







TO HEAR
well done

GOD'S STANDARD, EVALUATION & REWARD
FOR OUR GOOD WORKS

DAVE LOUDEN

TO HEAR WELL DONE

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TABLE *of* CONTENTS

	FOREWORD	7
	INTRODUCTION	9
01	CALLED TO SERVE	13
02	THROUGH THE CHURCH	27
03	A BIBLICAL MODEL	37
04	AND AS YOU GO	65
05	A GODLY STEWARDSHIP	79
	STORIES OF HIS WAYS	95



FOREWORD

Martin Luther once remarked, “There are only two days on my calendar: Today and that Day.”

In today’s Christian culture most believers do not live in the sober reality that one day, “that Day”, they will stand before Christ to have their works tested. Those saints that have been faithful servants of the Lord will receive a “well done” commendation from Him. Unfaithful believers will not receive the approval of the Lord concerning the use of their God-given giftings and resources.

Using the authority of scripture, this book describes how we as believers are God’s workmanship, “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in.” Unfortunately, many Christians today believe that once they have their “free ticket” to eternal life, God has little plans for the rest of their natural life. This belief could not be further from that taught in scripture. We are in a daily spiritual battle for Christ’s kingdom. All of our

TO HEAR WELL DONE

life decisions have consequences – they either further the kingdom of darkness or the kingdom of light.

Read this book soberly, and have an open heart as to whether or not you are seeking first the kingdom of God. As a believer, I can think of no greater disappointment then to have had all of this truth at my fingertips and yet fail to hear from the Lord, “*Well done*”, on that Day.

~Robert McLeod, PhD

INTRODUCTION

Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. EPHESIANS 1:15-23

TO HEAR WELL DONE

For several decades, the church and her reason for existing, have burdened my heart. We are hearing constantly that the church is not relevant – it needs to get with the times, it's dead, etc. I would like to propose the thought that in many ways what we call the church is simply not the church at all. This is no more evidenced than by our superficial insistence on calling a building the church.

Although many people look unfavorably upon the church, the Bible says that Christ *loved the church* and gave himself for *her* (Ephesians 5:25). In this day, what is it that we really love? For where our treasure is there will our heart be also (Luke 12:34).

I want to strongly emphasize that I am simply one of the members of the body of Christ – your brother and in no way extra ordinary. God's plan is to work through His members in ways that may sometimes seem very ordinary, yet in the light of eternity are so solid, real and lasting.

I invite you today to begin to live out God's desire for

Introduction

the church. It should be in our heart to experience all that He has, not in self seeking abundance – but rather to feast upon the spiritual riches of Christ. Without this heart the words “*Well done*” may only be heard by the brother or sister standing next to you on that Day.

Please, think soberly about this.

~*Pastor Dave Loudon*

The burden I share in this book is not intended to be an evaluation of anyone concerning their work for the Lord.

My only desire is that believers will discover God's way for His saints, in order to find their joy and usefulness in His kingdom. In so doing they will be pleasing to Him and one day will be able to hear from Him, "Well done."



οΙ. CALLED TO SERVE

As a believer, the words “Well done” represent the most valuable commendation we could ever hear from our Lord. After we are saved we enter into a life with spiritual rejoicing, gratefulness and hope for the future. However, along with these gifts from above comes a call to service. This service is to be part of our new life in the kingdom of God.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

This call to service is by His grace and yet He chooses to reward faithful and qualified service out of His rich storehouse. His rewards, however, are based on our fulfilling the requirements for service. Our service must be out of obedience to Him so that the work that is produced will be *approved*.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. EPHESIANS 2:10

Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 1 CORINTHIANS 3:12-15

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 1 JOHN 2:28

Called to Serve

His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

MATTHEW 25:21

An Old Testament Example

The moving of the ark of God was not to be done with a new ox cart, as the Philistines did (2 Samuel 6), but by God's appointed manner using the Levite priests.

...Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD... Deuteronomy 31:25

So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua; and the people hurried and crossed over. JOSHUA 4:10

In a similar vein, the Lord's good works for today also need to be carried out in the manner He has prescribed. It makes a difference how things are done!

TO HEAR WELL DONE

This study will take an in depth look at what the scripture says about good works. We want to explore what are His ways, His design and His provision in carrying out these good works. Specifically, I wish to address the following points:

1. Who should do good works?
2. How are good works implemented?
3. Where does faith come in?
4. Does the miraculous play a role?

As we consider these questions, we should soon discover whether we are doing the Lord's works in the Lord's way or rather moving the ark with a Philistine ox cart.

No doubt as we seek God's ways we will hit some bumps along the way and be tempted to defend our actions. However, the challenge is to come to the light and have our works weighed in God's balance. This will provide us an opportunity to change where needed.

The means by which we conduct these good works needs to be in accordance with God's design. Our methodology cannot be our good ideas.

Called to Serve

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. ISAIAH 55:9

It is inappropriate to simply justify ourselves by saying, “Well, everybody does it this way!” Knowing that our works are assessed at the Judgement Seat of Christ (Romans 14:10-12; I Corinthians 3:12-15), we should desire that they pass His *quality control test* and receive the praise of our Father.

There are two roads: the narrow road and the broad road. This description has more to say than simply, “*Is one saved or lost?*” To our natural man, God’s ways always appear to be narrow. We must let the Lord’s light reveal what He will be pleased with and then line up our life with such revelation.

God resists the proud but gives
grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5).
Lord Jesus give us a heart to see
Your way for Your body and for
Your kingdom. We wish to be brought
in line with Your way so that we may
hear You say “Well done!”

A New Testament Example

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” So he answered and said, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’” And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.” But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Then Jesus answered and said: “A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he

Called to Serve

arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves? And he said, 'He who showed mercy on him.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.' LUKE 10:25-37

The Organic Function of the Body*

God has an eternal purpose and the creation of men and women are His means to accomplish His purpose. In His plan He wants many sons and for those sons to comprise His church – His bride. He will one day rule as the undisputed Sovereign Lord and King of kings. In His mercy, He has chosen to have His sons rule with Him in His kingdom and to have His very image (1 John 3:2).

*Or living, as opposed to organizational.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. EPHESIANS 3:8-12

God has chosen to reveal Himself to men and women. In turn, His people are to manifest His character and qualities to others. This manifestation is largely accomplished by the good works that God has ordained for us. Our good works manifest His glory, love and care to a world that is trapped under the dominion of Satan (1 Peter 2:12).

Church Life

As believers, we are created in Christ Jesus for the carrying out of good works. It is impossible to produce biblical good works if you are not a believer. Biblical good works issue out of a life changed by God and are carried out in the context of church life. We are to be as a city set on a hill (Matthew 5:14). Godly lives, that the world can observe, glorifies God. Godly lives also cause believers to find favour in the lives of unbelievers.

***God's foreordained good works
are to be carried out by His church,
with His Spirit directing His saints.
This approach is not program based.***

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. 1 CORINTHIANS 3:9

The church is intended to be Christ's expression to the world of His care. We are to be His hands and feet in a way that is even more extensive and visible than when He walked on the earth (John 14:12).

