

Shorthand Sermon on Titus 3:8¹

This is the second of six sermons by Charles Wesley, written shortly after his evangelical awakening, that survive only in copies he composed in the shorthand that he had learned from John Byrom. CW appears to have preached directly from the shorthand manuscript. These sermons were inaccessible, even to most scholars, until an expansion of the shorthand was published by Thomas R. Albin and Oliver A. Beckerlegge in 1987.²

John Byrom’s shorthand is constructed of consonant sounds, with vowel markers; though the latter are often omitted when assumed to be obvious. It also frequently uses single letters for entire words, abbreviations for phrases, and the like. As such, expansion of shorthand texts necessarily involves varying degrees of interpretation and hypothetical renderings.³ Since the entire sermon that follows is in shorthand, we do *not* enclose each line or paragraph in double square brackets “[[]],” as we do for brief shorthand additions to longhand texts. But when more than one expansion might make sense, the letters indicated by the shorthand are given, enclosing the remainder of our suggested expansion in single brackets “[].” When the expansion is more tentative, a question mark is included within the brackets “[?]”.

While there is no title given in the original manuscript, CW referred to this sermon in his MS Journal as “on good works.” Its opening section is composed of extended extracts from two *Homilies* of the Church of England that deal with this topic.

On the inside cover of the booklet containing this shorthand manuscript CW recorded a longhand list of dates and places where he preached the sermon:

St. Anthony’s Dec. 21, 1738
at Islington, twice . . [i.e., also Dec. 21, 1738]
Kensington Jan. 14, 1739
St. Katherine’s Mar. 4, 1739

The manuscript containing this sermon survives at the Methodist Archive and Research Centre (MA 1977/597/7). The transcription which follows is our expansion of the shorthand, which differs on a few occasions from that of Albin & Beckerlegge. We focus on CW’s final text—ignoring any text ~~struck out~~ and replaced by CW. We also indicate the page transitions (in **red** font) of the original manuscript.

¹This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: Sept. 27, 2024.

²Thomas R. Albin and Oliver A. Beckerlegge (eds.). *Charles Wesley’s Earliest Evangelical Sermons: Six Shorthand Manuscript Sermons Now for the First Time Transcribed from the Original* (Ilford: Wesley Historical Society, 1987), 25–36.

³See Timothy Underhill, “John Byrom’s Shorthand: An Introduction,” *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 104 (2008): 61–91.

I[n] N[omine] D[ei]¹

Titus 3:8²

“This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.”

St. Paul in this, as in all his other epistles, having first laid the foundation of faith in Christ Jesus, goes on to build the superstructure of good works. He first preaches justification by faith only, and then presses the consequence, namely, of holiness and a good life. “After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards us appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. . . . that being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”³ Then he proceeds, “This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.” This is the method he prescribes to Titus, and in him, to every preacher of the gospel. First we are to insist that a man is justified—that is, forgiven and accounted righteous—by grace only through faith, exclusive of all works and righteousness of his own. Then, that he is to evidence this justification by universal obedience; by continually exercising himself unto godliness, by expressing the whole mind that was in Christ Jesus.

In my present discourse I shall endeavour to follow the apostle’s direction, and having explained the nature of faith and works, shall exhort you first to believe in God, and then to be careful to maintain good works.

[I.] What the true Christian faith is, and what the works that spring from it, I shall declare in the words of our own excellent Church, who thus expresses herself in her Homilies.⁴

Faith is taken in Scripture two ways. There is one faith which is called a dead faith, which bringeth not forth good works, but is dead, barren, and unfruitful. [...] And this faith is a persuasion in man’s heart whereby he knoweth there is a God, and agreeth to all truths maintained in Holy Scripture. And this is not properly called faith. [...] Forasmuch as faith without works is dead, it is not now faith, as a dead body is not a man. This faith, therefore, is not the sure and substantial faith which saveth sinners.

Another faith there is in Scripture which is not idle, unfruitful, and dead, but worketh by love. [p. 2] And as the other vain faith is called dead, so may this be called a

¹“In the Name of God.”

