

18. More On Dead Works

We want to continue with our study on the difference between being religious and being spiritual, to see what the Bible says about dead works as opposed to good works and evil works. We saw in our last study that there is a difference between the works of the flesh - evil things that are so obvious that our unconscious tells us about them and dead works, which could be good works, but works that spring from a corrupt source. We have considered two of them in our last study; works, those are done reluctantly or grudgingly without joy and works those are done not out of love for God.

Now we want to continue looking at some other works which may look good on the outside but which are dead in God's eyes.

Third dead work that we shall look at is works done without zeal. We read in Revelation 3:15-19 about the Lord speaking to the elder of the church in Laodicea and saying, 'You are lukewarm, you are neither hot nor cold, you are not on fire, and you are half-hearted.' Further He says, 'I wish you were either cold or hot.' Now in the world, there is a saying: 'Something is better than nothing,' but the Lord, apparently, doesn't believe in that. He says, 'I wish you were cold - dead or on fire. But this half-hearted type of Christianity, I am not interested in', and, finally, in verse 19, the Lord says, 'therefore be zealous.' Half-hearted works are dead works.

In quoting an Old Testament commandment, Jesus said in Mark 12:30 that we are to love the Lord, our God. It doesn't just stop there. We must love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and all our strength. He said that that is the first commandment. In other words, our whole being

18. 再谈无用之功

接下来，让我们继续学习属宗教与属灵的区别，看看《圣经》对于“善行”与“恶行”之外的“无用功/死行”是怎么说的。上一章的学习我们看到了，服务于肉体那些非常明显的，下意识都可以知道的邪恶，以及表面看起来可能是善行，但出发点来自腐坏的内在，这两者之间的区别。我们在上一章思考过关于无用功的两点，一个是出于勉强、不甘愿的付出，另一个是没有神的爱。

下面我们要继续来看其它一些，表面看起来可能很好的行为，但在神眼中是死的。

无用功/死行的第三种，可以形容为，做起来没有热忱。在启示录 3 章 15 到 19 节我们看到，主对老底嘉教会的长老说，“你如温水，既不冷也不热，你心中没有热情，三心二意”，然后进而说，“我巴不得你或冷或热。”现今社会的说法是，“有总比没有强”，但我们的主显然不这么认为。祂说，“我希望你或者彻底冷掉，或者热情如火。你们这种三心二意的基督徒生活，我根本没兴趣，”到 19 节，主说，“因此，你们要发热心”。三心二意的付出是无用功/死行。

在马可福音 12 章 30 节，耶稣引用了旧约的诫命，告诉我们要爱主，我们的神。尔后不止是这样，我们必须用我们全部的心、全部的灵魂、全部的头脑和全部的力量去爱我们的主。祂说那是诫命里最大的。换句话说，我们整个的存在都要充满对神的爱。比如在敬拜神的时候，全心全意的敬拜，与三心二意的敬拜，

must be taken up with the love for God. For example, when you worship God, there is a lot of difference between a whole-hearted worship and a half-hearted worship. When you praise the Lord, you can say hallelujah, and the other person says hallelujah, there can be a lot of difference between the two. In the other, it springs from the depth of his heart; he is really thankful to God and he praises the Lord with all the heart. But you have gone through the ritual. You have said the right words. It is not a sin to say hallelujah, but it is a dead work as far as you are concerned. It doesn't come from the depth of your heart; it is lifeless. Our worship and our praise must be whole-hearted.

Again, if you listen to some people praying, you can see the difference. I mean, they are not saying anything sinful in their prayer, but the whole thing is dead. You know what a dead prayer meeting is. What is a dead prayer meeting - that people prayed for sinful things there? No, they prayed for good things, but they were lifeless. Works, prayer, praise - any activity done without zeal is a dead work.

The Bible says (with one translation putting it like this) that we must be 'aglow with the Spirit' - on fire in the Spirit at all times (Rom. 12:11). Fervent in Spirit means on fire in the Spirit at all times. There was a law in the Old Testament which says that "the fire must burn on the altar perpetually" (Lev. 6:13). It must never die out. Paul told Timothy, "Fan to a flame that gift which is in you." There was a danger of it dying out. It is not a question of just exercising them in a half-hearted way. You have to fan to a flame even the gifts of the Spirit that God gives us. Just because some other people abuse them doesn't mean that we should ignore them and throw them in the wastepaper basket. No, let's exercise them in a proper way.