TO HEAR WELL DONE

...to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by **the church** to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. EPHESIANS 3:10

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to **the church**. EPHESIANS 1:22

To Him be glory in **the church** by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. EPHESIANS 3:21

Therefore, just as **the church** is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. EPHESIANS 5:24

...that He might present her to Himself **a glorious church**, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. EPHESIANS 5:27

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ **and the church**. EPHESIANS 5:32

And He is the head of the body, **the church**, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. COLOSSIANS 1:18

Called to Serve

*But if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is **the church** of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.* 1 TIMOTHY 3:15

*If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let **the church** be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.* 1 TIMOTHY 5:16

*Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of **the church**, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.* JAMES 5:14

*...who have borne witness of your love before **the church**. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well.* 3 JOHN 1:6

*To the angel of **the church** of Ephesus write, "These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands."* REVELATION 2:1

*And to the angel of **the church** in Smyrna write, "These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life."* REVELATION 2:8

TO HEAR WELL DONE

*And to the angel of **the church** in Pergamos write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword...'*

REVELATION 2:12

*And to the angel of **the church** in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass...' REVELATION 2:18*

*And to the angel of **the church** in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead." REVELATION 3:1*

*And to the angel of **the church** in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens...' REVELATION 3:7*

*And to the angel of **the church** of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God.' REVELATION 3:14*

Who are We in Christ?

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. 1 CORINTHIANS 3:9

Called to Serve

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. EPHESIANS 2:10

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20

**Fellow Workers
God's Field, God's Building
His Workmanship
Ambassadors For Christ
The Temple Of The Living God
The Church, Sons Of God
Heirs Of God
Joint Heirs with Christ
Kings and Priests
A Holy City, New Jerusalem
A Bride.**

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' 2 CORINTHIANS 6:16

TO HEAR WELL DONE

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. EPHESIANS 1:22-23

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. GALATIANS 3:26

And if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. ROMANS 8:17

And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth. REVELATION 5:10

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. REVELATION 21:2



02. THROUGH THE CHURCH

After the Lord's ascension, the church's focus was the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer. They lived in one accord while ministering to the needs of others. This living produced favour with God and men. People were being saved daily and thereby added to the church.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. **And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.** Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and **sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.** So continuing daily with **one accord in the temple**, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord **added to the church** daily those who were being saved. ACTS 2:37-47

Through the Church

1. Truth (apostles' doctrine)
2. Fellowship
3. Breaking of bread
4. Prayer
5. One accord
6. Meeting practical needs
7. Favour with men
8. Added to the church

We often think that *we* are able to manufacture the spectacular. If something (for example, a ministry or an audience) is bigger in size or grander in scope many will mistakenly claim that God's power must be the driving force behind it. However, it would be difficult to top the acts of Christ, given that the comments from the onlookers were "We never saw anything like this (Mark 2:12)!"

By dwelling in and working through His many sons, the church, God can be ministering in multiple places at one time. What an effective *organism* the Lord's body is. Recall that in his various letters to the church, Paul refers to the many parts of the body and

emphasizes that all have their usefulness (for example, see I Corinthians 12). It is of utmost importance to discover the way in which His body should work so we may practice that which pleases Him. In doing so, the church will be effective and at the same time realize that His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:30).

On Assignment

God has chosen to work through His people, in order to care for and encourage others to be reconciled to Him. As His ambassadors, we are to be regularly sent by Him on assignment in order to bring His comfort and supply to meet practical needs.

Such assignments are to be carried out under the headship of the Holy Spirit in the life of each priest. Every believer is a priest (1 Peter 2:9) and is a member of His body. The Head of the body, which is Christ, is desiring to demonstrate His care for people through His Spirit which indwells all believers. He desires that we respond to His leading and thereby

Through the Church

carry out His good work(s) toward a particular person or people.

This working of the Spirit within the body is personal and intimate. It calls for definitive participation and continual self-sacrifice in the life of each believer. Unfortunately, we have relegated the body of Christ into two classes – *the clergy and laity*. There is no biblical support for such a class distinction. Sadly, this distinction has served to nullify the function of the body and has relegated the church to the status of an organization run by a select few called the clergy. Yes, there needs to be order in the body but not preference based upon differing roles and spiritual gifts. The compartmentalizing of believers into second string roles has served to nullify the saints. The work of the ones gifted in leadership is to perfect the saints *to do the work of ministry* (Ephesians 4:11-12).

To change this thinking within the church requires a deep desire to honour God and His ways. We must leave behind what we so highly value, namely our great ideas and wisdom. Unfortunately, much of the

thinking within the church is mingled with large doses of personal pride and ambition. Many wish to exalt not only Christ but their own ministry as well.

Getting a Handle on It

God wants to empower and direct each believer to people He wishes to care for. This could be in the form of ministering the message of reconciliation, meeting practical needs, or in comforting and exhorting one another.

In each case, God is to be the source of the provision that each person receives. In practical terms, it follows like this. As we see needs we are not to subdue the compassion of our heart, but we are to give to others that which meets their needs. Do not be overly concerned with the perceived inadequacy of your resources. God has said throughout scripture that He will supply our needs and that He will ensure that we have the capacity for good works.

God will multiply your gift so that the person He sent you to will have their heart warmed and their need

Through the Church

met. As well, God will repay you and multiply your gift. He will then send you to another person with your “five loaves and two fishes”. Our contributions may seem like nothing compared to the overall need but simply give what He asks and let Him multiply it.

A Life in the Miraculous

This is the life to which every believer has been miraculously called, for His kingdom’s sake. You will become captivated by God’s work as you richly minister to others. Things that now seem so necessary in your life will fade in the brightness of seeing Him truly use you as He leads you from assignment to assignment. This forms the solid foundation of the abundant life that God has called us to.

How do I Start?

Simply tell the Lord that you want to live *His version of the abundant life* and that you willingly lay your life aside for His. When your spirit senses an opportunity to serve Him respond by saying “yes” to Him. You may also have to say “no” to the opposing thoughts

in your mind. Such contrary thoughts may include, “That money was for me!” or “I want to do something else right now” or “I have a better idea.” Recall that scripture instructs us to bring “every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Begin Today!

If you are struggling with this high calling, ask the Lord to give you His desire. See your life blossom into uncharted depths and richness. Your church life will blossom and grow much more important to you. Your oneness with God’s heart and your concern for eternal things will open God’s Word to you as perhaps never before. Don’t believe the enemy’s lies! He will attempt to tell you that you will never have any time for yourself or that your needs will not be met. Remember, the Lord’s yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:30). He has promised that He will supply all of your needs (Philippians 4:19).

Through the Church

Respond

As a situation arises and you sense it touching you, don't harden your heart. Rather, respond. You will likely have to *die to your own natural plans and wishes* in order to fulfill what God has placed upon your heart. It is this basic, don't make it more complicated than it has to be. Simply follow God's heart and in turn yours will be greatly blessed as He brings you into true kingdom work.

Enter the Battle

Reject fear and thoughts of unworthiness. God has not given us a spirit of fear (2 Timothy 1:7). We have been accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6) and He has given us all that we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). Enter the battle and receive the crown.

Die to Self

God's way is truly *death to self* on so many levels. This was clearly expressed by John the Baptist when he said, "He (Jesus) must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). To do God's work God's way requires us to see

TO HEAR WELL DONE

the need for a greater breaking of our fleshly independence and worldly thinking. We must not simply choose His ways but deeply desire them as well.

The path of self-sacrifice is very simple in its fundamentals. The difficult part is placing our Isaac on the altar when asked. We need faith like Abraham to believe God. The greatest things He asks us to offer Him will be righteously and lovingly handled by Him for His glory and for our good.



03. A BIBLICAL MODEL FOR GOOD WORKS

For decades I have witnessed the debate between Christians regarding the means of salvation.

Is salvation by grace? By good works? A combination of the two? To properly address the biblical model for good works, the remainder of this study will be divided into the following five sections:

TO HEAR WELL DONE

1. The vision for good works
2. The call of God to good works
3. The source of supply for good works
4. The evaluation of good works
5. The reward for good works

I. THE VISION FOR GOOD WORKS

The Bible clearly teaches that we are saved by grace alone, as we place our faith in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation is a gift from God. Unfortunately, many believers are weakened in their walk by not knowing for what they were saved. We are saved for more than just avoiding Hell and going to Heaven. Simply put, our personal walk with Christ does not culminate at salvation, it begins at salvation.