²Orig., “3:38”; a slip by CW/

³Titus 3:4–7.

⁴I.e., *Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches in the Time of the late Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory; and now Thought fit to be Reprinted by Authority from the King’s Most Excellent Majesty* (Oxford: Thomas Guy, 1683). CW begins abridging (and mildly rewording at places) Homily IV: “A Short Declaration of the True, Lively, and Christian Faith,” which begins on p. 19. We have indicated elisions longer than a word or two.

quick and lively faith. And this is not only the common belief of the Articles of our faith, but it is also a sure trust and confidence of the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and a steadfast hope of all good things to be received at God's hand. [...] This is the true, lively, and unfeigned Christian faith, and is not in the mouth and outward profession only, but it liveth and stirreth inwardly in the heart. And this faith is not without hope and trust in God, nor without the love of God and of our neighbour, nor without the fear of God, nor without the desire to hear God's word and to follow the same in eschewing evil and doing gladly all good works.

This faith is the sure ground and foundation of the benefits we ought to look for, and trust to receive of God; a certificate and sure looking for them. [...] And nothing so commendeth good men unto God as this assured faith and trust in him. [...]

This faith doth not lie dead in the heart, but is lively and fruitful in bringing forth good works (but without it can no good works be done that shall be acceptable and pleasing to God). [...] As the light cannot be hid, but will show itself; so a true faith cannot be kept secret, but when occasion is offered it will break out and show itself by good works. [...] It is no dead, vain, or unfruitful thing; but a thing of perfect virtue, of wonderful operation or working and strength, bringing forth all good motions and good works.⁵

A man may easily deceive himself and fancy that he by faith knoweth God, loveth him, feareth him, and belongeth to him, when in very deed he doth nothing less. For the trial of all this thing is a godly and Christian life. He that feeleth his heart set to seek God's honour, and studieth to know the will and commandments of God, and to frame himself thereunto; and leadeth not his life after the desires of his own flesh, but setteth his mind to serve God for his own sake; and for his sake also to love and to do good to every man; such a man may well rejoice in God, perceiving by his life that he unfeignedly hath the right knowledge of God, a lively faith, a steadfast hope, a true and unfeigned love and fear of God. But he that giveth himself to live after his own sensual mind and pleasure clearly deceives himself, and seeth not his own heart, if he thinketh that he either knoweth God, loveth him, feareth him, or trusteth in him. [...] [p. 3]

Christ himself saith the tree is known by the fruit. Therefore let us do good works and thereby declare our faith to be the lively Christian faith; adding to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. So shall we show indeed that we have the very lively Christian faith, and may so both certify our conscience the better that we be in the right faith, and confirm other men.

If these fruits do not follow, we do but mock God, and deceive ourselves and others. We may bear the name of Christians but we do lack the true faith that doth belong thereunto, for the true faith doth ever bring forth good works. As St. James saith, "Show me thy faith by thy works." Thy deeds and works must be an open testimonial of thy faith. Otherwise thy faith, being without good works, is but the devil's faith, the faith of the wicked, a phantasy of faith, and not the true Christian faith. And like as the devils and evil men be nothing the better for counterfeit faith, but it is unto them the more cause of damnation; so they that be Christians and have received the knowledge of God and of

⁵The last sentence is CW's distillation of Part II of Homily IV, as found on p. 23.

