

TRUTH SERIES

VOLUME 2



WORK

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Thanks to the Creator of all things who has blessed us with work and,
through His beloved Son, showed us the proper way to perform it.

This book is dedicated to all workers of God on Earth.



“For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease. Though its root grows old in the earth, and its stump dies in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth branches like a young plant.” (Job 14: 7-9)



INTRODUCTION

Let's address one more subject in this series: work. For some people, talking about work is like we were talking about punishment because they have experienced this blessing given by God with the curse of the obligation, with the yokes of religiosity and the distortion of what responsibility is. Jesus came to earth and made the hard work in our place, which was the victory over death. Today, with Him as our business partner, we can do our work and our ministerial calling under His easy yoke and His light burden because the yoke of Jesus is the love with which we make His will.



Definitions of work:

In the dictionary, we can find the following definition of work, among others:

- 1) Applications of human faculties and forces to achieve a particular purpose.
- 2) Coordinated activity, of physical and / or intellectual nature, required to perform any task, service or enterprise.
- 3) The exercise of this activity as an occupation, trade or profession.
- 4) Task to be fulfilled.
- 5) Activity which aims at physical, intellectual or artistic improvement.
- 6) In physics: Work (represented by the Greek letter *tau*, τ) is the product of force by the displacement vector (vector means a directed line segment) from its point of application.

$\tau = \text{force} \times \text{displacement}$. This leaves understood that work involves energy expenditure. Going further: depending on the work we do, this energy expenditure can be physical, emotional, spiritual or all of them at the same time.

In this book I'll give some biblical meanings of work in the way the Spirit of God revealed to my heart. With the base of God's word, we can achieve our mission in a more cheerful and safe manner, throwing away the prejudice and the old learning and, thus, enjoy the blessing of the work that He has given us. See it as a way to be helpful to your fellow man, while it becomes a vehicle to lead you closer to the Lord, bringing you back to freedom of Eden. When we do our work with love and for the love of Jesus, everything begins to have His easy yoke and His light burden. The cross we carry respects our capacity. Beforehand, I can say: if there is excessive weight, there is sin causing oppression of the evil one, or there are human burdens being placed where they should not be.

May you be taught and freed by the Holy Spirit, helping you to seek the true purpose of the Lord and see the activity you have, whatever it is, as a blessing and a way to grow and prosper in all areas of your life.

I wish you the peace of the Lord!

Tânia Cristina

Notes:

- Words or phrases enclosed in brackets [] or parenthesis (), in *italics*, were placed by me, in most cases, to explain the biblical text, although some verses already contain them [not in italics].
- The version used here is the New Revised Standard Version, NRSV-1989 (1995)
- NIV = New International Version (it will be used in brackets in some verses to make it easier for readers to understand).
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LEARNING



God gave work to man:

• *Gen. 2: 15*: “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.”

Before anything else, even before creating the woman, God gave work to man. That’s because He knew that through it, Adam could bring home the provision; moreover, he would give continuity to His work, caring for what was created. Through work man would approach God.



Effort:

• *Gen. 3: 17-19*: “And to the man he said, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it’, cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

• *Matt. 11: 12*: “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force [NIV: From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven is forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it].”

With the fall of man by his sin, a real ‘bomb’ was placed in his hands: the curse of God. Before the fall of man, work was done in a light way, for God’s blessing was upon all creation. From the disobedience on and, consequently, the spiritual separation between the Creator and the man, work became to be done with effort. Jesus came to abolish this curse, since He left us His sacrifice as a way to return to our pleasant communion with the Father. When we surrender ourselves to Him and He becomes our Lord, He also becomes Lord of all that belongs to us, including our work. Although with human bosses, our supreme leader is Jesus, for everything we do we do for love of Him:

• *Matt. 11: 28-30*: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”



Applied force to bear fruit:

• *Ecc. 9: 10*: “Whatever your hand finds to do, do with your might; for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol [NIV, grave; this word, sheol, in Hebrew have some meanings: depths, dust or death], to which you are going.”

• *Prov. 10: 4*: “A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.”

- *Col. 3: 23-24*: “Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ.”

- *Prov. 13: 11*: “Wealth hastily gotten [*by illegal human means or even ‘legalized’, at the expense of the work of others*] will dwindle, but those who gather little by little will increase it.” cf. *Eccl. 5: 19*: “Likewise all to whom God gives wealth and possessions and whom he enables to enjoy them, and to accept their lot and find enjoyment in their toil—this is the gift of God.”

