

Seeking Revival

DAY 9—DO I WORK FOR GOD — OR DOES GOD WORK THROUGH ME?

“I have been crucified with Christ. I do not live any longer, but Christ lives in me.” GALATIANS 2:20

Created for Good Works

Zsolt, a theology (study of religion) student from Austria, was sad. He was invited to tell people in Kenya about Jesus, but only 30 people showed up each night during the first week. Zsolt hoped for many more people to come. Frustrated (heartbroken), he locked himself in his room and prayed for four hours. He prayed and told God all about his hopes and frustrations, he fully surrendered (gave his heart to Jesus) himself and waited. He was sure God listened to his prayer, but he still had fear and doubts (no trust). That night 600 people came to the meeting! Later 700 people came, then 1,000 people. In the end, 39 people were baptized by God’s grace.

Whenever we try to do great things for God, we need to ask an important question: Am I working **for** God with my **human** abilities (skills)? Or is God working **through** me with His **Holy** abilities?

The Bible answers the question of how a strong God works through weak humans. “We are God’s creation. He created us to belong to Christ Jesus. Now we can do good works. Long ago God planned these good works for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10). This verse talks about two “works.” First, God has “created us to belong to Christ Jesus.” This is the new life He has given us in Christ. Then God does a second work in us: the “good works” that He has already planned for us to do. How should we live so that God can do these works through us?

- **Live in the Holy Spirit:** “Until people receive the Holy Spirit, they cannot understand all that God can do through them” (*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 286)
- **Live in full surrender to Christ:** “When you give yourself fully to God you will be led by God’s own hand. . . . As a person loves the lessons of God’s wisdom, God will give them a holy job to do” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 283, 284).

By doing the good work God has prepared for us, we grow in faith and develop our spiritual and mental abilities. Even our mistakes teach us important lessons because we learn that no human work can succeed without God. “Preaching God’s word will not be successful without the continued presence (showing) and help of the Holy Spirit” (Preaching God’s word will not work with no help of the Holy Spirit) (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 671).

Not By Strength, Not By Power

The same as preachers need God’s Holy Spirit to give them power, it is the same with people who write about God: “If the person who writes for the paper is saved by God, the reader will be touched by the same Holy Spirit. . . . But an article written by the writer who has not given all of their life to God’s glory, the angels feel the missing Holy Spirit in sadness. The angels turn away and do not help the reader with understanding and being touched by the article because God and His Holy Spirit are not in it. The words are good, but it does not have the warm influence of the Holy Spirit” (*EGW Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 1, p. 532).

This idea is true for all we do, whether ministry, teaching, leading a mission program, training a child, or anything else. “It is not our power that makes our work successful, it is God’s power working with us that makes our work perfect” (*Christian Service*, p. 260).

As a human, Jesus of Nazareth depended every day on His connection to heaven. Jesus asked the disciples, "Don't you believe that I am in the Father? Don't you believe that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. The Father lives in me. He is the one who is doing this work" (John 14:10). Let's look at the apostle Paul. How was one man able to do amazing mission work? Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ. I do not live any longer, but Christ lives in me. Now I live my life in my body by faith in Jesus, God's Son (Now I have faith in Son of God (Jesus Christ). He loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). Paul gave up his freedom and let Jesus lead his life. He explained, "I will speak about what Christ has done through me. I will not try to speak about anything else. He has been leading the Gentiles to obey God. He has been doing this by what I have said and done. He has given me power to do signs and miracles. I can do these things by the power of the Spirit of God. From Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum I have preached. In those places, I preached the good news about Christ" (Romans 15:18, 19). The important part is to be in-Christ.

God continues to want to do amazing things today. His plans go above what we can do alone. Only with a continued prayer relationship to Jesus can we do the work God has planned for us. He invites us, "Call to me. I will answer you. I will tell you great things you do not know. And unless (if) I do, you would not be able to find out about them" (Jeremiah 33:3).

Praying God's Word

Human abilities achieve only human results.

"Moses was taught all the knowledge of the people of Egypt. He became a powerful speaker and a man of action. . . . Moses thought his own people would understand that God was using him to save them. But they did not understand. . . . [God] led them out of Egypt. He did wonders and signs" (Acts 7:22, 25, 36).

Dear Father, lead us to give our life to you the same as Moses did after his years as a shepherd. We know You can use us to do amazing things when we live by the power of the Holy Spirit. Make us willing to go where You lead us. Thank You for Your power.

We are created in Christ to do good things.

"We are God's creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared long ago that we should do them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Lord, use us to save and bless our neighbors. We know the fulfilling the gospel depends on this question: Am I working for God with my human abilities, or am I allowing God to work through me with His abilities? Teach us that we cannot serve You on our own. Thank You for promising to work through us. Please bless the work we do.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific (exact) blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession (admit your sins/wrongs) and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to give wisdom for current challenges (now) and decisions.

Our Church: Ask God to bless the work of our local, regional, and world church.

Local Requests: Pray for the needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond (answer): Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Take My Life and Let It Be (#330); Not I, But Christ (#570); Anywhere With Jesus (#508); Have Thine Own Way, Lord (#567). Other Songs: Make Me a Servant; In His Time.