



March 5, 2020

Let Your Good Works Shine

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven"
- **(Matthew 5:16)**

We are put here on earth and we are given bodies so we can work to bring more good into existence. We are put here to work, for the image of God within us goes far beyond the grand use of our intellect. Some people talk about God as if he just sits around and does mathematical equations or contemplates some exalted form of truth. But God is an actor. He is one who acts, one who creates. His essence is seen not just in thought, but also in intelligent action that creates good. This is our calling as well, though in a more limited way.

God created us very like himself (in his image), but every one of us is unique. An original, not a copy. We each are made to assume the role of a particular child of God, and our uniqueness ties in with our unique purpose. God has ensured us a special place and purpose, giving us tasks that he specifically wants us to accomplish in our time and in our place. To this end, God also intended that we should have the freedom to love and serve him—the independent power by which we can choose to give ourselves to him, even to the point of death.

Phillips Brooks, in his book *Best Methods of Promoting Spiritual Life*, acknowledges the role of special religious practices, activities, and experiences. But he goes on to emphasize that to limit our spirituality to these is to omit most of our normal life from spiritual living. To promote spiritual life, he says, is not to be more religious where one is already religious:

It is to be religious where he is irreligious now; to let the spiritual force which is in him play upon new activities. How shall he open, for instance, his business life to this deep power? By casting out of his business all that is essentially wicked in it, by insisting to himself on its ideal, of charity or usefulness, on the loftiest conception of every relationship into which it brings him with his fellow man, and by making it not a matter of his own whim or choice, but a duty to be done faithfully because God has called him to it. . . . God chose for him his work, and meant for him to find his spiritual education there.

Brooks closes his sermon with these words: "The Christian finds the hand of Christ in everything, and by the faithful use of everything for Christ's sake, he takes firm hold of that hand of Christ and is drawn nearer and nearer to Himself. That is, I think, the best method of promoting spiritual life."

Practice: *This steady stream of Christian spirituality through our calling, vocation, and ordinary life flows down through the ages. This is your calling as a person. (Q) How is God inviting you to step into it, to set yourselves to learn it, and see its radiant power at work on the "job," where we are? (Q) How will you fill the hours, minutes, and actions from day to day with the appropriate amount of love for God's creation and creating, and then work to produce more of the good he has put in this world?*