

Seeking Revival

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

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

Created for Good Works

Zsolt, a theology student from Austria, was discouraged. He had been invited to evangelize in Kenya, but only 30 guests showed up each night during the first week. He had hoped for many more. Frustrated, he locked himself in his room and prayed for four hours. Spreading all his despair before God, he surrendered himself with his entire being and waited. He was sure God had listened, though fears and doubts still troubled him. Then came the evening meeting: 600 people arrived! Later he had 700, then 1,000. In the end, 39 were baptized by God's grace.

Whenever we attempt great things for God, we face a vital question: Am I working **for** God with my **human** abilities? Or is God working **through** me with His **divine** abilities?

The Bible addresses this mystery of how a strong God works through weak humans. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). This verse refers to two "works." First, God has "created us in 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 prepared for us to do. How should we live so that God can do these works through us?

1. **Live in the Holy Spirit:** "Till they receive the Spirit, they cannot realize what God can do through them" (*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 286).
2. **Live in full surrender to Christ:** "He who will give himself fully to God will be guided by the divine hand. . . . As he treasures the lessons of divine wisdom, a sacred commission will be entrusted to him" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 283, 284).

By completing the tasks God has prepared for us, we grow in faith, and our spiritual and mental abilities are developed. Even our failures hold valuable lessons, for we learn that no human effort can succeed without God at the center. "The preaching of the word will be of no avail without the continual presence and aid of the Holy Spirit" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 671).

Not by Might, Nor by Power

And just as preachers must be empowered by God's Spirit, so it is with authors of spiritual materials: "If the salvation of God is with the one that writes for the paper, the same spirit will be felt by the reader. . . . But a piece written when the writer is not living wholly for the glory of God, not wholly devoted to Him, angels feel the lack in sadness. They turn away and do not impress the reader with it because God and His Spirit are not in it. The words are good, but it lacks the warm influence of the Spirit of God" (*EGW Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 1, p. 532).

This principle is true for all tasks, whether ministry, teaching, leading a mission project, training a child, or anything else. "It is not the power that emanates from men that makes the work successful, it is the power of the heavenly intelligences working with the human agent that brings the work to perfection" (*Christian Service*, p. 260).

Even the human Jesus of Nazareth depended daily on His connection to heaven. He asked the disciples, "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works" (John 14:10). Or let's take a look at the apostle Paul. How was one man able to carry out such unbelievably great mission work? He said, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Paul gave up his autonomy and

allowed Christ to lead his life. He explained, "I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done—by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God" (Romans 15:18, 19, NIV). The key is being in-Christ.

God wants to do incredible things even today. His plans go far beyond our own capabilities. Only with a constant prayer connection to Him can we carry out the task He has prepared. He invites us, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know" (Jeremiah 33:3).

Praying God's Word

Human abilities achieve only human results.

"And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds. . . . For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand. . . . [God] brought them out, after he had shown wonders and signs" (Acts 7:22, 25, 36).

Dear Father, lead us to surrender as Moses did after his years as a shepherd. We know You can also perform signs and wonders through us when we live by the power of the Holy Spirit. Make us willing to go where You lead. Thank You for Your divine power.

We are created in Christ for good works.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Lord, make us tools in Your hand for the salvation and blessing of our neighbors. We know the fulfillment of the gospel depends on this question: Am I working for God with my human abilities, or is God working through me with His divine abilities? Teach us that we cannot serve You on our own. Thank You for promising to work through us. Please bless the work of our hands.

More Prayer Suggestions

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

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

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

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

Listen and Respond: 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.