

GLEANINGS

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WHEN DOES GOD REQUIRE GOOD WORKS?

In Philippians 2:12-13, Paul counsels the members of the church at Philippi to continue to work out their salvation with good works like a farmer working out a crop. *“¹²Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.”* Any farmer will tell you that you cannot begin to work your corn until you have corn. Neither can you begin to work out your salvation until you have salvation. Then, if you ask God to help you, His Spirit will give you the will to do the good works that He desires you to do so that your actions are according to His good purpose.

In Paul’s letter to the members of the church at Corinth (1st Corinthians 3:11-15), he uses the example of a carpenter building a house to describe building a life that is pleasing to God. *“¹¹For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. ¹⁴If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.* All God requires in order to receive that foundation is to ask that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ pay the sin debt each of us owes. If you desire to build a life that is pleasing to God, you begin your good works as soon as the Lord has given you your salvation. If you build your life correctly (gold, silver, and precious stones) it will stand up under God’s test when you get to the reward seat.