

Responsibility in the Work

by Stephen Kaung

The work of God is one work, centered on His Son, and requires faith, trust, and the power of the Holy Spirit to work with Him.

Duration: 1:19:53

Scripture: Ephesians 4:12, Philippians 1:6

Topics: "Responsibility"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of putting oneself fully into God's work. He uses the parable of the householder hiring workers for his vineyard to illustrate this point. The speaker highlights that God's work requires many workers and that everyone should be engaged in it. He also emphasizes that the attitude and willingness to work diligently are what make a difference in God's work. The sermon concludes with an invitation for the audience to ask any questions they may have about responsibility in God's work.

Transcript

A word of prayer first. Dear Heavenly Father, we do thank Thee for gathering us together here this afternoon. Our Father, we do acknowledge that by ourselves we can never take up any responsibility in anything that is related to Thee.

We are unworthy, we are unable, but our Father, we do praise and thank Thee that Thou has not only redeemed us in Thy Son, but Thou has also called us into Thy Word. So we humbly come to Thee this afternoon, lay ourselves at Thy feet, and just desire to wait upon Thee and allow Thee to reveal to us what Thy work is, and then put us in the place where Thou want us to be, that we may serve Thee according to Thy will, that Thy purpose may be fulfilled and Thy glory may be full. We just commit this time into Thy hands and trust Thee to give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation.

In the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen. That we will be considering together for this afternoon, and if God willing, tomorrow afternoon, is on this matter of responsibility in the work.

Responsibility in the work. I think first of all we have to define what is meant by the work. You know there are so many works going on, and many works in the name of the Lord Jesus, that we really need to know what really is meant by the work as we find in the Word of God.

You remember in John chapter 5, our Lord Jesus said, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. You know our God is a working God. He is most diligent.

And He is doing His work. And because of this, our Lord Jesus said, I too work. The work that the Father is doing, and the work that the Son is doing, are one work.

And then you remember in John chapter 6, after our Lord Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, then these people just followed Him, because they thought that this matter of food was solved. And you remember when they sought the Lord, the Lord said, Work not for the food that perishes, but work for that which will remain forever. So when these Jews heard these words, immediately they said, What shall we do? That we do the works of God.

And the answer of the Lord was most unusual. He said, This is the work of God, believe on Him that was sent. First you find the Lord mentioned that His Father and Himself are working.

Then He said, Do not work for the food that perish, but work for that that remains forever. And when the people said, Alright, if you are talking about work, tell us, what shall we do? That we do the works of God. But the Lord answered, This is the work of God, believe on Him that was sent.

Is it very strange? When these people want to work, to do the works of God, the Lord said, Believe, this is the work of God. Now how are you going to understand this or reconcile this? You know, we often think if we do the works of God, of course we have to work. But the Lord said, No, believe, this is the work of God.

Why? Because the work of God can only be done by God Himself. Nobody can do the work of God. Only the Father and the Son are able to do this work.

You notice that the people said, What shall we do? We do. That we do the works of God. Work in the plural number.

Many works. Now probably they are thinking, these Jews, probably are thinking, The priests in the temple, they are doing the works of God. The Levites in the temple, they are doing the works of God.

Now the priests will offer sacrifice. The Levites will help the people to bind the sacrifice and to slaughter the sacrifice. Or you find the Levites bringing water in to wash.

Or you find the priests teaching the people. Now these are the works of God. But what do we do? We are common people.

We are no priests. We are no Levites. We may be businessmen or we may be family, working in the family.

Now what do we do? That we do the works of God. Just tell us some that will be considered as sacred work, as the works of God, and we will do them. Now that's their idea.

But the Lord Jesus said, this is the work of God. In other words, God has only one work. They are thinking in terms of works.

Many activities. Activities connected with religion. Activities supposed to be for God.

But our Lord Jesus answered and said, God has only one work. God doesn't have all these many works. He has only one work.

And the work of God is that you believe on Him whom God has sent. Now that is the work of God. Because God's work can only be done by God Himself.

You cannot do it. I cannot do it. His son has done it.

And because He has done it, therefore, all that is required of us is belief. This is the basic nature of the work of God. If we want to know what God's work is, the first thing we need to understand is, you cannot do it.

I cannot do it. Nobody can do it. Only God can do it.

