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EVALUATING THE WORK OF GOD IN OUR MINISTRY

God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. What are the good works that God has so graciously prepared us for? Good works are the manifestation of the ‘work of God’ through our ministry in the Body of Christ.

There is a difference between doing a ‘work of God’ and a ‘work for God.’ An Old Testament illustration of this is found in the example of Cain and Able. Able offered a lamb as a sacrifice and Cain offered what he had produced from the ground God cursed. *God respected Abel and his offering but He did not respect Cain and his offering.* Able’s offering represented the ‘work of God’ by remembering through reenactment the Lord’s sacrifice for sin. Cain’s offering symbolized a ‘work for God’—the work of his own hands. The lamb embodied what God did for mankind; Cain offered what he did—which is the fundamental nature of religious works.

In the third generation from Adam, *men began to call on the name of the LORD.* This simple phrase, “*men began*” in the picturesque Hebrew language portrays a wedge-breached wall. When *man began* to seek God they created a line that would one day change the course of history. *Men began* ... breaking down the wall of separation from God by putting ‘stress’ and emphasis on the divine will of God.

The sons of Adam sought God in developing His plan in their generations. Men of renown venerated God and named their offspring according to His purpose, such as Enoch, the seventh from Adam who *walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.* Enoch was in generational order and possessed keen insight into the will of God—even naming his son Methuselah, being interpreted, “when he is dead, it (the deluge) will come.” (He died the same year as the great flood.)

Noah also was ordered in his generations back to Adam yet in his day another line began to emerge that differed from God's. In the tenth generation God judged man according to purpose—whether man's works were according to His will or not.

*Now it came to pass, when **men began** to multiply on the face of the earth ... the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever ... the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.*

"Men began," once again implying a wedge ... but this particular breach left unaltered would begin a line away from God, violating His divine purpose and forging man's will instead of God's—profaning the name of the Lord. God made a judgment to destroy man *but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord*. Noah was of the lineage that called on God and therefore heard His plan for the future of his family. God spoke the devastating terms of His judgment to destroy the violent men with the earth ... but to Noah God pledged to continue his generations.

In the beginning, *men began* to call on the name of the LORD, but by the tenth generation a wedge was set against the purpose of God and *men began* to call upon themselves—doing their own will, *every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*. Whatever is not of God's purpose is evil regardless of how noble it may appear. Man can be consumed with plans that may prosper all humanity but the true measure of a 'work of God' is whether it fulfills the vision of his ministry father.

The tenth generation from Adam determined to work for himself and *set his mind on earthly things*—not even conscious of the 'work of God' in progress through Noah. If the focus of our ministry is set on earthly things, such as our gifting and exalting self, then our works are disqualified. Since everything God does always has purpose, it is imperative that we search for our divine purpose and make it our objective for ministry.

The success of our ministry depends on doing the 'work of God' by fulfilling our portion of our ministry father's vision. Unless man does the 'work of God,' he cannot succeed ... *unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it*. Noah did the 'work of God'—*according to all that God commanded him, so he did*. His good works were what God commanded and it became the vision his sons pursued also. If we act upon God's vision for our House, we also understand our purpose and objective in ministry.

The significance of doing a 'work for God' or the 'work of God' was also demonstrated in the Tabernacle of Moses through the ministry of Nadab and Abihu.

Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

God judged Nadab and Abihu regarding the source of fire used for the sacrifice. Nadab and Abihu lit the censer of incense but did not take the fire from the altar of sacrifice ... therefore God judged it profane. To profane the name of God is to break His Word by doing our own will instead of His—opening a wedge or another line. In the Tabernacle, which is the pattern of heavenly places, God would not allow a breach in His Word to even begin to break away or deviate from the divine pattern that illustrates His redemption.

Likewise, God has a precise plan determined for us and does not respect any breach or alteration. We must seek the order and purpose of God. Everything we do ought to be according to the heavenly vision. We like holy men before us, seek the will of God by searching to know His plan and purpose ... and then ardently obey the heavenly vision.

Jesus did everything He saw His Father do. Jesus is the Apostle and High Priest of our faith. We likewise are zealous to do the ‘work of God’ in our generations. As part of an apostolic ministry we search for divine purpose and order—but the fire that fuels our endeavors must be to fulfill God’s purpose and not our own personal ambitions. God will not respect or bless our ministry unless it is accomplishing what He has determined.

God establishes a Vision in His House and each member of the House is directed in ministry towards accomplishing that particular vision. If we are not about our father’s business (the heavenly vision God has given for the House), then we are motivated by self-interest and busy finishing our own ‘to do’ lists and agendas. Focusing on self never reveals our ministry purpose—it is profane thinking.

A father in ministry will speak direction so that his sons may come into greater works. The son needs to receive a father’s direction as a command and not a mere suggestion. That means when the Apostle ministry speaks we should labor to accomplish it—our ministry producing the ‘work of God’ in the House.

In this last day, ministry is also judged as the ‘work of God’ by the finished works of Christ. *Man began* to first call on the name of the Lord in the third generation of Adam, but in our day *Jesus began both to do and to teach*. We connect to what *Jesus began* ... He became the wedge or stumbling block that broke down the wall of separation from God—destroying religion once and for all. Jesus came to break through every barrier and destroy all bondages. He rent the dividing wall of religion from top to bottom ... first in the heavens ... then in the temple ... and finally in the hearts of man. *Jesus*, the Restorer of the Breach, *began* ... and those in His lineage are following His example by remembering what He did—doing the ‘works of God’ and developing His plan in their generations ... ultimately restoring the foundation of many generations.

How do we know if our ministry is a ‘work for God’ or the ‘work of God?’ If we are accomplishing our portion of the Vision according to our generation, then it is the ‘work of God.’ If we have not made our father’s Vision our number one priority for functioning in ministry, then the thoughts and intents of our hearts are not God-ward but self-

fulfilling. We cannot fulfill God's purpose for our life while focusing on our own plans. Only a son striving to accomplish the vision of his ministry father discovers his function in ministry—his good works ordained by God to accomplish.

Defining our godly purpose will simplify our life. Therefore, if we are uncertain of the affect of our ministry, then follow the counsel of our father in ministry by “putting everything on trial for its life.” Our ministry will prosper if our objective is for good works—doing the ‘work of God’ by fulfilling the Vision of the House. Sons genuinely pursuing His purpose in the House are *thoroughly equipped for every good work*. Those sincere in their venture to discover His plan will explore His Word, find His ways ... and fulfill their destiny.

Our ministry purpose is to accomplish the ‘work of God’ according to our generation, which has the added benefit of conforming us as one in Jesus. This is very significant since becoming one with Him in purpose is the essence of the Corporate Man and the Risen Body of Christ—it's the whole Body successfully working together as the Beloved of the Lord ... sons passionately fulfilling Kingdom Purpose.

From the beginning of history man has been on a quest ... some merely desire to be noticed in what they do for God ... a few want to be as God ... yet those of the royal seed seek divine purpose—and these chosen ones accomplish the ‘works of God’ in their ministry. They have followed the plan of the ages and as a son, they are doing their ministry father's business. Their works are already determined for them ... completing their portion of the vision in the House of God is fulfilling their destiny.

“May God, who puts all things together—makes all things whole ... now put you together—provide you with everything you need to please him and make you into what gives Him the most pleasure by means of the sacrifice of Jesus, the Messiah. All glory to Jesus forever and always! Oh yes, yes ... yes!”

Any questions or comments please email: rk-roth@juno.com.