

## 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. 無用之功

下面讓我們繼續學習「屬宗教」與「屬靈」的區別,我們要特別討論下面這個題目——無用之功。

《新約》加拉太書 5 章 19 節一開始,說的是我們都很熟悉的,順從肉體的結果:姦淫、爭競、嫉妒、惱怒、巫術等等。我們知道,真正的基督徒作為屬靈的人,是不會沉迷于這類罪惡的。這些是太過明顯的罪惡,真正的信徒無法安然的去做這些而不受到自己的良心責備。因此,即使它們的確是非常邪惡的,卻其實並沒有引我們入歧途的危險。每當我們陷入這類的罪時都可以意識到,因為良心在隨時提醒我們。其實連那些世俗的沒有歸回神的人,借著良心都能立刻知道姦淫之類是罪惡的。

然而信仰裡的「無用之功」,則是更加危險的,因為它非常具有欺騙性。《新約》希伯來書 6 章 1 節講到了這種無用之功。那裡提到「無用之功」是需要悔改的。在《舊約》裡是沒有這種無用功的。那時只有所謂「善行」或「惡行」。但《新約》裡,我們看到除了「善行」和「惡行」,還有「死行」,就是「無用功」。善行,是那些討神喜悅的行為;惡行,則是如加拉太書 5 章 19 到 21 節提到的那些,因著肉體欲望而行出來。那麼,「無用功/死行」則到底指的是什麼?

「無用功」指的是那些表面看起來是好的行為,但出於錯誤的目的,內在的動機是腐敗的。因此它在神看來就如同破爛的衣裳。好比一個大麻風患者用長滿了大麻風的手,給你一個上等的蘋果一樣。你會接過來吃

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

嗎?蘋果本身是好的,但卻從那人手上沾滿了大麻風的致病菌。當我們帶著污染的動機,為神獻上所謂的「善行」時,就類似于此。一段禱告,或是你在聚會中獻唱,如果你的目的是為了給自己爭榮譽,榮耀自己,那麼你所作的,就是帶來屬靈死亡的「無用功」。那麼,你說這樣的行為算「善行」還是「惡行」?它是無用的「死行」。

理解這個問題對我們是非常重要的。有一句經文信徒非常熟悉,「耶穌的寶血洗淨了我們一切的罪」(約翰一書 1 章 7 節),但另外一句似乎就沒那麼眾所周知了,就是「基督的寶血還除去我們的死行/無用功,這樣我們就可以去侍奉那永生的神」(希伯來書 9 章 14 節)。那麼,基督的寶血都洗淨我們的什麼?不單單是罪而已。還必須將我們從這致死的「無用功」裡潔淨出來。因此,明白這死行/無用功是什麼,是非常非常重要的。

接下來讓我們來看看,哪些行為可以稱之為無用功。首先,無用功是那些做起來沒有喜樂的事情。換句話說,這些工作若是被迫、必須的,或是出於擔心被懲罰,諸如此類。你們中間有兒子的人知道,當他迫于你的要求去寫家庭作業,可心裡想的卻是出去玩,因為你手裡拿著藤條威脅他。然後他坐下來寫作業,臉上卻滿是不情願。他雖然在寫作業,但卻沒有喜樂。做作業原本是好事,現在卻是出於被迫。

很多人在給教會奉獻什一稅時就是這樣的,不是帶著喜樂去做。他們給,是因為牧師說,不給就會被懲罰,比如

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

回家會生病之類的,告訴他們,到時候那些沒給神的錢,就得給醫院了。因此,出於這樣的恐懼,他們就交了什一奉獻。

你覺得上帝會對強迫人給錢的這些心理技巧感興趣嗎?完全不會的。然而這卻是許多基督徒在使用的控制他人的技巧。關於給予,《聖經》說「那些歡喜的給予之人,是神所喜悅的」(哥林多後書 9 章 7 節)。在任何事上,神都想要喜悅。《聖經》裡一句相對不那麼眾所周知的經文說,「你迎接那歡喜行義的」(以賽亞書 64 章 5 節),不單單是行義,而是歡喜的行義。我再指給你另外一句經文,裡面主告訴以色列人,為什麼他們會受罰。摩西告訴他們,「因為你富有的時候,不歡心樂意地侍奉耶和華你的神,所以就得出去侍奉你的仇敵.....」(申命記 28 章 47、48 節)

神為什麼讓以色列人在他們的歷史上屢次成為奴隸?那就是因為他們沒有帶著歡喜去侍奉神。神的國不僅僅是公義(羅馬書 14 章 17 節)。這節經文說得非常清楚,神的國包括著公義,同時還有平安和聖靈裡的喜樂。換句話說,如果只有公義,卻沒有聖靈裡的喜悅,那麼你並沒有真的在侍奉神的國度,而只是完成律法虛弱的要求而已。因此,你可以是屬宗教的,卻不是屬靈的。一個屬靈的人,能分辨自己的無用功,並因此向神悔改,請求基督用祂的寶血潔淨自己的這些無用功/死行。只有那些無論做什麼都帶著歡喜去做的人,能給神的心裡帶來歡喜快樂。

