

DOCTRINE OF DIVINE GOOD

- I. Introduction.
 - A. This doctrine is designed to address the issue of what the directive will of God is for the believer following his Ph₁ salvation.
 - B. Many distortions exist, from the extreme that the believer is not expected to do anything beyond learning the Word of God, to the other extreme that he is just to constantly stay busy.
 - C. The truth lies in between the two extremes, taking into consideration the passages that stress the intake of Bible doctrine, as well as the passages that urge believers to engage in good works. Col. 1:9-10
 - D. Another issue that must be addressed is the reality that while Divine good production begins in the mental attitude, the actual focus is on the overt, visible applications of doctrine.
 - E. The will of God for the believer in time to produce acceptable works should not be confused with the issue of Ph₁ salvation, which does not admit human works, effort, or achievement. Tit. 3:5

- II. Greek vocabulary.
 - A. ἔργον (ergon), generally, work, action or deed; it is used of God's works as well as human duties and occupations.
 - 1. It is used in contrast to rest. Heb. 4:4
 - 2. It is used in contrast to word(s). IJn. 3:18
 - 3. James makes it clear that the emphasis is on the overt production of the believer and not what he thinks or says. Jms. 1:25
 - 4. Therefore, the believer has not fulfilled the will of God until his thoughts and words are complemented by the actions God desires. ITim. 1:5
 - B. ἀγαθός ἔργον (agathos ergon), 14X. good work, good deed. This phrase focuses on the quality of the works as being good, righteous, and acceptable by God's standards.
 - C. καλός ἔργον (kalos ergon), 15X. good work, good deed. This phrase focuses on the fact that our actions are appropriate, noble, and beneficial, meeting some overt need.
 - D. καρπός (karpos), 66X, production, fruit, crops, or harvest. Rom. 15:28
 - 1. Metaphorically, this term denotes that which proceeds or is produced by something else, an effect or result.
 - 2. The reality is that the fruit must be visible in order for one to identify what kind of fruit it is. Matt. 7:16
 - E. While we have previously taught that the Greek noun ἀγάπη (agape-love) can be a synonym for Divine good production, closer examination reveals that this is the motivation for the applications of doctrine and not the applications.
 - F. It should be noted that the terms above are not technical (they do not always refer to Divine good production in every context); in Romans 13:3, the context is law-abiding behavior, which any believer or unbeliever can produce.

- III. Definition and description.
 - A. Divine good production is defined as the application of resident Bible doctrine in the soul by the believer that is in fellowship and being led by God the Holy Spirit.

1. We must emphasize that the fundamentalist movement has generally embraced the fallacious notion that if it is good, God must be in it.
 2. This has resulted in concepts like the “purpose driven life”, which promotes the permissive distortion that if it brings people to the church/God, it’s OK.
 3. The idea that “one should not criticize what God is blessing” implies that numerical growth in a church clearly indicates that God is in favor of anything that is done to achieve success.
 4. Further, in the doctrinal movement there has surfaced another distortion that “if I see it as good, pray about it and God does not shut it down, then it must be His will”.
 5. However, the reality is that believers often engage in operation energy of the flesh and then attempt to classify it as Divine good production. Acts 1:15-26
- B. Divine good production must proceed from the correct internal considerations, and not be motivated by any area of fleshly lust. Matt. 6:1-8
1. In that regard, believers may do wonderful things simply so other believers will be impressed with them and not because they are led by the Holy Spirit.
 2. The pursuit of the details of life under the guise of Divine good production may meet with overt success, but it does not mean that God approves of or will reward such activity. I Tim. 6:5
- C. There are some applications that are made in the mental attitude and verbally; however, the real emphasis of Divine good production is visible, overt application of doctrine.
1. When one observes the Lord’s table, the application is largely mental with a minimal of overt energy expended. I Cor. 11:26
 2. When one is led by the Holy Spirit to encourage another believer verbally, that also qualifies as Divine good production. Heb. 3:13
 3. However, the emphasis of the Word of God is clearly on the quality of the deeds we do; these are what will be evaluated at the Bema seat, not our intentions. II Cor. 5:10; Eph. 6:7-8
 4. Further, Jesus emphasized that our witness to the cosmos must be comprised of the applications that they can see. Matt. 5:16
- D. Each believer must understand that God does not sanction, approve, or reward any activity that is not Divine good, no matter how sacrificial, generous, etc. I Cor. 13:1-3
- E. By definition, the unbeliever cannot produce Divine good since he is unable to learn Bible doctrine, unable to secure and maintain the filling of the Holy Spirit, and truly is unable to please God. Rom. 8:8

