



Food for Thought

ARE YOU WORKING FOR GOD, OR ARE YOU WORKING WITH GOD?

By Nita Edwards

- **NEVER DESPISE SMALL BEGINNINGS.** (Zechariah 4:10 a)

Interestingly, there is a teaching found only in the Gospel of Mark. (Mark 4:26-27 MSG) It gives those of us who serve in Christian ministry insight on how our God works. Jesus said, "God's kingdom is like seed thrown on a field by a man who then goes to bed and forgets about it. The seed sprouts and grows - he has no idea how it happens. The earth does it all without the man's help: first a green stem of grass, then a bud, then a ripened grain. When the grain is fully formed, he reaps - harvest time!"

Seeds are small things and often seem to be insignificant. You and I may be guilty of thinking nothing great or influential can result from trivial things. In our day and age, have you noticed the elements that impress us are size, speed and influence? What I wish to focus on today are "smallness," "slowness," and seemingly the "weakness" of God's mighty creative power in nature around us. I suspect the intense passion for "vastness" and "lavishness" can be detrimental to the work of God. The kingdom of God does not demand a time bomb in the ground - just a seed will do!

Here we learn the secret about the work of the kingdom of God. The apostle Paul reveals it to the church in Corinth. He described himself as a "laborer together with God." (1 Corinthians 3:9) This is what you and I are called to be. We are called to work WITH God; not so much to work FOR God. Therefore, the secret of effective Christian service is cooperating with the Master.

- **SLOW, STEADY AND STRONG.** (James 5:7 MSG)

Are you working for God or are you working with God? James sheds further light on the subject. "Meanwhile friends, wait patiently for the Master's arrival. You see farmers do this all the time, waiting for their valuable crops to mature, patiently letting the rain do its slow but sure work. Like that be patient. Stay steady and strong."

Often the work of God is out of the limelight. Just like the seed is out of sight; in the ground, but the work continues

silently and secretly until maturity is achieved. This is the need for God's workmanship in a man or woman of faith. We shall not progress far if we are tirelessly seeking evidence of the working of God in our domain. To be workers together with our God, we must not be in a hurry. He never is, for He inhabits eternity. In addition, if we are to be characterized by scripture, we are to be alert for whatever His next move is to be, as we develop in maturity. (Romans 15:5 MSG) Just consider the centuries of preparation for the coming of the infant Jesus into the world. Now think of the centuries since, as God is preparing for the final manifestation of Christ on Crowning Day!

- **GOD'S WORK IS SURE** (Psalm 126: 6)

There is precious little we really comprehend of the wonderful ways our God is at work in our lives, and in our area of ministry responsibilities. When we attempt to impose our own shallow ideas on Him, how much we miss! It is certainly imperative that we keep in mind that His ways are higher than ours by far. So may we be strengthened by our own submission to His will and guidance. The culmination of God's workings are sure. His timing is perfect. Harvests may fail in the earthly realms, but never in the spiritual perspective. We can rest assured that the work of God is sure. His word and work will not return unto Him void without accomplishing the reason for which He sent it. (Isaiah 55:11) May we aspire to a fuller, nobler life in union WITH our Master. ✝