Let us explain better:

We have seen that the work implies a force that is placed to achieve a goal, to move something from its point of origin. So, if something in our life is barren, it is necessary to make effort to displace that sterility and make room to fertility. Only then we shall rejoice in the fruit of our work; and it is here on earth where we do this, because after we die there will be no need to do anything (*Eccl. 9: 10*). What I mean is that while we live, work is one of the ways used by God to perfect our salvation in Christ. Thus, we sow here on earth our place with Him in heaven, through our improvement and our correct choices. The greatest strength to be used to generate the fruit of peace and justice in the kingdom of God, whatever the job or profession, is love. Love is the only thing that will remain at the end of times because it’s about God Himself: “Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love” (*1 Jn. 4: 8*). Paul also confirms this, “Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end” (*1 Cor. 13: 8-10*).

The text of *Prov. 10: 4* not only refers to prosperity but it also speaks about God’s blessing on those that apply themselves to something, because to bear fruit it becomes necessary a force, a human endeavor. This brings His approval and His reward.

The bible is also against the goods that are easily earned [*Through illegal human means, or even ‘legalized’, at the expense of the work of others – Jer. 22: 13*], but it’s in favor those goods that are won by the endeavor of work (*Prov. 13: 11*). The bible adds that wealth is a gift from God, making clear the difference between what is gained with divine approval and what is gained from other sources, that is, what has not His support. Hence, it’s a bit strange to call work certain branches of professional activity where a person only manipulates or bargains with the money of others in order to have profit, since the ‘fruit’ are not so holy or so altruistic. Leaving aside all the philosophical and philanthropic human explanations on the subject, the bible says in *Jer. 17: 9-10*: “The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse – who can understand it? I the Lord test the mind and search the heart, to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.”



With God’s support the work becomes light; it is not a curse:

- *Deut. 8: 17-18*: “Do not say to yourself, ‘My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth’. But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.”

- *Matt. 11: 28-30*: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am

gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” *cf. Jer. 6: 16*: “Thus says the Lord: Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’”

- *Jn. 15: 1-5*: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”

- *Gal. 6: 1-5*: “My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor’s work, will become a cause for pride. For all must carry their own loads.”

Here let us stop and think. When Jesus says to come to Him who are weary, He refers to those who are tired because they were improperly taking their own loads (“For all must carry their own loads” – *Gal. 6: 5*). When He refers to being carrying heavy burdens [*NIV*, *burdened*], He is talking about those who are carrying the burdens of others in an excessive and improper way (“Bear one another’s burdens” – *Gal. 6: 2*). Where should we bear another’s burdens? To the throne of God through our intercession, putting and leaving there the weights of sin and human impositions with the One who is able to give a solution for them. He has already taken these loads and other burdens upon Himself on the cross of Calvary, placating the wrath of God the Father and suffering it in our place. Burden or load is something that comes from outside and that is placed on someone like an imposition, for example, the unjust religious and worldly laws, which limit people’s freedom to move under God’s direction; or else, the evil works of Satan, keeping them bound to his chains and bringing oppression, pain and suffering that are unnecessary. On the other hand, weariness refers to the personal responsibilities and personal obligations with which the person will have to deal with during his lifetime, developing the correct learning and the salvation. Because it depends on his free will, the person can put on or take upon himself the yokes and weights he wants. He doesn’t need to impose an unnecessary burden to himself; just to be humble and ask Jesus for His help and His forgiveness (“Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”). What He gives us to perform takes into account our capacity and respects it. Actually, our part is only to sow His holy seed in the hearts of those who are lost and let them exercise their own free will.

Likewise, it is the Lord who gives us strength to acquire wealth, so that the glory is only His and not ours. So bringing back to His House the tithes and offerings is a way to humble ourselves before Him and give Him our best, knowing that without Him we can do nothing. Without His permission, money does not reach our hands, however much intelligence, science and knowledge we have in our profession. We would not have also the strength to work. His promise given centuries ago remains faithful until today. Therefore, the opportunity to give the tithe and offerings in God’s work is a mechanism created by He Himself to avoid the arrogance of the world reaches our heart and we turn again to be slaves of the devil and the passions of our flesh.



To continue the Creation of God:

• *1 Cor. 3: 9*: “For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.”

Our work is a way of contributing to the creation of God, because when we produce something good and we bless someone, whether through our profession, with material fruit, or through our ministry, preaching the Word, we’ll be helping souls to be rebuilt; therefore, bringing the divine restoration. We will be working on the land (hearts) of others that God loves.