IV. Necessary prerequisites for maximum Divine good production.

- A. First and foremost, one must be a believer in Jesus Christ to be qualified positionally to produce Divine good. Jn. 15:3; Eph. 2:10
- B. In fact, a new believer that is being led by the Holy Spirit, regardless of time under doctrine, is capable of producing Divine good since some applications are obvious even to a spiritual novice.
 1. While a believer’s frame of reference can limit his application in certain areas, some things are simple and straightforward. Matt. 7:11a, 10:42
 2. How much doctrine does one have to have in order to apply the golden rule? Matt. 7:12
- C. Ideally, the believer should then be exposed to the correct form of teaching that will produce a proper frame of reference, allowing him to understand what constitutes maximum Divine good production. Rom. 6:17

- D. The consistent teaching of Bible doctrine by the pastor-teacher is designed to instruct each believer in the particulars of his niche, allowing him to identify and exploit opportunities for Divine good production. IITim. 3:16-17; Heb. 12:1
 - E. The believer must be in fellowship to produce Divine good, which is secured only by the grace method of rebound. Jn. 15:4-7; Gal. 5:22; IJn. 1:9
 - F. Once a believer has isolated the sin nature, secured the filling of the Holy Spirit, has the proper motives and understanding, he is able to identify the various opportunities for Divine good production in his niche. Jn. 15:4,7
 - G. In the parable of the soils, the following are necessary components for Divine good production and ultimate growth to maturity. Lk. 8:15
 - 1. Hearing.
 - 2. Intellectual honesty.
 - 3. Positive volition.
 - 4. Tenacity.
 - 5. Patience.
 - H. Interestingly enough, continued associations in violation of the doctrine of separation have an adverse effect on Divine good production. IITim. 2:20-21
 - I. God's grace has and will continue to provide all that is necessary for the positive, motivated believer to maximize his Divine good production. IICor. 9:8
- V. The necessity of Divine good production in Ph₂.
- A. Divine good production is a part of the Divine Decrees from eternity past and thus constitutes a very important part of the plan of God for each believer. Eph. 2:10
 - B. Although believers may volitionally decide not to engage in good works; they are commanded of every believer. IITim. 2:10; Tit. 3:1,8,14
 - C. Our Divine good production is a necessary ingredient in our witness to those on the outside. Matt. 5:16; IPet. 2:12
 - D. Apart from Divine good production, the maturity adjustment is impossible. Lk. 8:15; Col. 1:9-10
 - E. Jesus Christ taught that believers are to focus on every opportunity for Divine good production during the limited time we have on planet earth; Divine good production is impossible after death. Jn. 9:4
 - F. It is interesting to note that the reason for the setting aside of Israel was clearly related to the lack of Divine good production. Matt. 21:33-43; Lk. 13:6
- VI. Hindrances to Divine good production.
- A. In the angelic conflict, it should be evident that Satan is opposed to any activity that brings glory to God; therefore, he will seek to obstruct our applications of Bible doctrine. Eph. 6:12ff
 - B. The sin nature, which generally takes the path of least resistance, is not going to enjoy the suffering and attendant sacrifices necessary to produce Divine good.
 - C. Therefore, STA activity, which destroys fellowship with God, neutralizes the believer in terms of Divine good production. Jn. 15:1ff
 - D. Clearly one cannot apply what he does not know; thus, the lack of a proper frame of reference limits the ability of the believer to understand what application is appropriate or necessary. IITim. 3:17
 - E. The pursuit of the details of life, hampers our Divine good production, saps our spiritual momentum, and may keep us from the maturity adjustment. Matt. 6:24; Lk. 8:14

- F. Divine good production must be distinguished from human good, which involves things done with the wrong motive and/or actions not sanctioned by the Word of God. ICor. 3:12
 - 1. Human good is defined as any activity that is not clearly mandated by the Word of God, which proceeds from human systems of wisdom, and does not glorify God.
 - 2. Human good is characterized by the adjective **worthless** when it is evaluated from the Divine viewpoint. IICor. 5:10
 - 3. The human good of unbelievers is condoned by Satan, the ultimate humanist, as part of his activity to deceive the human race and keep them blinded as to the true issues. IICor. 11:13-15
 - 4. At the Bema seat, all human good will be destroyed by fire and the believer will lose the rewards he could have had for Divine good production. ICor. 3:15
- G. Therefore, all believers should consider what they are doing, why they are doing it, use their time wisely, and seek to limit that which has no eternal value. Eph. 5:16

