

THE RELATIONSHIP OF WORK TO LOVE

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Sunday Sermon

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INTRODUCTION:

The Christian Life can be quite contrary to that which is natural to man. This is quite evident in that Scripture tells us that “the natural man receiveth not the things of God.” We are reliant upon the Holy Spirit to accomplish the things God wants done. And yet in some admonishments that are given in Scripture, there are implications that we have to be active as Believers in the things that we are doing. This activity comes after passivity. We cannot do anything pleasing unto God apart from the power of the Holy Spirit. This is true in our relationships one to another as Believers. The Bible constantly admonishes Believers to work on behalf of other saints. When we work as unto the Lord and are energized by the power that the Holy Spirit provides, our labor is going to be in love. When we try to do it on our own, we will fall well short of what God desires for us in grace. The Believer isn’t justified by the work they do on behalf of the Saints, but they do demonstrate the proper function of the Body of Christ by them.

I. The Spiritual Labor of the Believer

A. The Definition of Labor (kopos and kopiao)

1. The tireless efforts or work from one party on behalf of another without regard for the demand upon the one working
2. Distinct from the Synonym for Work (ergos) – (Translated “Labour”) Jn. 6:27; 1 Thess. 2: 9; 2 Thess. 3:8

B. Physical Labor (Examples)

1. Of the Jews Offered Rest by the Lord in His Earthly Ministry – Mt. 11:28
2. Of the Use of Occupation by Paul While Ministering to the Saints – 1 Cor. 4:12
3. Of the Thing Performed Rather Than Stealing – Eph. 4:28

C. Spiritual Labor (Examples)

1. In the Use of Spiritual Gifts
 - a) Of the Apostles – 1 Cor. 3:8; Col. 1:29
 - b) Of Pastor Teachers – 1 Thess. 5:12
2. Of the Potential of Futility (of Labor)
 - a) Of the Lack of Uselessness – 1 Cor. 15:58
 - b) Of the God’s Remembrance – Heb. 6:10
 - c) Of the Distorting of the Work Previously Done by Present Actions – Gal. 4:11; 1 Thess. 3:5
3. Of the Expected Activity of One Believer to the Next

- a) Of Paul's Example to the Saints at Corinth – 2 Cor. 5:9
- b) Of Paul and Epaphroditus in Their Ministry to the Saints at Philippi – Phil. 2:25
- c) Of the Impetus for Entering into God's Rest – Heb. 4:11
- d) Of the Collective Efforts of a Church Body (Ephesus) – Rev. 2:2

II. The Proof of Faith Is Demonstrated by Acts of Love

A. Love Is Demonstrated through Action

- 1. The True Manifestation of Love – 1 Jn. 3:18
 - a) The Love Originates from God – vs. 16
 - b) The Example of What Love Isn't – vs. 17
 - c) The Expression Is by What Is Said and Not What Is Done – vs. 18
- 2. The Believer Walks in Love by Action – Rom. 14:15
 - a) The Walk of the Believer (peripatao) = The Day to Day Steps and Decision Making Process
 - b) Emphasizing One's Personal Liberty over Another's Spiritual Needs

B. Faith Can Be Seen through Activity

- 1. Faith apart from Works Is Dead – Jas. 2:18-26
 - a) The Manifestation of Faith among Men – vss. 18-20
 - b) The Example of Abraham – vss. 21-24
 - c) The Example of Rahab the Harlot – vss. 25-26
- 2. Faith Is Accounted for Righteousness by God – Rom. 4:3
 - a) Abraham Cited as Example
 - b) His Faith in the Promises of God Was Counted for Righteousness

C. Faith and Love Are Connected in Scripture

- 1. In the Labor of Believers – 1 Thess. 1:3
 - a) Work from Faith
 - b) Labor from Love
- 2. In Stated Abundance – 2 Cor. 8:7
- 3. In What Is Imparted in Grace
 - a) Paul Commends the Ephesian Saints – Eph. 1:15
 - b) That Comes as a Result of Christ Being at Ease in the Believer – Eph. 3:17
 - c) From the Father and the Son – Eph. 6:23
 - d) Positional Faith Leading to Love for the Brethren – Col. 1:4
 - e) Given to Paul in Abundance in Salvation – 1 Tim. 1:14
 - f) Paul Advice to Timothy Concerning Sound Words – 2 Tim. 1:13
- 4. In the Protection against Attack – 1 Thess. 5:8
- 5. In the Things to Be Pursued by the Believer – 1 Tim. 6:11
- 6. In That Which Can Be Directed towards the Lord and the Saints – Phile. 1:5

CONCLUSION: