

THE BIG IDEA: Our good points to God's grace.

The Take-Off

This morning we wrap up our Signs of Life series, and I have loved every single week of it!

For me, knowing that I can stand confidently in my new life means everything to me.

We know that the enemy of our soul (and others around us) can do a pretty good job of accusing us of all that we AREN'T, and that's why in this series we've tried to fill each of us with signs, evidences or who we ARE!

From the beginning, we've been clear that these are not things we do to get saved, or even in pride to prove that we're saved.

These are indicators that we're saved. They're the fruit that we should see growing in our lives.

I want to make sure you get that, because of all the weeks that you'll be tempted to think that we have to DO anything to be saved, this is the one, because the last sign of life is, well, the good that we do.

This is tricky, but just because it's tricky doesn't mean that we can ignore it.

It means that we acknowledge it, and then allow scripture to help us understand what it looks like.

For starters, let's find **Titus 2:14**.

While you're doing that, let me read a few verses before so that we can hear it in the context that it was written.

Paul is talking about salvation - he mentions grace appearing and the salvation it brought - but he's also talking about what happens in our lives AFTER salvation.

The signs of life - the fruit - that will grow on the trees of a believer's life. Listen for some of those as I read starting in verse 11.

Now, our verse - verse 14 - explains the why behind all of the whats that we just read.

He gave himself in order to redeem us, to purify us, and to make us "**eager to do what is good.**"

Again, there's tension in this truth, because our "pull ourselves up by the bootstrap" mentality interprets this as "do good and you'll be saved" or at least "do more good than bad" and you'll be saved.

But the good that we do for others is securely grounded in the good that He - Jesus - has done for us.

Even Martin Luther - the father of the Reformation who pointed the church back to the truth of salvation by grace alone - and who struggled with the entire book of James because of its emphasis on works as a proof of salvation - even he agreed that good works are a sign of life.

In his words, "Good works are faith incarnate."

The plan this morning is to choose clear over clever or cute, and to allow the weight of scripture to help us see the role that works play in the believer's life.

If I do a good job, you're going to leave here understanding - maybe for the first time - the incredible power that comes from simply doing good.

So, let's ask and answer a number of questions about doing good.

1. Why should we do good?

- a. Well, we listed the most important reason to NOT do good, right? We don't do good to earn heaven.
- b. But one of the biggest reasons that we do good is because it's how we were made.
- c. **Ephesians 2:10** / created in Christ for the works we were created to do
- d. This isn't just for believers - all of us were created in God's image for God's purpose
- e. It's the believers who are now able to be conformed - or reconfirmed back - to that image
- f. **Matthew 5:16** gives us 2 more reasons why we should do good: so the good is seen and so God is praised
- g. We don't do good so others see us and praise us - we're praise deflectors!
- h. **The WORKS WE DO point to the WORK HE DID**
- i. The Big Idea sums it up in even less words - 6 to be exact: **OUR GOOD points to GOD'S GRACE.**
- j. Why do we do good? Because God's grace enables us to do good.

2. Where should we do good?

- a. If we know why we should do good, another question would be where should we do good?
- b. **Matthew 5:16** would seem to indicate anywhere there are people
- c. Short answer, I know, but why drag it out when the answer is so clear.
- d. If there are people, we should be doing good. Period.

3. Who do we do good for?

- a. By “who” I mean - what types of people? Believers? People we like? People we don’t?
- b. There are people everywhere, but can we choose what kind of people to serve?
- c. Let’s allow Scripture to answer this one, too, and as it does, you’ll see a progressively growing ripple.
- d. **Colossians 3:22** / we do good for God even if man isn’t looking
- e. **Galatians 6:10** / next priority is those who belong to the family of believers
- f. **Matthew 5:16** and **Galatians 6:10a** / we do good for everyone, or for EVERY ONE
- g. Why is this progression so important? Because sometimes we’ll do good for people who don’t see it, don’t appreciate it, or don’t ever want it to stop.
- h. That will drain us, unless we learn how to look past those people and see the God whose grace has enabled us to do good as a sign of His life in us.
- i. That will enable us to do good the way God intended, which is the answer to our fourth question...

4. How do we do good?

- a. **Galatians 6:9** / faithfully
- b. **2 Thessalonians 3:13** / continually
- c. **Psalm 37:3** / wholeheartedly (because we trust God to meet our needs as we do good for others)
- d. Practically, do good in areas and ways that excite you
- e. Do you love yard work? Mow someone’s yard.
- f. Love working on cars? Change someone’s oil.
- g. Love meeting new people? Start a conversation with someone in line at Walmart.
- h. Love people more from a distance? Smile.
- i. There is power in doing good, and here are a few of the things that happen we we do...

5. What happens when we do good?

- a. **Matthew 5:16** / we’ve seen this verse already, and it reveals that God gets glory when we do good
- b. **Galatians 6:9** / we reap a harvest of blessings and promises
- c. **Psalm 37:3** / we receive peace (“dwell” is “shakan” and means “settle down”)
- d. **1 Peter 3:13** / we receive God’s protection (Wendy’s mom being protected in Rio by drug lords)

The Landing

What could this look like?

Here’s a video highlighting the power of simply doing good.

[VIDEO / \$12,000 tip / Best Shift Ever]

Listen, that’s powerful, and yet we carry the greatest message and greatest motivation for doing good: the gospel.

They did good for a waitress to help ease her pain on earth - we have the opportunity to do good for people in order to change their eternal destiny.

This is the greatest sign of life, and it is what you were created for and saved for.

Let’s land this message and this series back in **Titus 2:14**, and let me show you how doing good for people is a powerful sign of God’s love for people.

Jesus redeemed us - the word for redeem is one that means purchase something in order to use it or display it

My definition of that word? To pay in order to place.

Jesus PAID FOR YOU because He has a PLACE FOR YOU.

That place? Doing the good that He made you to do in order to point people to His grace.

Our good points to God’s grace.

Let’s pray.