

A Vitally Important Summons

from *Gospel Minutes* (David Thurman)

One of the grandest calls to service that any mortal can receive is the invitation our Lord extended in parable, saying, "**Go work today in my vineyard**" (Matt 21:28). His promise in an earlier discussion was, "**Go ye also into the vineyard: and whatsoever is right I, will give you.**" (Matt 20:4). This is an open call for workers, and none is refused who would volunteer for His service. The invitation still embraces all, for it is "Whoever will, let him come."

The Time Is Vitally Important

The time element is very important in this call to labor. While many seek the full benefits offered to those who entered at the eleventh hour, it must be kept in mind that the reward was offered only to those who responded WHEN they heard! There is no suggestion that any man was given a full reward, having delayed after hearing the summons to work! "**For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee, behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation**" (2 Cor. 6:2). "**While it is said, Today if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the day of provocation.**" (Heb 3:15). There is always a note of urgency when God calls for obedience! Never allow Satan to delude you into thinking there is time enough yet!

The Persons Are Vitally Important

The persons involved in this summons are vitally important! Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is calling each reader to service! It is not a command appearance before the Queen of England, nor an invitation from the White House! It is far more important than all this. This is a call from the King of kings, Lord of lords, who is the only blessed Potentate (1 Tim 6:15). Never will you receive a more glorious summons than this! What thoughts must have rushed through Mary's mind when they told her, "**The Master is come and calleth for thee.**" (Jon 11:28). But in an even more important way, Christ has come to call us! It is thrilling to know that the Saviour of men is so concerned with each of us! But for us He was willing to die. His interest in us is shown by His words, "**Greater love hath on man than this that a man lay down his life fiends.**" (Jno 15:13). O, to think Jesus Christ cared for ME!

The fact that Jesus Christ died for us should give an estimate of our worth! YOU are vitally important, or God would not have given His Son to die for you (Jno 3:16). The soul which you have from God is so important that the greatest gift heaven could make was freely given that your soul might be saved! Jesus asked the rhetorical question, "**For what, shall it profit a man, if shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?**" (Mark 8:36-37). The value of your soul is far above that of rubies and diamonds! Surely then, the persons in the Lord's summons are of vital importance!

The Place Is Vitally Important

The place of labor mentioned in, this call is also vitally important. When Jesus said, "**Go work in MY, vineyard,**" He necessarily excluded every other field of labor! While we grant that much work can be performed OUTSIDE this vineyard, still we must contend that the promise of reward is offered for labor performed ONLY IN His vineyard. Nor can we agree that this is too narrow and bigoted. No farmer is willing to pay for labor performed in another man's fields! We recognize the fairness of this everywhere else, so why not in religious matters? Christ surely owes

nothing for work performed in Satan's fields, and it was He who said, "**He that is not, with me is against me**" (Matt 12:30). Can you expect Jesus to reward one who works against Him?

Frankly, a lot of loose thinking has developed in the minds of many honest folk. They've been led to believe they can "join any church", "go to the church of your choice," and "the church can't save you anyway," until they think one church is just as good as another! But friend, it just isn't so! This is a tragic assumption based upon false teaching. "You can be saved out of the church as well as in it," has been expounded by many preachers. While this is true concerning churches they represent, it is surely not true concerning the Lord's church! You can live, die and go to heaven without ever having heard of a single one of today's denominations. But you can't go to heaven OUT of the church of God! Jesus Christ gave Himself for His church (Eph.5:25), and thus purchased it with his blood (Acts 20:28), and further more, He is the Savior of this body the church (Eph 5:23). Does this sound like one can be saved OUTSIDE this blood bought church?

Jesus Christ is calling on all those outside His vineyard to enter in to the place of labor so that a reward will be given. For it is axiomatic that you can't work IN the vineyard of Christ while OUTSIDE! And all labor is wasted, all work is for nought, and patience of hope is vain if one is outside of Christ. But Paul wrote, "**Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father**"(1Thes 1:3). But God does not seek to reward any work done while one is out of Christ!

The Work Is Vitally Important

The work to be done is vitally important. One saves himself by coming unto Christ, but his true labor begins on the inside. "**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**" (Eph 2:10). Every saint IN Christ must be vitally concerned with every sinner OUT of Christ. A momentous task was assigned the church when Christ gave the commission to evangelize the world. It descends on each succeeding generation. This work is so demanding that each should say with Paul, "**For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me: yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the, gospel!**" (1Cor 9:16). Since the church alone is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim 3:15), and the only medium by which the manifold wisdom of God might be known (Eph 3:10), it is imperative that those in the vineyard do this important work for God!

Therefore the call is for workers: not idlers, loafers, and hangers-on. Christ has work to be done, and thus has no need for slothful, indolent time-servers! But if you want to work for

Christ, and receive wages at the close of day, there is a place of labor for you! And to spur us on when the work is a burden Paul says, "**And let us not be weary, in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.**"(Gal 6:9). At the close of the day labor, our Lord will say "**Well done, thou, good and faithful servant.**" What a reward that shall be! To enter into the clime of eternal contentment and find rest from all labor "The toils of the road will seem nothing, when I get to the end of the way!"

But it is imperative that we remember that the reward awaits only those who entered the right field of labor! You must work in the field of the Lord--not in the devil's territory! Christ will reward only those who are in the institution He, promised to save (Eph 6:23). Those in the world (and those who labor in churches built by men), must look to another to reward them for their toiling. Are you ready to enter into Christ? Paul wrote, "**For ye are all the children of God by faith by Christ Jesus. For as many of you as, have been baptized into. Christ have put on Christ**" (Gal 3:27). There is no other door into His' vineyard (His body, the church). Are you willing to obey Him completely to enter this field of labor for the Lord? - D.T.