

“Love Lifted Me Recovery” - January, 2026
Newsletter for October, November, December, 2025
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www.loveliftedmerecovery.com

Can You Earn Your Way to Heaven by Good Works?

“For **by grace** you have been saved **through faith**, and that **NOT of yourselves**, it is **the gift of God**; **NOT** of works, lest anyone should boast. For **we are His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus **for (for the purpose of) good works**, which God has **PREPARED BEFOREHAND** that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8-10

The Bible teaches that salvation is by FAITH ALONE, when we put our faith in Jesus Christ and His death on the cross where He paid the penalty for our sins, so where do our “good works” come into it? Many people think, **“I’m a good person, surely God will let me into heaven.”** But God’s standard of what is “good” is absolute perfection, and God’s word tells us that **NO ONE is GOOD ENOUGH to get into heaven** on their own merits, by doing good deeds, or keeping the Ten Commandments. Also, **God does not “grade on the curve”** as we do with ourselves. So, what place then do “good works” have in our lives? They are the **PRODUCT** of our salvation, and a **testimony** to the world, to **SHOW** them that we belong to Jesus. Someone once said, “If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?” **Our good works should be evidence to OTHER PEOPLE** that we belong to Jesus Christ. Also, God uses us to help meet the **needs** of His people in the church body. **•Romans 3:23** “For **ALL** have sinned and **COME SHORT** of the glory of God.”

•James 2:10 “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, **and yet offend in ONE POINT**, he is **GUILTY OF ALL.**”

•Titus 3:4-5 “But when **the KINDNESS and the LOVE of God** our Savior toward man appeared, **NOT** by works of righteousness which we have done, but **according to His MERCY He saved us**, by the washing of regeneration (being born again) and renewing of the Holy Spirit.”

•II Corinthians 9:12-13 “For the administration of this service not only **supplies the NEEDS of the saints**, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God.”

•Titus 2:7-8 & 13-14 “In all things **showing yourself** to be a pattern of **GOOD WORKS**; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that the one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say about you.” (Verses 13-14) “And let our people also **learn to maintain GOOD WORKS, to meet urgent NEEDS**, that they may not be unfruitful.”

•Colossians 1:10 “That you may have a walk **worthy** of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every **GOOD WORK.**”

•Matthew 5:16 “Let your light so shine before men, that they may **SEE** your **GOOD WORKS** and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Monthly Evangelistic Outreach to Venice Beach

Saturday, October 4, 2025 - We had a wonderful outreach, and those who showed up to help Tom and me were Kathleen, Felipe, and Ulysses - a small group, but the Lord was with us. Kathleen and I went to the north end of the Boardwalk, and Felipe and Ulysses went to the south end. Tom stayed home to keep us covered in prayer. We had 183 lunches, lots of socks, hygiene/toiletry packets, used and new clothing, shoes, blankets, and carry-all bags for the homeless, and dog food for those who have dogs.

Kathleen and I gave out all our lunches and most of the clothing, shoes, etc. A man named Jonathan got toiletries, a lunch, and a T-shirt and sweatshirt. A young woman named Kay got shoes, a lunch, some pants, a hygiene/toiletry packet, and dog food. She also took several gospel tracts in Spanish, and when others saw we had tracts in Spanish, they asked for some, too. Every lunch has a tract in English, so I try to ask people if they would like another language, and I also gave tracts in Russian and Ukrainian to an elderly woman (not homeless). We also gave a pack of gospel tracts to the men at the Phoenix House, a halfway house for men. Of the homeless people, one man was barefooted, and he got a pair of shoes that fit him perfectly, he also got a lunch, a shirt, and a brand new Bible. Later, Kathleen said, "A man walked up to us like we were J. C. Penny's, and said, 'You guys got any jeans in 34 length?' Sure enough, right on the top - a brand new pair in his exact size!" He said, "Oh, they are my exact size and they are brand new!" and he was so happy. Everyone was very thankful and grateful for the food and things they received, and they were especially happy to get long-sleeved shirts, sweatshirts, and jackets for the colder weather. One man got a sweatshirt in a big size that fit him, and he also liked the embroidered picture of "Grumpy" on the shirt (from Disney's Snow White), because he said he was kind of grumpy himself. Another man (don't know his name, but he dresses like an old Hippie) saw us coming from up on a hill (grassy knoll?) and waved excitedly at us, then came down to meet us. We gave him a lunch and some dog food for his dog, Zilla. Roberto, one of the vendors, saw us and came up and gave me a big hug. I gave him a gospel tract in Spanish, one that he hadn't already seen, as he asks for them every time. Felipe and Ulysses gave out all of their lunches and everything, and not only went to the Boardwalk, but also to the streets of Venice and West Los Angeles, finding homeless people in parking lots and on the street. Felipe is always so good at diligently searching out people to whom he can minister in Jesus' name.. Praise the Lord! We had a great outreach.