Christ's merits, and yet live idly without good works, thinking the name of a naked faith to be either sufficient for them, or else setting their minds upon vain pleasures of this world, do live in sin, not bringing forth the fruits that belong to such an high profession. Upon such presumptuous persons must needs remain the great vengeance of God, and eternal punishment in hell. Therefore as you profess the name of Christ, let no such phantasy or imagination of faith at any time beguile you. But be sure of your faith. Try it by your living. Look upon the fruits that come of it. Mark the increase of love and charity by it towards God and your neighbour, and so shall you perceive it to be a true and lively faith. If you feel and perceive such a faith in you, rejoice in it, and be diligent to maintain it, and keep it still in you. Let it be daily increasing, more and more by well working, and so shall you be sure that you please God by this faith, and at length come to him and receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your soul.⁶

Our Church's doctrine concerning works is as follows:⁷

Without faith can no good work be done, acceptable and pleasing to God. "For as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself," saith our Saviour Christ, "except it abide in the vine, so cannot you except you abide in me. [p. 4] I am the vine, and you are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, he bringeth forth much fruit. For without me ye can do nothing." And St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans saith, "Whatsoever work is done without faith, it is sin." Faith giveth life to the soul; and they be as much dead to God that lack faith, as they be to the world whose bodies lack souls. Without faith all that is done of us is but dead before God, although the work seem never so gay and glorious before man. Even as the picture is but a dead representation of the thing itself, so are the works of all unfaithful persons before God. They be but shadows and shows of lively good things, and not good and lively things indeed. For true faith doth give life to the works; and out of such faith come good works that be very good indeed; but without faith no work is good before God.

We must set no good work before faith, nor think that before faith a man may do any good works. For such works, although they seem unto men to be praiseworthy, yet indeed they be but vain and not allowed before God. They be as the course of a horse that runneth out of the way, which taketh great pains, but to no purpose. Let no man, therefore, reckon upon his good works before his faith: whereas faith was not, good works were not. [...] Where faith is not the foundation there is no good work, what building soever we make. There is one good work, in the which be all good works, that is faith which worketh by love. If thou hast it thou hast the ground of all good works. [...] But without this faith he that hath the virtues hath them not, but only the names and shadows of them. All the life of them that lack the true faith is sin; and nothing is good without him who is the author of goodness. Where he is not, there is only feigned virtue, although it be in the best works. [...]

⁶The final three paragraphs come from Part III of Homily IV, pp. 25–27.

⁷This second extended extract is from Parts I–II of Homily V, "A Sermon of Good Works Annexed unto Faith," *Certain Sermons* (1683), 27–29.

You shall find indeed many which have not the true faith, and yet as it appeareth, they flourish in good works of mercy. You shall find them full of pity, compassion, and given to justice. And yet for all that they have no fruit of their works, because the chief work lacketh. For when the Jews asked of Christ what they should do to work good works, he answered, “This is the work of God, to believe in him whom he sent.” So that he called faith the work of God. And as soon as a man hath faith, immediately he shall flourish in good works; for faith of itself is full of good works, and nothing is good without faith. [...] Faith may not be naked without good works, for then it is no true faith; and when it is adjoined to works, yet it is above the works. For as men, that be very men indeed, first have life and after be nourished; so must our faith in Christ go before, [p. 5] and after that be nourished with good works. And life may be without nourishment, but nourishment cannot be without life. A man must needs be nourished by good works; but first he must have faith. He that doth good deeds, yet without faith, he hath no life. I can show a man that by faith without works lived and came to heaven. The thief which was hanged when Christ suffered, did believe only, and the most merciful God justified him. And because no man shall say again, that he lacked time to do good works, for else he would have done them: truth it is, and I will not contend therein, but this I will surely affirm, that faith only saved him. If he had lived and not regarded faith and the works thereof, he should have lost his salvation again. But this is what I say, that faith by itself saved him, but works never justified any man. [...]

What manner of works they be which spring out of true faith, and lead faithful men unto everlasting life, cannot be known so well as by our Saviour Christ himself, who being asked by the ruler, “What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” answered, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” [...] By which words Christ declared that the laws of God be the very way that doth lead to everlasting life [...]. So that this is to be taken for a most true lesson, taught by Christ’s own mouth, that the works of the moral commandments of God be the very true works of faith, which lead to the blessed life to come.⁸

Such is the doctrine of our excellent and truly apostolical church. And you cannot now but own the infinite importance of being well assured that you have the true faith, even that sure and substantial faith which saveth sinners, and is (to repeat the words of the Homily) “not only the common belief of the Articles of our faith, but also a true trust and confidence of the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; and a steadfast hope of all good things to be received at God’s hand, a certificate and sure looking for them.”