And because God has done it in His son, therefore, if we believe in God's son, this is the work of God. The work of God is based on believing. Not on doing.

Because only after we believe in the Lord Jesus, that is, after we have really accepted what He has done, He whom the Father has sent, and He who has done it, and only we receive what He has already accomplished, then, in us and out of us, He will continue to do what needs to be done. Now, I don't know if it is clear. In other words, when we think of doing the work of God, our whole concept is, now let's do it.

God said, no, you cannot do it. You believe. And after you believe, then what has been done in you will be able to come out of you.

He first must work in you. And the result of His working in you will be the working out from you. And only the working out from you is related to doing the work of God.

There is a great difference between working for God and working with God. Lots of works in the name of Christian works are working for God. Very few are working with God.

Now, what's the difference? Working for God is a work that is initiated by man. Working with God is a work that is initiated by God. Working for God is working with our natural energy and talent and cleverness.

Working with God is working in the power of the Holy Spirit. Working for God does not need any revelation. You can plan it, plot it, start it.

But working with God requires revelation. Working for God does not need the working of the cross in your life. As a matter of fact, if the cross works in your life, you cannot work for God anymore.

But working with God, you have to know the working of the cross in your life. Working for God, the end result is you are glorified. You get the glory.

Because you have done something. Working with God, God gets the glory. I think the best illustration in the New Testament is Paul.

Before he met the Lord, Saul, the Pharisee, he worked for God with all honesty. He received the best tradition of Judaism. He sat under the best teacher.

With all honesty, he felt that he had to persecute the people of the way, the followers of Jesus. Because according to the traditional concept, Christ is an imposter to Judaism. So he did everything he could to

wipe out Christianity.

And he said, he thought he was serving God. Working for God. And do not think that only Saul was doing that.

Probably we have all done it. As a matter of fact, usually we begin by working for God, and then finally, by the grace of God, we are led into working with God. Not until he met the Lord, on the road to Damascus.

He received revelation. And then you find the Apostle Paul worked with God. And what a difference it is.

So dear brothers and sisters, we need to remember that you can work for God, or you can work with God. If you are just working for God, people may be benefited, but God is not satisfied. Now what is God's work? We say that God has only one work to do.

Now it is true God has done many things. You can think of creation, how God created the universe. You can think of redemption, the work of redemption.

But you know, whether it is creation, whether it is redemption, these are acts. But the work is one. Why? Because all the works of God are centered upon one purpose.

And that purpose is His Son. Whatever God does, whether He created or He redeems, it is for His Son. That His Son may have the first place in all things.

That His Son may be all and in all. That His Son may be glorified. That His Son may have His heart's desire.

A companion. A mate. A counterpart.

All the works of God. When you think of that individually, you will find that all the many works of God actually are one work. And that one work has only one purpose behind it.

And that purpose is that His Son may be glorified, may be satisfied. That is the work of God. And because of this you will find in different ages, or in different dispensations, or in different seasons, you will find God's work seems to have some special emphasis at different times.

For instance, in the beginning you will find God's work seems to be in creating all things. But that's not the purpose of God's work. That is only the appearance.

You will find that the emphasis is in creating. Then you will find later on in the patriarch period. The fathers.

You know, like Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. You will find God's work seems to be centered upon certain individuals. As if He is interested in a person.

Or a family. Then when you come later on in the time of Moses, in the dispensation of the law, you will find that God's work seems to be centered upon a people. A nation.

Israel. And then if you come to the dispensation of grace, you will find that out of every tongue, every tribe, every people, God has gathered together a people for Himself. He is centered upon the church.

In other words, you will find that in different time periods, there seems to be some different emphasis in the work of God. But, when you put them together, you will find God has only one work. Whatever it may

be, whether He is creating, whether He is emphasizing on a person, on a family, on a nation, on many nations, you will find the end result is one.

Therefore, you will find towards the end everything is gathered. All the works of God are gathered together into one. And that one is the New Jerusalem.

To satisfy and to glorify His Son. One work. God has only one work.

And because of this, it is very important for us to understand what is God's work in our time. In other words, what is the emphasis of God's work in our days. Because, if we do not understand this, we may be doing some good works, but these may be works good a hundred years ago, but not good today.

When God raised up Martin Luther in the 16th century, he was doing God's work. But, if we are doing the same thing today and no more, we are not doing God's work. We need to know what is it that God is doing today.

