

Good Intentions Vs Good Works

Good Intentions Vs Good Works

- Have you ever started out doing something you thought was good only to have it blow up in your face?
- Have you ever planned (and even begun) a project, intending to complete it, and then never got around to finishing it?

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- Matt. 21:28-31 - “But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, “Son, go, work today in my vineyard.” 29 He answered and said, “I will not,” but afterward he regretted it and went. 30 Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, “I go, sir,” but he did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?’ They said to Him, ‘The first.’”

The Outcomes Of Good Intentions Are Not Always Good

Judges 8:22-27 - “Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, ‘Rule over us, both you and your son, and your grandson also; for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.’ 23 But Gideon said to them, ‘I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you.’ 24 Then Gideon said to them, ‘I would like to make a request of you, that each of you would give me the earrings from his plunder.’ For they had gold earrings, because they were Ishmaelites. 25 So they answered, ‘We will gladly give them.’ And they spread out a garment, and each man threw into it the earrings from his plunder. 26 Now the weight of the gold earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred shekels of gold, besides the crescent ornaments, pendants, and purple robes which were on the kings of Midian, and besides the chains that were around their camels’ necks. 27 Then Gideon made it into an ephod and set it up in his city, Ophrah. And all Israel played the harlot with it there. It became a snare to Gideon and to his house.”

The Outcomes Of Good Intentions Are Not Always Good

- Though Gideon's intentions were good, the outcome was bad, and everyone paid for it.
 - Judges 8:33-35 - “So it was, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel again played the harlot with the Baals, and made Baal-Berith their god. 34 Thus the children of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; 35 nor did they show kindness to the house of Gideon in accordance with the good he had done for Israel.”
- How can we match a good work with a good intention?

Consult God Before Acting

- Sometimes we start with the good intention, then afterward try to find ways to justify it.
- Later, if it goes bad, we say: “I know what I did was wrong, but I did it for the right reason.”

Consult God Before Acting

- God's word, when read objectively, has a way of cutting through all things that cloud issues.
 - Heb. 4:12-13 - "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."

Count The Cost

- Our choices steer us between success and failure.
- Often our determination, or lack of it, sets the decision one way or another.

Count The Cost

- Luke 14:25-33 - “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it -- 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”

Count The Cost

- 1Cor. 9:24-27 - “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”

Count The Cost

- Jephthah's rash vow teaches that God will require the payment.
 - Judges 11:29-40

Don't Play The Hypocrite

- The Bible warns against forgetting or neglecting our purpose.
 - James 1:21-25 - “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

Don't Play The Hypocrite

- Why would someone forget his good intentions?
 - Because it is not comfortable to stay focused daily on the weaknesses he needs to change.
 - Because it is easy to procrastinate.
 - Because real change requires real effort.

Don't Play The Hypocrite

- People with good intentions hear the word of God but do not act on it.
 - Rom. 2:13 - “For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified.”
 - Luke 11:28 - “But He said, ‘More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!’”

Finish The Work

- Any job well worth doing is worth doing well.
 - Ecc. 7:1, 8 - “A good name is better than precious ointment, And the day of death than the day of one's birth... 8 The end of a thing is better than its beginning”
- A task may begin in difficulty, but it will end in joy.
 - Psalm 126:5-6 - “Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. 6 He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.”

Good Intentions Vs Good Works

- I know a number of good, honorable, un-baptized people who have the good intention of being baptized one of these days.
- I know of a number of good, honorable, baptized believers who have the good intention of one day doing good works for the Lord, who are just drifting along until one day comes.
- Who have the good intention of one day being faithful in their attendance and activity, hoping that circumstances will one day make it easy to do so.

Good Intentions Vs Good Works

- Good intentions alone are just that: good intentions.
- Good intentions depend on determination, sincerity, and action in order to become good outcomes.