Teachers of the word have failed to inform believers as to why God created us in the first place. Think of it – Adam and Eve were created *before* the fall. For what purpose then were they created? To have a higher vision for the kingdom work, every believer must realize that redemption was made possible in

A Biblical Model for Good Works

order for us to be brought back to God's original and eternal purpose for us.

Scripture says where there is no vision the people run wild and "cast off restraint" (Proverbs 29:18). Most of the body of Christ that I have been exposed to for decades have very little vision beyond being saved and going to Heaven. God's vision is far greater than location. It entails a life in oneness with Him thereby enabling believers to carry out His will by His personal direction in their lives. Consider the following verses in this light.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. EPHESIANS 2:10

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. MATTHEW 5:16

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. JOHN 15:16

TO HEAR WELL DONE

Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. 2 TIMOTHY 2:21

Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. TITUS 2:14

This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. TITUS 3:8

Well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work. 1 TIMOTHY 5:10

Having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation. 1 PETER 2:12

But whoever (personal, not institutional) has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 1 JOHN 3:17

2. THE CALL OF GOD TO GOOD WORKS

Many Christians struggle to believe that the Lord desires to use them in a powerful way for His kingdom.

In this struggle, many see themselves as the so-called one talent saints. They possess no noteworthy giftedness – after all, they can't sing, teach a class, or lead the youth. Such saints are perennially hampered by feelings of uselessness. They are never really sure how they can fruitfully serve within the body of Christ. All of this confusion and despair leads to disinterest and disconnectedness amongst the saints in the church. By extension then, such believers typically experience this disconnectedness with the Lord Himself.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

1 John 3:17 does not refer to a program, or to a para-church ministry. It refers to *whoever has*.

A study of the word *brother** in this verse, seems to indicate a more general definition than simply a brother in Christ.

Donors or Doers

Herein lies a great chasm between God's way and the way we have attempted to do God's work. Sadly, most believers are relegated to be the donors, rather than to be the doers. The doers are the living members of the body of Christ who can have God touch their heart. When God touches our heart we are enabled to care for another human being, as directed by the Holy Spirit and not by a program.

*From Strong's Concordance: Brother⁽⁶⁰⁾, Greek: *adelfov adelphos* and *delphus* (the womb); brethren, brother 1) A brother, whether born of the same two parents or only of the same father or mother 2) Having the same national ancestor, belonging to the same people, or countryman 3) Any fellow or man 4) A fellow believer, united to another by the bond of affection 5) An associate in employment or office 6) Brethren in Christ 6a) His brothers by blood 6b) All men 6c) Apostles 6d) Christians, as those who are exalted to the same heavenly place.

A Biblical Model for Good Works

The hands of many leaders are not clean when it comes to properly equipping the saints for the work of ministry. We can continue in the way of our “new ox cart” or we can submit to His way, through the church, over which He is to be the Head. Those who lead God’s people will be held to a stricter measurement (James 3:1). This begs the question, “Whose kingdom are we building?”

It Has Never Been About Us

Leaders, we should be servants seeking to do the master’s bidding. In the church life, leaders are to equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12). In this regard will we hear “Well done” at the Bema seat, or will the so-called “fruit” of our ministry be burned up? It doesn’t get more sobering than this. Paul says we must all appear at the Bema (2 Corinthians 5:10) to have our works tested for God’s approval. If repenting is needed let’s do it now and go His way.

If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your

TO HEAR WELL DONE

hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs. Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,' and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the LORD against you, and it become sin among you. You shall surely give to him, and your heart should not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your works and in all to which you put your hand. For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land'.

DEUTERONOMY 15:7-11

The Tithe in the Old Testament

At the end of every third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates. And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do. DEUTERONOMY 14:28 -29.

A Biblical Model for Good Works

At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release of debts. And this is the form of the release: Every creditor who has lent anything to his neighbor shall release it; he shall not require it of his neighbor or his brother, because it is called the LORD's release. Of a foreigner you may require it; but you shall give up your claim to what is owed by your brother, except when there may be no poor among you; for the LORD will greatly bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance – only if you carefully obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe with care all these commandments which I command you today. For the LORD your God will bless you just as He promised you; you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you. DEUTERONOMY 15:1-6

God's Fast?

Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily, And delight to know My ways, As a nation that did righteousness, And did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God. 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have

TO HEAR WELL DONE

we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?’ In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers. Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high. Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the LORD? Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’ If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday. The

A Biblical Model for Good Works

LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. Those from among you shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In. ISAIAH 58:1-12

If I have kept the poor from their desire, Or caused the eyes of the widow to fail, Or eaten my morsel by myself, So that the fatherless could not eat of it (But from my youth I reared him as a father, And from my mother's womb I guided the widow); If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, Or any poor man without covering; If his heart has not blessed me, And if he was not warmed with the fleece of my sheep. JOB 31:16-20

Then all his brothers, all his sisters, and all those who had been his acquaintances before, came to him and ate food with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversity that the LORD had brought upon him. Each one gave him a piece of silver and each a ring of gold. JOB 42:11

TO HEAR WELL DONE

Meeting Needs: A New Testament Model

He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." LUKE 3:11

For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. ROMANS 15:26

They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do. GALATIANS 2:10

Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share. 1 TIMOTHY 6:18

But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. HEBREWS 13:16

Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. 2 CORINTHIANS 9:5

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

A Biblical Model for Good Works

As it is written: He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever. 2 CORINTHIANS 9:9

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. EPHESIANS 4:28

As it is written, He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack. 2 CORINTHIANS 8:15

In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility. TITUS 2:7

And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful. TITUS 3:14

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works. HEBREWS 10:24

3. THE SOURCE OF SUPPLY FOR GOOD WORKS

The scripture says, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). So much effort of the church today is

born of the flesh and thus must be maintained by the energy of the flesh.

The cloud of God's Glory that filled the original temple was symbolic of His presence with the people. Today God's presence is sadly mimicked by a cloud of dry ice in so-called worship services. The church has relegated itself to replicating the powerless and vain shows of the world.

Today it appears that God's people are mainly led by the "success" of the most recent fundraising efforts. Contrast this with the Lord saying to His sent ones to go and take nothing with them for provision (Luke 10). Our ideas of *practicality* are often a mask for the possibility that our work may be of ourselves and not inspired and supported by Him.

How often have you heard, "God has blessed greatly in our meetings – but now we are deep in debt"? This statement cannot be reconciled when held to the light of scripture. As we give our five loaves and two fishes in obedience, God is able to make all grace

abound toward us. He will grant us sufficiency in all things so that we may abound in every good work 2 Corinthians 9:8.

When a believer gives to others as God prompts him that believer is now poised to experience God's ongoing provision and replenishment. Not just for themselves mind you but also to enable them to have greater provision to be used by God. Any believer who has begun to walk with the Lord in living obedience to Him will not be dead or disinterested concerning the things of the kingdom of God.

Imagine the impact on our world if we were to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry in a living way.

Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. LUKE 6:38

TO HEAR WELL DONE

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. PHILIPPIANS 4:18-19

Five Loaves & Two Fish

There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many? Then Jesus said, Make the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost. Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world. JOHN 6:9-14

A Biblical Model for Good Works

Ananias Prays for Paul

“Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.”” ACTS 9:10

And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. ACTS 9:12-13

And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. ACTS 9:17

Cast Your Net

“So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped

TO HEAR WELL DONE

speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking." LUKE 5:1-6

A Piece of Money

"When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, "Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?" He said, "Yes." And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?" Peter said to Him, "From strangers." Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. "Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you."" MATTHEW 17:24-27

A Handful of Flour

"So she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in

A Biblical Model for Good Works

a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

For thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth.'