And, then, work with God. So, I think, for this reason, if we think of God's work, the first thing that has to be before us is revelation. Without revelation, no one can do God's work.

We need to ask the Lord to give us an insight, a spiritual understanding into the mind of God, the heart of God, concerning His desire. What is it behind His work? And, what is it that He is really concentrating on today, that we may move together with Him in the work that He is doing? That is a necessity. And, of course, the second thing is the cross.

After we have been given such a revelation, it doesn't mean that we can do it right away, because the cross has to be applied into our lives, because God's work cannot be done by ourselves. It has to be done by God Himself in us. We need the cross.

And, of course, the power of the Holy Spirit. Another thing I think we need to clarify before we can go on, and that is the distinction between the work and the Church. You know, the work and the Church cannot be separated.

But, they need to be distinguished. Because, if we do not distinguish between the work and the Church, you will find all the confusions that we have today. I believe that many confusions that we find today in Christianity is because people do not see the distinction between the work and the Church.

The work is for the Church. The work itself is not an end. You know, many God's servants make work their end.

But, work, the work is not an end. The work is a means to an end. Whatever work it may be, it is not an end in itself.

Never take a work as an end in itself. Because, if you do, you actually make your work your God, or your Kingdom. But, work is never an end in itself.

Even when God is doing a work, the work is not His end. The work is for the Church. The Lord Jesus said, I will build my Church upon this rock, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

And Paul took it up and said, We are God's fellow workmen, and you are God's husbandry and God's building. I'm like a wise foreman. Really, that word is not architect.

Because God never called anyone to be an architect. He is the architect. You know, He designs everything.

But Paul was a foreman. Paul said, I am a wise foreman. And I laid the foundation.

Then each of you see how you build upon it. And we know that building is the Church. So, the work is for the Church.

Why work that the Church may be built? The Church is not for the work. If a Church exists for a work, that Church becomes a platform for a ministry. But it doesn't mean that because the Church is not for the work, therefore the Church does not need to cooperate with the work.

The Church needs to cooperate with the work. So you find that the Church and the work cannot be separated. Completely separated.

As if they have nothing to do with each other. No. The work is for the Church.

And the Church certainly should support the work. They work together. And yet they are distinct.

Now I think there are several ways we can see how the work and the Church are distinct. Number one, if we look at representation. Now who represents the work? Or who represents the Church? By representation we can see the distinction.

Now when you come to this matter of the work, you find that the work of God on earth today is represented by the Apostles. In Ephesians chapter 4 we find that God gave to the Church some Apostles and some Prophets and some Evangelists and some Pastors or Shepherds and Teachers for the perfecting of the Saints. God gave these men four classes of people.

Some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors or Shepherds and Teachers. Shepherds or Teachers are what? Because in Greek you find that they are put together. Not like some Apostles some, some, some, you find that some Pastors and Teachers.

So, according to Greek grammar, they should be one. Four classes of people. Now these four classes of people are given to the Church for the perfecting, for the maturing of the Saints.

Now they represent the work of God. They are workers. And of course the Apostles lead the list.

So we may say that the Apostles represent the work. And of course with Apostles, the Prophets, the Evangelists, the Pastors and Teachers and many others involved in the work of God, but represented by the Apostles. But the Church is represented now by the Church.

Of course, we come down to the practical aspect and that is the Church Local. The Church Local is represented by the Elders. By the Elders.

Not Apostles, but the Elders. In Philippians chapter one you'll find Paul wrote to the Church in Philippi. And we find there he wrote to the Saints, the Deacons and the Elders.

The Elders of the Local Assembly represents the Church. Now of course they are not the Church, but they represent the Church. With them there are the Deacons, there are the Saints.

The Apostles do not govern the Church. They help to build up the Saints. And when the Saints are built up, then the Saints begin to function and produce the body ministry for the self-building up of the body in love.

So in a sense the Apostles or the workers are like scaffolds. You see, when you are building a building, if it's a ten-story high, you need scaffolds, footholds, that you can build that building. But after the building is finished, then the scaffolds are taken away.

Now if you leave the scaffolds there forever, that's very ugly. So the workers represented by the Apostles and others, they are like scaffolds. God used them to help the Saints.

