

WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?

The heart that is truly in love with the Master, and which from his word has partaken of his spirit, cannot be either indifferent or idle, and the magnitude of his great work will be the continual spur to activity. The prayer of every such one will be, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? A proper zeal will not engage in mere hap-hazard work, but will diligently study the Lord's plans and methods.

Paul says, "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." – Gal. 6:10.

Here are three points to be specially observed: *First*, our obligations are limited to our opportunities. *Secondly*, our best energies should be devoted as far as possible to the household of faith, while any incidental opportunities for benefiting the world may also be improved, in so far as they may not interfere with the work of special and prime importance. *Thirdly*, if we can find no opportunities to do good to the household of faith, then all our energies may be devoted to others.

This teaching through Paul thus points out the work for each one, however obscure, or however limited may be his talents. You may be a mother surrounded with the many necessary cares of a large family, or a father whose small earnings by hard toil and long hours are constantly required by the necessities of a family. And these cares may have gathered about you, so as to almost overwhelm you, before you realized your higher calling and work, and they cannot and must not now be cast aside; hence these things are now a part of your duty, and if faithfully performed, *as unto the Lord*, will be acceptable to him as a token of your love and devotion.

Some mothers may be so constantly and necessarily engaged in their homes as to find very little opportunity for working outside, yet

there may be a few neighbors similarly situated with whom they may speak quite frequently. Then here and in your own home is *your* work. Perhaps not one of them is of the household of faith, and you say, It is of no use to talk to them about these things. They pay no attention and will only think me peculiar. But that will depend in some measure on how wisely you deal with them. To those who have no interest in spiritual things, it would be unwise to talk of spiritual things; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit, neither indeed can he, for they are spiritually discerned. But they can understand natural things, such [R935 : page 7] things for instance as relate to the restitution of natural men. Nor can your young children understand beyond this, for they are on the natural plane; but whatever of instruction or discipline they receive now, will be but a part of that general schooling which must ultimately bring them up to perfection. Your work will not be lost, even though death may interrupt it. If it does not make a very large showing in this age, it will appear in the next.

The weary father's evening hours may aid in this delightful and blessed work both in his family and neighborhood; and if on the alert for every opportunity to honor the Master, he may find some either of the household of faith, or of the worldly class, with whom he comes in daily contact, to whom he can communicate some truth, or at least before whom he can let the light of a consistent Christian character shine.

To these opportunities may sometimes be added the writing of letters to distant friends, bearing some portion of the glorious message. And here is a way in which many an invalid even, who is otherwise shut in to a very narrow sphere, may find some opportunity for spreading the good news. And such can often glorify God in the midst of suffering, by patient endurance and unwavering faith, or a word of counsel and cheer to those who attend to their wants. O how many ways there are for letting our light shine, when we begin to recount them; and there are just as many ways of hiding it under a bushel. And

perhaps you can think of many other ways of enlarging your sphere of usefulness. It is a part of our privilege and duty to study how we may best invest our talents in order to secure the largest results. This duty is plainly set forth in the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30), and is just as necessary in investing for the Lord, as in investing money for financial profit.

But the classes we have mentioned are some of those of most limited opportunities; and while these, if their devotion to the Lord is very strong, will put their one or two talents to the best use, some may have many more talents and opportunities. Some may have small sized or grown up families, or none, and these with economy of time and arrangements, may find many hours for outside work. You may think before you make the effort that it is of no use, as the people in your community are all wedded to sectarian churches. But is it really so? Have you tested the matter, and proved beyond doubt that there is *not one* of the real household of faith in your town or village or within reach of you? Have you tested the matter wisely, too?

If so, then you have at least done your part faithfully, and that fact will not escape the Master's notice; be assured of that. But even if this is the case, in all probability there is still a field of usefulness for you in that very neighborhood yet. There are some of the world's children, perhaps very poor, perhaps very ignorant or even degraded. None have ever thought of looking after or caring for them. What an oasis it would seem to them in their desert life, if you, a person of acknowledged respectability would call on them as a friend or neighbor, and not with the air of a charity call.

Many such heard our Master gladly. In all probability they would hear you gladly. Possibly in some localities all of the wheat is gathered out of the nominal church, and you may find no result of your labor or opportunity for further labor in that direction, as they resolutely refuse to hear, though often some of those who oppose for a time, are merely doing so to find the strength of our position. Glorify God, then, by

letting them see it. In due time the fruit will appear though it may be very slow. But at least the poor of this world you have always with you. And just here we are reminded of the words of Paul to some of the blinded Jews who wilfully rejected the truth – "It was necessary [a part of God's arrangement] that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For *so* hath the Lord commanded, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." – Acts 13:46,47.

The anointed ones are set for a light to all the world. Let it shine as much as possible now. If those who claim to be of the household of faith reject the truth, it is your privilege to turn your light upon the world around you. No faithful consecrated one can be idle where so many avenues of usefulness are open, and where there is so much need of service, unless he should forget his calling and become lukewarm and indifferent.

Such going forth to preach the Gospel will bring the reproaches of many of your former friends upon you. You know it will; but you took that into consideration long ago, when you covenanted to lay your all upon the altar. Do not think of reconsidering the question now. "No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62). You will meet with many rebuffs, if not violent opposition, but you will lightly esteem these, if your *chief* and *only* concern is to spread the good tidings. Be not discouraged if your efforts now seem fruitless, for "He that goeth forth and weepeth [is touched with sympathy for the blinded and suffering ones], bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." – Psa. 126:6.

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