

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH  
***THE PIONEER BAPTIST***

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## ***CO-WORKERS FOR GOD***

**By: C. D. Cole**

I Corinthians 3:6-9, Paul speaking, *“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one; and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.”*

**Introduction:** “A nation is no stronger than its working citizens and a church is no stronger than its working members.” (Dr. Ragland)

The menace of unemployment is more than an individual matter. It is a matter of concern to a nation and just as truly a matter of concern to a church.

A nation cannot encourage or permit unemployment of its citizens without peril to individual life and national prosperity. Nor can a church encourage or permit unemployment of its members without peril to individual growth and church prosperity.

Dr. Ragland continues: One of the distressing symptoms of present day life is the desire of many to put pay above service and to escape work and be paid for idleness at public expense. Relief rolls become attractive and welfare suffers.

The primary application of our text is to the work of the Christian ministry; to the work of pastors. But surely the thought of the text may be enlarged so as to take in all believers. Nobody will seriously and sincerely contend that the pastor should do all the work of a church. So I would use this text as a challenge not only to myself but to all the members of the body of Christ.

The church is said to be a body of Christ. It is likened to the human body. What would happen to the human body if only one or two members functioned? Suppose the eye had to do all the work of your body? Why you would get run over before you got home from this meeting. Suppose one foot had to do all the walking, to say nothing of having to do all the work of the body? Well, you would not think that a small matter, would you? That is, if it were your own body involved. Ephesians 6:11-17, *“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”*

I would challenge you with three thoughts based upon this text:

### **SOLEMN THOUGHT**

We have a solemn thought. *“Labourers together for God.”* Does God need laborers? Does God who has creating power; power to create according to His sovereign pleasure; does such a God need laborers? Cannot He do all the work Himself? The answer is both yes and no. If you think the question implies any weakness on the part of God, the answer is yes – God can do all the work himself. But if

the question implies His will and plan for human redemption, then it is true he needs workers. When Christ cried from the cross, *“It is finished,”* He meant He had done all that needed to be done for the world’s redemption. But for the report of that work, God is pleased to use human witnesses. How is a body going to be benefited by what Christ did on the cross who never hears about it? And how is he going to hear about it without a preacher – a human witness? Romans 10:14, *“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”*

We see this same principle in everything around us. There is the middleman between the mill and the consumer. The question of organizing a distributing agency is quite as important as any other part of the manufacturer’s business. What would great automobile factories be without dealers or distributors? What would our lake be worth to us if we did not have the mains and pipes to bring the water to our homes? What would the great reservoir of grace up yonder on Calvary’s hill be worth to the dying sinner if there are no human mouths to tell him about it?

The Bible is the word of God and a blessed Book, but who will benefit from it if there are no workers to carry its message to men? Yes, there is a very real sense in which God needs workers. And every Christian is a worker for God. And every church, if it is anything, is a collective group-worker’s together for God.

Here is a test of whether church work is work for God. It must be essential to the task of giving the word of God to this benighted world. The Bible is not a private book for myself. Jesus Christ is not a pri-

vate Saviour for myself. The Bible is not my special property, and Jesus Christ is not just a Saviour for me so that I have no concern that he should be a saviour for you.

So whatever work is necessary to the human testimony – whatever work is needed in the preaching of the Gospel is work for God. Whatever is necessary for the future testimony of this church is the work we need to do. The maintenance of this building is a work for God. The heating, somehow to keep this building warm is a necessity if the testimony of this church is given. Spurgeon used to say that there is no use preaching to people with cold feet. When you work in the mines or on the farm or in the office to get money to help buy a furnace or to help pay someone to fire it, you are working for God. If you are earning money, to pay your tithes, to keep a missionary on the field you are working for God. Whenever you put your money into the support of someone to give a public testimony from this pulpit you are working for God. Whenever you invite someone to come to the public services you are working for God. Whenever you visit the sick and the poor and relieve their necessities in the name of Christ and His church, you are working for God. BUT you can do all these things and not be working for God. You can do it in your own name, or in the name of some lodge, but this will not be working for God. It means much every way for whose credit you do a good deed as to whether it is a work for God. A lot of so-called church work is not for God. Lost people are not working for God when they give alms. You cannot work for God and ignore His Son and His church.