The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah. 1 KINGS 17:12,14,16

Nothing in the House

"A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the LORD. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves." So Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil." Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors – empty vessels; do not gather just a few. "And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones." So she went from him and shut the

TO HEAR WELL DONE

door behind her and her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured it out. Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not another vessel." So the oil ceased. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest." 2 KINGS 4:1-7

Not Enough

"Then a man came from Baal Shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, "Give it to the people, that they may eat." But his servant said, "What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?" He said again, "Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the LORD: "They shall eat and have some left over." So he set it before them; and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the LORD."

2 KINGS 4:42-44

Such as I Have

"Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask

A Biblical Model for Good Works

alms from those who entered the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them – walking, leaping, and praising God." ACTS 3:1-8

Giving Out of Poverty

"Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God." 2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-5

Then the Spirit Said to Philip

“Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near and overtake this chariot.” So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.” ACTS 8:29 -31

So the eunuch answered Philip and said, I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Acts 8:34 -35

4. THE EVALUATION OF GOOD WORKS

By teaching on the evaluation of the works of believers at the judgment seat of Christ I have been accused of teaching salvation by works. I do not fault the hearers so much. Rather, I lay the blame at the feet of those who stand in the pulpits and fail to deliver the whole council of God.

To preach the whole council of God will cause persecution in this life. However, he who fears the faces and is unwilling to speak the truth will have to answer

A Biblical Model for Good Works

for himself one day in the presence of our holy Lord. This, to me, is a much more sobering scenario.

Because so many dear saints believe that there will be no accounting of their actions they live without a proper fear of the Lord. Selfish and indulgent living is thus acceptable to many believers today because they are unaware that one day they must give an account to the Lord. So, is our activity motivated by the strength of our flesh or by the Holy Spirit's leading and empowerment? All of this will be accurately assessed at the Bema.

Each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 1 CORINTHIANS 3:13

For we must all appear before the judgment (Bema) seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.
2 CORINTHIANS 5:10

And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear. 1 PETER 1:17

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil. ECCLESIASTES 12:13-14

5. THE REWARD FOR GOOD WORKS

Jesus says in the book of Revelation, “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me” (Revelation 22:12). Salvation is for sinners but rewards are for saints. Rewards are God’s idea. We may not feel it is important; however, it is important to Him. As one reads through the Gospels the reality of rewards for faithful service is repeatedly emphasized. For example, in Matthew 25 we see that a servant’s faithfulness over that which was little resulted in being made ruler over that which was great.

The principle of rewarding faithful Christians is part of God’s economy. God’s reward for faithful service is not like that of a temporary crown. It does not need to be returned at a later date. Eternal rewards, like the good works that prompted them, have eternal value.

A Biblical Model for Good Works

Blessed is he who considers the poor; The LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. PSALMS 41:1

He who has a generous eye will be blessed, For he gives of his bread to the poor. PROVERBS 22:9

He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, And He will pay back what he has given. PROVERBS 19:17

And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward. MATTHEW 10:42

But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
2 CORINTHIANS 9:6

Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.
1 CORINTHIANS 3:8

If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 1 CORINTHIANS 3:14

Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. PHILIPPIANS 4:17

TO HEAR WELL DONE

And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

REVELATION 22:12

A Reminder

Recall that the prerequisite for doing good works is being justified by faith and receiving the gift of eternal life

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. TITUS 3:5

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. EPHESIANS 2:8-10

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. ROMANS 4:5

And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. ROMANS 11:6

A Biblical Model for Good Works

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. GALATIANS 2:16

After we are saved by His grace we are to live a life in Him – to be one with Him. As a servant labouring in His kingdom we are to heed His voice in order to carry out His good works. We are to minister on His behalf to a world needing His love and care.

***May we see and respond
to His purpose for us in this life.***

Such a calling is not reserved for a select few believers but for all who name His name and have His life. His plan is to work through us to meet the physical and spiritual needs of others. We are to be His ambassadors pleading with men to be reconciled to God.





04. AND AS YOU GO

Our Christian culture seems to be following a model of Christian life and ministry that cannot be found in scripture. Big shows. Big buildings. And even bigger debts. The church (primarily in North America that is) has been quietly conditioned to use the world's approach to meet the needs of others. Fundraising methods, many of them embarrassing and disgraceful, are often used for seeking support

TO HEAR WELL DONE

for projects under the banner of Christian ministry. Meanwhile, the average saint in the church is passed by, overlooked and truly nullified.

Today, believers are pressed to send their \$39.95 per month while remaining completely detached from the work. To enlist saints simply to provide funds for the next flashy project completely nullifies their highest calling.

The Lord would like to use each of His New Testament priests in a manner in which they could experience both His leading and His blessing in tangible ways. Saints are to be sent by the Lord, and by their spiritual authorities, in order to carry out His kingdom work using the resources in their hands. Believers should be personally involved in meeting needs, much like the good Samaritan (Luke 10).

Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness. 2 CORINTHIANS 9:10

And as You Go

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. ISAIAH 55:9

Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. JOHN 12:24

Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done. LUKE 22:42

As his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. 2 PETER 1:3

That you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. 1 THESSALONIANS 2:12

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 PETER 2:9

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps. 1 PETER 2:21

TO HEAR WELL DONE

Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. 1 PETER 3:9

But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. 1 PETER 5:10

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ROMANS 8:18

Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. LUKE 17:33*

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. REVELATION 12:11

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame. 1 PETER 2:6

*Psuche: From the Greek meaning soul, or soul life. The functions of the soul are thoughts, will, emotions and natural preferences.

And as You Go

For the Scripture says, Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame. ROMANS 10:11

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 1 JOHN 2:28

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

What we have embraced as impressive or successful in our churches and Christian organizations does not match the few examples from Christ's own experience, as shown below:

A Cave

And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. LUKE 2:7

Homeless

And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head. MATTHEW 8:20

TO HEAR WELL DONE

A Borrowed Room

Then you shall say to the master of the house, "The Teacher says to you, 'Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'" LUKE 22:11

A Borrowed Donkey

Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'" MATTHEW 21:1-5

A Borrowed Tomb

Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken

And as You Go

the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. MATTHEW 27:57-60

Provision for Himself & His workers

Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities – Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance. LUKE 8:1-3

And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: Do not go into the way of

TO HEAR WELL DONE

the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food." MATTHEW 10:1-10

Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. MATTHEW 6:30-34

The following points summarize how a believer can progress from “point A to point B” in their desire for doing good works and experiencing God’s provision and blessing.

And as You Go

1. See the need
2. Open your heart
3. Provide what you have
4. Trust God to bless you
5. See God's provision for you
6. Men will glorify God

**Repeat
the process
each time
you "See"**

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. EPHESIANS 2:10

Good and acceptable and perfect will of God

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

ROMANS 12:2

***The parameter for good works in the
life of a believer: "And as you go"***

Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal

TO HEAR WELL DONE

the sick. And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them." So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. LUKE 9:1-6

After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come

And as You Go

near to you.' But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.'" LUKE 10:1-11

And as You Go

Our call is to preach the gospel of the kingdom. The Lord is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). The gospel becomes the motivation for conducting the good works that we have been ordained to walk in.

In Matthew 10:7 the Holy Spirit says, "And as you go, preach, saying 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.'" Our primary objective needs to be the proclamation of the good news! In our course of ministering the gospel we are then called to do the good works. Matthew 10:8 says, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give."