Occupation to favor others (blessing / reconciliation):

• *2 Cor. 5: 18-21*: “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Here Paul says, first, that Jesus reconciled us with God through the cross. In Greek the word ‘reconciliation’ is *katallagḗ*, καταλλαγή, Strong #2643, which means: *to change mutually, to compound a difference (adjustment of differences), restoration to divine favor* (the restoration of the favor of God to sinners that repent and put their trust in the expiatory death of Christ), *atonement, reconciliation, restoration to favor, working out differences so that the other may be favored*. It comes from the verb *katallásson* (2 Cor. 5: 18), καταλλάσσω, Strong #2644, meaning: *to change, exchange, reconcile*; according to Aristotle (4th century BC): *exchange; of the business of money-changers, exchanging equivalent values*.

Ministry (or *Deaconry* – *Diakonia*, in Greek) means ‘service, to favor someone, who promotes links between men.’ Often, reconciliation is the act of giving a word of comfort to the afflicted, restoring him to his original position of beatitude. It is to appease the moods, to bring love where there is strife and division. The anointing of reconciliation breaks the yokes, is fragrant to the nostrils of God, thus it rises as sweet incense to Him. It is a condition of service to God. Whoever serves Him (in church or in his secular work) must have this anointing. It’s way of blessing. No matter what kind of profession you exercise. If your aim is to help and clear the path for people, God will use your professional knowledge and material resources to bring improvement to other lives, that is, to adjust the differences, to ‘exchange currencies’, to reconcile with Him those who were separated from Him and teach them to reconcile themselves with their brothers. It’s to take away the sadness and give joy, to exchange the misery and poverty for the abundant supply and dignified life.



To lead to the achievement of a goal:

• *1 Cor. 9: 1-27*: “Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who at any time pays the expenses for doing military service? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not get any of its milk? Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law also say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain’. Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Or does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was indeed written for our sake, for whoever plows should plow in hope and whoever threshes should thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits (*cf. Rom. 15: 27*)? If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is sacrificed on the altar (*Deut. 18: 1*)? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel (*Matt. 10: 10; Lk. 10: 7; 1 Tim. 5: 17-18b*). But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing this so that they may be applied in my case. Indeed, I would rather die than that – no one will deprive me of my ground for boasting! If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel. For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings. Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.”

Paul had a very high goal that was to gain souls for the kingdom of God and he spared no effort to carry it out. Likewise, our work needs to have a stimulus that leads to the true fulfillment of our goals. Without having a goal and an incentive, the work loses meaning and becomes a sad routine. The stimulus is the divine vision and the Lord’s call to each of us; this way our work gains another dimension. We and Jesus begin to work in partnership. If the stimulus is only the expectation of a wage for it, we can even feel frustrated because the human circumstances for this may be unfavorable. Despite of all, the bible assures: those who work for the kingdom are worthy of their salary.

Sometimes it becomes difficult for people to understand that to work in God's Work is a job like any other, even of greater responsibility and risk. In it, a person deals with unseen forces (spiritual ones) that have the power of destruction and devastation, as well as he does a holy work for the Lord, which is to sow His word of truth. If there is mismanagement of this service entrusted to us, the more we'll have to give Him account. God made it clear in *Deut. 18: 1-2* that "The levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi, shall have no allotment or inheritance within Israel. They may eat the sacrifices that are the Lord's portion but they shall have no inheritance among the other members of the community; the Lord is their inheritance, as he promised them." Many Christians exclude the OT of their lives with the excuse of living under the grace of Jesus Christ, forgetting that the OT was a shadow of the NT (*Heb. 10: 1; Col. 2: 17*), and Jesus didn't come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it. The full-time call to the work of God is not for everyone, nor a human choice, but an exclusive divine call as He separated the Levites to be His, since they had no right to their land in Israel as their brothers. Often, leaving a secular job to answer the exclusive call of God not only places us in a position of humiliation before the people, especially the carnal ones, who live only on what their eyes can see and what their mind can understand. It also puts us on another level of faith in which we come to depend on His fidelity, provision and His promise on our lives. Sowing insistently and patiently the spiritual things in people's lives for years requires divine empowerment and, in itself, already gives us the right to a fair wage (The harvest for our sowing) for such a difficult job that is to change the mind of human beings and help them to develop their salvation in Christ.



To exercise faith:

- *1 Cor. 15: 57-58*: "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

- *1 Tim. 1: 18-19*: "I am giving you these instructions, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies made earlier about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, having faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have suffered shipwreck in the faith."

- *1 Tim. 6: 12*: "Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

- *2 Tim. 4: 6-8*: "As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing."

- *Jam. 2: 14-17*: "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill', and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead."

