



“Doing Good” Without Christ by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Gospel Gleaner](#)

“Doing Good” Without Christ

The Bible speaks of some who did “good” without following Jesus Christ:

- **PHARISEE:** who was:
... Not like other men—extortioners, unjust adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess. ([Luke 18:11-12](#));
- **CORNELIUS:**
A devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. ([Acts 10:2](#));
- **ZACCHAEUS:** who said he gave
... Half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold. ([Luke 19:8](#));
- **SAUL OF TARSUS:** who said his:
... Manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know” for “according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee” ([Acts 26:4-5](#))

He had “lived in all good conscience before God until this day” ([Acts 23:1](#)), for he had been “brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers; law, and was zealous toward God” ([Acts 22:3](#)).

Question: *Before any of these followed Christ, could there have been found a false preacher who would not have “preached them into heaven?” Each was following a life of “good works” and in anyone’s estimation, would have been considered a “good moral man.” But was it enough to be saved?*

“Doing good” does not assure anyone of eternal life without Jesus Christ, for He said,

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you

All Scriptures and comments are based on the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.



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abide in Me. I am the vine, and you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” ([John 15:4-5](#))

Outside of Christ, one’s “good” is not good enough! “Good” is not good unless God authorizes it, and He never states His approval of good works except among His children:

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. ([Ephesians 2:8-10](#))

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. ([Ephesians 4:4-6](#))

Nothing is good when done in rebellion to God, and living the Christian life of good works without repenting and being baptized for the remission of sins ([Acts 2:38](#)) is rebelling against God’s Will. A Christian’s “good works” are good, not because the individual is good, but the individual is counted good by doing God’s Will.

This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. ([Titus 3:8](#))

Good works will not earn eternal life without obedience to the gospel and worship according to the truth ([Mark 16:15-16](#); [John 4:23-24](#)).

Dear Reader, are you trying to work your way into Heaven?

--- John T Polk II