TO HEAR WELL DONE

There have been two schools of thought on how the church can minister to the needs of others. One school emphasizes *good works* and the other *pure evangelism*. If we focus only on good works people will be cared for in their human life but still will end up in the Lake of Fire because they have not repented from their sin. Conversely, by focusing only upon preaching the gospel we fail to minister the daily love and care demonstrated by our Savior which He commands us to continue to do.

*His complete heart –
the gospel with good works!*

Recall that Jesus read the following scripture in the synagogue: “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD (Luke 4:18-19).”

And as You Go

The preceding scripture is to be carried out in conjunction with the direction given by the Lord to the lawyer who was concerned about who his neighbour was. Christ directed the lawyer to do as the “good Samaritan” did – to love his neighbour as himself. Together these scriptures show God’s care for the people He created and gave Himself for. We may summarize the biblical approach as follows: “As you go” preach the gospel of the Kingdom and as you “see” needs don’t harden your heart! Give – while trusting the Lord. “See” Him multiply your small offering. “See” Him replenish your resources for the next assignment. “See” favour bestowed upon you from other people and “see” the Lord add to the church daily those being saved.





05. A GODLY STEWARDSHIP

God's design is for man to work. This was the biblical norm before and after the fall. To ignore this is to rebel against God's ways.

Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it GENESIS 2:15.

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it' cursed is the

TO HEAR WELL DONE

ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.” GENESIS 3:17-19

From time to time people fall into need due to difficult economic times, sickness, famine, war, death and personal disobedience to God’s ways. During these times God requires it of His people to care for those in need by providing Godly instruction, physical help and practical needs.

God’s Discipline & the Devourer

For I am the LORD, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. Yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. “But you said, ‘In what way shall we return?’ Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the

A Godly Stewardship

storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” says the LORD of hosts; “And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land,” says the LORD of hosts. MALACHI 3:6-12

Obey the Voice of the Lord

*Except when there may be **no poor among you**; for the LORD will greatly bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance – only if you carefully **obey the voice of the LORD** your God, to observe with care all these commandments which I command you today. DEUTERONOMY 15:4*

FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD WORKS

If we are going to properly carry out the good works that God has prepared for us we need to follow the only approach – the biblical approach.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

The scripture reveals various causes for people being impoverished. For us to truly help these people we need to perform a diagnosis of their situation in order to give them the correct help.

To be effective in our stewardship, five criteria are provided to assist us in diagnosing the needs of others. This will take some time on our part. As well, we will need to have true love for the person (or people) God has placed in our path. Don't look for a quick fix so you can get on with your life. Such opportunities will provide you with additional occasions to die to yourself. We must minister the "oil and the wine" from a true heart of compassion.

To properly minister life and love to those He leads us to we now introduce the following five characteristics that detail how God may work thru us.

1. OUR SERVICE IS TO BE PROPORTIONAL

For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have. For I do not mean that others should be eased

A Godly Stewardship

and you burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack – that there may be equality. As it is written, “He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.”

2 CORINTHIANS 8:12-15

2. OUR SERVICE IS TO BE PERSONAL

But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 1 JOHN 3:17

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion.

LUKE 10:33

(i) True seeing is to have genuine deep compassion.

This compassion is God's heart in the situation. If God is compassionate for the situation He will provide us with the discernment as to how to help. We simply need to be *willing*.

Our part may be to meet an immediate need or to provide longer term assistance. The latter situation

will sometimes necessitate getting other believers involved so as to share the load!

(ii) Don't harden your heart.

We must sense the Lord's heart in order to sense His compassion directing us. If we harden our heart we will miss the assignment. We will then not hear "Well done" concerning this opportunity to minister.

Now in the fourth year of King Darius it came to pass that the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, on the fourth day of the ninth month, Chislev, when the people sent Sherezer, with Regem-Melech and his men, to the house of God, to pray before the LORD, and to ask the priests who were in the house of the LORD of hosts, and the prophets, saying, "Should I weep in the fifth month and fast as I have done for so many years?" Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, "Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me – for Me? When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink for yourselves? Should you not have obeyed the words which the LORD proclaimed through the former prophets when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous, and the South and the Lowland were

A Godly Stewardship

inhabited?” Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother.’ But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. Therefore it happened, that just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts. “But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that no one passed through or returned; for they made the pleasant land desolate.” ZECHARIAH 7:1-14

(iii) Give what you have

For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have. 2 CORINTHIANS 8:12

TO HEAR WELL DONE

If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows. 1 TIMOTHY 5:16

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 TIMOTHY 5:8

Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." ACTS 3:6

(iv) What you give will be replaced by the seed Giver! But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever." Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-11

A Godly Stewardship

Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. LUKE 6:38

(v) Men will glorify God for your good works

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

MATTHEW 5:16

3. OUR SERVICE IS TO BE PERIODIC

For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:16-19

Note that the church in Philippi sent gifts *once and again* to meet Paul's needs. These gifts were not perpetual.

Other scriptural examples of periodic help include:

- Caring for the Hellenistic Jewish widows (Acts 6)
- For the saints in Jerusalem through a collection sent from believers in Macedonia and Achaia (Romans 15:25-26)

4. OUR SERVICE IS TO BE PROVISIONAL

There are provisions or conditions that must be in place which, if they are absent, should restrict the providing of goods. Help should not be provided to lazy, or spiritually dreamy people who are actually referred to as “disorderly” in the scripture. To not work, when one is able, is to be disorderly.

But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should

A Godly Stewardship

follow us. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good. And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:6-15

But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. And these things command, that they may be blameless. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, well reported for good works: if she has brought

TO HEAR WELL DONE

up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work. But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith. And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not. Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some have already turned aside after Satan. 1 TIMOTHY 5:4-15

5. OUR SERVICE IS TO BE PERPETUAL

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. JAMES 1:27

To visit the widows and orphans here does not mean to put them on our visitation list but to provide what they really need. Widows (keeping in mind 1 Timothy 5:4-15) and orphans comprise a category of truly poor people that need perpetual care.

A Godly Stewardship

The biblical pattern:

Then the king (David) said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?" And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son (Mephibosheth) of Jonathan who is lame in his feet."

2 SAMUEL 9:3

So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet.

2 SAMUEL 9:13

The real poor are those who are truly unable to care for themselves. Perpetual care should be for those who, due to illness or infirmity, make it impossible for them to work and have no cure apart from God's healing.

The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. MATTHEW 11:5

Where ever possible, the perpetually poor should be taken care of by family. In large measure we have abandoned this biblical pattern and have opted for institutional care. Many opt out of the sacrificial

TO HEAR WELL DONE

approach because they wish for their lives to be unencumbered by such people.

But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. 1 TIMOTHY 5:4

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 TIMOTHY 5:8

Recap:

We need to properly (i.e., biblically) diagnose the true needs of others and understand why their needs have arisen. When we see our neighbor in need our heart of service is to be one or more of the following:

1. Proportional
2. Personal
3. Periodic
4. Provisional
5. Perpetual

A Godly Stewardship

Looking at need and poverty from a biblical point of view enables us to discern God's sovereignty and man's responsibility.

When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." JOHN 11:4

For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 1 CORINTHIANS 11:30

Throughout Scripture we see God dealing with men based on their obedience, or rebellion, to His ways. We need to learn to exercise Godly discernment as to the causes of one's plight so that we can render the most effective help. Scripture reveals that there are reasons for the circumstances we find ourselves in. Our culture erroneously thinks that throwing more and more money at the problem, or better educating people, will be the solution.