是有巨大区别的。当赞美神的时候，你说哈利路亚，别人也说哈利路亚，然而两者的区别却可能是巨大的。另外那个人从他心底最深处涌出的，对神的感激和全心的赞美。而你却只是流于形式，嘴上说着正确的词句而已。说哈利路亚并不是罪，然而用你那样的方式去说，就只是无用功/死行而已。因为那不是从你心底发出的，因此是没有生命的，是死的。我们的敬拜和赞美必须是全心全意的。

再说一次，如果你听有些人祷告，就能看出区别。他们祷告的内容不是罪恶的，然而那一切却是了无生机。你们都知道死气沉沉的祷告会是什么样子。有人祈祷邪恶的事情吗？没有。他们祈祷的是好事，但是却了无生机。事工、祷告、赞美，任何这些若没有热心，都是无用功/死行。

《圣经》说（有一个译本是这样说的），我们必须“与圣灵一起灼热发光”，就是时时刻刻都与圣灵一起燃烧（罗马书 12 章 11 节）。在圣灵里发热心的意思就是时刻与圣灵一同燃烧的意思。旧约律法里说“坛上的火必须一直燃烧，不可熄灭”（利未记 6 章 13 节）。那火是不允许止息的。保罗告诉提摩太“将神给的恩赐，如火挑旺起来。”因为那时有熄灭的危险。那不是三心二意做些操练就可以的。你必须把火挑旺起来，甚至包括神给我们的属灵的恩赐。不能因为有人滥用这些属天的恩赐，我们就把自己的恩赐置之不理，扔进废纸桶。不要这样，请让我们一起来正当的操练这些属天的恩赐吧。

A lot of Christian churches, today, are not probably living in gross sin, but they are lifeless, lacking the burning fire of the Holy Spirit. They are not cold, but they are not hot either. And the Lord told that the whole church in Laodicea, "Because you are lukewarm, I'll just spit you out of my mouth." You see how dead works can lead to a lifeless type of Christianity which, finally, the Lord rejects? We need to repent works done without zeal.

And then fourthly, dead works are works done without faith. In the Old Testament there is no such phrase called 'The obedience of faith'. It was only 'obedience' - you obey what the Lord says you to obey. But, when you come to the New Testament, you see in the first paragraph of Romans 1 and in the last paragraph of Romans 16, this phrase repeated: 'The obedience of faith'. James says that faith without works is dead. I would also say, works without faith are also dead, because without faith, it is impossible to please God.

Supposing you do a good work, and it is not in faith, it is a dead work. For example, you pray for half an hour, and you pray for a lot of powerful things but you don't believe that God is going to do one of those things, what is the use of that type of prayer? What is the use of a one-hour prayer meeting where you don't believe one single thing that God is going to do for you? Isn't that a dead work? You can have an all-night prayer meeting which is a dead work because people don't believe. Praying without faith is a dead work. In fact, one minute of prayer, with faith, is far more acceptable to God than an all-night prayer meeting which is just a ritual, without faith.

Works done without faith are dead works. Now I am not against long prayers - Jesus prayed all night, and there may be times when we need to do that. But Jesus praying all night was not a dead work; He

现今的许多基督教会，可能并没有活在显而易见的罪里，然而她们却毫无生命，缺少圣灵燃烧的火焰。她们既不冷，也不热。主对老底嘉的教会全众说，“因为你如温水，我必把你从我口中吐出去。”因此，你可以看到，基督信仰里毫无生命的无用功/死行，最终会被主所拒绝。我们要对自己无热心的事工来向主悔改。

接下来第四点，无用功/死行是出于没有信心的事工。旧约里没有“信服”这样的字眼，那时只有“顺服”，你只要去顺服神要你做的。然而到了新约时代，你可以看到罗马书 1 章第一段，和 16 章最后一段，“信服”这个词反复出现。雅各说过，没有行为的信心是死的。我想说，没有信心的行为也是死的，因为没有信心，便无法讨神喜悦。

假设你做了非常好的事工，然而若没有信心，那也是无用功。比如你祷告半小时，说了很多非常有力量的祷告词，然而假如你对于神是否会实现它，没有信心，那么你的祷告有什么用呢？不真心相信任何神能为你做的事，一整个小时的祷告会又有什么用呢？那不就是无用功吗？你可以参加一个彻夜的祷告会，但如果参加的人不真心相信，那么就是无用功。没有信心的祷告是无用的。实际上，若有信心，一分钟的祷告，比起彻夜的形式上的祷告会，都会更被神所接受。

