

Christ Taught His Followers to Be Laborers
(Matthew 9:37-38)

Introduction:

1. In our lesson we are emphasizing the fact that "Christ taught His followers to be laborers."
2. Since tomorrow is observed as Labor Day, perhaps this is a good time for us to study this important subject.
3. The first point we need to make is that . . .

Discussion:

- I. CHRIST TAUGHT HIS FOLLOWERS TO BE LABORERS BY BEING A LABORER HIMSELF
 - A. Jesus had a mission to fulfill that involved labor (John 4:34).
 - B. According to John 9:4, the Lord had a sense of urgency about His work.
 - C. He fulfilled His mission throughout His ministry (Matthew 4:23; 9:35).
 - D. We would expect the Lord to set the proper example (Acts 1:1).
 - E. In addition to being a laborer Himself, . . .
- II. CHRIST INSTRUCTED HIS FOLLOWERS TO BE LABORERS DURING HIS MINISTRY
 - A. When Jesus observed the multitudes in Matthew 9:36, He recognized the need for laborers.
 - B. In Matthew 9:37-38, Jesus taught His followers to pray for the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest.
 1. In vs.37 Jesus made His disciples aware of the problem that existed.
 - a. On the one hand, the harvest was truly plenteous.
 - b. On the other hand, the laborers were few.
 2. Jesus told His disciples to pray about this situation in vs.38.
 3. (Matthew 10:1) Jesus selected the twelve, and He sent them on the limited commission (vs.5-8).
 4. Their return is mentioned in Luke 9:10a.
 5. Jesus sent 70 others (Luke 10:1-2, 9).
 6. Their return is mentioned in Luke 10:17.
 - C. (John 6:27) Jesus taught His followers to labor with proper priorities.
 - D. To summarize,:
 1. Christ taught His followers to be laborers by being a laborer Himself.
 2. Christ instructed His followers to be laborers during His ministry.
 - E. Let us turn our attention to passages which show that . . .
- III. CHRIST HAS GIVEN GUIDELINES TO LABORERS IN HIS WORD
 - A. (1 Corinthians 3:8) Each person will "*receive his own reward according to his own labor.*"
 - B. (1 Corinthians 3:9) "*We are laborers together with God.*"
 1. We must remember that God gives "*the increase*" (vs.6b).
 2. Let us heed the warning given in Psalm 127:1 -- "*Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.*"
 - C. (1 Corinthians 15:58) Paul concluded his discussion of the resurrection by showing that Christian labor "*is not in vain in the Lord.*"
 - D. (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3) In addition to their "*work of faith*" and "*patience of hope,*" Paul was thankful for the "*labor of love*" of the Christians in Thessalonica [the necessity of love is stressed in 1 Corinthians 13:3].
 - E. (Hebrews 6:10) God remembers the labor of Christians (Nehemiah 13:31b).
 - F. (Revelation 14:13) Rest is in store for Christian labor.
 1. This message is comforting -- those who have died in the Lord are blessed.
 2. They are able to rest from their labors.
 3. Their works will follow them.

Conclusion:

1. Now is the time to work, as Jesus stated in John 9:4.
2. According to Revelation 14:13, there will be plenty of time for rest in heaven.