We must come to realize two things. First, society has embarked on a course which is unsustainable. Second, even though we may ignore God, He is still

TO HEAR WELL DONE

holding us accountable to His ways. In Deuteronomy, the Lord implied that it was possible for there to be no poor in the land of Israel; however, it hinged on whether or not they would fully obey Him.

We must cry out to the Lord, repent and embrace His basic principles for life. Then He will answer, forgive our sin and heal our land (2 Chronicles 7:14). We must be much more proactive in pointing people to their biblical responsibility to work, to provide for their own and to be ready to be used by the Lord to meet the legitimate needs of others. In doing so, believers will bring glory to God. Our humble response will demonstrate God's kingdom life to the world. People will see that we are accomplishing the good works He has prepared for us.

The Word says, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also will reap (Galatians 6:7)." So, let us sow to the Spirit good works. In this way we will bring Him glory and honor. Then we will hear from Him, "Well done."



STORIES OF HIS WAYS

The following pages provide a few stories demonstrating God's ways and His working in my life.

These personal accounts give me an opportunity to share my joy and excitement of seeing Him work and of being used by Him in His kingdom. They are meant to ignite in the reader a vision, a hope and a purpose in His kingdom service. Such a vision will permanently motivate you to pursue Him!

A Farmer's Care

My teen years in the 1960s were spent growing up on our family farm. It was a place of hard work. The summer months were especially busy with planting, weeding and preparing for the harvest. Getting time away from the farm to do anything else was nearly impossible. For many reasons, not all spiritual, I desired one summer to attend a bible camp. I looked forward to having camp breakfasts consisting of toast and corn flakes, as the only item on our breakfast table was oat meal – 365 days a year. I also desired to have a break from the unending pace of summer farm work as the main non-hired hand.

To reduce costs, my dad worked and shared equipment with another farmer. As a result of their interaction I also spent time with this farmer during the summer months. The farmer became aware of my desire to go to camp and felt some pity on me because of the arduous summer work schedule. One day the farmer told my dad that if he would allow me to go to camp he would come every day and do the work that

Stories of His Ways

I would typically be responsible for. Each day while I attended camp this farmer was at my dad's farm fulfilling his promise to carry my load. This was in spite of the fact that he had a larger farm than my father. Folks, that's putting your money where your mouth is. Thank you Wade and thank you Lord Jesus for someone who did not simply pass me by but compassionately stopped and picked up my burden.

A Pacing Lady

Leaving the train station in Minneapolis, MN for Vancouver, BC was the biggest adventure this country farm boy had ever been on. Along with my friend Marshall, I had boarded the train for the purpose of attending bible college in Vancouver. Marshall and I had developed a close friendship as we had recently spent much time traveling and singing gospel music together. We had the privilege of recording an album in Chicago in the late 1960s and were accepted to attend bible college for the winter term.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

As my parents and I parted at the station they reiterated their non-support for me. There would be no money coming from them. As the train slowly left the station I desired to leave my difficult past behind but such memories would not be easily forgotten.

Having never been on a train I was unable to fully grasp the distance we were about to travel. The trip seemed to continue on into eternity. As the train pulled out of Seattle, WA a new passenger, a woman, boarded. As the trip progressed I noticed her slowly pacing up and down the aisle as if looking for something. After some time she stopped at my seat and inquired, "Young man where are you going?" Being painfully shy I was startled and I looked at her with an expression as though I must have done something wrong. I told her that my friend and I were going to Vancouver to attend bible college. Immediately following my remark she said "You are the ones I've been looking for." She proceeded to tell us that the Lord had impressed upon her that there was some one on the train she was to give some money to. It turned

out that she had been pacing the aisle trying to sense the Lord's direction. This event on the train began a lifetime of seeing God work in miraculous ways to demonstrate His power via His faithful saints.

A Timely Envelope

Bible school and my early years of marriage proved to be challenging in many ways, not the least of which was in the area of finance. More than once the Lord demonstrated His provision; however, one particular occasion had a dramatic impact on my new wife and I.

The end of the month takes on a different tone when you are poor and unsure how the rent will be paid. My wife was in nurse's training and I was a full time student. I tried to find part time work, however, it was something that was not readily available. Eventually the day came and the rent was due. We did not have the money. Canada Post was used by the Lord to deliver an envelope containing a note and a sum of U.S. money. We did not know the people who sent

the envelope but the note said that our names were given to them and that the Lord had burdened them to send a certain sum of money. In their note they added, “We hope this sum meets your need and is timely.” Indeed it was. After conversion to Canadian dollars the sum turned out to be the amount needed to pay the rent. My wife and I sat down and gently placed the note and the money on the table as we ate dinner. Tears welled up in our eyes and our heart was filled with gratefulness for God’s power demonstrated through His body, the church. This was another clear example to me of God’s living members being faithful in carrying out His good works.

A Moldy Meal

We need to care for one another as we desire to be cared for because our good works as believers are to express God’s character and heart. The story I am about to relate to you taught me the lesson that I am to give my best to the Lord – not what I wish to throw away.

Stories of His Ways

One night there was a knock on the door of the little basement suite in which my wife and I were living. Upon opening the door we found a man from our church standing there and in his hand he held a brown paper bag. He told us that he was about to throw out some leftover food from his store until he had thought of my wife and I. He gave us the bag, we thanked him and he left. As we opened the contents of the bag we discovered some meat pies that had various levels of mold on them. At this time I determined to never give second best in the good works my Lord would call me to do.

A Money Box

The mail box at bible college was a place where students would frequently go looking for a letter from family to comfort them in their loneliness. Many of these students were away from home for the first time; however, my story is not so much about letters as it is about money.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

One Friday afternoon I was called into the Dean of Students office and was informed by the Dean that I should leave school to find steady work. I was newly married and, in their thinking, bible college was not the place for newly married, financially strapped, young couples.

I was young and perhaps not that wise or tactful in my response. Notwithstanding I spoke that which was in my heart. I replied to the Dean, "If God cannot provide for His work then He is not worth working for." I immediately received a sharp rebuke for this comment and was warned to no longer speak this way.

After chapel on Monday of the following week I went to the mail box as did everyone else. In my mail box was a clean white envelope. I opened the envelope and discovered a twenty-dollar bill. On Tuesday I received a second white envelope containing another \$20. This happened every day that week.

God again showed Himself faithful and worthy of my service. Again He had used His body to do good

works and thereby bring glory to Himself. Our mail box had become a money box. Praise Him.

Two for Twenty

My wife and I regularly attended prayer meeting while in college. During these meetings we would gather to consider a portion of scripture and to pray. This was a “good Baptist church” so there was an offering taken every time you got together. This is where my story really begins.

Do you remember the two dollar bill? Before the toonie coin replaced the two dollar bill in circulation, it was a red-coloured Canadian bill. This bill represented all of our worldly wealth on this particular evening. As the plate went past I felt the Lord pressing me to give the money. My first thought was “But that’s all we have.” In that brief moment I also concluded that if we were only two dollars away from starvation then let’s bring it on. I placed the two dollar bill in the plate and the prayer meeting went on. After the meeting concluded and we were getting

ready to leave, an elderly saintly lady came up to me indicating a desire to shake my hand. As I extended my hand to hers she grasped mine. As our hands met I felt something placed into my hand. Not knowing what was going on I removed my hand from her grip and slipped what I thought to be a note into my pocket. Upon checking later, the note turned out to be a twenty dollar bill! This saint made herself available that night to do His good work in such a sweet and loving way. Praise Him.

Toilets for Tuition

While in bible college work eventually came in the form of toilets! Toilets – plugged, full and running over. I was given the opportunity to clean up the mess of my fellow students. I was grateful for God's provision as it met our immediate needs. I was now in a place to do good works for my fellow class mates in the most unpleasant of ways. I quickly learned the valuable lesson to do things "as unto the Lord and not unto men." Toilets for tuition. For His glory and to

fulfill the good work He had planned for me. Thank you Lord Jesus.

