Good Works in His Household—P7

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

In traditional marriage, husbands often provided the house and the living for their wives. Wives filled the house with good works to make it a home—a place of health and happiness, which became a fruitful place, spilling out into the community with life and hospitality. Scripture commonly equates the work of wives with labors of good works. The disciple Tabitha was renowned because *"she was full of good works and acts of charity"* (Acts 9:36). Paul encouraged women to dress modestly, not adorned with perishable gold and pearls but instead adorned *"by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness"* (1 Tim. 2:9-10). Widows were to be supported by the Church if they had *"a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work"* (1 Tim. 5:10). Wives applied themselves to produce good works in the home and community.

Wives bore children by their husbands, filling the home with love—bringing up new life to abide in the ways of his name. And while husbands were often in the fields planting or harvesting, wives often were hard at work filling their home with all the things that nurture life, growth, and health. They were esteemed for turning bland sustenance into the nourishing and pleasurable experience of home-cooked meals. They were renowned for bringing "a woman's touch" that made a house into a home—a place of hospitality overflowing with good works into a cold, harsh world.

Similarly, Christ has provided us *"the household of God, which is the church of the living God"* (1 Tim. 3:15b), in which we spiritually dwell as His Bride. Jesus, *"nourishes and cherishes"* (Eph. 5:29) the Church. As our spiritual husband, He provides our living—our very life: He "*gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession **who are zealous for good works**"* (Titus 2:14), saving *"us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, **so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people**"* (Titus 3:5-8).

Jesus nourishes us with His Holy Spirit, the source of all good things, through Whom we bear *"the fruit of the Spirit* [which] *is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control"* (Gal. 22-23a) — making the Church a spiritual house overflowing with warmth, hospitality, and joy in this cold, dark world—a place nurturing the new life given to us by Jesus through discipleship.

In God's Household, the Bride devotes herself *"to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful"* (Titus 3:14). She does this for Jesus, *"to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God"* (Col. 1:10). So, *"let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near"* (Heb. 10:23-25)—the day of His return! Even so, Amen.