

- “for good works...” We do them in response to *being alive*, but never to *make ourselves alive!*
- “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Ps. 119:105 ESV). // As a *dim lamp* helps us take the next step and a *brighter light* shines down the path ahead, so *God’s Word* guides us now and always!

Works show our love for God and bring Him glory:

- “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” (John 14:15 ESV). // Love is action, so we love God by doing what He has commanded!
- “Let your light shine... that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Mt. 5:16 NAS). // Of ourselves we have no light, yet, *knowing Jesus*, let us ✦reflect Him to others and ✦glorify our Father who is in heaven!

Important Information

- **What does it mean to be justified?** God see me just [as] if I’d never sinned! Why is that important? *Because God requires us to be perfectly just, right, holy in His sight!*
- **Faith + Works** (Jesus + Anything = Nothing): “You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:4 NAS). // Cake is good; cake + ice cream is even better! However, for those who add

to Jesus, (1) they believe Jesus is NOT enough **and**, *by doing so*, (2) they cut themselves off from Jesus : (

- **Faith Alone** (Jesus = Everything): “...we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law” (Romans 3:28 NAS). // We need to be justified, *and we are **by faith alone!***
- **The LAW** *condemns everyone while the GOSPEL offers salvation to everyone:* “...the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23 NAS). // Wages are earned, so we have all earned *physical death and eternal punishment*. However, because of God’s great love for us **and** Jesus’ saving work, *God is offering everyone a most precious gift – eternal life!*

Conclusion

Where is your confidence for heaven: In ✦Christ; ✦works; or ✦Christ + works? God’s Word, the Bible is clear: Jesus is the Christ **and we are fully saved through Him alone!** Now, filled with much joy, *let us share this very important message with others!*

Connect With Us

Website: BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
Location: 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134 (*Just South of Pleasant Valley Road*)
Schedule: See our “Join Us” brochure
Facebook: “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”
Podcast: “Benefit from the Bible”
Contact: 440-845-2230

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What is the Way to Heaven?

Faith Alone
OR
Faith + Works

Keep Reading to Discover God’s Answer...

*What is the Way to Heaven?
Faith Alone? or Faith + Works?
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Introduction

Dear friend! Did you ever plan to go to a particular place, *but ended up somewhere else?* Consider this story: A Minneapolis couple decided to go to Florida to get a break during a very cold winter. They planned to stay at the same hotel where they spent their honeymoon 20 years earlier. Because of hectic schedules, it was difficult to coordinate their travel. So the husband

left Minneapolis and flew to Florida on Thursday, with the wife flying down the following day. The husband checked into the hotel. There was a computer in his room, so he decided to send an e-mail to his wife. However, he accidentally left out one letter in her e-mail address, and without realizing his error, sent the e-mail.

Meanwhile, somewhere in Houston, a widow just returned home from her husband's funeral. He was a minister, who, following a heart attack, had suddenly died. The widow decided to check her e-mail, since she was expecting messages from relatives and friends. After reading the first message, she screamed and fainted. The widow's son rushed into the room, found his mother on the floor, and saw the computer screen which read:

To: My Loving Wife
Subject: I've Arrived

Message: I know you're surprised to hear from me. They have computers here now and you are allowed to send e-mails to your loved ones. I've just arrived and have been checked in. I see that everything has been prepared for your arrival tomorrow. Looking forward to seeing you then!

PS: Sure is hot down here!

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/hotmail/>

Many Will Be Disappointed

That was a joke! But imagine this: What if someone expected heaven, *but ended up in hell?* Consider what Jesus said *will happen* on the day He returns: "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy

in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness'" (Matt. 7:22-23 NAS).

- Those people did extraordinary things *in Jesus' name* AND expected heaven, *but they went to hell!*
- Why? They trusted in their own good works *rather than in Jesus and His saving work!* **He never knew them :** (

A Powerful Example

Paul was highly qualified to earn heaven! He wrote: "If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.... [Then he added:] I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil. 3:4-6, 8 ESV).

Then Paul wrote this regarding his fellow Jews: "For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Rom. 10:2-4 NAS).

The point: Our good works will never meet God's requirement of righteousness, *so we all need a relationship with Jesus, the Christ!*

What Is Faith?

Faith is God-given and Word-fed:

- "...by [God's] doing you are in Christ Jesus" (1Cor 1:30a NAS). // Since we are, *by nature*, spiritually **blind** (1Co. 2:14), **dead** (Eph. 2:1), and **enemies of God** (Rom. 8:7), *God must and did take action to save us!*
- "...the word of [God's] grace...is able to build you up" (Acts 20:32 ESV). // The *word of God's grace* is the Bible, which **tells** of His great love, **feeds** us spiritually, and **builds** us up!

Faith is in who Jesus IS and what Jesus has DONE:

- "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt. 16:16 ESV). // Jesus is the Christ, *the one promised to come to defeat the devil* (Gen. 3:15)!
- "...the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29 ESV)! // Whether we know it or not, *our biggest problem is sin*. So God took radical action through His Son, *a.k.a. the Lamb of God*, to remove our sin! As the OT sacrifices pointed ahead to the Christ, so Jesus Himself **was the ultimate once-for-all sacrifice and made the way to God** (1Pe. 3:18)!

What Are Works?

Works are God-planned and Word-guided:

- "...created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand" (Eph. 2:10 NAS). // God made us alive in Christ for a purpose: