

It is God's Will that We Must Be Well Doers

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The apostle Peter takes pain to remind every Christian “that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God” (1 Peter 4:2). If a Christian does not yield himself to live according to the will of God, his life will be marred by the lust of the flesh. The will of God, which is contrary to the lust of the flesh, is the Christian’s best protection against the lusts which war against his soul (cf. 1 Peter 2:11). So, one of the chief concerns of the apostle Peter is that Christians ought to be doers of God’s will. To emphasise his point, Peter repeatedly affirms (three times, in fact) in his first epistle that it is God’s will that Christians be characterised as well doers (cf. 2:15; 3:17; 4:19).

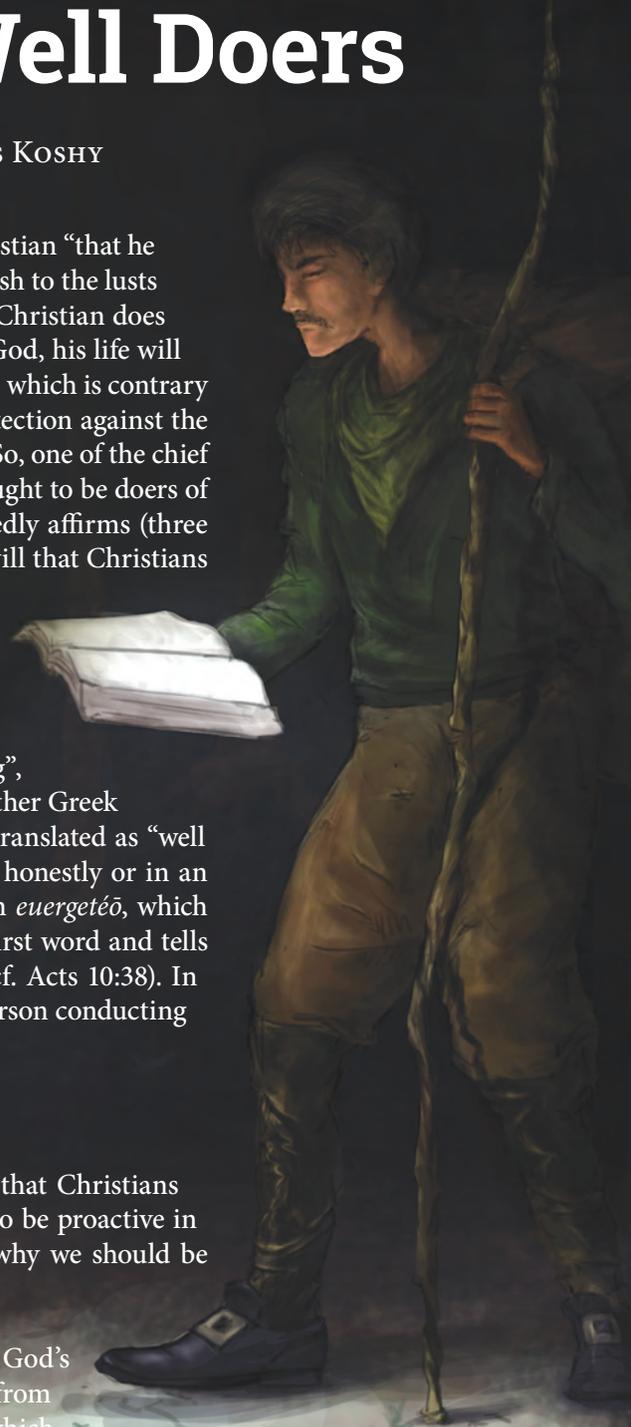
Explanation of “Well Doing”

The Greek verb *agathopoiēō* and its noun form, used by Peter three times to indicate “well doing”, refer to doing good for the benefit of others. Another Greek word *kalopoiēō*, which is used by Paul and also translated as “well doing” (cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:13), denotes acting honestly or in an upright and responsible way. A third Greek term *euergetēō*, which is used in the New Testament, is similar to the first word and tells of doing good to others or conferring benefits (cf. Acts 10:38). In short, the general idea of well doing portrays a person conducting himself in an upright and beneficial manner.

Exigency of “Well Doing”

It is an oft-repeated instruction in God’s Word that Christians ought to be well doers. Christians are expected to be proactive in well doing. Several reasons are put forth as to why we should be earnest about “well doing”.

It is an indisputable teaching of God’s Word that God’s will concerning those whom He has redeemed from their sins is that they will abound in good works which



God has ordained for them to accomplish. The apostle Paul reminded Christians that “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10; cf. Colossians 1:10). Again, Paul declared in Titus 2:14 that Christ “gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” So it is vital that “they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works” (Titus 3:8). Paul further reminds Christians: “But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing” (2 Thessalonians 3:13; cf. Galatians 6:9). While Christians are not to be busybodies, they are to be like busy bees, always dedicated to carry out God’s will, which is “good, and acceptable, and perfect” (Romans 12:2b). Idleness and indifference cannot be part of the Christians’ nature. They must always be industrious in fulfilling the will of God. When it comes to well doing, Christians must be highly enthusiastic and earnest, cheerful and generous, thoughtful and sacrificial.

