

It took too long to realize 2 – God expects

Chris Fluitt

It is a good day to be in church. Welcome everyone to Redemption Church in Plano TX. My name is Chris Fluitt and I want you to know that God loves you, and we love you too.

It took too long to realize

We are in the 2nd week of our series “It took too long to realize,” where I am sharing some things that I am so glad I learned, but I really should have learned a lot sooner.

Last week we answered the very theologically dense question “How is

Jesus both God and the son of God?” I want to encourage you to hear that message. Study that subject out. It is very important and even greater, I believe it is very honoring to Jesus Christ.

Do you want to honor the Lord Jesus Christ today? The best thing I could accomplish today would be to honor Jesus. It has taken many preachers way too long to realize that we are not called to preach a good interesting sermon that gets honor for the preacher... our job and the highest calling is to bring honor to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords Jesus Christ.

Today I want to talk about what God expects.

It took too long to realize what God expects.

What does God expect from you? Does God expect anything from you? What do you think?

Is it possible that we don't think about what God expects of us often enough? Is it possible that this message is not preached enough?

Wouldn't it make sense for the Church of Jesus to preach about "how to come into a saving relationship with Jesus," and then follow that message with "now that you are in a saving relationship with Jesus, this is what He expects of you?"

This is really a message of acceptance & expectation.

Acceptance and Expectation

We are accepted by God. God saves us. Yet God also expects certain behavior from those He has saved.

Both of these ideas are true! Yet it is difficult for some people to understand.

Martin Luther

The man who is responsible for the protestant revolution is Martin Luther.

God used Martin Luther to bring revelation into the world in the 1500s.

One of the great revelations was that we are saved through faith.

Here is one of his favorite verses.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—

and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

Salvation is a gift. You are saved by the gift of God's grace and through your faith.

In my own words...

We are saved by God's kindness (grace) and through our trust (faith) in God's kindness.

If God were not kind, you could not be saved.

Romans 2:4 (NIV) Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience,

not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

If you do not trust that God is kind & truthful, you will not follow Him to salvation.

Saved by grace through faith. This is what Martin Luther preached. This is what God's word says and we preach today.

Martin Luther understood salvation by grace & faith, but he struggled with the subject of works.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

The scripture clearly says we are NOT saved by works. We do not earn God's kindness, God gives it to us. And we receive His kindness through faith/trusting God.

We are not saved by works, but if not careful you could start preaching against works, or to make all works insignificant for the Christian life. This is what Martin Luther and still much of the world does today.

Faith vs Works

They set up a faith vs works dynamic. Martin Luther became against works... so much that He tried to remove any scriptures that taught about doing good works.

James 2:17-18 (NIV) In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

James 2:26 (NIV) As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Martin Luther disagreed with these scriptures in your Bible. He disagreed so much that He tried to remove the entire book of James from the Bible.

Learn this... if your doctrine requires you to erase other verses from the Bible, explain them away, or ignore them...

there is something wrong with your doctrine.

Although Martin Luther was right in one area... We are saved by grace through faith and not works... He was wrong in another area. This is likely true of all of us by the way... We are all human and there some areas we are getting right and other areas where we are falling short.

Luther struggled in this area. People today struggle with this area. I struggled way too long with this area of faith vs works.

James actually reveals that New Testament Christians in the 1st century were struggling with this same issue.

James 2:18 (NIV) But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds,
and I will show you my faith by my
deeds.

They were arguing a few decades after the resurrection about faith and works. This is not a new issue.

If you have ever struggled with a faith vs works mentality, I would like to help you today.

It took too long to realize what God expects.

God does expect things from mankind.

In the garden God gave Adam a job.

Genesis 2:15 (NIV) The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

God had expectation before sin entered the picture. As we march through the Bible we will see God having expectation.

God expected a different sacrifice from Cain.

God expected the people of the earth fill the Earth and not to gather around the Tower of Babel.

God expected us to follow commands like don't kill, don't steal, don't use my name like a curse word.

God expected Israel to obey His Word.

God expects us to obey His word.

What does God expect?

You can ask Him. He will tell you. You can also look into His Word.

Micah 6:8 (NIV) He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Sarah and I were once at a work party where a nicely decorated house had a picture on the wall with the words... act justly, love mercy, walk humbly. Without thinking I just said “wow I love this. Do you know this scripture? You know this is scripture.” The woman in an OMG a pastor is calling me out on my home decore tone of voice said... “Uhh yeah... maybe?”

God wants you to do more than decorate your house with His Word. He expects you to live these beautiful words.

Act justly, love mercy, & walk humbly.
God expects... he requires this.

Are you acting justly? Are you living
righteously? Have you turned your back
on sin?

Are you showing mercy? Are you loving
your enemy?

Are you walking humbly with God? Are
you praying before you just make your
decisions in the life He has given you?

These are works. God expects them from
you.

In an interview Billy Graham was asked
this question “what does God expect?”
The elderly evangelist with a soft voice
said one word. I have tell you I am
impressed that he could narrow it down
to one word. He said “FAITHFULNESS.”

God expects faithfulness. –

Billy Graham

The more I think about his answer, the more I love it.

Perhaps you have heard this phrase from scripture? “Well done my good and faithful servant.” It is from a parable of Jesus, and Jesus teaches us that God our master will one day call home good & faithful servants and give them greater treasures in heaven.

God expects faithfulness. This is so good because it is completely in line with Ephesians 2:9 – we are saved by grace through faith. It also leads you to the idea of keeping and doing faithfully the things of God.

Faith vs Works

Here is the problem with the faith vs works paradigm. It separates faith and works.

Did you know there is a verse in your Bible that says anything that is separated from faith is a sin? Here it is...

Romans 14:23 (NIV) ...everything that does not come from faith is sin.

God expects faith, and everything you do to come from faith.

Christians we have endless arguments among us. Something as simple as the question “Does God expect me to be baptized?” can start a war in a church.

It is only complicated when we separate faith and deeds.

If you have faith in God, you should IN FAITH be baptized. Do not separate faith from the obedient work of being baptized. Because of your faith you are being baptized.

Should I worship... should I pray... should I study the Word of God... should I witness to someone... Can you do it in faith? Then yes you should.

I find it maddening that we make it more complicated than we should.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ

Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Grace through faith. You need to tie your faith to God's grace. You do not tie your works to God's grace... so do we just throw our works away?

We are in created in Christ Jesus... we are saved, we are born again... to do GOD WORKS. Tie your works to your faith. Tie everything you are doing to faith and if it can't be tied to faith... then throw that away.

Grace – Faith – Work

Faith without works is dead...

Grace without faith is dead...

Work without grace is a disaster...

Works without faith is sin...

We don't need faith vs works... We need a faith that works

Faith that Works

We need a vibrant faith that cannot stay a silent belief held in the heart... We need a faith that explodes outwardly into good works.

-musician

We will pray soon. I want you to pray for a faith that works. A faith that honors God in action.

Pray that your works would be tied to faith and that your faith would be tied to grace.

Before we pray I want to ask you one question...

Who should be a more faithful worker? The servant of the master or the child of the master?

A servant is doing work for a paycheck. A servant can lose their position.

A child of the master should do work for their father... out of love. A child can never lose their position.

The prodigal son returned home willing to be a servant... The Father saw him from a distance and called him his son!

We are invited by God to be more than His hired hand... He calls us His children.

Are we children who serve our Father?

