

17. Dead Works

We shall continue our study on the difference between religiosity and spirituality; particularly we will be looking at the subject of dead works.

The New Testament speaks of the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19 onwards and we are all familiar with those works: immorality, strife, jealousy, outburst of anger, sorcery, and many things like that mentioned in those verses. We understand that a true Christian, as a spiritual person, can never indulge in these sins. These are known as sins - these works are so obviously sinful that it would be difficult for a believer to practice any of them without being deeply convicted in his conscience. So, they are not dangerous in the sense of leading us astray. Certainly they are evil. But one good thing is that, when we fall in any of them, we are aware of it, because our conscience tells us immediately. Even a worldly unconverted person's conscience will tell him about immorality and things like that.

But dead works are more deceitful. The New Testament speaks about dead works in Hebrews 6:1. It says that we should repent from dead works. Now in the Old Testament there is no such thing as dead works. You either have good works or bad works; there is only good and evil. But in the New Testament we have good works, evil works, and dead works. Good works are works that please God; evil works are works which are mentioned in Galatians 5:19-21, also known as the works of the flesh. What are dead works then?

Dead works are works that appear good externally but that spring from a corrupt motive or done for the wrong reason. Therefore they are like filthy garments in God's eyes. It is like a person who is

17. 无用之功

下面让我们继续学习“属宗教”与“属灵”的区别，我们要特别讨论下面这个题目——无用之功。

《新约》加拉太书 5 章 19 节一开始，说的是我们都很熟悉的，顺从肉体的结果：奸淫、争竞、嫉妒、恼怒、巫术等等。我们知道，真正的基督徒作为属灵的人，是不会沉迷于这类罪恶的。这些是太过明显的罪恶，真正的信徒无法安然地去做这些而不受到自己的良心责备。因此，即使它们的确是非常邪恶的，却其实并没有引我们入歧途的危险。每当我们陷入这类的罪时都可以意识到，因为良心在随时提醒我们。其实连那些世俗的没有归回神的人，借着良心都能立刻知道奸淫之类是罪恶的。

然而信仰里的“无用之功”，则是更加危险的，因为它非常具有欺骗性。《新约》希伯来书 6 章 1 节讲到了这种无用之功。那里提到“无用之功”是需要悔改的。在《旧约》里是没有这种无用功的。那时只有所谓“善行”或“恶行”。但《新约》里，我们看到除了“善行”和“恶行”，还有“死行”，就是“无用功”。善行，是那些讨神喜悦的行为；恶行，则是如加拉太书 5 章 19 到 21 节提到的那些，因着肉体欲望而行出来。那么，“无用功/死行”则到底指的是什么？

“无用功”指的是那些表面看起来是好的行为，但出于错误的目的，内在的动机是腐败的。因此它在神看来就如同破烂的衣裳。好比一个大麻风患者用长满了大麻风的手，给你一个上等的苹果一样。你会接过来吃

filled with leprosy giving you a first class apple to eat with his leprous hand. Would you take it and eat it? The apple may be good, but it is contaminated with the germs of leprosy in that person's hands. It is the same way when we offer a good thing to God but contaminated with the wrong motive. It could be a prayer, you could sing a solo in a Christian meeting, and your aim may be to get honour for yourself. Well, what is that - a good work or a bad work? - It is a dead work.

It is important for us to understand this. It is well known among believers that "The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sins" (1 John 1:7), but what is not so well known is that "The blood of Christ must also cleanse us from dead works before we can serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14). So, what does the blood of Christ cleanse us from? - Not only sins. It must also cleanse us from the dead works. And therefore it is very, very important for us to have a very clear understanding as to what dead works are.

Let's look at some of the type of works which we could call as dead works. First of all, dead works are works done without any joy. In other words, these are works done out of compulsion, or necessity, or for the fear of punishment, or something like that. You know how some of you get your son, for example, to obey you to do his homework when he wants to play out in the field. You force him to come in with a threat of punishing him with a cane if he doesn't listen. Then he sits down with a grumpy face at his table and does his homework. He is not doing it with joy, but he is doing it. The homework is a good thing to do but then it is done out of compulsion.

