

## Audio Teaching Sermon

## Message #36

## According to Our Labor

[ **A** Intro – Pastor Jefferson 0:00 thru 1:24 ]

Greetings in the Holy name of Jesus Christ! The Son of God. The sole path via which a person can go to God the Father. Hey folks, you are listening to the **36<sup>th</sup> message** of the **Audio Teaching Sermon Series** where our only mission is to educate followers on the details as provided within the pages of our Holy Bible. Welcome! I'm Pastor Jefferson and today we will pick up where we left off from the last message. We were discussing the point that Paul was making regarding the law of sowing and reaping, where he planted and Apollos watered. He was using the example of farming, where seed is planted in dry, fertile soil. And upon receipt of water, the seed germinates and then begins to grow. Paul was emphatic; while the act of watering and planting—each serve a purpose—they are *nothing* when compared to the growth of the new plant. And Paul stresses not once, but twice—*"It is God Who causes all growth."* Listen friends, Paul is not just talking about spiritual growth here. He's talking about every element of life on this planet. Nothing grows apart from the hand of Almighty God.

[ **B** According to His Own Labor 1:24 thru 3:11 ]

Paul then makes what I describe as a pivotal statement, *"But each person will receive his own reward, according to his labor."* I left you at the end of the previous message with the following question: *"Who is Paul talking about in this verse?"* I get accused frequently of teaching and preaching at a level which is deemed intellectually too challenging for the average church goer. To that I say, *"Rubbish!"* I say this for several reasons. First, we just studied in the last message, **1 Corinthians 3, verses 6 & 7** that it is **God Who causes all growth**. As you will momentarily hear, God is talking about *intellectually driven spiritual* growth. He is the One Who causes that to happen as well. So, if you aren't getting the deeper meaning of these teaching sermons, then you are the one who isn't sufficiently applying yourself. This is where **verse 8** now comes into play: *"But each person will receive his own reward, according to his own labor."* Ouch! The truth really stings, doesn't it? Secondly, we just heard that the act of planting and watering is *nothing*—which doesn't mean it's not important, it just tells us that the planting and watering have absolutely NOTHING to do with the resulting growth of the

disciple. That verse essentially takes me and all other preachers and teachers of the Word off the hook.

[ **C** Don't Blame the Teachers 3:11 thru 4:46 ]

That's why we here at **DWJD ministries** have produced the program we call **Discipleship Training 101**. This program is entirely self-paced as we fully recognize that **Jesus** alone is the instructor, the **Holy Spirit** is the sole facilitator, and the **disciple** is the target or the student. In the same way, we here do some of the planting and watering, but we make no claim to furthering the spiritual growth of any of the fledgling disciples. Oftentimes in the modern age, parents blame the teachers for the scholastic failures of their students. I'm not defending every single teacher out there when I say, "It ain't their fault." But, apart from a rare few unmotivated or perhaps inexperienced teachers, the failure of the students to learn is indeed 100% the students' fault. And, if there is any fault to be handed out, I assign it to the parents and guardians for failing to create the necessary learning environment. When I grew up, any failure on my part was assumed by my folks to always be 100% my fault, unless it could be proven otherwise beyond any shadow of doubt. My folks were not hesitant to use assorted forms of the old stick and carrot to keep me moving in the right direction. It works the exact same way in God's kingdom.

[ **D** Lacking Godly Empowerment 4:46 thru 6:28 ]

Now, to further substantiate that the apostle Paul is talking about the student, open your Bible to **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3:1**. In the original Greek the passage reads; <sup>1</sup> "And brothers, I was not able to speak to you <sup>2</sup> as spiritually mature people, <sup>3</sup> but rather as fleshy people, <sup>4</sup> as unto babies in Christ." Paul begins by addressing them as **brothers**. The Greek word present is **ah-del-FOI**, which means '**members of the same religious community**.' For example, a fellow Christian. Paul is saying in **T-1** he was unable to speak to them. When we examine the word for **was unable** we find the word [1] **ed-DYE-neth-en** which translates to '**lacking the ability, or not having the capacity to be empowered by God**.' Paul is saying that he was not able to communicate to them because God did not give him the capacity to do so. The **one-time** use of this word is *momentous*. It is saying what I've been preaching all along is true. Paul was not empowered by God to be able to

speak to them using spiritually mature language. The word we find for spiritually mature in T-2 is [3] *pneu-mah-tik-KOIS* and it means ‘**relating to the spiritual realm.**’ In this case it's talking about matters emanating from the **Holy Spirit** and produced solely by the **power of God**.

[ E Spiritual Versus Fleshy Side 6:28 thru 7:43 ]

Paul frequently contrasts the *natural* man with the *spiritual* man, as he does in this verse. Guess what—pastors, teachers and mentors do not *ever* have the ability to teach disciples in the spiritual realm. Did you get that? It is because **God alone** possesses the power to cause spiritual growth. How many times have you heard your Biblical instructors make that statement? If you haven't, then it's likely due to the fact that they themselves believe that they possess the power to teach spiritual truth. The hard truth is they do not. We of the cloth are all planters and waterers of the Word of God. T-3 is telling us that Paul can only speak to their fleshy side. The word we see for **to fleshy** is [1] *SAR-kin-ois* – and it means ‘**fleshy or soft via analogy.**’ It's a word pertaining to the body, that being the part of us which is earthly and perishable—our sin nature. Paul is describing the *natural man*—the physical man possessing the sinful nature.