And as the Saints are built together and built up, then the scaffolds are taken away. In other words, the Apostles can go elsewhere. The success of a worker is depending on how soon he works himself out of job.

If he becomes so much needed, if the Church depends on him so much that he just cannot go out of job, he is a failure. He does not stay there to govern the Church local. He should be use of God to help develop some men of statue, of spiritual statue, that they can be put in the position or in the function of elders.

That they can take care of the local Church, govern the local Church. So, just remember this, the work as represented by the Apostles, they are not to stay put in a locality to govern that Church, the Church that God may use them to raise up and stay them forever. That's a failure.

Because they are representing the work and not the Church. But the elders, they are raised up locally, not transporting from other locality. Now, you do not transport elders.

Elders are raised up by God locally. And there, they stay there. Be with the people all the time.

They know the people. And God use them as the governing body, representing the head in that local assembly. They do not direct the work of God.

As a matter of fact, in the New Testament, you never find a local Church send out missionaries. Well, if you can find some evidence in the New Testament, please, correct me. Why? Because a Church never governs God's work.

God Himself, the Lord Himself send out workers. They are responsible to the Lord, not to the Church. And that's the reason why you find today what a confusion it is.

The work and the Church are mixed up together, and you do not know whether this is work or this is Church. The work seems to dominate the Church. The Church is completely under the work, not only in one place, but in many places.

Or, the Church is governing the works, because they send out missionaries. They support the missionaries. So the missionaries have to report back to them, and if they are not happy with what they are doing, or they decide the policy.

Now you have all the confusions in Christianity today, because you do not see the difference between the Church and the work. Another way to distinguish the Church and the work, and that is, the Church is local. The work is regional.

The Church is local. The scope of the Church is local. For instance, the Church in Jerusalem.

It is Jerusalem. The Church in Antioch, it is Antioch. The Church is local.

Whether it is a city, or whether it is a village, but you find it is a community. It is local. But the work is regional.

In other words, the work, the scope of work is broader than just one locality. You see Peter and the eleven apostles, it is true they stay in Jerusalem, but they go out to Judea, and even to Samaria. And you'll find Paul, even though he went out from Antioch, and sometimes he came back to Antioch, but here you'll find he moved out to Asia, many places in Asia, and even he was called to many places in Europe.

The work is regional, but the Church is local. And if we can see this, probably that will help us to see the distinction too. The third question is, who are the fellow workers? Who are the workers? Paul in 1 Corinthians 3 said, we are God's fellow workers, and we, the we, he referred to himself and to Apollo, because he was just talking about himself and Apollo.

Now Paul, we know, is an apostle. Apollo, now I do not find in the scripture that Apollo is an apostle. I don't know if you can find it or not.

But so far as I know, Apollo is not an apostle, he's a teacher. He's a teacher. Some apostles, some teachers.

Not all are apostles. Now you know, in a very broad sense, the word missionary is the modern word for the ancient word apostle. Now that's true.

Because it means sent out ones. But strictly speaking, not all sent out ones are apostles. Some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers.

And here you'll find apostle Paul is a fellow worker of God. And here you'll find Apollo, a teacher, is also a fellow worker of God. Now in God's word, we are fellow worker of God.

In other words, you're working together with God. You're not only working together with one another, but you're also working together with God. We are God's fellow workers.

But if you read the New Testament, especially in the case of Paul, you'll find that Paul seems to have many fellow workers. In Acts chapter 13, you'll find there in the church of Antioch, there are five prophets and teachers. And they were ministering unto the Lord.

And the Holy Spirit said, set apart Barnabas and Paul for the work that I call them to do. In other words, they are set apart for the apostolic work. So here you'll find Barnabas and Paul, they move out from Antioch, and they begin to travel to do the apostolic work.

And John Mark went with them as their attendant. In other words, John Mark, a young man, he traveled with Barnabas and Paul as an attendant. But he was involved in God's work.

Unfortunately, this young man wasn't really disciplined. You know, so when something happened, not only because the road began to be tough and hard, but I think probably the main reason was he wasn't happy about that relationship, that order between Paul and Barnabas. Because Barnabas, when they first started out, it was Barnabas and Paul.

But very soon you'll find it was Paul and Barnabas. In other words, the Holy Spirit had decided that Paul should take the lead. And of course, John Mark being a cousin to Barnabas, a young man undisciplined, he was jealous, and he couldn't stand it.

