

The Work of Christ
(2 Corinthians 5:21)

Introduction

- If we are saved by our works we have to ask the question: What does the Law of God demand? The Law of God demands perfection that is twofold, both positive and negative.
 - Positive: we perform duties suitable to righteousness.
 - Negative: we undergo punishment if we fail to perform those duties.

The Futile Works of Men

1. *Men are wicked.*
 - By God's grace men can do relative good works (Matt 7:11), but all men are wicked (Rom 3:23, 6:23). Men's hearts are deceitful and sick (Jer 17:9), and Jesus agrees with this when He says that from the heart comes all wickedness (Mark 7:21-23). To those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure (Titus 1:15).
2. *Therefore, we cannot please God.*
 - Men in their flesh are hostile to God and cannot please Him (Rom 8:7-8). Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6). Our works are filthy rags to God (Is 64:6) because His standard is perfection (Matt 5:20, 48).

The Full Work of Christ

1. *He made him to be sin who knew no sin - Christ's Passive Obedience*
 - The Death of Christ: He came under the curse and condemnation due to sin. He took care of the guilt of sin. This is Christ's willing reception of the punishment of sinners' breaking the law.
 - God is divinely, perfectly just, so no sin will ever go unpunished. Jesus paid the infinite penalty we owe to God. (Matt 20:28; Acts 20:28; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 1:18-19; Rom 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10; Titus 3:7; 1 Pet 3:18)
2. *That in him we might become the righteousness of God - Christ's Active Obedience*
"Jesus not only had to die for our sins, but He had to live for our righteousness." - R.C. Sproul
 - The Life of Christ: He fulfilled the Law of God in all of its positive requirements. He perfectly fulfilled the demand of righteousness.
 - This righteousness He possesses had to be achieved by living a perfectly obedient life as truly man. Only then could it be counted on our behalf. He had to perfectly fulfill all of God's commands. (1 Cor 1:30; Phil 3:9; Is 61:10; Heb 2:14-18; 1 Pet 2:22; John 6:38; 8:29; Heb 10:14)

The Response to Christ

- *We appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain (2 Corinthians 6:1)*
 - Receive the gift (Is 55:1).
 - Jesus glorified God and we are called to do the same (John 17:4; 1 Pet 4:10-11).
 - Never separate the work of Christ from the benefits/blessings we receive in Him (1 Cor 1:30).