

# To Every Man His Work

## *Mark 13:34*

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Study Given by W. D. Frazee—September 30,

Now our subject. We are going to study another triangle tonight. We studied one last Tuesday night, didn't we? This evening we will begin with Mark the thirteenth chapter and the thirty-fourth verse. Mark 13:34.

The subject I want to study with you tonight is the various ways in which God uses men in His church. First, the church employed. The ministers and related workers who are employed by the church and paid by the church. Second, the regular laymembers who are wage earners, or who in other ways bring in income and through their tithes and offerings support the church. And third, what we call the self-supporting workers.

We are going to look at all three of these classes tonight and see their relationship and what we mean by these different areas of service. Mark 13:34.

*"For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch"*  
Mark 13:34.

When Jesus left, He gave to every man His what? His work. Now who has a job then? Everybody. But notice the expression, the master of the house gave to every man what? His work. Do we all have the same work? No. We don't. In fact we are told that:

*"Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God" Messages to Young People, page 219. See also Christ's Object Lessons, pages 326, 327.*

Each one of us has a special place which means that no two of us have the same place. Isn't it a wonderful thing to know that you have been born for a special job? Do you know you are filling that place you were born for? If you do, there are no inducements that can lead you to abandon that assignment. If you don't know that, you may be restless, uncertain, you may be attracted by an offer of wages, or an offer of conveniences, or a chance to see some part of the world. And so on and on, many inducements which are perfectly all right for the people of the world. But we are studying tonight about the church, and the work of Christians to carry the Gospel to all the world.

Now let's look at that opening text again. What did Jesus give? To every man his work. And that means that everybody has what? A special work cut out for him, his particular assignment. There are not all the same. In fact, each one is different.

Let me stop right on this point then, and note this—we are not to measure our work by somebody else's. We are not to compare our work with somebody else's. We are not to say, "My work is more important than somebody else's." For me, my work is the most important thing in the world. For me. Isn't it? Yes. And that way everybody can get the joy of doing the greatest thing in the world.

If you want something interesting, look up in the index what the Spirit of Prophecy says about the greatest work, the most important work, the most valuable work, and so forth. You will find things like the ministry. You will find things like the physicians work, the teacher, the mother's work, the cook, the colporteur, just to name a few. And you may say, "What does it mean?" Well, it means just what it says. And if you are a mother doing what God has called you to do, you are doing the greatest thing in all the world. But that doesn't mean that God has called everybody to be a mother.

If you are a colporteur and God has called you to that, there is nothing in this universe more important for you. But that doesn't mean that God has called everybody to be a colporteur. And so on around the circle. And in this way each one of us can be happy and enthusiastic about the work we are doing personally, and yet, at the same time, indulge no bigoted attitude of down-grading what other people are doing.

Do you see? This is very important.

Alright. Now "to every man his work." Let's see what happens when we work. Let's turn to Luke the tenth chapter. Don't you love to study the Bible and see all the practical things in it, answering the questions that come to our minds? Luke the tenth chapter, and the seventh verse, the last part. Here Jesus is sending out the seventy after He had sent out the twelve. He is instructing them in their work as medical missionaries, and He tells them how they are to be taken care of as they go from place to place.

But in the middle of this I want you to notice the law, or rule, or principle that He lays down. In the middle of the seventh verse.

"For the labourer is worthy of his hire" Luke 10:7.

What is another word for hire? Wages. Now what is the laborer worthy of? Hire, or wages. Suppose he doesn't labor? Well, then he isn't worthy of it. That is right. But suppose he does labor? Then he is what? Worthy. What does worthy mean? He deserves it. He has it coming to him. Not a beggar.

"The labourer is worthy of his hire" Luke 10:7.

Now my next question, I want you to think this one through. Who does he deserve to get his hire from? The one that hired him. I hope you will get that down in your notes because this is very important. Put that in your notes and we will pick it up a bit later.

The laborer is worthy of his hire, and he is worthy of getting it from whom? The one that hired him. That is it.

Alright. Now let's go over to 2 Thessalonians, the third chapter, beginning with the seventh verse.

Who is writing this epistle to the Thessalonians? Paul. He raised up a church in Thessalonica. When he went there, there weren't any Christians. When he left, there was a church.

"For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us" 2 Thessalonians 3:7.

What did he mean? They ought to keep going over the country like Paul was? No, follow his example.

