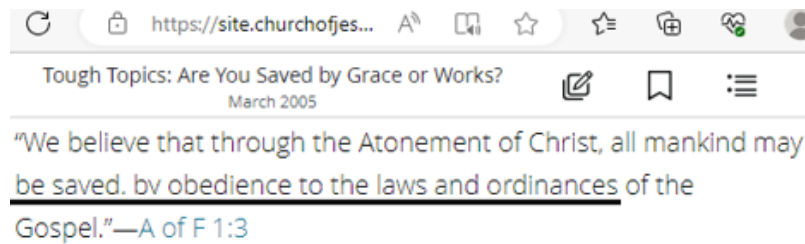


## Which Gospel Are You Under?



- *What are these laws and ordinances? The 4<sup>th</sup> article of faith tells us some of them but leaves out other necessary ordinances such as the endowment ceremony and being sealed to your spouse.*

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Tough Topics: Are You Saved by Grace or Works?  
March 2005



Heavenly Father wants all of His children to return to Him. The help or strength He gives us through the love of Jesus Christ is called grace. The things we must do are called works.

- *These laws, ordinances, and outward actions are referred to as “works.”*

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To gain eternal life, we need both grace and works. A Christian author, C. S. Lewis, compared grace and works to the blades of a pair of scissors. Both are necessary. To ask

- *Both works and grace are prerequisites to qualify for eternal life.*

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the Lord’s forgiveness is another example of grace. But before He will forgive us, we must repent—that’s our part, our works.

- *God will NOT forgive us and we will NOT receive eternal life until we have done the required **works**.*

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If your friends ask, “Does your church believe you are saved by grace or works?” you could say, “We believe that we are saved by grace after all we can do (see 2 Ne. 25:23). We don’t earn salvation. Heavenly Father and the Savior will bless us with eternal life, through Their grace, if we do our part. They

- *We must do the required works before we can qualify for the choicest blessing of eternal life.*

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**One way to summarize the LDS gospel: No Temple Works = No Eternal Life**

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## What are the works that we must to qualify for eternal life?

- Tithe: give 10% of your income specifically to the LDS Church
- Baptized specifically into the LDS Church (baptism into other churches does not count)
- The Endowment Ceremony ordinances
- Sealed to your spouse in the temple
- Consistently wear your sacred undergarments
- Abide by the Word of Wisdom – no coffee, tea or alcohol
- Receive the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods (for males)
- Other works are required as well

These are all works that you **MUST** first do before you can receive eternal life and live with God forever in his kingdom. ***The equation is: Grace + Works = Eternal Life***

General Authority Dallin Oaks gave a talk called, “Repentance and Change.” Here is a quote from him: “Practices must be changed by those who wish to **qualify** for God’s choicest blessings...The gospel plan is based on individual responsibility...***The plan of the father and the savior is based on individual choice and individual effort.***”

- The choicest blessing anyone can receive is eternal life. This is something you must qualify for. What does your qualification for eternal life depend on? Your own choices and your own effort... also know as: your works.

General Authority Brad Wilcox gave a talk called, “His Grace Is Sufficient.” But the one thing he never tells us is this: What exactly is God’s grace sufficient for? The impression he leaves us with is this: The grace of God enables/empowers us to do the required works in order to receive eternal life. You have to do your works, then you will receive eternal life and live in the presence of God. Another way to say this is: ***you have to work for/earn your eternal life.***

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## What did Jesus and his apostles teach?

*John 3:16 & 18* ***“Whoever believes in him (Jesus) shall not perish but have eternal life...Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”***

- If you believe in Jesus, you will receive eternal life. If you don’t you will be condemned and not receive eternal life.

*Matthew 7:21* ***“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”*** (This begs the question: what is the will of the Father?)

*John 6:40* ***“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life.”***

- Only those who do the Father's will can enter into his kingdom and receive eternal life. The Father's will is to believe in Jesus.
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*Ephesians 2:8-9* "For it is **by grace** you have been saved, through faith—and **this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works**, so that no one can boast."

- Only those who have faith in Christ will be saved. Those who do not have faith will not be saved. The necessary condition of faith implies that this verse is talking about eternal life/living in the presence of God, not general salvation/immortality. It is saying that by grace and through faith/trust in Jesus alone that we can receive eternal life...and NOT by our own works and effort.

*Romans 6:23* "For the wages of sin is death, but **the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**"

- Eternal life is gift of God. Think of a birthday party. You get gifts from friends and family. One friend holds out a present to you and says, "Before I give you this gift, you have to do 100 pushups, then I will give you your gift." You are going to look at your friend and think, "First of all, it's my birthday and I don't feel like doing any pushups. Secondly, that's no longer a gift. Anything that has obligations or required works that I must perform is not gift. In order for something to be truly classified as a gift, the only condition is that you must choose to accept it for what it is. That is what a free gift is. And according to God's Word: eternal life is a free gift.

*Titus 3:3-5* "At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, **he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.**"

- Our righteous deeds and works do not play any role in whether or not we are saved. It is ALL about the mercy and grace of Jesus. Not our own works.
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*Romans 4:3-6* "What does Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.**" Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their **faith is credited as righteousness.** David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom **God credits righteousness apart from works.**"

- In verse 4, Paul distinguishes a gospel of grace from a gospel of works. If we are required to work for salvation and righteousness, then that would be wages due and NOT a gift from God.
- Jesus is the only person who perfectly fulfilled the Old Covenant by keeping all 613 laws. He alone is perfectly righteous. And if we have sincere faith/trust in Jesus and HIS works, HIS

perfect life and HIS atoning sacrifice, then God will give us that perfect righteousness as a gift APART FROM WORKS. We don't work for our own righteousness. We trust in the righteousness of Christ and then all of our sin stained garments are covered and forgiven by the blood and perfect righteousness of Jesus.

Romans 3:27-28 *"Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? **The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith.** For we maintain that a person is **justified by faith apart from the works** of the law."*

- When we stand before God on judgement day, it will not be our works that justify us and get us into the presence of God. It is by faith alone, and not of works.

Romans 11:5-6 *"So too, at the present time there is a remnant **chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.**"*

- This is the true gospel of grace. If even 1 work is required for us to be saved and receive eternal life, we have fallen from grace and are under a gospel of works.

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**Galatians 1:6-8** *"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the **grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— which is really no gospel at all.** Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. **But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse!**"*

- Paul warns us to be on guard for deceptive doctrines and different gospels. He even goes as far to say that any gospel other than the one true gospel of grace is a false and CURSED gospel!

All of this is NOT to say that Christians can just say a prayer, say "Jesus is my home boy" and then continue living in their sin (James 2). Works are absolutely important and we ought to obey the commands of Christ...but works are not how we receive eternal life. Our works simply demonstrate our love and devotion for Jesus. *John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commands."*

True faith in Jesus will always produce good works. "It is grace alone that saves, but true grace will never be alone." Meaning that if someone truly has put their faith and trust in Jesus, their life will show it and they will strive to obey his commands. But not in order to try and qualify for eternal life and forgiveness. They strive to obey God's commands BECAUSE they have already received eternal life and forgiveness.

***Below is an equation that is in accordance with the New Testament:***

***Grace + Nothing = Eternal Life + Works***

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**Which gospel are you under: *The true gospel of grace?*  
*Or a cursed gospel of works?***