom and Charlene Broadway visited on November 2nd, with Tom presenting a wonderful lesson to us. Mark, Tammy, and our three+ sweet grandchildren visited three weekends in a row. Mark spoke one Sunday, giving us a very fine lesson. Chuck, Dana, Katie, Melissa, and Charles Garner visited during the holidays, with Chuck giving a fine lesson on December 31st. Dana's mother, Dorothy Calhoun, and her daughter-in-law, Karen, also visited at church that Sunday. During the holidays, we also had Steve, Nancy, Jessica, Andrea, and Holly Silva visit. Nancy's niece, Kari, came with them. Marty and Tayna had over twenty people in their house; it was wall-to-wall sleeping bags. Other visitors during the last four months were: Dave, Lori, and Justin McCarthy; Al and Charlotte Burtis; Doris Jared; and Shar Perigen, and son Dustin. I hope I haven't left anyone out; if I have please forgive me.

Our thanks to each of you who took the time to stop by and share your love with us; it was wonderful having you, and we invite you back anytime.

We have all had our share of colds, flu, and just generally not feeling good. Several have missed church services due to illness. As of this writing, most are on the mend, and we are all praying this continues. We ask for your prayers in our behalf; we need them. We will continue to keep you foremost in our prayers, praying our God will give you strength as He has provided the armor to stand against the onslaught of Satan and his powers of darkness.

The battle rests with each of us! Any army is only as strong as each individual soldier; we cannot give up or give in! We will not stand before Jesus Christ as a group; each will be there to answer for his life's deeds. Each of us is a flag bearer; each is an ambassador; let us gird up our loins, and fight as if the whole battle depends on us!

The congregation sends their love to all the faithful everywhere. May God Bless you richly.

In Christian love,
Brother Al Way

You are not the center of the universe. That job is already taken.

Baron, OK

Dear Brethren,

We are happy to announce the baptism of Amanda Ross. Amanda obeyed the gospel on Sunday, December 24, 1995. She was assisted in baptism by Brother David Brown. Please help us welcome her into the blessed fold.

Some of the members of our congregation recently lost loved ones. Please pray for their comfort and understanding.

We hope and pray all is well with each and every one.

In Christian love,

Brian Ross

Church of Christ at Baron, OK

Comanche, OK

Brothers and Sisters,

As we start a brand new year we want to remember to count the blessings we received in 1995. Sometimes it seems we get so caught in day to day living, we forget to count our blessings.

Teresa and I can count many blessings of the past year, including two new grandbabies added to our family. September 27, 1995, brought us Emily Teighlor (pronounced Taylor) Scott. She weighed in at seven pounds, five ounces, and looked a lot like big brother, Tanner. She has huge dark eyes that don't miss a thing.

November 13, 1995, Kaleb Chase Boehm made an appearance, weighing in at seven pounds, six and ¾ ounces. Both babies and families are doing fine. These two little ones bring to a total of five grandchildren for us. We have several opportunities a week, usually, to spoil all five of them, and take pleasure in doing so. That seems to be the grandparents' prerogative, and we love doing it.

In October, we had some visitors to come and stay three or four days apiece. Paul and Marge Andrews from the Goshen, Arkansas, congregation came first, and then Jaetta and Jim Loftis from Lorenzo, Texas, came a couple weeks later. Paul brought us a very good lesson while he was here. As always, we were glad to have them all in our midst.

Fairly often Mark, Vickie, and Steven Taylor from Lugert drive in and meet with us. We are always happy to see friends and loved ones any time they are able to be with us.

Our little congregation is still striving along. Several have had the usual winter illnesses such as colds and sinus infections. Sister Smith still has bouts with her heart, but continues to make the 50+ mile trip nearly every Sunday. She never ceases to amaze us all.

Howard Taylor has had some problems with his blood pressure, and is taking more frequent kelation treatments to get it under control. A series of tests ruled out blockages to his heart, for which we are all thankful.

Karla Jones can't seem to get well, despite two surgeries in the past eight or nine months, and is in almost constant pain. The doctors can't seem to get a handle on it, and keep trying different medications.

I would like to submit a poem taken from our daily newspaper October 17, 1996 (*Today*).

We ask for the prayers of the faithful for all of us as we strive to do our Father's will.

Audley Barnes

Comanche Congregation

Santee, CA

I have moved and would like to continue to have the paper. I am trying to find a one-cup church down here, but so far have been to two and neither has one cup; and all such big congregations are not very friendly. Have another one to go to this next Sunday, and hope it will only have one cup. It's a smaller church building, so I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

I enjoy The Courier very much, and hope you can keep up the good work.

God bless you all.

Lots of Christian love,

Caroline Hellems

Selah, WA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We here at the Selah congregation have had the usual colds and flu. Our young ones are growing so fast! When we hear them make noise, it reminds us of the growth we have in the church.

Pat and I traveled to California in November. We got to visit with the San Pablo congregation several Sundays. Then we went on to San Diego to visit our daughter and family. We spent Thanksgiving with them, and enjoyed the beautiful weather. Our trip finally came to an end as we needed to get home.