Admittedly, there can be many challenges and obstacles that would discourage and drain those who busy themselves in well doing. “Unreasonable and wicked men” (2 Thessalonians 3:2), as well as “some which walk among you disorderly... (and) are busybodies” (2 Thessalonians 3:11) in the church, can encumber those who are engaged in diligent service. Besides, tiredness and personal struggles can also cause Christians to shun difficulties and crave for ease and rest. So it is paramount that Christians guard against weariness that would prevent them from maintaining good works.

Even in the midst of affliction, opposition and persecution, Christians must endure them all to be well doers, as admonished by the apostle Peter: “For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing” (1 Peter 3:17). In the

advancement of God’s truth, righteousness and benevolence, Christians must be prepared to cope with all kinds of suffering allowed by God’s providence. Christians are not called to suffer as evildoers, but as well doers. They should not be surprised that they are afflicted even though they have acted righteously and charitably. If well doing is their main desire and purpose in life, they will brace themselves for all kinds of problems and sufferings.

To those who suffer as well doers, Peter says, “Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator” (1 Peter 4:19). All who persevere in well doing, even in the face of suffering, have the assurance that God the faithful Creator will preserve their souls. God’s will for Christians is that they will “by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life” (Romans 2:7). Those who have repented of their sins and trusted in Christ will not live like the unrepentant men again. Rather, they will patiently maintain their lives for the glory and honour of their most holy God, trusting always in His love and care for them. They will gladly embrace Jesus’ exhortation to “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

Encouragement for “Well Doing”

The Almighty God, whose will is that Christians ought to be well doers, has also promised His unceasing help to enable them to fulfil every good work which He has ordained them to do. In 2 Corinthians 9:8, Christians are reminded that “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work”. God will furnish Christians with all the means

necessary to liberally give of themselves, so that they will abound more and more in their good works.

Furthermore, God is able to “make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (Hebrews 13:21). Hence, Christians who yield themselves to well doing should expect God’s abundant blessings for them to accomplish all of God’s good and perfect will concerning them. To this end, Scripture has this added encouragement: “And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you” (1 Thessalonians 3:12).

Examples of “Well Doing”

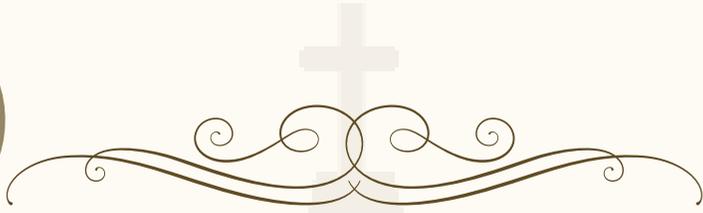
The supreme example of fulfilling God’s will by doing good works is seen in none other than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Jesus did innumerable acts of kindness and miracles of benevolence, such as healing the sick and feeding the hungry. His miracles were good works, as they ministered to the well-being of the people who are in need and suffering. Peter, who had personally witnessed much of Christ’s miraculous deeds of compassion and mercy, further affirmed this fact: “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10:38). The kind of good which Christ had dispensed was wondrously beneficial to the souls and bodies of those who came to Him. Christ’s works of compassion had been carried out with great diligence and unwearied patience. Yet He had to contend with a group of hateful, murderous Jews, to whom He issued this challenging query: “Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?” (John 10:32).

It is written of Christ that He “for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame” (Hebrews 12:2). He was least concerned about his own personal comfort and welfare. While He lived on this earth, He endured all sorts of hardships without soliciting help from others. As the Gospel-writers have testified, “the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45). His mind was wholly set on doing good to others and blessing them. His doctrine has always been “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

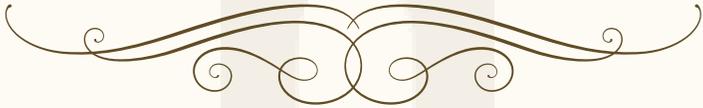
Another example of well doing can be gleaned from a lady disciple of Jesus, Tabitha, who was specially mentioned in the Bible for her good works. It is written of her in Acts 9:36 – “Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.” She helped and cheered many widows by making coats and garments for them. She used her God-given abilities for the purpose of helping the poor and needy. Tabitha not only did good works, but was also “full” of them, implying that her heart was dedicated to do God’s will concerning her. Her discipleship was expressed in deeds of benevolence. Tabitha, who was a “disciple” of Christ, truly emulated her Master’s goodness in showing sympathy and love.

It is the duty of every Christian not only to do good works, but also to encourage other Christians towards manifesting good works. In Hebrews 10:24, Christians are exhorted to “consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works”. Clearly, the divine counsel is that Christians ought always to be ready channels of good works, as well as a decided influence for well doing.

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so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity:
for God loveth a cheerful giver”
2 Corinthians 9:7*



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“Not my will, but Thine, be done” – Luke 22:42

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