"...for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;  
neither did we eat any man's bread for nought"  
2 Thessalonians 3:7-8.

What does that mean "neither did we eat any man's bread for nought"? He worked for what he got. Is that right? Yes. And he is telling them that they ought to do what? Follow his example.

"Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but  
wrought with labour and travail night and day"  
2 Thessalonians 3:8.

Should have been a law against there, shouldn't there?

"But wrought with labour and travail night and day, that  
we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because  
we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample  
unto you to follow us" 2 Thessalonians 3:8-9.

What is an ensample? An example. Pattern.

"For even when we were with you, this we commanded  
you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat"  
2 Thessalonians 3:10.

My, that was hard. Wasn't it? But the man who the Holy Spirit inspired to write it was doing what? Practicing it.

Now dear friends, let's face it. We are in a generation and in a nation that has forgotten all about this. There are literally millions of people today that are eating

without working. And many of them are complaining because the government welfare checks are not big enough to suit them. It is simply terrible. I pray that God may save us from the idea that anything like that is what Jesus wants.

Now I am not talking about people that are sick and crippled and that can't do it. That isn't the point. Paul is dealing here with people that can, and he says that if they won't work, they shouldn't what? Eat. But they keep right on eating today in most cases.

Now we are looking at the church. Let's back up a little. God gave to every man what? His work. And he said that the laborer is what? Worthy of his hire. From whom? Those that hire him. That is right. So if he works, he is entitled to, worthy of, it is coming to him to get his what? His hire, his wages. And again, from whom? The one who hires him.

But if he won't work, then he doesn't get any hire. He doesn't get food. Do you suppose that God intended that that should be an incentive to some people? Do you suppose He did? Oh yes. Are there millions of people in this world that wouldn't work unless it took that to get something to eat? Sure. And the Lord arranged that. He told Adam when he left the garden, He said, From now on, in order to eat bread, you have got to what? Sweat. Work so hard you sweat. And modern man says, "We will see how to avoid that."

A friend of mine used to say, "God said you have to sweat. If you won't work and sweat, then you will get sick, and you will have to come to the sanitarium and we will sweat you there."

Now, 1 Corinthians, the ninth chapter, and the fourteenth verse. Here is the great New Testament expression of the age old principle that God has appointed for certain people to be supported by the church in the preaching of the Gospel.

"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" 1 Corinthians 9:14.

I will read with this from the book *Acts of the Apostles*, page 336.

"One tenth of all the increase was claimed by the Lord as His own, and to withhold the tithe was regarded by Him as robbery. It was to this plan for the support of the ministry that Paul referred when he said, 'Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 336.

What was Paul talking about when he wrote this verse? The support of the ministry through the tithe. Do you believe in the tithe? Do you pay your tithe? Well, if you are an intelligent Christian, a faithful church member, you pay your tithe.

Now how do you pay it? Do you put it in a box at home and when you see somebody that you think might be doing some good work, give it to them? Is that the way you pay the tithe? What did God say in Malachi 3:10-12?

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.* And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts”  
Malachi 3:10-12.

Bring ye what? The tithe.

How much? All

Where to? To the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house.

What is God’s house? The church.

So the tithe is used for the support of those that God has called, and the church has called to preach the Gospel. And:

“It was to this plan for the support of the ministry that Paul referred when he said, ‘Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.’ And later, in writing to Timothy, the apostle said, ‘The laborer is worthy of his reward.’ 1 Timothy 5:18” *Acts of the Apostles*, page 336.

Now we could spend the whole period this evening just studying about the tithe. In fact, we could take a whole week, or a whole month on it and never study anything else. There is plenty to study in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. This book *Counsels on Stewardship* has some wonderful things in it. And I thank the Lord for the tithing plan. It is one of the great things that has made this denomination strong financially, and enable it to extend its work around the world—the tithe with the missions offerings in addition.

Now, I want you to look at something very interesting. In that next verse in 1 Corinthians 9. What is the first word of that next verse? But.

“Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things” 1 Corinthians 9:14-15.

Wait a minute. Was Paul a minister? Yes. Was he an apostle? Yes. Had he been ordained by the church? Yes. Had he been called by God? Yes. Was he a prophet in addition to being an apostle? Yes. And did he devote his time to preaching the Gospel? Yes. And yet, while he defended the program that God had given of supporting the gospel ministry through the tithe, he said to the Corinthian church as he had said to the Thessalonians, "I haven't done it that way with you."