The Master's Touch

Do you believe in healing? Is it for today? There are many theological debates on this subject. Well, I have a story of healing! The following story exemplifies the need for the reality of Christ's power in our daily lives. We must believe Him, not simply in an intellectual manner, but in the reality of our heart.

As several of my stories have revealed already, my wife and I were quite poor while attending college. One day I needed gas to go to school but all I had was a gas coupon worth 15 cents. I pulled into a nearby gas station with the intention of using this coupon. Now you have to recall that in this era there were no self serve pumps. I would have to humbly present this coupon to the gas attendant. I did just that and informed the attendant "15 cents please!" I wish that I had a camera to capture the look on his face as he awkwardly squirted in 15 cents worth of fuel.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

Now back to my healing story. On the way home from the gas station the car was running very poorly and was jerking and backfiring. Not having any money for a fix or for a tow I pressed on. While driving on an uphill off-ramp to go into Vancouver I cried out to the Lord in desperation, “I have no money and I don’t know if I will get up the hill. Lord, will you please heal my car?” I placed my hand on the dash while looking to Him. At that very second the car began to run perfectly and never again gave me such trouble. Healing is for today. Thank you Jesus!

The Flip Side of Life

It was an old pet shop in which the floor had not been cleaned in years, or so it seemed. This was to be the new home of a youth drop in centre that I was ministering in. I had decided to call the centre, the Flip Side Inn. The location was ideal as it was near a number of large high schools in New Westminster, BC. We fixed up the old pet shop so that it would have the feel of a little coffee shop. Our goal was to share the gospel with all who would come in. To facilitate this

we opened the youth centre daily from 4 pm to midnight and served pop, coffee and doughnuts at low prices. Pop for a dime was the going price. During these busy days I also worked at a Mac's convenience store from midnight to 8 am to pay my family's bills. This job, combined with the frequent generosity of the Lord's people, enabled my wife and I to minister the gospel to many, many youth. To God be the Glory, great things He has done!

Pizza Anyone?

"Pizza anyone?" This was the cry coming from a car driving past our newly established youth drop in centre, the Flip Side Inn. This second drop in centre was located in Burnaby, BC. It was a good location for such a ministry. At the time the surrounding neighborhoods had the highest juvenile delinquency rate in the province of BC.

Excited for what we thought was a provision of the Lord we cooked the pizzas and fed every kid that was at the drop in. As the pizzas were being gratefully

eaten we discovered that the pizzas had been stolen from a local grocery store. This experience taught me to use more discernment when receiving such miraculous provisions. I learned a valuable lesson.

You Called – You Pay

Maybe you're okay with physical healing being for today. But how about the reality of *demonic warfare*? Are such topics only relevant for missionaries in the darkest of Africa or other such places? Well, let me tell you a story involving demonic oppression. This incident taught me to do my good works as unto the Lord and not unto men.

We had been dealing with a lady who had demonic activity in her life. These pages simply do not allow for all of the details – she was in a very bad way.

One night I was at home and the phone rang. Upon answering the phone there was a guttural voice on the other end. It was a demon speaking through this girl. The voice on the phone said, "We have her and we are going to take her with us!" I immediately hung

up the phone, jumped in my car and drove for about thirty minutes to where she lived. When I arrived at her dwelling I tried the door and discovered it to be unlocked. Upon entering I discovered this lady passed out on the couch. Several empty pill bottles were there beside her. I called the ambulance and rode in the back with her. I was scared stiff. Not just because of what had transpired, but also because of what had occurred with her on several previous occasions. Upon arriving at the hospital the medical staff pumped her stomach and observed her for a time. After several days had passed this same lady walked indignantly into our drop in centre. After locating me she plopped the bill for the ambulance on the table and smugly said “You called them, you pay it.”

All Aboard

A very interesting chain of events in my life began with an invitation to speak at a long weekend retreat in northern BC. The retreat was held in a large log house in a logging community. Attending the retreat was a collection of youth and some of their parents.

TO HEAR WELL DONE

This little community only contained a handful of believers and it was clear that they were struggling to move forward with the Lord. As it turned out I was not even this remote community's preferred choice for guest speaker. The man that was originally called to minister felt too ill-equipped to speak at which point I was then asked.

In spite of the circumstances the Lord accomplished some wonderful works in the lives of these people. As the weekend drew to a close and I prepared to depart, many attendees shared concerning the goodness of the Lord and how they had been blessed because of the meetings.

A couple of weeks after the retreat I received a letter of gratefulness from the community along with a stunning request – *Would I come and be their pastor?*

This unexpected invitation also contained some very alarming caveats: they could not pay, the living conditions were difficult and there was no vacancy in the community. Nevertheless, would I come?

Such a move would obviously cause huge changes in my young family's life. We would have to close the drop in centres and head directly into the unknown. If things weren't interesting enough, my wife was pregnant with our third child. Our oldest child was not yet three. We diligently prayed and held this request before the Lord. Finally, after fellowshiping with some older brothers in the Lord we felt unanimous that it was of the Lord that we should go.

*People need to see the fragrance of His
reality in us as we do His good works
by stepping out in faith.*

Before officially moving I first made a "reconnaissance" trip to this community. It was about a seven hour drive from where we were currently living. Upon arriving I discovered that, indeed, there was no suitable place to live with the exception of an old railroad box car probably dating from the 1920s or so. It was sagging in the middle and was in a very undesirable

TO HEAR WELL DONE

condition. I first set to work to level her and install some windows. I finished by constructing some cupboards from materials that I could scrounge. On the plus side we did have running water – if we ran for it!

My family moved in and we began to serve. Soon thereafter the Lord opened up a job for me. I assisted a man who was building his house. Other odd jobs provided a means for us to serve in this community. From initially ten people in our gathering we quickly grew to about ninety five in nine months.

When He calls, we must simply obey. He will provide as we go. I believe we have largely lost this approach in the church today. Fundraising and support raising, etc. are the supposed requirements of God's provision today. Where is our powerful and capable God in such tactics? Theology is insufficient. People need to see the fragrance of His reality in us as we do His good works by stepping out in faith.

Go West, Young Man

The University of British Columbia was west of where we lived and was exactly where I was asked to go by the leadership of the church that I attended. They desired that our family move out there to reach the university students with the gospel. Now you have to realize that by this time in my life I had acquired a newly renovated, and comfortable, family home. This move would require that we sell our house and relocate to some student housing (i.e., nearly slum housing) on the campus. Desiring to be in submission to our spiritual authorities we said “Amen” to their request and sold our house in preparation to move.

*Some of the good works He calls
us to will cost us a hefty price
(not just financial).*

Can you guess what happened next? Within months of selling our house for \$54,000, the Vancouver real estate market took off. The house we had sold

TO HEAR WELL DONE

increased in value to about \$300,000 within six months. I would be lying if I said that I did not struggle over this. My thoughts went something like: “Lord what happened? I left to serve you and someone else gets the profit.” This hurt for a long time. Eventually I decided that instead of looking back I would choose to trust the Lord’s promises.

God promises to be faithful. Some of the good works He calls us to will cost us a hefty price (not just financial). Sometimes believers are unwilling to pay such a cost. Many times we can spin a very good story that assists us in avoiding God’s call. In fact, you can expect many other believers to support you in resisting God because they don’t want to pay the price either. However, unwillingness leads to leanness in our spiritual walk. Fearing spiritual leanness more than leanness in my earthly bank account enabled me to once again say, “Amen Lord, I will follow.”