Faith without works is dead. To work in God's Work or in secular life is to put our faith into action hoping to reap what we have not seen yet, like Abraham exercised his faith even without seeing the promise. It means to wait for our reward, not only material

at the end of the month because we worked during all that time; more than that, it is to know that our work had the participation and the goals of God beyond the carnal ones, and although it seems that we have failed a few times, all is recorded before Him and nothing was in vain.



To carry out God's plan:

- *Jn. 4: 34*: "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.'"

- *Jn. 6: 27-29*: "Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal. Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.'"

Our work must be focused on the glorification of the name of the Lord and His work, and our tithes and offering in His House must have the purpose of helping those who need to believe in Jesus to be saved. As previously mentioned, the very activity we do must be coupled to the desire to do the Lord's work, which is to teach people to believe in Him.



A way to get daily sustenance:

- *Prov. 10: 3-4*: "The Lord does not let the righteous go hungry, but he thwarts the craving of the wicked. A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich."

- *Prov. 12: 9*: "Better to be despised and have a servant, than to be self-important and lack food."

- *Prov. 12: 11*: "Those who till their land will have plenty of food, but those who follow worthless pursuits have no sense."

- *Prov. 28: 19*: "Anyone who tills the land will have plenty of bread, but one who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty."

- *1 Tim. 5: 17-18*: "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching; for the scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain', and, 'The laborer deserves to be paid.'"

The work was a means provided by God for our daily sustenance, but should not be done in a negligent or careless way, with boast or with the carnal goals of just receiving money. We must be aware that the holy work, dedicated and consecrated to the Lord is a means provided by He Himself to 'plow' and 'harvest' our land, our soul; this means that is God's way of perfecting us and making us like Him.



Hope in the reward:

- *Col. 3: 23-24*: “Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ.”

- *1 Cor. 9: 9-12*: “For it is written in the law of Moses, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.’ Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Or does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was indeed written for our sake, for whoever plows should plow in hope and whoever threshes should thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits (*cf. Rom. 15: 27*)? If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we still more?”

- *1 Tim. 5: 17-18*: “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching; for the scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain’, and, ‘The laborer deserves to be paid.’”

The honest work assures us from God the certainty of reward. Often, in our moments of apparent failure, the enemy takes advantage to send people with defeatist attitudes and words that come to steal our hope and make us distrust in God’s promise. Everything in the spiritual world follows the law of sowing created by Him. So if we are sowing His word of truth, faith and love, it’s more than natural that we gather our fruit. Meditate on how many wins you’ve lost by allowing the enemy deceive you, saying that everything would come to nothing. Give the Holy Spirit a new chance to show you that His word is alive and powerful to fulfill what has been appointed by God to your life. If He has promised you victory, it will be so.



Investment and sowing now to be able to reap later:

- *Prov. 20: 4*: “The lazy person does not plow in season; harvest comes, and there is nothing to be found.”

- *Eccl. 11: 1-6*: “Send out your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will get it back. Divide your means seven ways, or even eight, for you do not know what disaster may happen on earth. When clouds are full, they empty rain on the earth; whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie. Whoever observes the wind will not sow; and whoever regards the clouds will not reap. Just as you do not know how the breath comes to the bones in the mother’s womb, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything. In the morning sow your seed, and at evening do not let your hands be idle; for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good.”

- *Mk. 4: 26-32*: “He also said, ‘The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come’. He also said, ‘With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.’”

- *2 Cor. 9: 6-15*: “The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you




must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written, 'He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever' (*cf. Ps. 112: 9*). 'He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness' (*cf. Isa. 55: 10*). You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"

• *Gal. 6: 7-10*: "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith." *cf. Eccl. 11: 1-6*.

