



October 23, 2005

Living Beyond Myself ... The Power of Doing Good

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. **Eph. 2:8-10***

What is good?

The essence of good is joining the Father in what he does every single day. This is what Jesus said.

*"I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me." **John 8:28***

*As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. **John 9:4***

*For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. **John 6:38***

What kind of work does the Father do? Ephesians 2 paints a bad news/good news picture that gives us a hint at what God does.

Everyday the Father is working his goodness in this world. If only we have eyes to see....

*But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. **Matthew 5:44-45***

*Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing. **Eph. 2:8-10** (The Message)*

When God showed up on our planet with skin on, we see him doing what he has always done. Caring for people. Reaching out to them. Loving. Healing. Teaching.

Where do we find the strength to do good?

1. We need the goodness of God's word and prayer.
2. We need the goodness of fellowship.
3. We need the goodness of service.

*"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. **John 4:34***

Perhaps the quickest way to spiritual emptiness and bankruptcy is to assume the strategy of our culture. Watch out for number one. Live for yourself.

Recommended Reading:

"The Jesus Creed" by Scot McKnight