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DISCUSSION GUIDE – Based on the 3-minute video at OverflowToday.com titled: **Are Good Works Worthless?**

Section 1

Discuss what you applied in the past seven days from the last OverflowToday show.

(Attention group leader: *This Bible study in section 1 is much longer than most, so watch your time budget).*

Discuss each of the below passages for 2 minutes each, one by one, together. Volunteers to look up each.

Read Galatians 3:10-11

Does this passage say that it is bad for a Christian to do works of the law? (No)

What specifically does this passage condemn regarding works of the law? (Try to choose just one word to answer this question).

Relying. It is wrong to rely on works of the law for our justification or for salvation.

Read Ephesians 2:8-10

If we are created to do good works, if that is a key reason for God choosing us, then why aren't the works-based religions correct in their contention that works are required for salvation?

Salvation must happen apart from works. But we are created to do good works for God, once saved.

Read 1st John 3:9-10

Describe what "helpful" purpose sin might serve, were it to be present on a regular basis in one's life.

Continual sin can be evidence of a lack of connection to Christ and a lack of salvation.

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Most of you will see yourself represented in the list. What is the key phrase that resolves this tension between Paul addressing sinners but referring to them as washed?

“And this is what some of you were.”

Will our lives be totally without sin after embracing Christ? Read Romans 7:19-25

Section 2

Watch the podcast entitled “Are Good Works Worthless?” at <http://OverflowToday.com>

Featured is Mike Fabarez, Pastor - Compass Bible Church, Aliso Viejo, CA. <http://www.compasschurch.org/>

Section 3

What did you think? What stood out to you as you watched this?

Mike used these letters and definitions in his diagram:

W = Good works

G = Gospel, or faith in Jesus’ sacrifice

H = Heaven or salvation

Now as a group, recall each of his four equations, one by one.

Discuss together what each line portrayed. Discuss what groups, worldviews, or religions believe each line to be God’s way.

W = H Doing good works gets you into heaven.

G + W = H Jesus, or his gospel and our good works gets you into heaven.

G = H The gospel alone gets you to heaven.

G = H + W The gospel alone gets you to heaven. A changed life and a decrease in our practice of sin will follow. Yet we will never be perfect.

Which of these lines would you say qualify as biblically true?

3rd and 4th

If more than one line is true, then what is the value of the 4th line when discussing Christianity with others?

What is the important difference in where the letter W is positioned in lines 2 and 4?

Someone volunteer to draw the 4 equations now on a piece of paper as we watch. The rest of us will call out corrections and coach you as you bravely give it a try.

Imagine drawing out these four lines for friends who might practice different religions. If you asked them to choose what they believe, which line do you think they'd choose? Discuss for each of the below groups:

Mormons –

Jehovah's Witnesses –

Muslims –

Agnostics –

Protestants or Catholics who might not attend a Bible-studying church –

Christians who see the Bible as their source of truth –

Often in religious discussions, people in some of the above groups will say, "We believe in Jesus, too. We honor him and believe his words." How might you use these four lines of formula, drawn on a napkin, to show him the difference in your Jesus and their version of Jesus?

Draw all four lines of formula. Ask them to choose which line represents their religion and why.

If they choose line 3 or 4, ask them, "So you are telling me that good works do not help us achieve eternal life at all, right? (Normally they will become uncomfortable, not be able to embrace that, and walk away clearly seeing the difference in a works-based salvation and a biblical grace-based salvation. And they will see that we do value works in another way).

Section 4

Discuss some ways we could apply a few of these principles in the next 7 days.

One suggestion (if needed):

This week, each group member ask a non-Christian friend if he'd give his opinion on a drawing you'll do for him in 1 minute that is merely 4 lines of equation representing present life and the after-life.

When you have finished the drawing, explain each line and ask him which line most closely represents his view,

Ask him if he'd like to see which line represents the Bible's view of the after life. Attempt to explain the gospel to him including how someone might be able to actually know that he has eternal life, as discussed in 1st John 5:13.

Meet back next week to report on what happened.