Saturday, November 1, 2025 - Praise the Lord! We had a great time down at Venice Beach again, with Tom, Dottie, Felipe, Andrew, Kathleen, Holly (her first time) and Jazul and her kids (their first time). Andrew, Kathleen, Holly and I went to the north end of the Boardwalk, and Felipe, Jazul and her five kids went to the south end. Tom stayed home to keep us covered in prayer. We didn't have enough people to do a third group, but we covered all the areas that we usually cover. We had 183 lunches, lots of socks, toiletry/hygiene packets, used clothing, knit hats, shoes, blankets, and carry-all bags for the homeless. We also had dog food and cat food for homeless people with pets. We saw a few people we knew, but some new people such as Joe, Joan, Joseph, and Jay. We saw Jean, who is 91 years old and lives in her van. We gave her two lunches, a towel and wash cloth, and some crossword puzzle books and an "Our Daily Bread" in large print. We gave out every single lunch, all the clothing, all the toiletry packets, all the dog food and some of the cat food, and all but two pair of shoes. Everyone was extremely happy and grateful for the things they received. Jay opened his lunch and said, "Oh, Vienna sausages, I love them!" and he ate them with his fingers without even seeing we had put a fork in the bag. Joseph said he was not too keen on people who came down to the beach to preach at them, but then didn't bring any food or anything for their physical needs, and he really appreciated what we were doing. It reminded me of the verses in James 2:15-17 where he says, "If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." We went down the alley behind the Boardwalk for a while, looking for homeless people, and saw two people and gave them lunches and everything. Another man looked like he was carrying all his worldly possessions on his back, and he was rooting around in a trash can. Andrew offered him a lunch, and the man was so grateful he was almost crying. Holly really enjoyed going on the outreach and she said, "There were lots of heart-felt "thank you"s from everyone." We also handed out gospel tracts to people just walking along the Boardwalk, and gave out tracts in English, Spanish, and one in Korean and two in Russian. Felipe said his group gave out all the lunches and

clothing, and they had great fun. They enjoyed giving out the things to help the homeless on the Boardwalk, and also, Jazul and her kids had never been to Venice Beach, so they all had a great time! Thank You, Jesus for a great outreach!

Felipe said he also saw a pregnant woman and her two kids by a freeway exit, and he gave them lunches. Later, he saw another pregnant woman with two kids (not the same one), and he gave them all lunches. After this happened, Felipe said he found out later that the “pregnant-woman-with-kids-by-the-freeway” thing was a scam, and that they weren’t really pregnant. Well, we’re thankful that he didn’t give them any money, but just a few lunches, and God knows our hearts, that we’re only trying to help people.

Saturday, December 6, 2025 - The Lord provided “laborers to go into the harvest” for us today, besides Tom and me, and they were Felipe, David, Ulysses, Anthony, Sheldon, Andrew, Victor, and Kathleen. Tom stayed home to keep us in prayer. Kathleen, Andrew and I went to the north end of the Boardwalk, and Sheldon and Victor went to the south end, and gave out most of their food and clothing (there aren’t as many homeless people at that end). Sheldon said they found a young woman with a baby, which was very sad, but he told her about the Bible Tabernacle. Felipe, David, Ulysses and Anthony went to the streets of Venice, Culver City and West Los Angeles, finding homeless people in parking lots and on the street, some in tents and some in motor homes. They found a lot of homeless people in tents on a side street by Costco, in the parking lot at Best Buy, along Sepulveda Blvd. by the freeway, and along several streets in Venice. They gave out all of their lunches and everything, including some extra lunches Felipe got from another organization. We had 181 of our lunches, hygiene/toiletry packets, dog food and cat food for those with pets, and lots of warm, heavy jackets and blankets for the homeless. Kathleen, Andrew and I gave out all but four of our lunches and most of the clothing, blankets and toiletries. We gave food and clothing to an older woman who said everybody called her “Auntie.” She was dressed very colorfully and had face paint on her face. A man in a wheelchair named Edgar got toiletries, a lunch, and a jacket. A woman named Christina asked if we had any women’s pants, and we found a pair that fit her perfectly. Another man named Osvaldo was so happy to get a lunch, clothing and toiletries. Joseph had two dogs, so we gave him extra dog food, along with a lunch for himself and clothing. Kathleen also gave Joseph a frisbee for his two dogs, and cat food to one of our regular guys. She said, “I think he might feed stray cats, because he doesn’t ever have one with him.” We saw ninety-one-year-old Jean who lives in her van, and gave her a towel and washcloth, a lunch, and some crossword puzzle books. Everyone was so thankful for everything they received, and you never saw so many smiles and happy faces! Each lunch contains a gospel tract, and we also handed out tracts to people who were just down on the Boardwalk enjoying a day at the beach. Praise the Lord!