So he left. But then you'll find again, the second time when Paul went out, of course Barnabas took John Mark and went away. So you'll find Paul chose Silas to travel with him.

Now Silas became a fellow worker of Paul. And being a fellow worker of Paul and Paul engaged in God's work, of course he became a fellow worker of God too. Silas.

Then as they came to Derby and Iconia, here you'll find a young man, Timothy. And this young man Timothy, within a few years, had really developed a ministry, a teaching ministry, maybe. So Paul decided to take Timothy with him into the work to train him, to help him, to develop him, that he might be a worker fit for the Master's use.

So here you'll find Timothy was drawn into the work of God. A fellow worker of Paul. And therefore, a fellow worker of God.

Now as Paul travelled, you'll find more and more people were drawn in. If you read, say Acts chapter 20, I would just like to read a few places to show you. In Acts chapter 20 in verse 4, and there accompanied him as far as Asia, so Peter's son of Pyrrhus, Abelian, and of Thessalonians, Aristarchus, and Secundus, and Gaius and Timotheus of Derby, and of Asia, Tychicus, and Trophimus.

So here you'll find there are more people travelling with Paul. Now they are not just travelling companions. As a matter of fact, these people travelled with Paul and they became helpers in the work that Paul was engaging.

Some from Asia, some from Berea, some from Derby, some from Thessalonica, you'll find that different ones began to come in and together they serve in the work of God. If you turn to Romans chapter 16, and here you'll find Paul wrote to the church in Rome. In verse 1 he mentioned, But I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, who is minister of the assembly which is in Cintria, that ye may receive her in the Lord worthily of the saints, and that ye may assist her in whatever matter she has need of you, for she also has been a helper of many, and of myself.

Here was a sister, Phoebe, from the church in Cintria, and she had been a help to Paul. And then verse 3, Salute Prisca, that is Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workmen in Christ Jesus. Here you'll find a couple, Priscilla and Aquila.

Now you'll notice in the scripture it's very, very important to see this. Whenever it comes to the matter of work, Priscilla is always put before Aquila. But whenever it is a matter of the order of the family, it is always Aquila and Priscilla.

Why? Because evidently Priscilla was more involved in God's work than her husband. So here you'll find again, Priscilla, Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workmen in Christ. Verse 6, Salute Maria, who labored much for you.

Here again, another sister, Maria, labored much for you. Verse 7, Salute Andronicus and Junius, my kinsmen and fellow captives, who are of note among the apostles, who were also in Christ before me. These two were of note among the apostles.

Also fellow workers of God. Verse 9, Salute Urbanus, our fellow workmen in Christ. Verse 10, Salute Apellas, approved in Christ.

Verse 12, Salute Trophina and Trophosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute Persis, the beloved, who has labored much in the Lord. So here you'll find in Romans chapter 16, there are many people, men and women, and they labor much in the Lord.

They are, they were Paul's fellow workmen, and therefore, they were fellow workmen of God. If you return to Philippians, in Philippians chapter 2, you'll find Paul not only mentioned Timothy, now of course Timothy was a fellow worker with Paul, but then in verse 25, But I have sought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow workman and fellow soldier, but your messenger and minister to my need. Here you'll find Epaphroditus.

He was also a fellow workman of God. Then chapter 4, verse 2, I exhort you, O dear, and exhausting Tacky, to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yea, I ask thee also true yoke fellow, assist them, who have contended along with me in the glad tidings with Clement also, and my other fellow laborers whose names are in the book of life.

You have more fellow workers here, Paul's fellow workers, more fellow workers. Not only you, O dear, and sing Tacky to sisters, but also the true yoke fellow, we don't know who he is, and also Clement. These are fellow workers of Paul.

Now, if you turn to Colossians, in Colossians chapter 4, verse 7, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow bondman in the Lord, will make known to you all that concerns me. Verse 10, Aristarchus, my fellow captive, salutes you, and Mark, Barnabas' cousin, concerning whom you have received orders, if he come to you receiving, and Jesus, called Justice, who are of the circumcision. These are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who have been a consolation to me.

Verse 12, Epaphras, who is one of you, the bondman of Christ Jesus, salutes you, always combating earnestly for you, young prayer, to the end that you may stay perfect and complete in all the will of God. Verse 14, Luke, the beloved physician, salutes you, and Demas. Verse 17, and say to Archippus, take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, to the end that thou might fulfill it.