It is the same way a lot of people pay their tithe; they don't do it joyfully. They do it because they are told

吗？苹果本身是好的，但却从那人手上沾满了大麻风的致病菌。当我们带着污染的动机，为神献上所谓的“善行”时，就类似于此。一段祷告，或是你在聚会中献唱，如果你的目的是为了给自己争荣誉，荣耀自己，那么你所作的，就是带来属灵死亡的“无用功”。那么，你说这样的行为算“善行”还是“恶行”？它是无用的“死行”。

理解这个问题对我们是非常重要的。有一句经文信徒非常熟悉，“耶稣的宝血洗净了我们一切的罪”（约翰一书 1 章 7 节），但另外一句似乎就没那么众所周知了，就是“基督的宝血还除去我们的死行/无用功，这样我们就可以去侍奉那永生的神”（希伯来书 9 章 14 节）。那么，基督的宝血都洗净我们的什么？不单单是罪而已。还必须将我们从这致死的“无用功”里洁净出来。因此，明白这死行/无用功是什么，是非常非常重要的。

接下来让我们来看看，哪些行为可以称之为无用功。首先，无用功是那些做起来没有喜乐的事情。换句话说，这些工作若是被迫、必须的，或是出于担心被惩罚，诸如此类。你们中间有儿子的人知道，当他迫于你的要求去写家庭作业，可心里想的却是出去玩，因为你手里拿着藤条威胁他。然后他坐下来写作业，脸上却满是不情愿。他虽然在写作业，但却没有喜乐。做作业原本是好事，现在却是出于被迫。

很多人在给教会奉献什一税时就是这样的，不是带着喜乐去做。他们给，是因为牧师说，不给就会被惩

by some pastor that if they don't do it they will be punished - that they will get some sickness in their home and then they have to give the money to the doctor at the hospital, if they don't give it to God etc. So, out of fear, they pay their tithe.

Do you think God is interested in all these psychological techniques by which people are forced to give their money? - Far from it. These are the techniques of manipulators among Christians. The Bible says concerning giving, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). In everything God wants cheerfulness. The Bible says, in not a so well-known verse, that "God meets with those who rejoice in doing righteousness" (Is. 64:5), not just those who do righteousness. Let me show you another verse where the Lord was telling Israelites why they were being punished or why they would be punished in the future. Moses was telling them, "Because you did not serve the Lord with joy and with a glad heart for the abundance of all the things He has given you; therefore you shall serve your enemies ..." (Deut. 28:47, 48).

Why did the Lord send the Israelites to become slaves at different times in their history? It is because they didn't serve the Lord with joy. The Kingdom of God is not just righteousness (Rom. 14:17). This verse makes it very, very clear that the Kingdom of God consists of righteousness along with peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. In other words, if you just do righteousness without the joy of the Holy Spirit, you are not really serving the Kingdom of God; you are just fulfilling weak legalistic requirement. And, therefore, you can be religious, but not spiritual. A spiritual man is a man who has discerned dead works and repented of those dead works and cleansed his heart from dead works through the blood of Christ. The only ones who can

罚，比如回家会生病之类的，告诉他们，到时候那些没给神的钱，就得给医院了。因此，出于这样的恐惧，他们就交了什一奉献。

你觉得上帝会对强迫人给钱的这些心理技巧感兴趣吗？完全不会的。然而这却是许多基督徒在使用的控制他人的技巧。关于给予，《圣经》说“那些欢喜的给予之人，是神所喜悦的”（哥林多后书 9 章 7 节）。在任何事上，神都想要喜悦。《圣经》里一句相对不那么众所周知的经文说，“你迎接那欢喜行义的”（以赛亚书 64 章 5 节），不单单是行义，而是欢喜的行义。我再指给你另外一句经文，里面主告诉以色列人，为什么他们会受罚。摩西告诉他们，“因为你富有的时候，不欢心乐意地侍奉耶和華你的神，所以就得出侍奉你的仇敌……”（申命记 28 章 47、48 节）

神为什么让以色列人在他们的历史上屡次成为奴隶？那就是因为他们没有带着欢喜去侍奉神。神的国不仅仅是公义（罗马书 14 章 17 节）。这节经文说得非常清楚，神的国包括着公义，同时还有平安和圣灵里的喜乐。换句话说，如果只有公义，却没有圣灵里的喜悦，那么你并没有真的在侍奉神的国度，而只是完成律法虚弱的要求而已。因此，你可以是属宗教的，却不是属灵的。一个属灵的人，能分辨自己的无用功，并因此向神悔改，请求基督用祂的宝血洁净自己的这些无用功/死行。只有那些无论做什么都带着欢喜去做的人，能给神的心里带来欢喜快乐。

bring joy and delight to the heart of God are those who do whatever they do with joy, with a cheerful heart.