Our work is a seed, like bread that is sent out upon the waters to be found later. Besides being sowed, it must be shared. Thus, our talents and knowledge and skills serve to share the blessings of God with those less fortunate, that is, through them (our talents and knowledge and skills), others shall receive supplies and word of life. The thought of the world is that if we give, if we share, we will remain with nothing; however, the mathematics of God shows us that when we share what is ours, we show the real prosperity, for He will take charge of multiplying what we have. Another lesson here is that the Lord tells us that if we just observe the wind, like a farmer who is only looking at the sky waiting for favorable weather, we will never sow anything, and who only looks at the clouds will never reap. The wind is the symbol of the Holy Spirit, as well as our requests. 'Clouds' is the symbol of rain, blessing, promise and the glory of God. This means that if we stay just praying and waiting for the action of the Spirit until we have His signs (There are people always asking signs from God), or if we stay just looking at His promise without acting in a practical manner, we will not sow anything or reap. The NT summarizes this thought: "So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (*Jam. 2: 17*). We must make an effort to invest in what we started and we intend to accomplish. If we open a business but do not want to have any expense, we shall not expect any harvest, because nothing has been sown. It is this spirit of misery that prowls the several activities of society, including the churches, deceiving the people by making them want to reap what they never sowed. This is not a biblical concept. And what's worse: they make wrong prayers before God as if charging from Him an attitude of blessing by what they did not work to have. I'm not saying that we need to do something for Him to bless us. He blesses us because He is giver and has an abundant character, but He forges us like responsible children, teaching us to develop the same characteristics than He has, so that we conquer our promises and goals here on earth. We work and sow, but the harvest does not depend on us. Growth occurs by divine power, depending on the quality of the seed we planted and the land where we sowed, not by human effort (*Mk. 4: 26-32*). This is quite true when it comes to preaching the Word. Only God knows the 'good lands.' Therefore, Paul wrote in *1 Cor. 3: 6-8*: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor

the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each.” We also have something to learn from the parable of the sower; there is the correct time to harvest the fruit of a work (‘the full grain in the head’ – Mk. 4: 28). It’s no use to rush it, but to see something mature, it is necessary to wait.

Another lesson here: the important thing is to learn to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, but joyfully. This not relates only to the money we give in God’s Work, but to our commitment to the work entrusted to us. The Lord Himself puts the seeds in our hands so that we sow and then He can multiply it. We must not give or work reluctantly or under compulsion, but with joy, because this moves God’s heart. Joy is a fertilizer for the seed.

 To develop creativity,  to shape the character and  to attain self-knowledge:

• *Prov. 31: 10-31*: “A capable wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband *trusts in her*, and he will have no lack of gain. *She does him good, and not harm*, all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, and *works with willing hands*. She is like the ships of the merchant, she brings her food from far away. She rises while it is still night and provides food for her household and tasks for her servant-girls. She *considers* a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she *plants* a vineyard. She *girds* herself with *strength*, and makes her arms strong. She *perceives* that her merchandise is profitable. *Her lamp does not go out at night*. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. She *opens her hand* to the poor, and reaches out her hands to the needy. She *is not afraid for* her household when it snows, for all her household are clothed in crimson. She makes herself coverings; her clothing is *fine linen and purple*. Her husband is known in the city gates, taking his seat among the elders of the land. She *makes* linen *garments* and *sells* them; she supplies the merchant with sashes. *Strength and dignity* are her clothing, and she *laughs* at the time to come. She opens her mouth with *wisdom*, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household, and *does not eat the bread of idleness*. Her children rise up and call her *happy*; her husband too, and *he praises her*: ‘Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.’ Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her a share in the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the city gates.”

An interesting example about this topic can be found in relation to the virtuous woman (‘the wife of noble character’ – NIV; or ‘A capable wife’ – NRSV). A person who lets herself be shaped by God achieves self-knowledge, leading her to the discovery of her potentials and the development of her creativity. This is the way used by God to shape her character and improve her to be a vessel of honor in His hands. Divine features developed in the person:

- 1) *Reliability*
- 2) *Goodness*
- 3) *She is fertile and productive; she uses her hands to bless and prosper.*
- 4) *Knows to discern between good and evil and knows how to take advantage of the material opportunities, using what she has at her disposal.*
- 5) *She strengthen herself in God and therefore can see how much He blesses her.*
- 6) *The flame of the Spirit never fades, even during difficult times.*

- 7) *She knows how to supply the needy, does not eat the bread of avarice.*
- 8) *She doesn't worry, because she has faith in God.*
- 9) *Clothes herself spiritually with righteousness and holiness (fine linen), love and protection of the blood of Jesus (salvation and royalty – purple).*
- 10) *Knows to negotiate and to manage properly the material goods.*
- 11) *Has a dignified life and feels strong because she does not depend on outside resources, but on her work.*
- 12) *Does not worry about the future, for she knows who is in control of all things.*
- 13) *Has the wisdom of God.*
- 14) *She not lazy*
- 15) *She can really feel a happy person.*
- 16) *Is rewarded and praised for her works.*



To thrive:

• *Deut. 28: 1-14*: “If you will only obey the Lord your God, by diligently observing all his commandments that I am commanding you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth; all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the Lord your God: Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, both the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. The Lord will command the blessing upon you in your barns, and in all that you undertake; he will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. The Lord will establish you as his holy people, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in his ways. All the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you. The Lord will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground in the land that the Lord swore to your ancestors to give you. The Lord will open for you his rich storehouse, the heavens, to give the rain of your land in its season and to bless all your undertakings. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. The Lord will make you the head, and not the tail; you shall be only at the top, and not at the bottom—if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today, by diligently observing them, and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I am commanding you today, either to the right or to the left, following other gods to serve them.”