You'll find more to the list. And if you turn to 2nd Timothy, 2nd Timothy, here you'll find Paul mentioned in chapter 4, verse 10, for Demas has forsaken me, having loved the present world, and is gone to Thessalonica, a worker, left. Christians to Galatia, evidently Paul sent him to Galatia.

Titans to Dalmatia, Paul sent him to Dalmatia. Luke alone is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thyself, for he is serviceable to me for ministry.

But Titicus I have sent to Ephesus. And of course, in the letter to Philemon, you'll find in chapter 1, only one chapter, verse 1, Paul, prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy is the brother to Philemon, the beloved, and our fellow workmen, and to the sister Ephea, and to Octopus, our fellow soldier. So here you'll find in these lists, Paul mentioned many fellow workers.

Now, if you put them together, what do you see? You see that not only the apostles are fellow workers, not only the evangelists, the prophets, the pastors and teachers are fellow workers. But you'll find there are others, who do not belong to the four classes of people whom God has given to the church for the work. Some are sisters.

Quite a lot of sisters. As a matter of fact, the work of God cannot be done without sisters. You know, some sisters complained and said, what can we do? All we do is the kitchen.

Not so. Not so. You'll find Phoebe, Persis, Maria, Priscilla.

These sisters greatly used by God in His work. You'll find professional people. Luke, the physician.

You know, according to the way the Holy Spirit writes. Peter was a fisherman. But after he was called to the work, he was never called Peter the fisherman anymore.

Peter the apostle. And if Peter went back to fish, God will look to it that he caught no fish. But, when the Bible writes Luke the physician, it means that he was not only a physician before he was involved in God's work.

But even after he was very much involved in God's work, he was still a physician. In other words, he continued with his profession. Zena, the lawyer.

Another one. I haven't read. In other words, that lawyer continued to do his law business.

But at the same time, he was very much involved in the work of God. Aquila, the tent maker. He continued to make tents.

And yet, I think he was involved in God's work more than most people. Because at least three churches began in his home. As a matter of fact, he moved his home from one place to another, not for business, but for the Lord's business.

Marvelous. So here you see a picture. In God's work, there are many workers.

The apostles, of course, they represent the work of God. But aside from the apostles, there are many others who are involved. Not because you are not an apostle, you are not a prophet, you are not an evangelist, you are not a pastor and teacher, therefore you are not involved in God's work.

Not at all. Not because you are not so-called full-time worker, therefore you are not involved in God's work. No.

As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as full-time. Or, may I say, everyone is full-time. If you are serving the Lord, you are serving the Lord full-time, no doubt about that.

God does not need part-time worker. You are full-time. But of course, that doesn't mean that you do not, you are not able to have another profession.

You can. Luke is full-time worker, but he has a profession. He is a physician.

Whether it is full-time, or whether you live by faith, as a matter of fact, there is no such thing as certain people live by faith and other people do not live by faith. If you don't live by faith, what do you live by? Everyone lives by faith. So, you find that as a worker, it is not determined by full-time live by faith.

Now, today, our concept is, if you are a worker in the work of God, well, you must be full-time, and you must live by faith. Otherwise, you are not a worker. Then Paul is not a worker.

Paul is not qualified. Because sometimes Paul make his tents. Ah, we say, Paul, you must have fallen.

But strangely, God prospers his tent-making. He was able to not only support himself, but his fellow workers. But Peter cannot go fishing.

If he goes fishing, he will starve to death. God's way is flexible, very flexible, very living. Do not be so legalistic.

In God's work, you can find all kinds of people there. Full-time or no full-time, or live by faith, or not live by faith, whatever it may be, you find that these people are fellow workers. Now, brothers and sisters, what does it mean to us? I think there are two extremes.

Two errors in the matter of work. One is we think that the work of God is only entrusted to the apostles. Exclusively it is the work of the apostles, or the prophets, or the evangelists, or the pastors and teachers.

And all the rest are not involved. That is one extreme, one error. And the other extreme, the other error is, I won't call it an error, but I will call it, first shall I call it, it's not an error, but it is it is not operative.

Everyone is a worker. Now, so far as the truth is concerned, that is true. Every believer is a worker.