### SIGNAL HONOUR

A signal honour. *“Laborers together for God.”* How would you like to work for the government? Most people would like it. There is a sort of honour attached to a government job. The pay is pretty good and most jobs carry more or less authority – two things that appeal to human nature – and we all still have human nature.

Can you think of any higher honor that working for God? What greater title can anybody have than that of “servant of the Most High God”? And it is a further honor that God works with us. We never have to work alone. One of the sweetest romances in all the missionary work of the

church of Christ is that of the unnamed and unsung men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, fleeing for their lives, went as far as Antioch, preaching the Lord Jesus to Greeks. No church sent them. They had not heard Christ give the commission to go into all the world. They were not officials preaching publicly. They were just men of God who had learned of a Saviour and wanted others to know about Him. They were Jews but the ceremonial law that separated between Jew and Gentile could not bind them. To them all men were sinners and Jesus Christ was the only Saviour for anybody. They did not study facts to find out to whom the Gospel was to be preached. They found sinners in Antioch and preached the Lord Jesus to them. Acts 11:20-21, *“And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And look at the blessed sequel: And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.”*

We are God’s fellow-labourers. I am your pastor, [Bro. C. D. Cole preaching to Morton’s Gap, September 2, 1951] but I am also related to you as God’s fellow-worker. Does that suit you? It ought to suit all of us. But there are plenty of church members who think that it is a perpetual nuisance to be talking about money and work, who think of Christian service as a burden. Why, of course it is a burden to serve God, and it is a burden just because it is an honour. We are told the Hebrew word which means glory literally means weight. There are no push-button jobs in the kingdom of God. And there are no brass hats in the army of the Lord. We are fellow workers and comrades in arms. There is no pentagon in the government of Jesus Christ. We are brother and sister in the Divine family, and Jesus Christ is our Lord and Master.

There is pastoral authority in the church, but it is the authority of one who watches for the interests of your souls; the authority of a spiritual physician who gets his prescriptions for your health out of the Bible. A watchman does not enforce his warnings by legal procedure or external force. The physician does not make you take his medicine. We constantly hear of people whose doctor will not let them do thus and so, and we think that is alright; but if it is ever said that such and such a pastor will not allow his people do thus

and so, it is said with derision and in a spirit of criticism.

It is alright for the doctor to warn against enemies of our bodies; we thank him for his interest in us. But for a pastor to warn against fleshly lusts that war against the soul is a thing either to be ignored, treated with contempt, or opposed. We can believe that the doctor who charges us a big fee for caring for our bodies is really interested in us, but for the pastor to make any appeal to us is to lay himself open to the charge of selfishness.

### ENCOURAGEMENT

A strong encouragement. *“Fellow-labourers for God or with God.”* Regardless of the critical aspect of the text, both of these things are true. We are God’s fellow-labourers, and God works with us. Did not Christ say in Matthew 28:20, *“... lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”*

It is said that Hudson Taylor the great missionary once said: “I used to ask God if he would come and help me; then I asked God if I might come and help Him; then I ended by asking God to do His work through me.”

**Conclusion:** Are you working for God? If saved, you were created in Christ Jesus for that purpose, created unto good works. Ephesians 2:10, *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”* Are you working for God? Do you reply by saying that you do not have time that all your time is taken up, that it takes all your time working for your wife and children. Are you working for God? Do you reply by saying that is useless; by saying that it does not pay to serve God. I hope you do not feel that way about it, but if you do, and if it is any consolation to you to know that there are many other people who feel the same way about it, you are welcome to that consolation; but I must warn you that the consolation will be short-lived.