• *Prov. 10: 22*: “The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.”

• *Prov. 11: 24-26*: “Some give freely, yet grow all the richer; others withhold what is due, and only suffer want. A generous person will be enriched, and one who gives water will get water. The people curse those who hold back grain, but a blessing is on the head of those who sell it.”

• *Prov. 14: 23*: “In all toil there is profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.”

• *Prov. 20: 13*: “Do not love sleep, or else you will come to poverty; open your eyes, and you will have plenty of bread.”

• *Prov. 28: 19*: “Anyone who tills the land will have plenty of bread, but one who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.”

When God takes part in our work, surely there will be prosperity. And prosperity is not only restricted to the material wealth (To bring home the daily provision), but reaches the harmonious development of all areas of human existence: material, emotional and spiritual. The thriving heart of a person, besides being a giver, sower, multiplier and releaser of resources and gifts, can rejoice at the victory of the brothers, knows how to correctly manage the resources the person has and this attitude is also reflected in his very life. The prosperity is linked to obedience to the Lord, sowing, action, knowledge and understanding (awareness) of God’s word.

Multiplying talents:

• *Matt. 25: 14-30*: “For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you? That I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

As I said in the passage about the virtuous woman (‘capable wife’), the work contributes to teach us how to develop our creativity and multiply our talents, that is, not only financial gains but also our natural and spiritual gifts. The willingness to serve the Lord with our work multiplies what He gives us and increases our storehouse in heaven: “For to those who have (treasures in heaven; a life of communion with God), more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing (treasures in heaven; a life at the altar), even what they have will be taken away (even the interest in God will be lost).”

 Care,  patience,  perseverance,  love – to be like God:

- Summarizing the Creation of the world described in *Gen. 1: 1-31*:

“In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good (1st day). And God said, ‘Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters’... God called the dome Sky (2nd day). And God said, ‘Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.’ And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas ... The earth brought forth grass, herbs and fruit trees (3rd day). And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night... God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars (4th day). And God said, ‘Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky (5th day). And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.’ And it was so... And God saw that it was good. Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’ So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it... God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good (6th day). And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done (7th day).”

- *Col. 3: 23-24*: “Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ.”

In all Creation there was care, patience, perseverance and love from God. By acting the same way concerning our work, we’ll be like Him. So, if you have to repeat, correct, redo, plan again, perfect and transform your work, do not complain; instead, give glory to God for this, because while you work in natural things, He also perfects you in the spiritual. In a while, you will look back and see how much God worked with your being, how much He gave you experience, how much you grew up with everything you have been through. He taught you, not men. This is divine wisdom.

 Prudence / wisdom:

- *Prov. 6: 6-8*: “Go to the ant, you lazybones; consider its ways, and be wise. Without having any chief or officer or ruler, it prepares its food in summer, and gathers its sustenance in harvest.”

The work teaches us to be wise and prudent, managing the material resources that are given to us by God as well as to plan our future. It’s true that it is written: “The plans of the mind belong to mortals, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord” (*Prov. 16: 1*). But it is also written: “O simple ones, learn prudence; acquire

intelligence, you who lack it” (*Prov. 8: 5*). This means that when the human flesh is planning things and circumstances without the concurrence of wisdom and divine revelation, God shows it His true designs. However, when He actively participates in our lives, what we plan and do is in agreement with His will and makes us His partners.



To think about the well-being of our offspring:

- *Prov. 13: 22*: “The good leave an inheritance to their children’s children, but the sinner’s wealth is laid up for the righteous.”

- *2 Cor. 12: 14b*: “for children ought not to lay up for their parents, but parents for their children.”

We work not only to leave a material and financial inheritance for our descendants; when we work, especially our healthy and true relationship with God and with our fellow men, we begin to leave something more valuable that is the blessing and approval of God upon the following generations. The word says: “but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments” (*Ex. 20: 6*). David was an example of someone who fought his entire life the wars of the Lord in order to leave resources not only for his offspring in particular but for all the people of Israel to build the temple: “With great pains I have provided for the house of the Lord one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and stone too I have provided. To these you must add more. You have an abundance of workers: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of artisans without number, skilled in working gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Now begin the work, and the Lord be with you. Now set your mind and heart to seek the Lord your God. Go and build the sanctuary of the Lord God so that the ark of the covenant of the Lord and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the Lord” (*1 Chr. 22: 14-16; 19*). So, strive and sow for your offspring.



