

Our Part in the Lord's Harvest

The coming summer months are shaping up to be quite busy, and hopefully productive for the Lord's sake. Perhaps the Lord's words to His disciples, "*The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest (Mat. 9:37-38),*" will take on an immediate and personal meaning to each of us as we consider what we have to offer Him in service. Understanding that no more will be required of us than that which we are able to perform (Mat. 25:15), let us each determine to bear our fair share of the burden in our small part of the Lord's harvest.

The most important first steps in Christian service are simple, easy, and require little effort, but nonetheless seem difficult for many. We must begin by being faithful to Christ in the assembly. No stretch of the imagination could conclude that in view of all that Jesus has done for us that He requires us to assemble too often. Out of the 8760 hours in a year, our regular assemblies account for only 156 hours, or 3 hours out of 168 per week. Even if one were never to miss an assembly, it could hardly be said that the time spent was sacrificial. In the light of Hebrews 10:23-27 every Christian should assemble regularly to build and maintain the spiritual strength needed to at least be minimally involved in the good works that the Master requires of each of us (Mat. 5:13-16; 25:31-46; Eph. 2:10). We can also determine to be faithful and fervent in prayer on behalf of our congregation and our evangelistic efforts (Rom. 12:12; 1 Thes. 5:17), always remembering and believing that, "*The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16b).*" We must never doubt that if we muster the love, courage and resolve to sow the blessed seed, that God will grant the increase (1 Cor. 3:6; Lk. 8:11, 15). The more abundantly we labor (1 Cor. 15:58), the more abundantly the seed is sown, the more likely the increase. Be positive and enthusiastic, not doubtful and negative. If the soil is hard God will judge it, not us. And we must remember that the condition of our own hearts will be counted among our successes or failures. Our attitudes will either fan the flames of zeal, or smother them. Let all that we do be toward the edifying of the church (Eph. 4:11-16) and, "*Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers (Eph. 4:29).*" Our gratefulness to the Lord can only be shown by our willingness to obey *all* of His commandments (Mat. 28:20; Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 5:3).

Randall F. Matheny
PO Box 911, Warren, PA 16365-0911