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

還用剛才說過的什一奉獻為例,這是舊約時代的一條命令。實際上,在舊約時代,除了什一稅,你還得有其它的供奉和獻祭。全算下來,你收入的 15%以上都獻給了神。然而很有意思的是,耶穌從來沒要求過這些。祂唯一一次提到這個,是在馬太福音 23 章,對法利賽人說話的時候。那個時候的人還是活在律法之下的,耶穌說「做那些(交什一稅之類)是當行的,然而卻不要忽略了公義、憐憫和信實,那才是更重要的」。另外,交什一稅,不是耶穌給新約之下人的誡命。這就是為什麼,在使徒行傳第 2 章之後,你再也沒見過對於什一稅的要求了。在那以後,唯一可尋的參考,是從希伯來書 7 章 2 節開始,談到亞伯拉罕交了十分之一給麥基洗德。

那麼新約之下,為什麼不再提到什一稅的要求了?那是因為,在舊約之下,重要的是你給神的「數量」。然而新約之下,則是你給予的「品質」更為重要。不是你給了多少,而是你如何給。你明白這兩者的區別吧?舊約時代是取決於你給了多少。如果沒有給足十分之一,則是悖逆。實際上,舊約的最後一頁說到「你們是強盜,沒有把十分之一送入我的倉庫。去將什一奉獻納入,爾後看我如何的賜福與你」(瑪拉基書 3 章 10 節)。然而它隨著瑪拉基書的結束而結束了。

當你來到新約時代,我們看到哥林多後書 9 章 7 節說

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,神喜悅人歡喜的奉獻。那麼為什麼還有這麼多人不情不願地,在被迫交出十分之一?那是因為一些貪婪的基督教領導者要他們做的。因此人付清了什一稅,可是卻一點喜樂也沒有,因為不是出於自願的。這是勉強的、不情願的奉獻。用這種方式斂財的牧師也許很高興,可是神卻不高興。神的不高興,是因為這些奉獻不是出於喜悅。

我個人同意,奉獻十分之一是種好的紀律約束。如果一個人說「如果我不去約束自己,結果會什麼都不給」,爾後給了十分之一,這樣是好的。然而不要以為你勉強的給予,會討神的喜悅。基督教的領導者們,往往喜歡大數目的奉獻,然而神所喜悅的,是快樂的奉獻。這兩者是有非常大區別的。你看到了,新約的原則不是給的越多越好。新約的原則是,給予你能夠歡喜奉獻的最大量,就停下來。神不再要更多了。神要喜樂的人。祂想要快樂的孩子。當然,《聖經》還說「按神給予你的比例去奉獻。你若更慷慨,神也對你更慷慨。」這些都是真的。然而如果你想這樣來和神做交易,去得到更多,那麼你做的就是無用功。因此你看,連對神的奉獻這件事上,你可能都需要悔改,因為你是不情願的在奉獻。哥林多後書 9 章 7 節說的非常清楚,不要勉強的去奉獻。你留意到了吧?不要作難,不要勉強。這話是什麼意思呢?一個人不要強迫另一個人去奉獻,因為神喜悅的,是快樂的奉獻。在這個領域裡,很多基督教領導者,和神的態度是如此的不同。

這是無用功/死行的其中一個方面——做事沒有歡喜快樂。無用功/死行的第二個方面,是做事卻沒有愛。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.

們都知道,一對剛結婚的夫妻在家,妻子對丈夫各種服侍,都是出於愛。她做好吃的,洗衣服,把房間打掃得很乾淨,等等,都是出於愛。二十年以後,你去同一家,妻子仍然做飯、打掃房間、洗衣服,然而卻不再是出於愛了。耶穌說過「你要盡心、盡性、盡意、盡力愛主你的神」這是誡命裡最大的。你如果不持守這一條,那麼所有其它的功都是白做的。

思想一下,主對以弗所教會的領袖說,「因為你離棄了起初的愛心,所以你的勞苦是無用的。」另外想一下,在約翰福音 12 章主對彼得所說的,在彼得否認了祂三次之後,祂重新要彼得做祂的使徒。主問了彼得三次的是什麼?就只有一個問題:「你愛我嗎?」主曾經說的是「你若愛我,就遵守我的誡命」,而不是你若懼怕我就遵守我的誡命。那些因著懼怕而做的,是無用功,是沒有生命的行為。而因著愛做的,則是有生命的。你的善行,若是因著懼怕,或是希望從中得到神的獎賞,那麼在神眼中就沒有價值了。祂要的是我們愛祂,從愛而來的順服,從愛而來的服侍。

這章我們探討了無用功的兩個標誌,後面的學習我們還會繼續觀察無用功的其它標誌。