In the days of the prophet Malachi, God charged Israel with that very attitude. Malachi 3:14, *“Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, ...”*



# EVIDENCES OF THE NEW BIRTH

By: Rosco Brong

(Former Dean of Lexington Baptist College)

You can and ought to know whether you have been born again. Here are 10 signs:

John 3:7-8, "*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*"

We know when the wind blows because we can hear the sound of it and we can see the effect of it when dust and smoke and chaff are blown away and grass and trees move and bend with the wind. We have learned that these things are the effects of the wind, and we accept them as evidences that the wind is blowing. Even so, the Bible tells us that certain things are effects and evidences of the new birth, and if we recognize these evidences in our lives we may be sure we have been born again.

The person who is born again:

## HEARS GOD'S WORDS

1. John 8:47, "*He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.*" The persons to whom Jesus spoke these words were mentally acquainted with the Scriptures and they did hear God's words through Jesus with their outer ears, but they refused to hear them with the inner man. They turned a deaf ear and hardened their hearts against the truth. The child of God not only hears God's words with the outer ear and receives them into his natural mind, but he hears in a real spiritual sense: that is, he consents and agrees to God's words in his heart, so that he is willing to be governed by the truth conveyed in these words of God. He recognizes the authority of God to speak and his own duty to listen to what God says. He believes that God has spoken through the Apostles and other inspired writers of the Bible, and he listens to their message as unto God. I John 4:6, "*We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.*"

## BELIEVES IN GOD'S SON

2. I John 5:1, "*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:...*" The Bible does not say that we are born again because we believed, but that we believe because we have been born again.

John did not write, "*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ will be born of God,*" but, "*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is [or, better translated has been] born of God:*" that is, his faith is evidence of his regeneration. Many lost sinners say that they believe in Christ, but they don't. They have no true inner conviction or faith that Christ died for their sins, that He is the Son of God, that He arose from the dead, that "*he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*" I Corinthians 15:25, or that God has ordained Him to "*...judge the world in righteousness...*" Acts 17:31. Lost sinners may believe in some false or imperfect imaginary Christ of man's teaching, but they do not believe in the Christ of the Bible. They do not believe that Jesus is the Christ described in the Bible. "*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:...*"

## LOVES JESUS CHRIST

3. John 8:42, "*Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me:...*" The lost sinner does not love the Lord. The person who is born again loves Jesus, and will do anything he can for Him. John 14:23, "*...If a man love me, he will keep my words:...*" I John 5:3, "*For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments:...*"

## LOVES THE BRETHREN

4. I John 4:7, "*Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*" I John 5:1, "*...every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.*" John 13:35, "*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*"

## MAKES PEACE FOR SINNERS

5. Matthew 5:9, "*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*" Lost sinners are enemies of God. Isaiah 57:21, "*There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*" Even the saints in this life war against God in their fleshly natures. Galatians 5:17, "*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*" The children of God delight in making peace between God and sinful men by bringing them to Christ. II Corinthians 5:20, "*Now then we*

*are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*"

## KEEPS HIMSELF

6. I John 5:18, "*...he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.*" The person who is born again has within him a desire to persevere in the faith, and God gives him the power to keep himself as he is "*...kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*" I Peter 1:5

## DOES RIGHTEOUSNESS

7. I John 2:29, "*If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.*" Romans 8:3-4, "*For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*"

## CANNOT SIN

8. I John 3:9, "*Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*" John 3:6, "*...that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*" Romans 7:20, "*Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*"

## IS CHASTISED

9. Hebrews 12:5-6,8, "*...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth...But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*"

## OVERCOMES THE WORLD

10. I John 5:4, "*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*" The person who is overcome by the world and goes back into sin may have some kind of religion, but he does not have Christ. The children of God overcome the world instead of being overcome by it.

Have you been born again? Examine yourself in the light of God's Word. John 3:3, "*...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

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