

The Work of God

Romans 4:1-13 In one of the Gospels Jesus was asked the question, "What must we do to do the works of God?" His reply was, "Believe on Him." Paul makes it clear in this passage that we are justified by faith, not by works. He used Abraham as an illustration. If his works justified Abraham, then he would take the glory himself. God considered Abraham a righteous man simply because he believed. Paul also speaks of David and how he writes in a psalm about the blessedness of the man who is counted righteous not because of his works, but because of his belief and trust in God. If we consider ourselves as working for the Lord, then we are working out of debt, not out of grace.

For so long in my own life I was working (doing all the right things a Christian should do) to please God. In essence I was trying to earn points with God by what I did. I was a Christian, but I was bound in my effectiveness because I was not allowing God to work through me. All of this changed when I was twenty-six. I was attending a retreat, and we were asked to go by the lakeside and find a quiet spot. Then we were instructed to ask God questions and wait for an answer. This was new to me since all my conversations with God until that time were one way conversations. I simply gave my prayer requests and then said "Amen." I never realized God had many things to share with me, and I never stopped to listen. The question I asked God was simply, "What was wrong with my life?" I noticed other Christians seemed to have more joy than I did, and I wanted to know why. Then I heard the Lord speak the following to me not in an audible voice, but in His still quiet voice within me. He said "Linda, what is wrong with your life is that you have been trying to earn my love. My love is free. I gave it to you two thousand years ago on the cross. Receive My love today, rest in My love and quit trying to earn My love. Quit working for Me and allow My Spirit to work

through you. If you did nothing but sit on that log by this lake the rest of your life I would still love you."

It was almost too good to be true. I understood for the first time that God's love for me did not depend upon what I did, but upon what He did on the cross two thousand years ago. On that day I resigned as an employee of God and became a co-laborer with Him and a joint heir with Him. I stopped trying to keep up with Jesus by following Him, but instead let Him begin to live His life through me. When we believe and trust God, then God does His work through us and He receives all the glory. My life scripture is, "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). God gives me daily the desire to do His will, and then He enables me to do His work that day by empowering me with His Spirit. What then is my part? My part is to believe and trust Him, and then to obey Him as He leads me through the day by His Spirit. "Lord, lead me today by Your Spirit and help me to obey."

**READ: 1 Chronicles 24:1-26:11; Romans 4:1-13; Psalm 13:1-6;
Proverbs 19:15-16**