

Abounding in the Work of the Lord (Slide 1)

1 Corinthians 15:58

Psalm 18:30

***As for God, His way is perfect;
The word of the LORD is proven;
He is a shield to all who trust in Him.***

Last week our focus was on *steadfastness-immovable* from the admonition of the Apostle Paul to the church at Corinth. We learned that *Steadfast-immovable*: (Slide 2)

1. Is a Spiritual tool of commitment for our singular determination to be with God in Heaven
2. That this Spiritual mindset would give us the capability to resist anything that would detract us from achieving our heavenly goal
3. That this admonition would enable us to have stability in our lives because these attributes are grounded in Christ Jesus
4. We cited how Jesus is our example as He had His face toward going to Jerusalem to complete His mission
5. We learned that to be all that we can be in regard to these Spiritual attributes we must employ an active faith.

6. Hope fuels our Enthusiasm!

Therefore, *steadfastness-immovable* doesn't imply standing still. It is in conjunction with ***abounding in the work of the Lord***. We don't put an emphasis on the secular concept of "*Well I've done my good deed for the day! So much for that!*"

It is an admonition to constantly look for and participate in whatever I can do to work for the Kingdom which God established through His Son.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (Slide 3)

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

An active faith is the catalyst for "***abounding in the work of the Lord.***" ***Abounding in the Work of the Lord*** begins with *abounding in faith!*

Faith, the hope in the promises of God, is the point of labor in a Spiritual and Physical sense when it comes to feeding the needs of the church and I personally believe, the community.

The work of the Lord is the responsibility of all who would call on the Lord and are added to His church by Christ Himself. (**Acts 2:47**)

We need to remind ourselves and acknowledge that the church was built upon the rock of faith:

Matthew 16:18 (Slide 4)

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

The church is not conceived by man but is a Spiritual house built from the foundation of the *Gospel of Christ*. Therefore, ***abounding in the work of the Lord*** translates into labor in His vineyard. We labor because of the Hope we have instilled in us because of God's Grace and Mercy through Christ.

What is the work of the Lord?

This is something that has long been debated. We know that ***faith without work is dead*** (**James 2:26**). So each Spiritual work is rooted in faith and that work can be assisting with a Spiritual need or a Physical need of those

in the church and I believe those outside of His body when warranted.

It could be a wide range of physical needs: those who are hungry, those who have had tragedy in losing their homes to a fire or flood and the list goes on.

There are countless people who have Spiritual needs. Those in the church who have despair or need prayer for a physical ailment. Sharing the Gospel to a lost and dying world and again the list goes on and on.

The very hope we have in us is displayed by ***abounding in the work of the Lord*** and *God will remember that work!!* As well, He will remember when we refuse or do not do the work that needs to be done!!

Hebrews 6:9-20 (Slide 5)

9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. 10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until

the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, “Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.” 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. (Slide 6) 17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, (Slide 7) we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

The work, of which we as Christians are called to do, is a **Labor of Love**. We don't “**abound in the work of the Lord**” hoping just for a reward. We do what we can because we Love God and His creation.

Hebrews 6:9-20 is proof positive of what we stated last week about the stability that can only be found in God. God doesn't forget. God acknowledges what we do in His Kingdom.

Recall **Matthew 25** the last few paragraphs, Jesus talks about when the *Son of Man will come in His Glory* and separate the sheep from the goats.

The sheep that is; the righteous He places on his right who are those who know Him and have heard His voice. The goats on the left, that though He was speaking to them they could not hear nor could they see.

As He established His eternal kingdom He states:

Matthew 25:34b-36 (Slide 8)

"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; (Slide 9) I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me."

They were "abounding in the work of the Lord!"

This is exactly what the righteous did and they did it to all because they had faith and hope. Even at that they ask

when did we do this for you Lord? (Slide 10) ***'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*** Matthew 25:40

They helped all that they could without partiality, without regard to race or gender, young or old and not with the purposeful attitude looking for what they would get out of it for themselves but a personal sacrifice for the good of another.

That is a *glowing* definition of what is meant by a **Labor of Love**.....because all men are created in the image of God.

Jesus recognizes their good works!

The difference between the *left* and the *right* is that those on the *left* simply didn't help anyone but those who were their own.

Jesus wants His people to humbly do good works. He states in **Matthew 5** to ***love your enemies, to do good to those who hate you and to pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.***

He says do these things so that we will be "*counted*" as ***sons of God***. He says the sun and the rain are given to the just and the unjust.

