



GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PRAYER REQUESTS & PRAISES

Regarding Good Works

by Rev. Carl Miller

The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 16, Sections 2 and 3 *Of Good Works* states this:

II. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith (James 2:18): and by them believers manifest their thankfulness (Psalm 116:12, 1Pet. 2:9), strengthen their assurance (1John 2:3, 1Peter 1:5), edify their brethren (2 Cor. 9:2), adorn the profession of the gospel (Titus 2:5, 1Tim 6:1), stop the mouths of the adversaries (1Pet. 2:15), and glorify God (1Pet. 2:12, Phil 1:11), whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto (Eph 2:10); that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life (Romans 6:22).

III. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. (John 15:4-5, Ezek. 36:26-27) And that they may be enabled thereunto, beside the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit,

to work in them to will, and to do, of His good pleasure: (Phil. 2:13, 4:13; 2 Cor. 3:5) yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them. (Phil 2:12, Heb. 6:11, 2 Pet. 1:3, Isa. 64:7, 2 Tim. 1:6, Acts 26:6)

"Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men." Titus 3:1-2

Our Gracious God blesses us with instruction to walk in obedience and "be ready for every good work". Note that Paul's instruction to Titus wasn't merely a suggestion, but a command that Titus needed to follow. The word for "remind" in the Greek is an imperative. Titus must remind the people to walk in obedience, being ready for every good work. Though we struggle with sin daily, though we lose focus, though we become confused, God pursues us and

The Miller Family as they try to come to California to Pastor the church in Red Bluff. For Carl a job and for a home for them.

Our members who are having health issues.

Any expecting mothers

Our Youth group – for growth, bonding, and a spirit to serve Jesus in our community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fellowship Sunday is November 6th. Check the bulletin board for the theme.

Bible Study is every Wednesday night at the church.

If you have something to add to the monthly newsletter – please contact Elaine Minami.

(continued) brings us back to the path that we must follow. One of the ways that God guides us is through reminding us of the truth and then telling us what we must do in light of that truth.

This reminder is important for us today. Readiness requires preparation. Praise the Lord that He has given us His Word that is full of reminders and instruction regarding readiness. He hasn't left us to ourselves to figure it out. God has provided us with every detail that we

need to follow His commands. He has also promised us that He will work in us to "will and to do for His good pleasure". (Phil. 2:13)

We all are forgetful sometimes. I would like to say that my memory has been sharp as a tack most of my life. However, that sadly isn't true. As I have gotten older, I have become more forgetful. We can all attest that age, increased responsibility, and other factors affect our memory. I often forget the things I read. Therefore, I need to keep reading!

However, are our actions a product of forgetfulness or disobedience? The answer to this question is important. As those who have been redeemed by God, His people have been brought out of darkness and made children of light. Many times sin isn't a matter of memory failure, but rather our response to the lure of darkness that leads us to sin. We can agree with the Apostle Paul when he said:

"For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice." Romans 7:19

Reminders are therefore crucial for the Christian! As He sanctifies us, God uses reminders in His Word to bring conviction of sin that leads to confession and repentance, preparing us to maintain good works.

"But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy

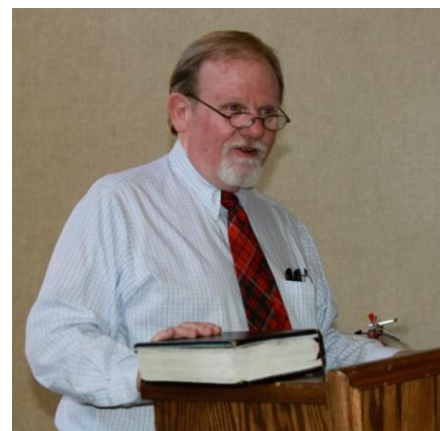
Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men." Titus 3:4-8

The word for "maintain" in the Greek means "to practice diligently". As we walk with the Lord, it is important to remember that we must be diligent in good works. Maintenance doesn't refer to a one time or occasional occurrence. Maintenance refers to consistency in action. Note that doing so is good and profitable us. God blesses us in our good works. To be clear, we aren't saved by them. Our salvation is through faith in Christ alone. However, God blesses us in our obedience. God also uses our obedience to be a blessing to others.

