Glad Tidings

"And we bring you good of the promise made unto the fathers…" (Acts 13:32)

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Focused Energy

(Jerry Fite)

Don't we feel good about ourselves when we have given our all to accomplish a task? I hope everyone of our teachers and helpers in Vacation Bible School this year are having that feel-good feeling. You, who expended night-time energy for preparation, along with parents and children who expended morning-time energy to be present issued into young roots being grounded in the Lord.

Conversely, when we do not give our best effort, subconsciously we know it, and even when a worthy task is accomplished, we are not happy with ourselves. In the back of our mind, we know we could have put forth a better effort. Dissatisfaction sets in - not a good feeling.

By our anecdotal experiences we could offer good advice about living: if you want to be happy with yourself tomorrow, give your best effort today in completing your tasks. But do we do things only because they make us feel good about ourselves, and make us happy? The Word of God allows us to dig deeper than the surface feel-good mentality, and anchor ourselves in His infallible wisdom.

Concerning our tasks under the sun, God tell us, *"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, or wisdom in Sheol, whither thou goest" (Ecclesiastes 9:10).* God implores us to use "all" our "might" when we do anything. We should not approach our tasks nonchalantly, or half-throttle our efforts in our work.

God offers us a sobering thought to motivate us to give our best effort. He declares there is no work, device, knowledge nor wisdom in the place we go to in death. He implies that the task before us today is where these attributes must be applied. There will be no "to do" lists, or inventing a tool to accomplish a task, or applying knowledge and wisdom so our work can be accomplished efficiently in Sheol. Work in this world only stays in this world. What a shame to go through life and not apply all our abilities to their fullest extent in our tasks upon the earth. Such opportunities to accomplish work under the sun will not be ours in the world to come. So, do it now, and do it with your best effort.

God takes our focus deeper than mere life under the Sun, Paul writes, *"whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians 3:23).* Doing something "heartily" literally means "from the soul." There should be passion in our work. The passion should be tempered with a proper understanding that we are doing each task, "as unto the Lord."

Doing our deeds in life rises above whether or not men are watching, or approving. Our focus is doing what the Lord looks upon with favor. No half-hearted service will be tolerated in our godly mind. *"In diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11).* Knowing we have been bought from the slave master of sin, purified from our sins, and are looked upon by God as His special people, should charge our batteries to do the work of the Lord with boiling fervency *(Titus 2:14).*

Determine to do each task "with all your might" and each work "heartily" as demanded by the Lord. When you are tempted to slack up, remember your opportunities to employ your abilities in work under the sun will end someday, and it is the Lord you are working for, not men. Thus focused, we should give it our all!