没有信心的事工是无用功。要声明的是，我不反对长的祷告——耶稣本人就曾彻夜祷告，在某些时间点上我们也需要。然而耶稣的彻夜祷告却不是无用功，祂在用信心祷告。信心也代表着亲身的确信。我们在罗

prayed in faith. Faith also means personal conviction. We read in Romans, "The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God" (Rom. 14:22). We must have a personal conviction about the truths of Scripture. The faith which you have, it says here, let it be your own conviction before God. When you do something merely to imitate what somebody else is doing, or merely because some man of God teaches it, without personal conviction, it is a dead work. Maybe it is a good work, and maybe that great man of God teaches that particular doctrine and tells you to do it, in some way you imitate him, it is not going to bring life in you; imitation always brings death.

Let me give you an example of it. We read in Hebrews 11:29 that the Israelites, by faith, crossed the Red Sea and then, it says, the Egyptians imitated them. What happened then? - They drowned. What did imitation bring to the Egyptians? - Death. Now the Israelites went through by faith. The Egyptians didn't have faith. They just imitated what the Israelites did. It was a dead work. That is written for our warning. You may see another brother doing something in faith - a ministry, for example, he does it in faith and you imitate that. What is it going to be? - A dead work. God never called you to do that.

So we are not to imitate another man's ministry, or the emphasis that another man has in his ministry. The Bible says, "Prophesy according to the proportion of your faith" (Rom. 12:6). God doesn't want us to be imitators; you know, like parrots, repeating what somebody else says. He wants us to have personal convictions, and what you do without personal convictions is a dead work, even if it is a good work. God has no value for it, because it doesn't come out of your personal relationship with God.

马书读到，“你有信心，就当在神面前守着”（罗马书 14 章 22 节）。我们对《圣经》经文的真实必须有亲身的确信。这里说，你自己所拥有的信心，是你在神面前亲自的确信。如果你做某些事仅仅是模仿别人，或者是近神的人所教导，却不是你亲身的确信，那也同样是无用功。那也许是非常好的事情，然而若仅仅是由于某位近神的人所教导的，那是无法带给你“生命”的——模仿带来的总是“死亡”。

让我给你举个例子吧。我们在希伯来书 11 章 29 节看到，以色列人凭着信心，过红海如行干地，然后埃及人模仿他们。结果怎样？全部被淹灭了。模仿给埃及人带来了什么？是死亡。以色列人过红海凭的是信心。而埃及人是没有这信心的。他们仅仅是模仿以色列人的行为而已。写在这里的经文对我们是个警告。也许你见到某位弟兄凭信心做事，也许是某种事工，他凭着信心做，而你去模仿。结果怎样？一份无用功。因为神从没呼召你去做。

因此，我们不要去模仿别人的事工，或者是模仿神要另外一个人所强调的领域。《圣经》说，“照着信心的程度说预言”（罗马书 12 章 6 节）。神不要我们变成模仿者，像鹦鹉一样重复别人说的话。祂要我们个人亲身的确信，任何缺乏亲身确信的行為都是无用功，即便是很好的事工。那在神眼中那是没有价值的，因为并非来自你亲身与神的个人关系。

Let me say this for your encouragement. God does not want you to be like somebody else; He wants you to be yourself. He made you to be yourself with a particular personality and a particular background and upbringing. Just be thankful and do what you can. And that will be far more acceptable to God than if you try to imitate somebody else.

A fifth way in which we can do dead works is when we do works, which may be good works, Christian works, but which are done for personal gain or honour. The Lord told the leader of the church in Sardis, "You have a name that you are alive." Sometimes we can do Christian work to get a name that we are alive, and we can build up a reputation. And to continue that reputation we keep on doing certain things. They look very spiritual in the eyes of others, but God sees the underlying motive in everything: you want to get a name that you are alive. And what is the result? All your works are dead works. Anything that we do to impress another man is a dead work.

A living work, on the other hand, is one that is done to impress God. Living works are done in secret, before God's face alone where your left hand does not know what your right hand has done, where you keep it hidden. You pray, but you don't let anybody know that you pray. You fast and you don't let anybody know that you have fasted. Those are living works. But dead works are works done to impress people, and you don't conceal it from the eyes of men. We could say that those are works which we later on meditate on and glory over.