As you walk with the Lord today, remember that He is faithful and will complete the good work He has begun in you (Phil. 1:6). He is faithful to give you strength and success in obedience. *But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."* James 4:6-10.

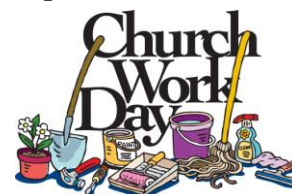
Be encouraged and strengthened by the good work He is doing in and through you, knowing that it is not of you, but from Him alone. Give thanks to God for the fruits and outworking of faith that is in your life and the lives of fellow saints. Encourage each other with the Scriptures, reading together, praying together, being reminded to follow His commands and instruction. Walk diligently with the Lord, that He would receive all the glory.

Reformation OC Conference 2011





Please note: The Wednesday night before Thanksgiving there will be no youth group.



Article Title

To view column breaks, section breaks, and other formatting marks, on the **Home** tab, in the **Paragraph** group, click the paragraph mark icon.

Our activity for November is a youth work day on November 12th from 9am -2pm.

We will meet @ the church @ 9 and will go to homes and work on jobs for members of the church. Please contact the Doeblers if you're interested in participating in this event.

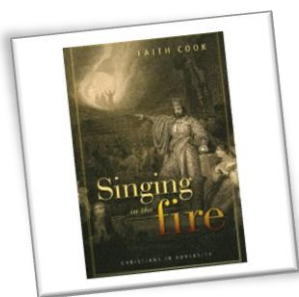
Mary's Book Review

by Mary Montague

SINGING IN THE FIRE

By: Faith Cook

(Continued on page 4)



This is the book cover. Please check out Amazon.com or our church library for a copy.

The title suggests martyrdom, and although it begins with the story of Christians burned at the stake for refusing to renounce their faith, most of the book tells of the lives of men and women and even a child who went to their deaths joyfully facing many

other forms of great pain and suffering and loss. The title comes from an incident in which Susannah Spurgeon, wife of Charles Spurgeon, during a period of prolonged illness, while lying in bed by the hearth, heard in the crackling fire what sounded

much like melodious bird song. In her words:

The fire was letting loose the imprisoned music from the old oak's most inward heart! ... Ah, thought I, when the fire of affliction draws songs of praise from us, then indeed are we purified, and our God is glorified ... Singing in the fire! Yes!

This book, subtitled "Christians in Adversity" is not one narrative, but a collection of short and inspiring biographies. The individuals include some well-known preachers, and missionaries as well as some you are less likely to recognize. But all are truly remarkable and admirable for their zeal, for their devotion and their strength and determination in facing all manner of adversities. The people Cook writes about overcame great problems and persevered in the face of unbelievable opposition, political, cultural, economic suffering and physical afflictions, but all exhibited an unshakable love of God and rock solid faith in their devotion to their Lord and Savior, and in their unyielding faith inspired many and led great numbers of others to salvation.

Example: The story of Wang Ming-Dau, a missionary imprisoned by the Chinese Communists, hearing that his wife was in danger finally gave in and signed a false confession in order to obtain his freedom. But he was so troubled by what he had done, that he went back and

confessed to his lie and was immediately returned to prison, and took comfort in the Scriptures, as in Micah 7:9 "Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise....I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He pleadeth my cause." He endured and although often ill and mistreated never again wavered.

Reading this book was a humbling experience and I hope to recall some of these warriors for the faith the next time I am tempted to feel sorry for myself or waiver in my faith. It is a small paper back of less than 200 pages, a good book for a short read, as each chapter is complete in itself. I will leave it in the church library should anyone wish to borrow it.

Heidelberg Catechism

Q: What is my only comfort in life and in death? That I am not my own, but belong - body and soul, in life and in death to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.

A: He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven: in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.

Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him."