He goes on to say:

Matthew 5:46-47 (Slide 11)

46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?

We are to be different in “***abounding in good works***” striving for perfection as God is perfect.

The Christian tries to help all people and the work is fueled by *hope like an anchor* that is in the system of salvation Jesus set up through His death.

God is stable in keeping promises, He won't go back on His word and His words are absolute truth because He cannot lie.

In the Hebrew letter the word *immutable* means *unchangeable*. No one is greater than God so He swore an oath by Himself and His promises are true and we can have full assurance in God almighty.

Two immutable things: The Promises of God and His Oath!! ***Hallelujah Praise Jehovah***

Abounding in good works is made possible because one abounds in Faith! Abounding in faith should cause our faith to grow! Every trial we face should strengthen our

faith!! In fact, trials should produce the endurance we need to run this race:

Abraham was tried and tested. Yet, he believed God: He had faith in God before the covenant:

Romans 4:9b (Slide 12)

For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

It wasn't just because he was to be the leader of the covenant. The "effect" of his type of faith is universal toward all men.

Romans 5:1-5 (Slide 13)

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations,(Slide 14) knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Faith makes one complete in God's Kingdom!

In **Mark's** record of the Gospel **Chapter 9**, a very difficult, and traumatic event occurred. It was a time of complete despair for a father who was desperately looking for some help.

Jesus has just come down from the *Transfiguration*. The circumstances of this particular instance are quite similar to God telling Moses in:

Exodus 32:7

And the LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves.

That corruption that He speaks concerning these people is their lack of faith!

Mark 9 speaks about faith which is at the core of our relationship with God.

Jesus and his disciples who were with Him on the mount came down to face a great multitude and the scribes, as is often the case, disputing with the people.

When the people saw Jesus they came to Him and were greatly amazed at His appearance. I believe they were so glad to see Him so that He may settle the dispute. At least

at this time, generally speaking, the average Jew had favorable feelings toward Jesus.....

Jesus questions the scribes; ***“What are you discussing with them?” (Mark 9:16)***

A voice of a distraught and desperate father broke through the midst of the multitude. When He spoke to Jesus he said that he brought his son, who has a demon living inside of him and that it does all manner of terrible things to him in an effort to kill him. The man says I brought him to your disciples seeking their help but they couldn't cast him out.

When Jesus hears this He directs His disappointment toward His disciples and says; ***“O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.” (Mark 9:19)***

I think it is important for us to understand the mental state of the father. He was extremely distraught, desperate and likely to the point that he was under so much mental anguish from the torment his son has endured since childhood that it has affected him physically. He is desperate for help.....

At times we have been desperate for help, perhaps not to this extreme, but we couldn't see any hope at the end of the tunnel.....

The father says to Jesus;

“But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” (Mark 9:22)

“If you can do anything, have compassion, mercy on us.”

Can you hear his desperation? He felt the loss of hope because he already placed a great deal of hope in Jesus' disciples to help. Is it any wonder that his faith was wavering?

Then Jesus makes an incredible statement to the father:

Mark 9:23 (Slide 15)

“If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”

I think it would be safe to say that this father had already tried so many things to rescue his son from this demon. He came to the disciples who he believed could help but they could not.

I don't know for sure but knowing the type of people that the scribes were, I believe they were belittling and calling

out the disciples because of their failure and the father became even more distraught.

The more we understand the situation the better we can relate and understand his response.

Mark 9:24 (Slide 16)

Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

In times where we feel all hope is lost, we need the help of the One who is the originator of hope because He is still the same Man who walked the earth. *We need to abound in faith or our work is in vain!*

"Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" and that's exactly what Jesus did as He cast out the demon.

Abounding in Faith!! If we believe with an active faith we will draw closer to Christ and the Holy Word will help us through doubt (unbelief) and we then will abound in good works!

Invitation

Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of the Living God and that He died on the cross, was buried, and resurrected on the third day? If so, don't delay, arise and put on Christ in baptism.

If your faith needs a boost and you need the prayers of your Brethren for whatever reason.....please let us know.

Whatever we can do to assist you with your walk in faith with Christ, let your wish be known.....

Reading

Mark 9:14-29

14 And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. 15 Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. 16 And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?"

17 Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. 18 And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."

19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." 20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him,

and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

21 So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?"

And he said, "From childhood. 22 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" 26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

29 So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

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