

Faith Works

"What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?" (James 2:14) This question is a penetrating one. Saving faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will result in works. The word "works" here refers to the new way of thinking and living that a Christian demonstrates in their life. Faith will be demonstrated through good works. *"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."* (Matthew 5:16) Faith is expressed through works or actions which produces eternal results in and through God's people.

Labor of Love

"constantly bearing in mind your labor of love" (1 Thessalonians 1:3) Love comes from God, but it must be expressed in and through a human vessel. You and I are those vessels that God wants to use to express His love. All of our expressions of God's love require work: action, time, effort, energy, physical involvement, patience, etc. Often, in order to express love, we will have to go somewhere, do something, put up with uncomfortable situations, and work at keeping focused on His love. Love is not just a feeling, it is work. But, it is worth it and it is what God desires of us. Your labor of love will have eternal value.

More Workers Needed

"Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." (Matthew 9:36-38) God is in need of more workers. There are so many people who

are lost in sin around us. Yet, Jesus says that there is a harvest of souls to be brought into God's family and that they are just waiting for someone to bring them. Will you be one of those workers? Work for the eternal value - the eternal soul of another person. We are also told to pray for more workers to join in the harvesting. Prayer is an act of work in God's kingdom.

Work Is Partnership With God

"For we are God's fellow workers..." (1 Corinthians 3:9a) One of the greatest privileges we have is to be considered a partner with God in His kingdom. Work for God should not be considered as just a duty or obligation, but as an opportunity to work with and serve the King of kings and Lord of lords. Being a partner with God also results in us experiencing God's supernatural power and life, which is far greater than anything this world could offer. What a wonderful experience it is to be used of God and know His working through your life.

Work Brings Eternal Reward

"...each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

(1 Corinthians 3:13-15). There is reward in Heaven and it will be determined by what we did with what God has given us. We do not understand what these rewards will fully mean in eternity, but they may have some determination as to our eternal fulfillment in Heaven.



KNOW THE TRUTH

"...AND THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE!"

Work For Eternal Value

Understanding The Christian Work Ethic

Pastor Lynn Kern

WORK FOR ETERNAL VALUE

"Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life."
(John 6:27a)

Life's Work

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, mankind has had to work and toil to provide for the needs of family and community. Even in our leisure-oriented society, work is still the basis for our daily routines and how we spend our time. Most often our work determines what we can afford, where we will live, and the value that we and others place on our lives. Whether our work is in the market-place or at home, work is basic to our life and reaches far beyond our job or occupation.

God's Plan

God knew that work would be important and basic to our life's functions, as well as help determine our worth and values. He had created mankind with abilities and gifts in order to accomplish life's work and find fulfillment. Yet, God planned that mankind would have a greater purpose in life, one in which He, as God, would be known and His ways would be followed by those who would trust in Him. God had created us as eternal beings and wanted us to have a eternal perspective in life that would out-weigh this temporal life. Work would be an important part of that greater purpose in life because our life's work would center on God's purposes and eternal values.

Work For Eternal Value

In John chapter six, Jesus feeds over five thousand people. Later, many of those people followed Him across the sea, seeking after Him. It is here that Jesus speaks these words, *"Do not*

work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life...." (John 6:27a) Jesus knew that the main reason these people had followed Him was to get more food. Jesus told them not to be pre-occupied with working for food and other basics of life which are temporal and perish with the using. He wasn't saying they didn't need those things, but He was saying that those things aren't what you should be focusing your work on. Instead, you should be working for the spiritual food, the eternal values which will last forever. Work to produce the fruit of obedience, love, faith, good deeds in yourself and others so that your investment will be eternal. While you work in the market place, at home, and beyond, recognize the opportunities for fruitful work that honors God and leads to eternal results. Jesus was also saying to spend your efforts working for God's spiritual truths and direction in your life. In other words, work at developing your spiritual life as a Christian.

Good Works Count!

It is easy in our Christian sphere of influence to get the impression that "good works" are of secondary importance, since the act of salvation in coming to Christ was based upon grace and faith and not our works. However, God makes it clear that our coming to God by grace through faith was for the purpose of producing "good works." Read Ephesians 2:8-10 carefully and especially note verse 10. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."* Though a person cannot earn their salvation by works, God has purposed that His people display His character and

fulfill His purpose by living a life of "good works." Obviously, work is the action word in our understanding about "good works." Work must be done by us in order for goodness and good deeds to be expressed to others. At the same time, "we are His workmanship" - meaning that God is the one working in us and through us to make us what we are to be. He is the one who is at work in us to do His work. *"...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."* (Philippians 2:12c,13) We are instructed to work out or live out the salvation that God has provided for us, for God is at work in us to make it happen. This is the balance we need to understand. Do not reject God's created purpose for you by discounting the importance of good works in your Christian life.

The Work of Faith

"...constantly bearing in mind your work of faith." (1 Thessalonians 1:3a) This phrase "work of faith" would seem to be a contradiction. Instead, it is a profound truth that teaches us to work toward the development of and give expression to our faith in God. Every Christian must cultivate their faith and trust in God through reading God's word, prayer, meditating on spiritual truth, and acting upon God's will. We work our faith by taking action to secure our faith in the Lord in times of Christian service, obedience, doubt, trials, temptations, crisis, difficult circumstances, etc. As Hebrews 4: 10,11 suggest, we are to be diligent to enter into a place of trusting in God so that we will not trust in our own abilities, but "rest" in what He can do and has done for us.