Take this matter of tithing which I just mentioned earlier. This was a command under the Old Covenant. In fact, in the Old Covenant, in addition to your tithes you had to give other offerings and sacrifices. You ultimately end up giving about 15% or more of your income to God. But it is interesting to see that Jesus never commanded it. The only time He ever mentioned it is in Mathew 23 when he spoke to the Pharisees. That was the time when people were still under The Law and He said, "You ought to have done this (tithes) but not neglected the other things." Otherwise, it was not a commandment that Jesus gave to people who have come under the New Covenant. That is why, after Acts 2, you never find any command to tithe. The only reference to it, after that, is in Hebrew's 7:2 where it talks about Abraham tithing and giving his money to Melchizedek.

Why is there no commandment to tithe in the New Covenant? Because, in the Old Testament, the quantity you gave to God was important. In the New Testament the quality of your giving is what is more important -Not how much you give, but how you give. You understand the difference between how much you give and how you give? In the Old Testament, it was a question of how much you gave. If you didn't give 10% you disobeyed. In fact, in the last page of the Old Testament it says, "You are robbers. You have not brought tithe into the storehouse. Bring the tithe in and see how I will bless you" (Mal. 3:10). But once you finish with Malachi that is the end of it.

When you come into the New Covenant, we read in

还用刚才说过的什一奉献为例，这是旧约时代的一条命令。实际上，在旧约时代，除了什一税，你还得有其它的供奉和献祭。全算下来，你收入的 15% 以上都献给了神。然而很有意思的是，耶稣从来没要求过这些。祂唯一一次提到这个，是在马太福音 23 章，对法利赛人说话的时候。那个时候的人还是活在律法之下的，耶稣说“做那些（交什一税之类）是当行的，然而却不要忽略了公义、怜悯和信实，那才是更重要的”。另外，交什一税，不是耶稣给新约之下人的诫命。这就是为什么，在使徒行传第 2 章之后，你再也没见过对于什一税的要求了。在那以后，唯一可寻的参考，是从希伯来书 7 章 2 节开始，谈到亚伯拉罕交了十分之一给麦基洗德。

那么新约之下，为什么不再提到什一税的要求了？那是因为，在旧约之下，重要的是你给神的“数量”。然而新约之下，则是你给予的“质量”更为重要。不是你给了多少，而是你如何给。你明白这两者的区别吧？旧约时代是取决于你给了多少。如果没有给足十分之一，则是悖逆。实际上，旧约的最后一页说到“你们是强盗，没有把十分之一送入我的仓库。去将什一奉献纳入，尔后看我如何的赐福与你”（玛拉基书 3 章 10 节）。然而它随着玛拉基书的结束而结束了。

当你来到新约时代，我们看到哥林多后书 9 章 7 节说

2 Corinthians 9:7 that the Lord is interested in you giving with joy. Then why is it so many people are being compelled to pay their tithes reluctantly? It is because of covetous Christian leaders who want them. So people pay up, but without any joy; it is not spontaneous giving. It is grudging, reluctant giving. The preachers who collect the money may be happy but God is not. God is not happy because the money is not given cheerfully.

I agree that it is a good discipline to give 10%. If a man says, 'Well, if I don't discipline myself, I will give nothing' and gives 10%, then that is good. But don't think that God is going to be happy if you give that money reluctantly. Christian preachers, very often, love very large givers but God loves cheerful givers. There is a lot of difference. You see, the New Covenant's principle is not - give as much as you can give. No, the New Covenant's principle is - give as much as you can give cheerfully and stop there. God doesn't want anymore. God wants happy people. He wants children who are happy. Of course the Bible says, 'Give in proportion to what God has given you. If you give more liberally you will get more liberally.' That is all true. But when you do business with God thinking that if you give more you will get back more, that is a dead work. So, you see, even your giving money to God is something you may need to repent of because you gave it reluctantly or grudgingly. It is so clear from 2 Corinthians 9:7 not to give grudgingly. Did you notice that? - Not grudgingly, not under any compulsion. What does that mean? Nobody should compel another person to give because God loves a cheerful giver. Christian leaders are so different from God in this area.

