

OUR WORK FOR THE LORD

In every work that we undertake there are some essential underlying characteristics that one must possess in order to perform the task successfully. The Lord's work is the most important work of all and there are some essential characteristics which we must possess if we are to do His work successfully. So, notice with me now four of these essentials that one must possess in order to successfully do the Lord's work,

One of the essential characteristic one must possess is a powerful faith. If a person believes nothing, he will do nothing. If one does not think he can do anything, he is not going to try. Ten of the twelve spies that were sent to spy out the land of Canaan did not believe the Israelites could take the land and they accomplished nothing for the Lord. Two of the spies believed and later in life accomplished great things. Sometimes one's faith has to be strong through many trials before great things will be accomplished. Think about the great faith of the centurion in Matt 8:5-13. He said to the Lord: "but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed". Then there is the faith of the four in Mk 2:1-5 who took up the roof to get a man to Jesus to be healed. In having a powerful faith, one obviously must believe the right thing. Many are convinced that "it makes no difference what you believe just so your heart is right". An active, saving faith comes by hearing God's word Rom 10:17. The writer of Proverbs said: "There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death" Prov 14:12. Our faith is shown by what we do according to Jas 2:18. It is shown on first day of week when we worship in spirit and in truth Jhn 4:24. It is shown during the week by the way we offer no excuses, but start and continue to work for the Lord in treating our families; neighbors, and co-workers, etc the way they ought to be treated. We are showing our faith when we try to teach others the Gospel. Faith that will command the blessings of God is the faith that will win conquest for Him.

Another essential characteristic one must possess to be successful in the Lord's work is a prevailing prayer. Prayer is a very powerful weapon in our work for the Lord. Jas 5:16 says: "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much". James uses Elijah as an example of the power of prayer Jas 5:17, 18. Elijah prayed that it wouldn't rain and it didn't for three years. This certainly does not mean that God will answer our prayer in the same way He did Elijah's, but it does show us the power of prayer and I believe that is what James is trying to show us. We pray laborers in the harvest according to Lk 10:2. But are we willing to work ourselves? The apostle Paul said we are to pray without ceasing 1Thess 5:17. When we pray, we are not praying to get anything out of the Lord, but to live in communion with Him

Along with faith and prayer, an essential characteristic one must possess to be successful in the Lord's work is a personal love. When we do our duty and it is backed up by love, it is a blessing. Jesus performed His duty out of love Eph 5:2. Because of that He was exalted Acts 2:36. When we perform our duty out of love, we will be exalted 1Cor 13:1-13. 1Pet 1:22 says we are to: "love one another with a pure heart fervently". 1Jhn 3:23 says loving one another is a command, it is not an option, it is a "must". Again in 1Jhn 4:20,21 we learn that one who hates his brother does not and cannot love God. Then in 1Jhn 5:2 we learn that only when we love God and keep His commandments to we know that we love the children of God. This shows us just how important the right kind of love really is.

In order for us to have these characteristics and make the work there must be persistent effort on our part. Persistency of effort is the secret of success. Robert Bruce had fought the English six times and had been defeated every time. While in hiding he watched a spider try six times to swing himself from one rafter to another. Six times he tried and failed. Then on the seventh time the spider succeeded. Robert Bruce took inspiration from this spider and fought the English again, and was victorious. Persistency of effort can accomplish much in our work for the Lord. In Jhn 1:40-45 the Scripture records that Christ found Andrew who found Peter. Christ then found Philip who found Nathanael. We can find people if we are persistent then they in turn will find others. Once many years ago when I tried selling insurance because I was laid off from my regular job, I was taught that the law of averages would sell insurance, if I would be persistent

enough and see enough people. Many times we give up too soon. We need “importunity” which means shameless persistence as was demonstrated by the man in Lk 11:8

Our bodies must be a living sacrifice according to Rom 12:1,2 if we are to serve God effectively. This must be a steadfast service according to 1Cor 15:58. Paul said we must press toward the mark Phil 3:12-14. So we must have a very powerful faith in God; talk to Him in prayer; have a deep love for God and His creation and this will result in very persistent effort on our part, which will cause us to be successful in our work for the Lord... Even if we do not realized or see any visible results from our work, (which is very unlikely), we certainly will be rewarded with a home in heaven and that is what it is really all about. The things we work for here on this earth are so very unimportant in relation to our work for the Lord.

(JLH)