*If you see your brother in need and
shut up your bowels of compassion how
dwells the love of Christ in you?*

From Triple Panes to Tickets

Good works can rarely flow from us without first dying to ourselves and to our plans. This leads to my next story. We had been saving for some new triple pane windows in our Winnipeg home and had by this time saved a fair sum of money. Just at this time we became aware of another believer whose mother was dying in a far away country. This believer's family had no money for the plane tickets that they needed in order to get back home. When we were made aware of this situation we felt compassion well up in us for this believer's plight. "Heart trouble" also instantly developed in me. I felt the Lord tapping our family to use the triple pane money to purchase the plane tickets. I began to reason from my flesh: "We have saved

the money for these windows. With our cold winters it's a valid need in Winnipeg."

Despite my reasoning no peace came. In addition, the scripture was sounding out loudly in my mind: "If you see your brother in need and shut up your bowls of compassion how dwells the love of Christ in you?" I saw the need and my heart had compassion but I was trying to justify my fleshly preferences in my mind. It wasn't working. I yielded to the Lord and bought the plane tickets. I realized that I needed to be a member of the body of Christ that was willing to be used to meet a brother's need. God wants to use His people, not just faceless organizations. Have you ever struggled with this type of heart trouble? This is often exactly where the Lord's good works die!

The Land is Worth What?

Our heavenly Father is no debtor to His saints! Perhaps at first glance we may not be able to see this but over the years of following Him the trail of His faithfulness can be clearly seen.

Stories of His Ways

A number of years ago we purchased a piece of valuable property for a very low price. Around this time I felt quite burdened from the Lord to be free of any debt in order to have more freedom in our finances to serve others. Even with this “gift” of land, ridding ourselves of our mortgage debt still appeared impossible. I was extremely busy, working and pastoring full time. In addition, we were also in the midst of raising our young children. My odds of paying off our mortgage quickly was equivalent to that of me successfully scaling a mountain peak. Not very likely. I did not want to work more hours to earn more cash.

Now back to the property. In a brief period of time this property increased four times in value. We were able to sell it and pay off our mortgage! To God be the glory. In addition, the house without the new triple pane windows eventually sold for double our purchase price. Believe and trust Jesus. He is faithful.

It's a New Car

A man I knew was going through very difficult financial hardships and was in danger of losing his house and his leased van. He required a van to do his job so his was a very pressing situation. Eventually the tow truck came and impounded the leased van. This left my friend without a vehicle.

These events deeply troubled me and I wondered what would become of his family. Then it happened. The Lord spoke to me and said “Buy him a car.” Oh boy. (Why do we always struggle over these little requests from the Lord?) By God’s grace I yielded to Him and found a car for this certain man. I purchased it and personally delivered it to him. Oh saints, it was a joy finding myself being used by God to do the good works He has prearranged for me.

An Air Mail Letter

I want to preface the following story by saying that at the time it unfolded I was earning good money in sales and was pastoring full time. Things were going

well and all of my needs were met. Yet the Lord had further plans for me.

One day an airmail letter arrived from another country. I am not sure if I had ever received an overseas airmail letter until this one. My mother happened to be visiting at the time and was sitting in the living room as I opened it. My curiosity was piqued, "Who could this be from?" Inside the envelope was a letter from a brother whom we had previously cared for during his university years as a foreign student. His letter expressed his grateful heart for the kindness we had displayed to him. He proceeded to say that he was now a successful businessman and wanted to bless us with a gift of money. Enclosed in the envelope was an international money order. I remember saying to my mother, "It's an international money order for \$2,500." As my mother conveyed her excitement to me I took a second look at the cheque. The sum I had told her was incorrect. I gasped and told my mother, "I was wrong, the cheque is for \$25,000." I was instructed by this brother to use the money wherever the Lord saw fit.

From this experience I learned that God is faithful to replenish my resources so that I may be able to do all of the good works that He has prepared beforehand for me.

Your House is Burning

The fire department called me one day to say that the house owned by our church had caught fire and was burned beyond salvage. Before the fire, our intent was to renovate the house in order to make it usable for church activities.

After the fire I received a bill for the fire department's work in boarding up the burned house. Along with this bill I also received a directive that instructed our church to demolish the house, disconnect the water and gas and level the lot area. We discovered that these expenditures would come to about \$3,500.

How would the church pay? Once again the Lord told me "You pay!" By now I was learning His kingdom's way. I did not have to worry. He would replenish abundantly.

I want your Business!

In the late 1990s I had become a successful jewelry salesman. I owned my own business and sales were strong. It was about this time that the Lord revealed a new plan for my life. I received a call to pastor another church. For the first time in my life I would actually be paid for pastoring. I was a bit unsure what to do with my jewelry business. Should I try to somehow manage it on the side? While I was wrestling with these issues I received a call from a man. He said, "I want to buy your business. I will pay you for your inventory, as well as a healthy sum for the intrinsic value of your business." Wow. A sure pattern had developed in my life. When the Lord asked of me, He more than returned to me. His reality in my life was becoming even more evident.

Acres and Acres

Forty years of marriage had never yielded my wife and I the release in our spirit to live in the country. We both had been raised in a rural setting and we still retained a desire for the wholesome atmosphere

of garden growing and country living. However, we had never felt His smile on returning to this lifestyle so we remained in the city.

While on a drive one spring day to buy some ice cream with my wife, I saw a hand painted sign advertising an acreage for sale. The sign looked like grandpa had painted it with some weeds for a quill. A bit intrigued, we commented on the sign but drove on.

The next time we passed that way the sign was still there and our interest was now piqued. Given that we were so close to the city we mused that the land could surely not be around here. Being curious we quickly did a u-turn and entered a dirt driveway that led into a heavily treed yard. Just while I was thinking that this could not be the place some people suddenly appeared from a nearby house. I said to my wife, "Let's get out of here before this place grows on us." However, by that time the people were nearing our car. So as not to be rude or to seem like we were up to no good we waited. We then politely inquired as to the location of the land. The shocking reply was

that the land was located “right here”, as they pointed to the back of the yard just behind some trees.

Now note this conversation took place in early May. Fast forward to August. We called to see if the property was still for sale. They said it had been conditionally sold, however, the financing had not gone through so the land was still available. I was amazed at the Lord’s timing. My wife and I had considered the Lord’s will concerning this property all summer. Now in this moment it seemed as if we had received the Lord’s smile to purchase the land – 21.44 acres to be precise.

It turned out that the land was appropriately zoned so that in the future it could be subdivided into lots. All of this, just 15 minutes from the city. Since we purchased this land its value has skyrocketed. The Lord had displayed His amazing provision once again!

Five Bedrooms

Arriving home late one night from my uncle's funeral in southern Minnesota we discovered a phone message from one of the saints in the church. Being quite tired we decided to wait until morning to deal with the voice mail.

In the morning we phoned our friends and were made aware of the following opportunity. They told us that they knew of some people who had an old 1,400 square foot house available for sale. Our friends had immediately thought of us. We went to look at the house and decided to purchase it for the sum of \$5,000. Not a bad price for the 21st century, I must say.

We had the house moved to our newly purchased acreage and placed it on a foundation. The Lord provided unbelievable building materials through auctions, material we could have never otherwise afforded. We fixed up the house and it is our present home. This property is worth several hundred thousand dollars as it is, and much more when it is subdivided.

Stories of His Ways

If you have read each of the preceding stories you will have observed God's pattern of *Give and it shall be given unto you*. This is His burden for His body – to bless others and to be blessed.

~Pastor Dave Loudon

So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time – houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions – and in the age to come, eternal life (MARK 10:29-30).