[II.1] Examine yourselves, my brethren, whether ye be in this faith. If you are not, all your good works are vain, and like a building without a foundation. And you may easily deceive yourselves herein, as I and thousands besides have done. It is easy to say and think that you believe; but you must feel it. The true faith is to be felt “and is not in the mouth and outward profession only, but liveth and stirreth inwardly in the heart.” So saith the Church. And saith not the Scripture the same: “If thou shalt believe in thine heart [p. 6] thou shalt be saved, for with the

⁸The final paragraph is the opening section of Part II of Homily V.

heart man believeth unto righteousness.”⁹ Hence it evidently appears that the faith which is unto righteousness, or true justifying faith, is of the heart, not of the head. And he who can deny, much more he who can ridicule a faith which is to be felt, demonstrates that his faith is false, as sure as the word of God is true.

[2.] Further, if you think the apostle’s advice unnecessary; that you need not examine yourself whether you be in the faith, but take it for granted and make no doubt but you are; this too is an infallible proof that you are not. He that never doubted never believed, but the god of this world hath blinded his eyes, and deluded him with a faith false and counterfeit and diabolical like his own. The reason whereof is this: No man’s faith is perfect at first, but accompanied—or rather assaulted and tried—by many doubts and fears springing from the evil heart of unbelief. Which doubts are not wholly dissipated and chased away till the believer is come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.¹⁰ Whosoever then hath not experienced these doubtings, he hath never begun to fight the good fight of faith,¹¹ but he is easy and satisfied about his state. He doubts not of his having faith, or rather he thinks not at all about it. His goods are therefore in peace, because the strong man armed still keeps his palace.¹²

[3.] You were not born with faith. Where then and when and how did you come by it? Learned you it from books or men? By reasoning upon what you have read or heard? Hereby you might acquire a human but not a divine faith. You can demonstrate, as may every thinking man, that Christianity must be of God. But if you think you therefore believe, you deceive your own souls, and the truth is not in you. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.”¹³ Faith is the gift of God.¹⁴ No man can call Jesus the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.¹⁵ Flesh and blood cannot reveal it unto him.¹⁶ Faith standeth not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.¹⁷ It must be wrought by a stroke of omnipotence. It is the Holy Ghost alone who purifies the heart by faith.¹⁸

[4.] If this seems strange or new to any of you, that faith is the effect of almighty power; if any among you does even assent to this divine truth, “faith is the gift of God,” but as to a truth he had not heard or considered before; oh let not that man think he hath faith. He may most surely have it if, being convinced of unbelief, and utterly renouncing his own works and righteousness, both what he hath done and what he is, he humbly and meekly [p. 7] waits to receive this unspeakable gift at the hands of God. But he hath it not yet, unless he is sensible and

⁹Rom. 10:10.

¹⁰See Eph. 4:13.

¹¹See 1 Tim. 6:12.

¹²See Luke 11:21.

¹³1 Cor. 2:14.

¹⁴See Eph. 2:8.

¹⁵See 1 Cor. 12:3.

¹⁶See Matt. 16:17.

¹⁷See 1 Cor. 2:5.

¹⁸See Acts 15:8–9.

conscious of its having been wrought in his soul by him who made it.

[5.] That you may the better prove your own self, and examine whether you be in the faith, I shall mention the marks or effects of true faith as plainly laid down in Scripture, and beseech you by the mercies of God,¹⁹ by the concern you ought to have of your own heart, to consider and try whether these effects of faith be in you.