Every believer should be involved in God's work. But not every believer can be involved in God's work. Now, that's what I'm trying to say.

Oh, not every believer is really involved in God's work. So far as God is concerned, He does desire every child of God, everyone whom He has redeemed, He has paid such a price, He wants to see that you and I are really engaged in His field. Now, that is God's heart, no doubt about that.

We cannot say that we are just saved and enjoy, but we have no responsibility in God's work. We cannot say that. If we do, we fail God.

Every child of God, looking from the viewpoint of God's truth, is a worker. Let each see how he builds on that foundation. But, to be really involved in God's work, number one, you require revelation.

If you do not have revelation, vision, of what God's work is, then you are not in God's work. You may be involved in many works, but you are working for God. Lots of activities, but you are not in God's work.

You need vision. Number two, you need to commit yourself fully to God, and to His work. You cannot be involved in God's work if you are only half-hearted.

You cannot engage in God's work if you just give Him what is left. If you are to be involved in God's work, you have to give yourself a hundred percent to it. That doesn't mean you cannot have a profession.

If God wants you to carry on a profession, fine. But the profession is for the sake of God's work. It doesn't mean you cannot have a family.

If God had arranged that you have a family, then even in the family, it is for God's work. Your home is for God. But, these are the two basic requirements.

You may be fellow workers of God. You may be fellow workers with those whom God has called to His work. If number one, you have vision.

If number two, you give yourself a hundred percent. Now that gets you into the work of God. I hope that we are clear about this point.

Not everyone said to say, not everyone who is saved can be said he is a fellow, she is a fellow worker of God. That's very sad. The reason is, most people do not have vision.

They do not know what God's work is. They do not know what God is really after. And if you do not see what God is really working towards, you may be working just in the opposite direction.

And number two, if you do not put yourself a hundred percent to it, you will not make it. You will not make it. But to ever really see and really give himself to God, thank God he is our fellow worker.

Of course, in God's work, he requires lots of workers. You know, maybe we look at a parable, Matthew 20. Matthew 20, you find a kid parable for the kingdom of heavens is like a householder, who went out with the early morn to hire workmen for his vineyard.

You know, it is a parable. But of course, this parable, we know that it is concerning God's work. Because vineyard is God's work.

And the householder is God. He went out with the early morn to hire workmen for his vineyard. God's work needs workers.

So very early in the morning, he went out to hire workers. And having agreed with the workmen for a denarius, a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And having gone out about the third hour, he saw others standing in the marketplace idle, and to them he said, Go also ye into the vineyard, and whatsoever may be just I will give you.

And they went their way, and again having gone out about the sixth and ninth hour, he did likewise, but about the eleventh hour, having gone out, he found some others standing and says to them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say to him, Because no man has hired us. He says to them, Go also ye into the vineyard, and whatsoever may be just ye shall receive. So here you'll find our God, our Lord, He is looking for workmen in His work.

And from the early morning until the eleventh hour, there's only one hour left. And He is still going out and bringing in workmen. In other words, you'll find that our Lord just cannot stand seeing people standing there idle.

Our God is such a diligent God. You know, if He sees anybody standing there idle, He says, Why are you standing idle? There's lots of work to do. Why don't you come in and work? He wants everyone to come into the vineyard, into the work.

But of course, we know what happened. At the end of the day, and when the householder began to give the wages, he began with the last, and to the first. And when they who came to work about the eleventh hour came, they received each a denarius.

And when the first came, they supposed that they should receive more, and they received also themselves each a denarius. And on receiving it, they murmured against the master of the house, saying, These last have worked only one hour, and Thou hast given them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the heat. But he answering said to one of them, My friend, I do not wrong you.

Dost Thou not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is Thine and go. But it is my will to give to this last, even as to Thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will in my own affairs? Is Thine eye evil because I am

good? Thus shall the last be first, and the first last, for many are called, but few chosen ones.

Yes, all are in the vineyard working, but there is a difference. Some work for wages agreed upon. In other words, there have been negotiations.

You give me a denarius, and I come into your vineyard. If you don't, I come. I don't.

Bargaining. But others without any promise, some promise, I'll give what you should have. And others without even any promise of any wages.

In other words, work willingly. It's our hard attitude that will make the difference. The last will be first, and the first will be last.

