

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

By Scott Parker

WORK, WORK, WORK!

On one occasion our Lord said, *“I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work”* (John 9:4). In His longest recorded prayer, Jesus lifted these words to the Father in heaven: *“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do”* (John 17:4). It’s very obvious that our Lord understood the necessity of doing spiritual work. This being the case, it amazes me that so many of His “followers” act as if engaging in authorized spiritual work (Col. 3:17) is an optional matter.

It’s no secret that many people who call themselves Christians – yes, even amongst those who render the proper initial obedience to God (Rom.6:1-4, 17) – talk a good game, but play a poor one. Yes, for one reason or another, some people fail to grasp the following bit of truth: once a person has been redeemed, it is time to go to work! Hear God’s Word:

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, ‘Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled;’ notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, ‘Thou hast faith, and I have works:’ shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (Js. 2:14-24).

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Plp.2:12).

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10).

“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord’s money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, ‘Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.’ His lord said unto him, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.’ He also that had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.’ His lord said unto him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.’ Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, ‘I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.’ His lord answered and said unto him, ‘Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.’ ‘Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt.25:14-30).

“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:15-16).

Are you laboring for the Master in every authorized respect? Really now, are you?