

November 17, 2015

Dear Brethren and Friends,

"The WORK!"

Over the years, saying those two words has conveyed great meaning—an immediate understanding of what the Church of God was committed to accomplishing. In particular, this focused on preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God, the same powerful message with which Jesus Christ began His ministry:

"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel'" (Mark 1:14-15).

What followed was a period of some three and one-half years in which Jesus undertook an endeavor to ultimately change the world! That kind of impact was what He sought to accomplish! However, consider the struggles even He confronted.

At first, His relatives thought He was crazy, and He was accused of being demon possessed by the religious leaders (Mark 3:20-22). Among His closest disciples—the apostles—there was competition for position, and this continued until just before His death (Luke 22:24). Financial support for His preaching came from those who believed Him—especially from some of the faithful women (Luke 8:1-3).

God gave Jesus great power to heal, to cast out demons and to bring about astounding miracles, "but although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him..." (John 12:37).

In spite of this rejection, Jesus was successful in the responsibility God placed on Him:

"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do" (John 17:4).

Throughout almost two-thousand years, the Church of God has continued the work passed to it by Jesus. We catch a glimpse of this time period in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation. To each of the seven Churches, Jesus says, "I know your works..." (Revelation 2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15).

His is a message of encouragement—including promise of future rewards. But it is also one of correction and urgent warnings! In addition, Jesus says to all:

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

We must understand that the Church of God has a job to do. What do you think the consequences will be for those who QUIT? It happened to many who followed Jesus (John 6:60-66). Close disciples who had served with Paul abandoned him (2 Timothy 4:10). Sadly, in every era of God's Church people have left without finishing the job!

The apostles and disciples who gathered in Jerusalem for the Day of Pentecost in 31 AD did so at the instructions of Jesus. Little did they expect what was to occur, and the work of the Church of God had

tremendous impact—for a while. However, that great success faded away.

In recent times, tens of thousands of baptized members of the Worldwide Church of God QUIT the Work of God! There were devastating consequences! The Church was thrown into disarray. Its capacity to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God was greatly weakened.

Now, the people of God find themselves as spiritual refugees! Nonetheless, the Work of God must and will be FINISHED (Romans 9:28)! Brethren, in ways not even imaginable in times past, incredible opportunities are open to us to do the Work—the job that has fallen to us to accomplish (Matthew 24:14).

Our part in the Work of God—whether small or great—must be finished! In truth, brethren, we are among those who have been chosen to help finish “the WORK!” As we proceed, let’s do so with this approach:

“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ” (Colossians 3:23-24).

In Christ’s Service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Harris".

Dave Harris