We had a Baked Potato Dinner one night, and we had a good turn-out. There was plenty of food, and everyone had a good time eating and visiting.

Hope this finds all of you well.

If in the Yakima area, please stop by.

In Christian love,

Gene McKinney

Selah Congregation

If your trouble is of long standing, try kneeling.

Sea-Tac, WA

Greetings to all the Beloved in Christ,

Our sun is shining brightly here in Seattle, but we have a couple inches of ice and snow. Even though driving conditions Sunday were very bad, we had a nice-sized group for services. We heard a fine lesson from Brother Matthew Shepherd on "*Victory in Jesus.*" Brother Matt and Sister Kelly and their three girls were here to visit over the weekend in spite of a treacherous drive home.

Brother Eric and Sister Lori Harper and their three little ones were here New Year's weekend. We had a wonderful lesson from Brother Eric on "*The Glorification of God,*" and we also had some great singing later that day. It's wonderful when we have visitors.

We have had some illnesses — colds, flu, ear infections, etc. Most are on the mend from these problems, for which we are thankful.

Our dear Brother Howard McCay was pretty sick for a week with flu and bronchitis. It gave all of us quite a scare. After a trip to the doctor, those problems are mostly resolved, but the doctor says the cancer is trying to flare up again. We pray for a successful fight against the cancer. Also, our love and prayers go to Brother Gerald Morris, who recently lost his aged mother.

We also wish to thank each of you who have sent letters or articles. Your efforts determine the success of this paper.

Our love to all,
Sea-Tac Church of Christ

Where is the Church?

A man and his family drifted from fellowship with Christ and the brethren. After years of indifference, or of being busy here and there, his health failed. One day he noticed something strange. Those people down at the church no longer came by. He was in the hospital and they did not visit him. And, lo, he was very angry.

"Where is the church?," he demanded. "Oh," somebody said, "that church went out of business several years ago!" "Oh," he cried, "they should never have let it die!"

(Quoted in ***Christian News***, January 5, 1987, p. 15).

If we do not die spiritually, the church in our community will not die. We have a responsibility to keep alive and to keep the church alive. When we think **they** (others) have a responsibility but we do not we are headed for spiritual death.

How long would the church function as a church **of Christ** if others do no more than you to keep the church alive?

— submitted from Baron, OK.

MATCHING PUZZLE: SOLOMON

Can you match the halves of these wise sayings of Solomon?

1. A good man	_____ is the beginning of knowledge.
2. Trust in the Lord	_____ are clean in his own eyes.
3. Be not wise	_____ the people fall.
4. All the ways of a man	_____ shall be satisfied from himself.
5. A soft answer	_____ in thine own eyes.
6. The fear of the Lord	_____ with all thine heart.
7. Where no counsel is	_____ turneth away wrath.

BULLETIN BOARD

Meetings

June 16-23, 1996	Lorenzo, TX	Mike Geho
June 29-July 8, 1996	Cedaredge, CO	Camp Meeting

Births

Emily Teighlor Scott	Comanche, OK	Sept. 27, 1995; 7 lbs., 5 oz.
Kaleb Chase Boehm	Comanche, OK	Nov. 13, 1995; 7 lbs., 6 ¾ oz.

Baptisms

Amanda Ross	Baron, OK	Dec. 24, 1995

Prayer of Faith for those in need

Bonnie Dougherty	Aloha, OR	Health problems
Shelia (Maloney)	Aloha, OR	Expecting baby
Hugo Denny	Baron, OK	Serious heart problems
Sloan Vanderpool	Bohannan Mt., AR	Broken back
Erelene Chessman	Bellflower, CA	Fighting cancer
Vincent Johnson	Bellflower, CA	Confined to wheelchair
Karla Jones	Comanche, OK	Surgeries & pain
Howard Taylor	Comanche, OK	Blood pressure problems
Larissa Smith	Comanche, OK	Heart problems & age
Oren Johnston	Mt. Vernon, WA	Heart surgery recovery
Luke Carpenter	Sacramento, CA	Cystic Fibrosis
Jessica Carpenter	Sacramento, CA	Cystic Fibrosis
Kathern Ann	San Pablo, CA	Diabetes
Howard McCay	Sea-Tac, WA	Fighting cancer & bronchitis
Jerry Barker	Stilwell, OK	Leukemia
Earl Roby	Yakima, WA	pneumonia
Cliff Schrader	Yuma, AZ	Very ill
Horace Orendorff	Yuma, AZ	Very ill
Ruth Duncan	Yuma, AZ	Back pain
Willie Davis	Yuma, AZ	Quadruple bypass surgery

Passings

Gerald Morris' mother	Sea-Tac, WA	Dec., 1995 in West Virginia
Zella Brown	Stilwell, OK	Jan. 6, 1996
Doyle Littlejohn	Baron, OK	Jan. 8, 1996