I wonder if you noticed this expression in Acts 7:41 where Stephen was speaking about the Israelites that they worshipped the work of their own hands.' You know what that means? To do something, and

我想要鼓励你一下。神不希望你变得像别人，祂希望你有自己的特色。祂造你时给了你独特的个性、人生背景和成长环境。你只要感恩，尔后去做你该做的。这样的你是被神接受的，而不是那个模仿别人的你。

无用功的第五种，是我们带着个人的目的去为神工作，即便是你干得非常好，但如果目的是为了个人利益或名誉，那么则是无用功。主对撒狄教会的领袖说，“按名你是活的，其实是死的。”有时候我们可能为了得到一个活泼的名声而去做教会工作，为给自己建立名声。为了保持那个名声，我们会一直持续做某件工作。这种人在别人眼中看起来似乎非常属灵，然而神看的是每件事情背后的动机，那就是你为了让人觉得你是活泼有生机的。结果怎样？所有那些工只是无用功。我们任何试图给人留下深刻印象的行为，都是神眼中的无用功。

真正活泼有生命的行为，则是一个人做出来为了使神印象深刻。这些行为是暗暗做的，只要神知道，不要叫左手知道右手所作的。祈祷时不要故意给人看。禁食也不要让别人知道。这样的是在神眼中有生命的行为。无用功/死行，是那些为了让人印象深刻而做的，做出来以后，还会反复在心里品味和体会所得的荣耀而沾沾自喜。

不知道你是否留意，在使徒行传 7 章 41 节，在司提反讲到以色列人崇拜自己手里做出来的东西。你知道那是什么意思吗？就是自己做了一件事，然后看着它，心里想，“好家伙，我可真有两下子。”记不记得

then to look at your work and say, 'Boy, that is something good I've done.' Do you remember how Nebuchadnezzar walked on the roof of the palace in Babylon (Dan. 4:30) and he said, 'This is a kingdom which I have built, a huge palace with its hanging gardens and all that, and what must people be thinking about it?'

Do you know, my friend, that when you serve the Lord and you do some work - maybe God has used you in building a great ministry for the Lord - and then you look over it, like Nebuchadnezzar did, and say, 'It is tremendous what I have done' and you are thinking about the opinion that others have about your work. It is a dead work. You have got to take all those thoughts and throw it in the garbage bin. It is Babylon. What Nebuchadnezzar built was Babylon, and what you are doing is building Babylon too. Our righteous acts, in human eyes, are an abomination fit to be flushed out into the sewage system in the sight of God. "All that is great in man's eyes is an abomination to God" (Lk. 16:15).

If you are not going to be radical in eliminating dead works from your life, you will never be a spiritual man. If you do God's work, for example, for a salary, it is a dead work. God may give you money to care for your needs, but if you serve the Lord only because you are paid, what is that? You can call it Christian work, but it is not really serving God; it is serving God and money.

May God help us to have our eyes open, so that we are free from dead works.

但以理书 4 章 30 节，尼布甲尼撒在巴比伦宫殿的城墙上行走时对自己说，“我建的这个王国真实太了不起了，巨大的宫殿、空中花园和这一切，别人得要怎么想呢？一定会崇拜的没话说。”

我的朋友，你知道吗，当你做某些事情来侍奉神的时候，也许神用你来成就非常了不起的事工，但假如你像尼布甲尼撒那样感慨，“看我做了多了不起的事情！”，然后想着别人因此对你的看法。那么这一切就成了无用功。你得把全部那样的想法丢进垃圾桶。因为那是巴比伦的方式。尼布甲尼撒修建的是巴比伦，你那样做的话，修建的也将是巴比伦。连在人眼中的我们的义举，在神眼中都是可憎的，可以顺着下水道冲走了。“人所尊贵的，是神看为可憎恶的。”（路加福音 16 章 15 节）

你若不彻底清除生命里的无用功/死行，就没法成为一个属灵的人。假如你为神做工，目的却是为了挣工钱，那就是无用功。神会给你提供钱来支持你的需求，但如果你服侍神的目的是为了挣钱，那么会怎样？你可以把它叫做事奉工作，然而却并没有真的事奉神，那是既事奉神又事奉钱财。

愿神帮助我们睁开眼睛，救我们脱离那没有生命的无用之功。