[i.] The first of these is reconciliation with God, attested by an inward peace of conscience, even the peace of God which passeth all understanding,²⁰ bequeathed unto us by our parting Lord.²¹ This immediately springs from a sense of forgiveness—faith, pardon and peace being so linked together and intermingled that neither men nor devils can separate them: “Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1), “by whom we have now received the atonement” (verse 11). We have now received it, and by faith the first moment we believed in Jesus “in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Eph. 1:7). The Scripture everywhere speaks of forgiveness as a present grace (not as something to be looked for at the hour of death only) and describes it as the inseparable effect of faith. So that whosoever hath faith, hath forgiveness; whosoever hath not forgiveness, hath not faith.

[ii.] A second effect of faith is joy. For so said the apostle speaking in the person of all believers: “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.”²² Thus again verse ten, “When we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”²³ This joy we have in believing. And he who contradicts the Scripture by denying it only proves himself to be without that faith from which it flows. He is that stranger who intermeddleth not with his joy.²⁴ Not being born anew of God, he cannot see that kingdom of God, which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.²⁵

[iii.] A third effect of faith is liberty, not only from the guilt, but likewise from the power of sin. The language of every true believer is this: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”²⁶ This glorious effect of faith, liberty from sin, is fully and strongly asserted throughout Romans 6: “Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace.”²⁷ “Ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine [p. 8] which was delivered you. Being then” (namely, when you did first

¹⁹See Rom. 12:1.

²⁰See Phil. 4:7.

²¹See John 14:27.

²²Rom. 5:1–3.

²³Rom. 5:10.

²⁴See Prov. 14:10.

²⁵See Rom. 14:17.

²⁶Rom. 8:1–2.

²⁷Rom. 6:14.

believe with the heart) “made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”²⁸

Hereby my brethren ye may try yourselves whether you be in the faith. If the Son hath made you free, then are you free indeed.²⁹ Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;³⁰ and this Spirit is received by the hearing of faith.³¹ If Jesus is by faith your Jesus, then hath he saved you from your sins. He that believeth is born of God,³² and whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God.³³

[iv.] A fourth effect of true saving faith is love. These two are inseparable. Faith works by love.³⁴ And he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.³⁵ But whosoever truly believes, has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him (Rom. 5:5). Having not seen the Lord Jesus, he loves him; in whom, though now he sees him not, yet believing, he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory.³⁶

This love to God he expresses and evidences by his love to man; seeing everyone that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him (1 John 5:1). And hereby we know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.³⁷ We love them as Christ loved us, and are ready to lay down our lives for them.³⁸

My brethren, have you this genuine fruit of faith? Do you love the Lord Jesus in sincerity?³⁹ Does the love of Christ constrain you,⁴⁰ so that you desire only to spend and to be spent for him and for your brethren?⁴¹ Unless you find your hearts drawn out after Christ by an affection infinitely stronger, you have not that faith which works by love. You do not yet believe in Christ.

[v.] I shall give you a fifth mark of faith in the words of the beloved disciple. “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself” (1 John 5:10). “And hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit” (4:13). So testifies the great apostle speaking to those for whom there is no condemnation, who are in Christ Jesus;⁴²

²⁸Rom. 6:17–18.

²⁹See John 8:36.

³⁰See 2 Cor. 3:17.

³¹See Gal. 3:2.

³²See 1 John 5:1.

³³See 1 John 3:9.

³⁴See Gal. 5:6.

³⁵See 1 John 4:8.

³⁶See 1 Pet. 1:8.

³⁷See 1 John 3:14.

³⁸See 1 John 3:16.

³⁹See Eph. 6:24.

⁴⁰See 2 Cor. 5:14.

⁴¹See 2 Cor. 12:15.

⁴²See Rom. 8:1.

that is, who have the true saving faith. “Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”⁴³ And in the same eighth chapter to the Romans, he speaks no less than fifteen times of this Spirit as the common privilege of all believers. And they that explain away these texts explain away the whole Scripture, and may as well cast off all revelation at once. Whatsoever they be, it maketh no matter to them. They be blind leaders of the blind,⁴⁴ and give God the lie no less than his church, who deny the Holy Ghost to be the common [p. 9] privilege of all believers to the end of the world.