VII. Divine promises for those that fulfill the mandate for Divine good production.

- A. God will, through His grace, supply all that is necessary for every believer to excel in the various areas of Divine good production. IICor. 9:8-10
- B. Our Divine good production will be the basis for our eternal rewards that are administered at the Bema seat. ICor. 3:12-15
- C. Divine good production will be rewarded with an appropriate increment of SG₃, based on the nature, difficulty, and sacrifice associated with the particular application. Matt. 5:12, 10:41-42; ICor. 3:8; Col. 3:24
- D. Human good, as defined above, will be destroyed and the believer will suffer the loss of the reward that would have come to him for the proper application. ICor. 3:14-15
- E. Since we receive our rewards at the revelation of Jesus Christ, we are exhorted to focus on the importance of SG₃ as part of our motivation to produce Divine good. IPet. 1:13
- F. This focus on eternal rewards was certainly the focus of the great believers of history, as they made the appropriate applications in their niches. Heb. 11:26
- G. There are temporal and eternal blessings promised to those that will persevere in Divine good production during Ph₂.
 - 1. Temporal blessings. Ps. 19:11, 58:11, 127:3; Prov. 22:4, 25:22; Jn. 15:7
 - 2. Eternal blessings. Lk. 6:23; IIJn. 8; Rev. 2:26-27, 3:10

VIII. Concluding observations on the importance of Divine good production.

- A. All believers have many opportunities in their respective niches for Divine good production; the Word of God sets forth the particulars for:
 - 1. Ladies. ITim. 2:10, 5:10; Tit. 2:3-5
 - 2. Men. Tit. 2:2,6
 - 3. The prosperous. ITim. 6:18
 - 4. Young people/children. Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20
 - 5. Parents. Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21
 - 6. Husbands and wives. ICor. 7:4ff; IPet. 3:1-7
 - 7. Employers. Col. 4:1
 - 8. Employees. Col. 3:22ff
 - 9. Pastor-teachers. ITim. 3:1-7; IPet. 5:1-4
 - 10. Deacons. Acts 6:2-3; ITim. 3:8-12
 - 11. Widows. ITim. 5:5-6
 - 12. Those with any sort of authority. IICor. 10:8, 13:10
 - 13. Those under the authority of the ECC and RCC. Rom. 13:1; Heb. 13:17

- B. The pastor-teacher plays an important role in the lives of believers with respect to their understanding.
 1. He is to instruct them as to the appropriate applications. Eph. 4:12
 2. He is to exhort believers to follow through when necessary. Tit. 3:8
 3. He is to set an example by persevering in his niche over the years. Tit. 2:7; IPet 5:3
 4. He is to pray for RC to excel in the matter of Divine good production. Col. 1:10; IIThess. 2:17
- C. Divine good production and God.
 1. God is keenly aware of your niche and your applications. Rev. 2:2,19, 3:15
 2. He cannot overlook or forget Divine good production. Heb. 6:10
 3. He is a fair and impartial judge of our Divine good production. IPet. 1:17
 4. Divine good production glorifies Him in time and the blessing of SG₃ provided to those that produced Divine good will glorify Him in eternity. Matt. 5:16; Jn 15:8; ITim. 1:17
 5. The fact that He will reward all Divine good production should motivate us to persevere in time. ICor. 15:58
- D. The correct attitude toward Divine good production is seen in Titus 2:14
- E. Believers are to spend time considering how they can encourage others to excel in the various areas of Divine good production. Heb. 10:24
- F. In fact, despite all suggestions to the contrary, Divine good production is an infallible standard by which we can correctly evaluate anyone that claims positive volition.
 1. The example of the tree. Lk. 6:43-45
 2. Paul indicates that one's theology is an accurate measuring stick of one's fitness for Divine good production. Tit. 1:16
 3. James declares that your Divine good production is an acid test of your doctrine and positive volition. James 3:13,17
- G. We are exhorted not be become tired of Divine good production, no matter what others may do. Gal. 6:9
- H. Failure to properly orient to doctrine and produce Divine good destines the believer for Divine discipline and eventually the sin unto death. Jn. 15:2,6
- I. Believers in this local church should receive first priority in our applications of Divine good. Gal. 6:10
- J. However, we should be ready, willing, and able to **do good to all men, especially those of the household of the faith.** Gal. 6:10

*...he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit;
for apart from Me you can do nothing.
Jn. 15:5*