Many are called, but few are chosen. Those chosen are those who serve the Lord for the Lord's sake, not for any other purpose. So, brothers and sisters, we find here that not because you are not an apostle, therefore, you have nothing to do with God's work.

Finally, we have to just go very quickly, and what's our responsibility in the work? Now, of course, God's work is one, and but it covers everything. Therefore, when you come to this matter of responsibility, I think I can only very generally point out a few things. Number one, certainly, we need to pray.

We need to pray. Whatever specific part in God's work you are doing, one thing that we all have to do, be responsible together, and that's prayer. You know, Ephesians chapter six.

Ephesians chapter six, verse eighteen. Praying at all seasons with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching unto this very thing with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints, and for me in order that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the glad tidings. Here you'll find the Ephesian believers are exhorted to pray.

To pray. For all the saints, and for Paul in the work. So, in other words, number one, our responsibility in the work is if we see the work of God, then we need to engage ourselves in praying.

You know, often times we find our prayer is so limited. Probably just limited to ourselves and our family. Now certainly we should pray for ourselves and for our family.

And maybe some will pray for the brothers and sisters who are in the immediate circle with them. Now thank God for that, but I believe that if you see, if you have vision of God's work, your prayer life has to be broadened. Not only you pray for yourself, for your family, for your brothers and sisters in your locality, but you really need to take up the burden to pray for God's work all over the world.

Pray. I think that that is a responsibility that we must all take up. Number two.

Philippians chapter one verse six. Having confidence of this very thing, that he who has begun in you a good work will complete it until I should read from verse five. Because of your fellowship with the gospel from the first day until now, having confidence of this very thing, that he who has begun in you a good work will complete it until Jesus Christ's day.

In other words, responsibility in the work, there is another general responsibility that everyone involved in the work must take up, and that is, we must all have fellowship in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a good work. And God has begun in you, he will certainly complete it.

In other words, we have to take up the gospel of Jesus Christ as our work. We need to have fellowship in it. Now, fellowshiping in the gospel of Jesus Christ may be in many different ways.

Some may be evangelists. Some may not be evangelists, but witnessing. You know? Or some may be just helpers in some way.

But here you'll find, or even like Paul, they have fellowship with Paul in the gospel. They send supplies to Paul once and twice so that the work of God may be done. These are fellowship in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And we all need to be involved in the fellowship of the gospel. Number three. Ephesians chapter four, verse fourteen.

No, not verse fourteen, but verse thirteen. Until we all arrive at the unity of the, verse twelve, for the perfecting of the saints with a view to the work of the ministry with a view to the edifying of the body of Christ. Until we all arrive at the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, as the full grown man at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, sixteen.

From whom the whole body fitted together and connected by every joint of supply, according to the working in its measure of each one part, works for itself the increase of the body to itself building up in love. And that is according to the grace and gift that God has given to you. Work diligently, abounding in the work.

God gives gifts to different ones differently. God gave great grace to everyone, but the grace of God is so tremendous that probably some people will be great on this side and other people will be great on that side, but everyone who is involved in God's work, work diligently, abounding in work, with whatever grace and gift God has given to you. And as we work together, we will find the church is built.

So, this afternoon we just put before you this matter of God's work and its responsibility. I do hope that God will open our eyes to see that we shouldn't be passive or negative about God's work. There is a call from God that we should all be engaged in His work.

Now, God willing, tomorrow we will have some questions and answers. So, if you have any questions on responsibility in the work, will you please write in, write on a paper and then give it to me anytime before tomorrow afternoon. So, we hope that tomorrow afternoon we will share on some maybe practical questions.

And I do hope that don't expect me to answer all the questions, but my practice is everybody help. Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, how we do praise and thank Thee that Thou has been and Thou art still doing Thy work. Oh, how we praise and thank Thee that Thou art calling Thy people into Thy work.

We do acknowledge that we are unworthy, we are unfit, but we thank Thee because it is Thy grace and Thy gift given to us, enable us to be engaged in Thy work. So, we do ask Thee, O Lord, that Thou will give vision and Thou will also bring us to that point that we may give ourselves to Thee a hundred percent, that Thou are able to use us for Thy great work to be done. And to Thee be all the glory, in the name of our Lord Jesus.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/2/SID2232.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/stephen-kaung/responsibility-in-the-work/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net