To exercise humility, interdependence and solidarity:

- *Prov. 3: 27*: “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it.”

- *Ecc. 4: 9-10*: “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help.”

- *1 Pet. 4: 10-11*: “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.”

We must keep in mind that we are not ‘everything at the same time.’ Each one of us is a specialist in some area and we are important to meet the needs of our fellow men. In other words, we depend on each other to live on earth. There’s room for everybody, so there is no place for competition in the kingdom of God. The world still thinks that it is advantageous to pull the rug from under those people who are beside us, in order to occupy the high places; or else, that illegal competition is valid. However, the plan of

God has always been mutual cooperation. What matters is to care for the gifts He has given us and use them for the good of others.

★ To reveal the glory of God to men:

• *Jn. 9: 1-41*: “As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind *so that God’s works might be revealed in him*. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which means Sent).’ Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ Some were saying, ‘It is he.’ Others were saying, ‘No, but it is someone like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’ But they kept asking him, ‘Then how were your eyes opened?’ He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.’ They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, ‘He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.’ Some of the Pharisees said, ‘This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.’ But others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?’ And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, ‘What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.’ He said, ‘He is a prophet.’ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, ‘Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?’ His parents answered, ‘We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.’ His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, ‘He is of age; ask him.’ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, ‘Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.’ He answered, ‘I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.’ They said to him, ‘What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?’ He answered them, ‘I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?’ Then they reviled him, saying, ‘You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.’ The man answered, ‘Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.’ They answered him, ‘You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?’ And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, ‘Do you

believe in the Son of Man?’ He answered, ‘And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.’ He said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshiped him. Jesus said, ‘I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.’ Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, ‘Surely we are not blind, are we?’ Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see’, your sin remains.’ [*cf. Rom. 4: 15: For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation*].”

Many people work to have their names known, a lot of money and fame. However, we who know the Lord, work like Jesus: to show others the glory of the Father. Everything we do for love of Him, He Himself honors and there is no need for the world’s publicity, because what comes to light makes clear that the deed is from Him. We are only His channels of wonders and miracles. This is our honor: to be known for belonging to Him and for Him to reveal Himself to men through us. Our work with simplicity, innocence, purity, and without ulterior motives always generates light, and the reward that we have with it is clean, true, without flattery or interests, for it is brought by Him through those who ‘have eyes to see.’

In the second place in this text, Jesus reaffirmed to be the light of the world and said that one must do the works of the Father while it is day, because at night it is not possible. This has two meanings: one related to Himself, another to us. While He was exercising His ministry on earth, He could do the Father’s work; however, when the time came for Satan to prevail upon Him to take Him to the cross, the work would be another and He could not perform what He was doing at this moment. There on the cross, His work would be of redemption and He would carry on Him the darkness (sins) of us all. The second meaning is to us, that is, while God is pouring His Spirit upon our lives, He is also pouring the anointing to accomplish His work; however, when Jesus comes back leaving on earth only those who will go through the plagues, we shall no longer do the work because it will be the time of the Judgment of God upon sin. As teaching remains the idea that *we should do God’s work while we have opportunity, because His Spirit is pouring His anointing*. As I wrote before, it is not only within the church that we manifest our potential, but where we are or go and where we work. The source is constantly within us through His Spirit. We can show the glory of God in a simple handshake, a smile, a hand that is anointed to touch people, even in a wise decision at a conflicting meeting.



To be part of the body (of Christ) and of a divine plan:

• *1 Cor. 12: 1-31a (Rom. 12: 7-8; 1 Pet. 4: 10-11)*: “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says ‘Let Jesus be cursed!’ and no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another

prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts...”

Throughout the ages, God has worked with different children in order to remake His covenant with man, bringing him back to Eden. So, He gave us natural and spiritual gifts, so that both in the natural and the spiritual world we can feel participants in a larger project, working together with Him. The recognition of our work restores our self-esteem and strengthens our true identity in Christ.

† The main work was that of Jesus:

- *Isa. 53: 4-5*: “Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.”

- *Jn. 3: 16-21*: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed.

But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

The main work was done on Calvary, the salvation of man. The weight of His work was infinitely greater than ours, because Jesus bore upon Him the iniquity of us all, and therefore God’s wrath because of it. Under the covering of His blood and His love, our work can be done with lightness and joy of being under His blessing and His justification.



God’s blessing:

- *Deut. 15: 5-6*: “if only you will obey the Lord your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today. When the Lord your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.”