I wonder why? Isn't that interesting? He advocates the tithe and offering plan. He teaches his converts to do it. But he himself on these occasions that he is speaking of was supported some other way. I wonder how he was supported anyway? Well, let's turn over to Acts and see if we can find how he was supported.

"After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers" Acts 18:1-4.

Who did Paul stay with here in Corinth? Aquila and Priscilla. And why did he stay with them? They were of the same craft. What does that mean? The same trade. What was their trade or craft? Tentmakers. And Paul was what? Of the same craft. So he was a what? A tentmaker.

But he didn't just stay with them for the social life of being with people that knew how to make tents. It says "he abode with them, and" what? Wrought. What does that mean? He worked, in plain language. He worked. Doing what? Making tents.

The fourth verse.

"And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks" Acts 18:4.

Now, a comment on this from the book *Acts of the Apostles*, page 346.

"While Paul was careful to set before his converts the plain teaching of Scripture regarding the proper support of the work of God, and while he claimed for himself as a minister of the gospel the "power to forbear working" (1 Corinthians 9:6) at secular employment as a means of self-support, yet at various times during his ministry in the great centers of civilization he wrought at a handicraft for his own maintenance" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 346.

Now it wasn't just for himself that he did it. Let me read you a statement that I have pondered over quite a bit. It really is a picture. This is *Acts of the Apostles*, page 352.

“Paul sometimes worked night and day” *Ibid*, page 352.

We read it here in the Bible, didn't we? Yes.

“Paul sometimes worked night and day, not only for his own support, but that he might assist his fellow laborers. He shared his earnings with Luke” *Ibid*.

What? Luke should have been sharing his fees with Paul, shouldn't he? Paul shared with Luke the money that he earned doing what? Making tents. Sometimes that happened. Well, dear medical brethren, we are so glad that you have answered the call of God to Luke's type of ministry of combining the Gospel with the medical. And let me real serious about it, folks. If socialized medicine continues to make the progress that it is making, we may learn more about this. Thank God for physicians who are willing to do what Luke did. And thank God for others like Paul who are willing when necessary to help others with the means they have earned by working with their what? Their hands.

Alright. Back to my paragraph.

“Paul sometimes worked night and day, not only for his own support, but that he might assist his fellow laborers. He shared his earnings with Luke, and he helped Timothy. He even suffered hunger at times, that he might relieve the necessities of others” *Ibid*.

Now I want you to look at that folks. What did we read in one of our earliest texts this evening that the laborer is worthy of? His hire. Over in Matthew 10 Jesus says that the laborer is worthy of his meat, his food.

Was Paul working? Working doubly. He was earning it as a gospel minister, and on top of that, he was earning it with his hands as a tentmaker. And yet, sometimes he went hungry.

What was the matter? Oh, he was taking what could have ministered to himself and using it to do what? Help other people.

What a spirit! What a spirit! That is the spirit of Jesus. Isn't it? Yes.

Now let me make a statement that will relieve somebody just now. God hasn't called everybody to do what Paul did. That may help somebody to breathe a sigh of relief. God hasn't called everybody. Abraham was a rich man. Wasn't he? Yes. David and Solomon were rich. They didn't steal it either. God lets some people be rich. We could study that. That isn't our subject tonight. There are many lines of work in this world, and God has called some people to do things which produce money, or that which money can buy.

Suppose here is a man that is enabled to buy a piece of property and has a lot of timber on it. He goes in there with a sawmill and cuts down those trees and

makes them into lumber. And as the result, we will say he profits over a period of a year ten thousand dollars.

Do you remember what the Bible says in Deuteronomy 8:18?

“Thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is* he that giveth thee power to get wealth” Deuteronomy 8:18.

Are there some people that seem to have more of that power than others? Did you ever envy somebody that seemed to have the power that anything they touched it turned to money? Well, don't envy them. If they have that power, it is a gift from God, and they are responsible to God to use it. Aren't they? Sure. They will have to give an account of their stewardship. God has given to every man his work.

Alright. So God has called some people to devote their time to preaching the Gospel. He has called some people to what we might call the common vocations of life. Did Jesus spend some time as a carpenter? Yes. Do you think he got any wages? Why sure. We are told that he helped to support the family that way. So it is perfectly proper to turn time and labor into productive work that produces money or the things that money can buy.