This is one area of dead works - doing things without joy, cheerfulness, gladness. A second area

到，神喜悦人欢喜的奉献。那么为什么还有这么多人不情不愿地，在被迫交出十分之一？那是因为一些贪婪的基督教领导者要他们做的。因此人付清了什一税，可是却一点喜乐也没有，因为不是出于自愿的。这是勉强的、不情愿的奉献。用这种方式敛财的牧师也许很高兴，可是神却不高兴。神的不高兴，是因为这些奉献不是出于喜悦。

我个人同意，奉献十分之一是种好的纪律约束。如果一个人说“如果我不去约束自己，结果会什么都不给”，尔后给了十分之一，这样是好的。然而不要以为你勉强的给予，会讨神的喜悦。基督教的领导者们，往往喜欢大数目的奉献，然而神所喜悦的，是快乐的奉献。这两者是有非常大区别的。你看到了，新约的原则不是给的越多越好。新约的原则是，给予你能够欢喜奉献的最大量，就停下来。神不再要更多了。神要喜乐的人。祂想要快乐的孩子。当然，《圣经》还说“按神给予你的比例去奉献。你若更慷慨，神也对你更慷慨。”这些都是真的。然而如果你想这样来和神做交易，去得到更多，那么你做的就是无用功。因此你看，连对神的奉献这件事上，你可能都需要悔改，因为你是你不情愿的在奉献。哥林多后书 9 章 7 节说的非常清楚，不要勉强的去奉献。你留意到了吧？不要作难，不要勉强。这话是什么意思呢？一个人不要强迫另一个人去奉献，因为神喜悦的，是快乐的奉献。在这个领域里，很多基督教领导者，和神的态度是如此的不同。

这是无用功/死行的其中一个方面——做事没有欢喜快乐。无用功/死行的第二个方面，是做事却没有爱。你

of dead works are, works done without love. You know how, in the home of a new couple that are just married, the wife serves; everything she does for her husband is out of love; She cooks the food, washes the clothes, and keeps the house clean; all done out of love. Twenty years later you go to the same home, the wife is still cooking the food, still keeping the house clean, still washing the clothes, but it is not out of love anymore. Jesus said, "Love God with all your heart, soul, and strength." This is the first commandment. If you don't keep it, all your other works are useless.

Think about what the Lord told the leader of the church in Ephesus: "All your works are useless because you left your first love." Also think of what the Lord told Peter in John chapter 21, when he was commissioning Peter to be His apostle once again after Peter had denied the Lord three times. What did the Lord ask Peter three times? Only one question: 'do you love me?' He said, 'if you love me keep my Commandments,' not if you fear me. That which is done out of fear is a dead work. That which is done in love is a living work. You can do a good work and yet, if it is done out of fear of judgment or the hope that you will get a reward from God, God has no value for it. He wants us to love and, from our love must come obedience, from our love must come service.

We have looked at two marks of dead works and we will continue to look at some other marks of dead works in the next study.

们都知道，一对刚结婚的夫妻在家，妻子对丈夫各种服侍，都是出于爱。她做好吃的，洗衣服，把房间打扫得很干净，等等，都是出于爱。二十年以后，你去同一家，妻子仍然做饭、打扫房间、洗衣服，然而却不再是出于爱了。耶稣说过“你要尽心、尽性、尽意、尽力爱主你的神”这是诫命里最大的。你如果不持守这一条，那么所有其它的功都是白做的。

思想一下，主对以弗所教会的领袖说，“因为你离弃了起初的爱心，所以你的劳苦是无用的。”另外想一下，在约翰福音 12 章主对彼得所说的，在彼得否认了祂三次之后，祂重新要彼得做祂的使徒。主问了彼得三次的是什么？就只有一个问题：“你爱我吗？”主曾经说的是“你若爱我，就遵守我的诫命”，而不是你若惧怕我就遵守我的诫命。那些因着惧怕而做的，是无用功，是没有生命的行为。而因着爱做的，则是有生命的。你的善行，若是因着惧怕，或是希望从中得到神的奖赏，那么在神眼中就没有价值了。祂要的是我们爱祂，从爱而来的顺服，从爱而来的服侍。

这章我们探讨了无用功的两个标志，后面的学习我们还会继续观察无用功的其它标志。