- *Deut. 28: 12-14*: “The Lord will open for you his rich storehouse, the heavens, to give the rain of your land in its season and to bless all your undertakings. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. The Lord will make you the head, and not the tail; you shall be only at the top, and not at the bottom—if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today, by diligently observing them, and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I am commanding you today, either to the right or to the left, following other gods to serve them.”

- *Prov. 10: 22*: “The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.”

- *Ecc. 2: 24-26a*: “There is nothing better for mortals than to eat and drink, and find enjoyment in their toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God; for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? For to the one who pleases him God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy; but to the sinner he gives the work of gathering and heaping, only to give to one who pleases God.”

- *Ecc. 3: 13*: “And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift [Strong #H4991 – *mattath* מַתָּת: gift, a present] of God.” (KJV)

- “moreover, it is God’s gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil.” (NRSV)

- “That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God.” (NIV)

- *Ecc. 5: 18-19*: “This is what I have seen to be good: it is fitting to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of the life God gives us; for this is our lot. Likewise all to whom God gives wealth and possessions and whom he enables to enjoy them, and to accept their lot and find enjoyment in their toil—this is the gift [*mattath* מַתָּת] of God”.

- *Jl. 2: 25-27*: “I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you. you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other. And my people shall never again be put to shame.”

The work is a blessing of God in our lives, not only because it is a source of material supply, but also because it frees us from the shame of having to borrow. The

Lord is the owner of gold and silver, not the devil, as the world makes us think, preventing what belongs to us to arrive to our hands. But the word of God is faithful and never lies. Even through tests, when we truly honor Him, He gives us deliverance and puts us in victory, restoring what was consumed by the 'locust' [symbol of demons that steal and devour our goods].

To help our fellow men to see life with other eyes:

- *Mk. 8: 22-26*: “They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, ‘Can you see anything?’ And the man looked up and said, ‘I can see people, but they look like trees, walking.’ Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. Then he sent him away to his home, saying, ‘Do not even go into the village.’”

Here, Jesus’ work opened the eyes of a blind man and made him see things in the right way, not in a distorted way. Likewise, our anointed work can open the eyes of many people, broadening their understanding to see the reality of the spiritual world and God’s plan for them. Just let yourself be a free channel in the hands of the Holy Spirit. Through His power, Jesus did all the miraculous works of the Father on earth. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, showing God’s will for them: “I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power” (*Eph. 1: 16-19*).

To exercise free will:

- *Deut. 30: 15- 20*: “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

- *Prov. 12: 14*: “From the fruit of the mouth one is filled with good things, and manual labor has its reward.”

- *Prov. 13: 2-4*: “From the fruit of their words good persons eat good things, but the desire of the treacherous is for wrongdoing. Those who guard their mouths preserve their lives; those who open wide their lips come to ruin. The appetite of the lazy craves, and gets nothing, while the appetite of the diligent is richly supplied.”

- *Prov. 18: 20-21*: “From the fruit of the mouth one’s stomach is satisfied; the yield of the lips brings satisfaction. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.”

- *2 Tim. 2: 15-17a*: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth [*NIV, correctly handles the word of truth*]. Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, their talk will spread like gangrene.”

Here, I will talk about the power of our words, for they have the power to bless or curse our work and our whole life, as well as all others who are around us. It is also a hard work, an effort to human being to tame his tongue and sharpen it like a sword of God, the way it was planned to be. So, bless your work instead of cursing it. Then you will see His glory manifested on all areas of your life. Your work will be an instrument of victory. When you pick up your paycheck at the end of the month do not blaspheme, but give glory to God for it, give your tithe to the Lord and prophesy growth and prosperity on your work. Your money will multiply and your anointing will increase in the name of Jesus.

EPILOGUE



“My work is a blessing that I have given so that you may prosper and show my power among men. Don’t dismay anymore by the arrows thrown by the enemy over it, trying to kill or destroy what I created in my infinite wisdom, because what I create can never be destroyed or stolen. Get ready for what I’ll do in your life from now on; you will have your reward and you will be a powerful instrument of healing, deliverance and restoration of light for those who are blind and chained in lies. Receive my seal of approval and don’t let your thoughts be troubled by the pettiness and human impossibilities. I already released my decree of victory over you and it will not be revoked. Hear, O Israel, my chosen, prepare to meet your God. Fear not, I am your strength, your reward and your inheritance. I quiet today the affronts of the enemy and say to you, ‘Fear not, I help you.’ My light and my prosperity shine upon you. You will no longer suffer humiliation. I love you and want the best for you.”