Now I want to read a statement here from Volume 5, page 459 on this.

“So long as we are in the world, we must have to do with the things of the world. There will ever be a necessity for the transaction of temporal, secular business; but this should never become all-absorbing” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol 5, page 459.

What does ever mean? Always. Now it is true, eventually we are going to be deprived of this privilege of buying and selling, aren't we? That isn't what is being discussed here. It is talking about right now, day by day.

There is a what? A necessity. What does a necessity mean? Can't get along with out it. You know, even if we would set out to raise all the food we eat on this place, we would still have to find some way to get some salt, wouldn't we? That is right. And a few other things I imagine. So:

“There will ever be a necessity for the transaction of temporal, secular business; but this should never become all-absorbing. ... The humble, common duties of life are all to be performed with fidelity; "heartily," says the apostle, "as to the Lord." Whatever our department of labor, be it housework or field work or intellectual pursuits, we may perform it to the glory of God so long as we make Christ first and last and best in everything. But aside from these worldly employments there is given to every follower of Christ a special work for the upbuilding

of His kingdom--a work which requires personal effort for the salvation of men" *Ibid*.

Do you see that? Now notice that. Look at two sides of this triangle. We will look at that top one and we will call that the tithe supported preaching of the Gospel, and those who are appointed by God and by the church to give their time to the preaching of the Gospel are supposed to give how much of it? All of it. Again and again that is laid down by inspiration.

The Spirit of Prophecy speaks specifically against ministers spending their time selling real estate or a lot of other things. Why? It diverts them from the work that God has called them to do. And we read in the Bible that they are to be supported how? By the church through tithes and offerings.

But now we have just read in harmony with the great principle that God has given to every man his work, that God has given to many people common ordinary every-day vocations. Like carpenter work. Like mechanical work. Like book-keeping. Like cooking. And so on and on and on. Hundreds of different things that need to be done, that are productive work. And who is it that gives people the skill to do that? God. And who is it that gives them the ability to use the money that they earn by it? God does. That is right.

Now, besides that work which they do from day by day in earning their money and supporting their families, God has given them a what? A special work of personal soul-winning. Every member of the church is called to this. And so we are told in *Messages to Young People*, page 227:

"The work above all work,--the business above all others which should draw and engage the energies of the soul,-- is the work of saving souls for whom Christ has died. Make this the main, the important work of your life. Make it your special life work" *Messages to Young People*, page 227.

If a man is a barber, can he be a soul-winner? Yes. If he is a mechanic, can he be a soul-winner? Yes. A cook? Yes. And we could go on with a long list of jobs both for men and women. All of them may be productive jobs, bringing in money for the support of the people who work and the support of their family, and in addition, bringing in the tithe to support the ministry and offerings for the foreign mission program, and so forth. It is a great plan.

Now where does the self-supporting work come in? That is what I want to study with you. I can only introduce it this evening. Another evening we will have some more on it. But have we made clear these two things tonight? Yes. And before I leave that, let me give you this marvelous statement here from Volume 9, page 117. Oft quoted, never too many times.

"The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of

ministers and church officers” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol 9, page 117.

So it is going to take the ministry and those associated with them, church employed, church paid, church supported, plus the laity supported by their own work, their own efforts, but spending time in soul-winning, it is going to take that combined effort to do what? Finish the work.

Now where does what we call “the self-supporting work” come in? Let me tell you, friends, then we will study it. As I say, I can only introduce it tonight. First of all, that term “self-supporting work” can be used in a broad way or in a narrow way. In a certain sense everybody is to be a self-supporting worker. If a minister goes out and raises up a church and the tithe that comes in as the result of that is sufficient to pay the proper proportion of the conference expense and pay his salary, he is a self-supporting worker, in a sense. Isn't he? Yes.

If a man goes out here and plants a crop, and he gets enough to support his family and spends some time in giving Bible studies, he, in a sense, is a self-supporting worker. If he runs a barber shop, or a lumber mill, or a gas station, or whatever.

So in that sense all of these are self-supporting workers. But this is not specifically what the Spirit of Prophecy is talking about when it uses the term “self-supporting work” and “self-supporting workers,” and I will prove that to you in later studies. I will just introduce it tonight.