But I trust, my brethren, ye are not of those who thus grieve the Spirit of God,⁴⁵ contradicting and blaspheming.⁴⁶ I trust that many of you have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God; that you might know the things which are freely given to you of God,⁴⁷ being sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of your inheritance.⁴⁸

But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.⁴⁹ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they and they only are the sons of God.⁵⁰ Are you thus led, not by your own, not by the spirit of the world, but by the Spirit of God in all things? Hath God sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts?⁵¹ Doth he or hath he borne witness with your spirit that ye are the children of God?⁵² Do you live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit?⁵³ Or do these scriptures appear foolishness unto you? Or do you imagine them not to be to you?

You may [know] this blessed Spirit, if as yet you know him not. May he now fall upon you, at least in his convincing power, and reprove you of sin—because not having received him, ye believe not on the name of the only begotten Son of God!⁵⁴

[vi.] I should only mention one more mark of faith, without which all the others are fallacious and wrought by that lying spirit of delusion who continually opposes the work of God.⁵⁵ This great and outward and visible mark of faith is obedience or an holy life, as appears from the whole tenor of Scripture. I shall first allege that place of St. John in his first epistle, chapter two, “Hereby we know that we know him” (that is, believe in him) “if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the

⁴³Rom. 8:15–16.

⁴⁴See Matt. 15:14.

⁴⁵See Eph. 4:30.

⁴⁶See Acts 13:45.

⁴⁷See 1 Cor. 2:12.

⁴⁸See Eph. 1:13–14.

⁴⁹See Rom. 8:9.

⁵⁰See Rom. 8:14.

⁵¹See Gal. 4:6.

⁵²See Rom. 8:16.

⁵³See Gal. 5:25.

⁵⁴See John 3:18.

⁵⁵See 2 Cor. 2:11.

truth is not in him. But he that keepeth his commandments, in him verily is the love of God perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him.”⁵⁶

It is evident from hence that without obedience all our pretensions to faith are vain. Without obedience, the inward marks of faith are mere phantasm or the effect of diabolical illusion; as on the contrary where the inward marks are not, such as peace, love, joy in the Holy Ghost, all outward obedience is merely formal and pharisaical. Holiness is the test and evidence, no less than the end of faith. We are God’s workmanship created through faith in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:10). The very design of our Lord’s coming was to purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.⁵⁷ To make us holy in all manner of conversation.⁵⁸ And to set us an example that we should tread in his steps who went about doing good.⁵⁹ [p. 10]

[III.1.] He therefore that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk as he walked.⁶⁰ This is a faithful saying, and these things his apostles affirmed constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.⁶¹ This was the second thing I proposed exhorting you to, namely, that you might be careful to maintain (or as it should rather be translated) to excel in good works. I have already done it in some measure. But it can never be pressed upon you too much, seeing by this alone you can declare, and evidence to yourselves and others, that you have the true faith. “For what doth it profit, my brethren, that a man say he hath faith, and hath not works?”⁶² Can a faith which is without works save him? Can an idle, dead and devilish faith avail for his salvation? Of the true faith he hath none at all. He only says he has it. For unless he shows it by his works, he has certainly no faith to show.

[2.] In the sight of God we are justified by faith only without works.⁶³ But in the sight of men we are justified by works and not by faith only.⁶⁴ By faith alone we are counted righteous before God, but by works alone we are declared righteous before men. These w[orks] of r[ighteousness] verily we are taught by the great asserter of justification by faith only, St. Paul, who in the midst of his discourse upon this head, inserts the necessity of holiness and good works: “What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?”⁶⁵ So the sixth chapter of his epistle to the Romans, which is all an exhortation to an holy life. So in the eighth chapter he several times points out those which are in Christ Jesus, and of whom there is therefore no condemnation, by

⁵⁶1 John 2:3–5.

⁵⁷See Titus 2:14.

⁵⁸See 1 Pet. 1:15.

⁵⁹See 1 Pet. 2:21; Acts 10:38.

⁶⁰See 1 John 2:6.

⁶¹See Titus 3:8.