Matthew 25:34-40 “Then the King (Jesus) will say to those on his right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, **when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?**’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”

Prison Ministry

John Robert De La Torre, Jr., Valley State Prison, Chowchilla, CA - "Your program has really given me such a positive outlook on life and the love I have for God. I've learned that God loves me and will take care of me, and I'm trusting Him to allow me to come home soon, whenever it is His time for me. Blessings, John"

Richard M. Mesa, California Institution for Men, Chino, CA - "Thank you for all you have done. Your commitment to teach the word of God to men and women in our predicament really transforms lives. You have deeply impacted my life. May God richly bless you both, and I'm looking forward to my next Bible lessons. Love in Christ, Ricky"

Arnaldo Valdivia, Calipatria State Prison, Calipatria, CA - "Just want to thank you for allowing me to take these Bible study courses. These lessons in God's word help me build a stronger connection to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I'm doing the Gospel of John Bible study and the 12-Step program, and I am very grateful. Your brother in Christ, Arnaldo"

Dan Witczak, Valley State Prison, Chowchilla, CA - "Thank you, thank you, thank you! I am really enjoying your Bible course and I have learned so much about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I have to let you know I have been working on other courses, but yours is set up the best of all of them. I can't express enough how the words from the Bible have been jumping off the paper and slapping me in the face with such expressions that have left me breathless. God's word is so powerful! Respectfully in Jesus' name, Dan"

Jonathan Mendoza, Mule Creek State Prison, Inglewood, CA - "I would like to thank you for your love and service in the Lord. Your and your ministry have been a true blessing in my life. When a friend told me about your ministry years ago, that wasn't a coincidence, but I strongly believe it was all in God's plan. Only God knows how to put the right people in our lives at the right time. Your 12-Step course has been life-changing - it has brought me freedom, restoration, healing, transformation, wisdom, conviction and great peace and joy into my life. It has been the best Bible-based course I have taken and I thank God for it. I am also enjoying doing the Gospel of John and Favorite Psalms Bible studies. After twenty-four years in prison, I can honestly say that NO self-help group I have completed has helped me transform my heart and mind like God's word. Blessings in Jesus' name, Jonathan"

Norman Smith, Valley State Prison, Chowchilla, CA - "Bless you for all your good works you do unto our Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot imagine what the world would be like without God-fearing people like yourselves. It has been a very special experience to grow closer to the Lord with you leading the way. I am this close to the Lord because of your Bible program. I was given your address in 2008 so I could do the 12-Step program, and it has been a great journey. I wake up each and every day and thank the Lord, and as you always say, to see what He has for me to do that day. Your brother in Christ, Norman"

Manuel Zarate, Folsom State Prison, Represa, CA - "Thank you once again for the Bible lessons, I am getting a lot out of them. They are very well put together, and I am so thankful to God that He allowed me to meet you. I read your newsletters and am blessed to hear about all the people you help, who are being fed and hearing the gospel. God has put it on my heart to send you a small donation for the homeless ministry. May God continue to watch over you. Your brother in Christ, Manuel"

Josh Vines, California Institution for Men, Chino, CA - "Hello, I just finished my lessons and am putting them in the mail. I feel like I spent a whole year on this study of the gospel of John, but I really enjoyed it. I really appreciate all that you do for us in prison, and I enjoy your letters, they really inspire me. God bless! Love always, Josh"