A self-supporting worker is somebody that has been called by God as fully as the minister that is paid by the tithe to devote his time, his life to the finishing of the work, and yet, is not paid by the church. But since he is hired by the Lord he has to look to God to pay his wages. And our heavenly Father has what? “A thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing.” *Ministry of Healing*, page 481. And that is the problem the self-supporting worker faces. That is the problem.

Now watch. If he quits that full time devotion to the work and merely goes out and takes a job and spends all his time doing that, then he becomes a part of that segment of the church, which is, as I say, being employed full time in daily work, earning its wages, paying its tithe, and supporting itself. And that is alright. God wants thousands of people there.

Or, if he becomes an employee of the conference, and as a minister, or Bible worker, or teacher, or whatever, he goes on a regular salary, and is devoting his full time to the work of the church and is paid by that, he has an assured income. Is that right? Yes. And if God has called him to do that, that is fine. No higher work he could do.

But there are some people that God has called from age to age and time to time to devote themselves, and I use that word devote wisely, carefully, that is the word inspiration uses, to devote themselves to the work of the Gospel without being a charge upon the church, without the church taking an obligation to support them, they are self-supporting workers.

Well, how are they going to be supported? How many ways did I read God has? A thousand ways. But they are ways of which we know nothing, so I am not going to give you a thousand. But listen, He has got a thousand besides the ways I know, but I am going to tell you some of the ways I know. Would you like to learn more about this?

But I want to tell you something, folks, nobody should ever accept a call to self-supporting work without knowing what the consequences may be and counting the cost and being willing to pay it. The laborer is worthy of his hire from those that hire him. And the church does not hire the self-supporting worker. If the church hires him, he is not a self-supporting worker, he is a church supported worker. That is ok. That is alright. Nothing wrong with it. We believe it. We pay our tithes and offerings week after week, year in and year out, ten of thousands of dollars goes off this campus to support the organized work of the church. That is what God wants.

But oh, friends, some people, beside all of that and in addition to their responsibility as members of the church, have a fire burning in their bones. They have a call ringing in their hearts. They know that God has called them to devote their lives to the finishing of the work.

My closing statement tonight is from the book *Medical Ministry*, page 75. It is a talk that Sister White gave at Loma Linda October 30, 1907. As the prophet of God stood on that beautiful hill, and her mind, guided by the visions of God, took in what the future of that work was intended to be, she said:

“Here we have ideal advantages for a school and for a sanitarium. Here are advantages for the students, and great advantages for the patients. I have been instructed that here we should have a school conducted on the principles of the ancient schools of the prophets. It may not be carried on in every respect as are the schools of the world, but it is to be especially adapted for those who desire to devote their lives, not to commercial pursuits, but to unselfish service for the Master”  
*Medical Ministry*, page 75.

God has called some people, not to commercial pursuits, but instead, to devote their what? Their lives. Oh, think of the dimensions of that. The length of it. The breadth of it. The depth of it. The height of it. Devote their lives, not to commercial pursuits, but to unselfish service for the Master. And it was to train that kind of students that Loma Linda was established. And it is to train that kind of students that Wildwood is established. If this is why you came, thank God, may you never lose the vision. If you came for any other reason, God help you on your knees to find out why the Lord really brought you here.

Would you understand me if I should say if in any way, from any angle, for any purpose your life goal is to make money, you just came to the wrong place? You just came to the wrong place. This is not a place to learn how to make money so that you can be rich. It is a place for those who desire, don't forget that word

“desire,” they are not drafted, they are volunteers. Instead of God sending the recruiting sergeant to round them up, they knock on the gates of the kingdom of God and say, “Oh, I want to pick grapes. I want to gather the harvest. I want to have a part in the finishing of the work.” And they do not say to the Lord of the vineyard, “What will You give me?” Those who come in at this eleventh hour hear the commission “Go ye also into the vineyard and whatsoever is right, I will give you.”

Christ has paid us our wages, my friends. And we look to Him, in a special sense, and thank God, we are content if we have heard the call and answered it with whatever He gives. Therefore there is never any complaining, never any complaining.

Shall we stand?

Oh precious Lord, rightly interpret to our hearts the glorious vision. If it seems a narrow gate, may we strive, agonize to enter in at the strait gate. May we know our call. May we understand which side of this triangle we are to find our part in the finishing of this work. May there be no exaltation of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or anybody else. May each one of us know what God has called us to, and know the joy of answering that call and devoting our lives to the object of the call. For Christ's sake, Amen.

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