

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **John 9:4.**
- B. From Roy H. Enoch (10-30-94).
- C. Work is an honorable and enjoyable thing.
 - 1. One who has not learned to enjoy working has not been properly trained, or matured.
 - 2. Work is also essential to be pleasing to God (2Th. 3:10-12).
 - 3. A Xian is to be characterized by good works (Ti. 3:14).
- D. We are to do our work with enthusiasm and the desire to do it well (Col. 3:23). We should be diligent in religious service (1Cor. 15:58).
- E. Each one has his own work to do (Mk. 13:34).
- F. Several factors in our work for God.
 - 1. There is a limited time to work.
 - 2. The Lord encourages us to work.
 - 3. We need to understand the nature of the work.
 - 4. We need to understand the relationship of faith to works.

I. THERE IS A LIMITED TIME TO WORK.

- A. Jesus says that work is necessary: **"I must work..."** (Jn. 9:4).
 - 1. It is boring and depressing to be idle and many are disappointed at (in) retirement.
 - 2. God does not give us an option of idleness.
- B. We must work **"...while it is day..."**
 - 1. Jesus describes the time for work as while it is day, while we still have life and health.
 - 2. Some want to do as they please while they are young, thinking that they can serve God in the frailty of old age.
 - 3. But if we refuse to serve him while we have the opportunity, we will lose it.
 - a. First, we will lose the desire.
 - b. Secondly, we may lose the opportunity or health.
- C. When the night comes **"...no man can work."**
 - 1. We have no idea when death will come.
 - 2. It comes to the young and the old.
 - a. We daily hear of some child dying.
 - b. Men die when in their prime of health.
 - c. The "elderly" sometimes die when they are feeling well.
 - 3. None of us have promise of tomorrow (Jas. 4:13-15).
- D. We are not to do the works of man, but of God.
 - 1. **"...I must work the works of Him who sent Me..."**
 - 2. Jesus did not come to do His own will (Jn. 5:30).
 - 3. He came to do the Father's will (Jn. 6:38).
 - 4. He was sustained by doing the Father's will, and so are we (Jn. 4:34).

II. THE LORD ENCOURAGES US TO WORK.

- A. As we have just seen, He gives us an example of putting the Father's work first.
- B. The Father's work will keep us "steadfast in the faith" (1Cor. 15:58).
 - 1. When we focus on God's work, we will be focused on His will, promises and blessings.
 - 2. It will cause us to "always abound" in our lives.
 - 3. What we "abound" in depends on what we focus on.
 - a. If we focus on the world and love it, we will perish w/the world.

- b. If we focus on God's will, we will abound spiritually.
 - 4. Therefore, let us abound "in the work of the Lord."
- C. Working for the Lord will help keep us out of Satan's employment.
 - 1. What wages does Satan pay? DEATH!!
 - 2. The Jews claimed to be "working for God" but they were not (Jn. 5:18).
- D. Working for the Lord will insure that our "labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1Cor. 15:58).
 - 1. Yet just believing IN GOD is in vain (Jas. 2:24).
 - 2. It is the obedient that are blessed (Rev. 22:14).

III. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE WORK TO BE DONE.

- A. Paul praised the kind of works that the Thessalonians had (1Th. 1:2-3, 8).
- B. The "work of faith" that is praised is the work that is taught in the gospel, or "the faith" which came by Jesus X.
 - 1. This is the reason Jesus emphasized teaching so much (Jn. 6:44-45).
 - 2. We must not only work by faith, but walk by faith (2Cor. 5:7).
- C. Our labor is to be in love, rather than compulsion. John defines loving God (1Jn. 5:3).
- D. Our labor is also to be w/patience in hope (Lk. 21:19; Heb. 6:19).

IV. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAITH AND WORKS.

- A. "Faith" is used in several ways in the NT.
 - 1. It is used to represent the "gospel" of X.
 - a. Paul contrasts those under "the Law" and those under "faith" (Rom. 3:27-31).
 - b. Paul contrasts the Law which was the "schoolmaster" or "tutor" to bring the Jews unto X with "the faith" which came that we might no longer be under "the Law" (Gal. 3:19-25).
 - c. See Jude 3.
 - 2. "Faith" is sometimes used to mean the act of complete trust or being persuaded.
 - 3. "Faith" can only be a mental concept that is neither trusted nor practiced (Jas. 2:20-26).
 - 4. So James describes "faith only" as being as dead as a corpse.
 - 5. Paul describes the faith of one who does not stay in the truth as vain or worthless (1Cor. 15:3).
 - 6. Faith sometimes means an obedient trust (Jn. 3:36).
- B. The word "works" is also used in several ways in the NT.
 - 1. It sometimes refers to sin as the "works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19-21).
 - 2. It may refer to law-keeping for justification, as in (Rom. 3:28).
 - 3. It may refer to the religious doctrines that come from men (Mt. 15:9; Eph. 2:9).
 - 4. Sometimes it refers to obedience to God's commands (Jas. 2:20-26).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. If we are going to be truly happy in life, we will have to learn to enjoy working, and especially doing God's work.
- B. We must realize that we have a limited time to work--don't put it off.
- C. X shows us how we should be dedicated the Fathers work.
- D. He shows the kind of faith we must have and the kind of works we are to do.
- E. Are you putting the work of God's kingdom first?
- F. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.