⁶²James 2:14.

⁶³See Rom. 3:26, Gal. 2:16.

⁶⁴See James 2:24.

⁶⁵Rom. 6:1–2.

this mark, “who [walk]⁶⁶ not after the flesh but after the Spirit.”⁶⁷

[3.] The same he strongly insists upon in all his epistles, spending the last chapters always in exhortations to all manner of virtuous actions. The sum of all is this: “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him; and established in the faith” (Col. 2:6–7). These two, receiving Christ and walking in him, or faith and obedience, comprehend the whole duty of a Christian and are, and must continue for ever, inseparable. Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him and to none beside, saying, “Whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God,”⁶⁸ and “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.”⁶⁹ “But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”⁷⁰ [p. 11]

[4.] If Christ be given for us, he is likewise given to us. He is formed in our hearts by faith,⁷¹ and lives and reigns in our souls. If Christ is made unto me righteousness, he is, he must be, made unto me sanctification also.⁷² His righteousness is not imputed to me unless I manifest it by righteousness inherent in me. Whom he justifies, them he also sanctifies.⁷³ Having put off the old man they put on the new, which is created unto righteousness and true holiness.⁷⁴ They are good that do good, being conformed both outwardly and inwardly to Christ Jesus, in whom neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.⁷⁵

[5.] By this rule, my brethren, I trust you are resolved to walk, from a full conviction of the absolute, indispensable, eternal need of holiness and a good life. You who do believe, I would more especially exhort that you would not be barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, but abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Christ Jesus unto the glory and praise of God.⁷⁶ God rewardeth every man according to his works,⁷⁷ that the more our works, the more will be our reward. May you therefore improve every talent to the utmost. Having obtained mercy, may you labour more abundantly. Let it be your meat to do the will of your Father.⁷⁸ Let it be your constant employment to serve and relieve your Saviour in his poor distressed members. He gives

⁶⁶Orig., “mark”; a slip by CW.

⁶⁷Rom. 8:1.

⁶⁸1 John 3:10.

⁶⁹Heb. 12:14.

⁷⁰1 John 1:7.

⁷¹See Gal. 4:9, Eph. 3:17.

⁷²See 1 Cor. 1:30.

⁷³Cf. Rom. 8:30.

⁷⁴See Eph. 4:22–24.

⁷⁵See Gal. 6:15–16.

⁷⁶See Phil. 1:9–11.

⁷⁷See Ps. 62:13 (BCP), Rom. 2:6.

⁷⁸See John 4:34.

you now a blessed opportunity. For inasmuch as you do it to one of the least of these his children, you do it unto him.⁷⁹ He himself has assured you that whosoever shall give a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose its reward.⁸⁰ F[reely] and l[iberally] give charity because this is the noblest, as taking in both the body and soul. What you give them is given toward training up so many candidates for eternity,⁸¹ and the lover of little children is now waiting to receive it at your hands. Indeed whatever you do in alms, you should do it unto the Lord and not unto man.⁸² You should see and revere your Saviour in every poor man you ease, and be as ready to relieve him as you would to relieve Christ himself. Is Christ an hungered?⁸³ Give him meat. Is he thirsty? Give him drink. Is he a stranger? Take ye him in. Clothe him when he is naked. Visit him when he is sick. When he is in prison, come ye unto him.⁸⁴ So shall he say unto you when he comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”⁸⁵

Which God grant us all, for the alone merits of his Son Christ Jesus. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, worship and praise, now, henceforth, and evermore. Amen.

Source: Methodist Archive and Research Centre, MA 1977/597/7.

⁷⁹See Matt. 25:40.

⁸⁰See Matt. 10:42.

⁸¹Cf. 1 Tim. 4:8.

⁸²See Col. 3:23.

⁸³The content from “He gives you now ...” through “Is Christ” was inserted by CW on the verso of p. 10 in the manuscript.

⁸⁴See Matt. 25:35ff.

⁸⁵Matt. 5:34.