[ F Given Milk for Sustenance 7:43 thru 9:18 ]

Man is dominated by his sin nature and with its inherent weakness possesses a *proclivity* for sin. **Proclivity** is defined to mean ‘**an inclination or predisposition toward something.**’ The truth is man has an appetite for sin, a penchant for it, if you will. In T-4 we see the words **as babies**. The Greek word present is [3] *NEP-pee-ois* and it translates to ‘**immature, simple minded or childish.**’ A lot of folks believe Paul here is comparing us to *innocent* babies in Christ. He most certainly is not! The root word *NAY-pee-os* does mean someone lacking the ability to communicate – as with a very young infant, but that is not what Paul is saying. Look now at **verse 2**, I am quoting directly from the Greek where he writes, <sup>1</sup> “I gave you milk to drink, <sup>2</sup> not solid food; <sup>3</sup> yet you were not able to receive it. <sup>4</sup> In fact, you still are not able.” The word for **I gave to drink** we see in T-1 is [1] *ep-po-TIS-sah* and it means ‘**to furnish drink.**’ This one-time use of this word tells us that Paul was attempting to provide milk as sustenance in the metaphorical sense of nurturing and sustaining spiritual life for folks who were yet babies in Christ.

[ **G** Unable to Even Drink Milk 9:18 thru 10:53 ]

Look now in T-2. The word for **solid food** we see is [6] **BRO-mah** and means '**food eaten by chewing, other than bread.**' It excludes liquids, which of course we drink. Paul is saying that he never attempted to give them solid food. In T-3 we see that these folks weren't yet able to receive "it", referring to the milk he gave them. He goes on in T-4 to say, "*In fact, you still are not able.*" Paul is censuring the Corinthian church for their lack of spiritual growth due to their focus on fleshy issues. In **verse 3** he continues by explaining they are unable to even drink the milk given to them, due to their ongoing submission to their sin nature. He then gives them the proof in the form of a question: "*For since there is jealousy and dissention among you, are you not following your sin nature, and living like unbelievers?*" My point here is very simple: Paul just said they are behaving like *unbelievers*, via their carnal pursuit of their sin nature. Let me ask you a question—do *unbelievers* drink the Biblical milk of babes in Christ? Nope—they do not. That's what Paul is stating that they are doing; acting like the heathen with no appetite for even Biblical milk.

[ **H** Admonish, Not Bring Shame 10:53 thru 12:03 ]

It pains me to say this, but that pretty much describes membership of the current modern-day church. Paul then softens his approach in **1 Corinthians 4:14** where he says, "*I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved offspring.*" The word for **shame you** is [1] **en-TRE-pon** and it means, '**the idea of turning one's attention or attitude in a negative direction, so as to cause embarrassment.**' Rather, Paul's prime motivation is to get folks to change their ways. He says he is admonishing them. The word we see for **admonishing you** is [2] **noo-thet-TON** and means, '**reasoning with someone by way of warning them.**' The emphasis here is on guidance and correction. The word **admonish** means '**to indicate duties or obligations by way of rendering seasoned advice.**' Just as with Paul, I am only seeking the best for all followers of Christ.

[ **I** Childlike is Not Childish 12:03 thru 13:21 ]

Paul then uses the word **offspring** or children. The Greek word present is **tek-NAH** and is a term of endearment. It means '**anyone who is figuratively living in full**

**dependance on the heavenly Father, and who willingly relies upon the LORD in glad submission.** Paul is referring to them not as they currently are, but as he (and God) would want them to be. The idea the word delivers is we are to be **childlike** (and not *childish*) when coming before Jesus. We must approach Him with the right attitude, with a glad heart, being openly receptive to the teachings of Christ. When we bring our offerings before the LORD, we must do it apart from the guidance of our sin nature. This includes our effort to learn all we can about Him and His plan for our salvation. Just as with Cain, God does not honor the fruits of our sin nature. In conjunction with Paul's words, God uses His people to gently warn us that failure to bring a proper offering will be met with outright rejection.

[ **J** **Oneness with Yahweh** **13:21 thru 14:51** ]

Perhaps the capstone of Paul's words can be found in **Ephesians 4:13 & 14** where he begins with what amounts to an **IF-THEN** statement. He writes the **IF part** in **verse 13**, So **IF** and *"Until we attain the whole of unity of the faith in and knowledge of God's Son, and having the stature of a mature person, as measured by our completion in Christ ..."* The word we see here for **unity** is [2] **hen-NO-teh-tah** – and in both places where it is used means **'oneness with God,'** describing the ideal relationship with Jesus Christ. The word for **completion** is [3] **pler-ROE-mah-tos** and means **'fullness, fulfillment, or to be filled to the brim as in a container.'** Now for **verse 14**, the **THEN** part, *"Only then will we no longer be little children, tossed about by the waves and blown around by every wind of false teaching, driven by human cunning brought on by craftiness, towards the scheming of deceit."* Now, who does that sound like? If you said, *"Satan and those under the influence of the demonic empire,"* you would be correct.

[ **K** **Fraud is the Main Tool of Satan** **14:51 thru 16:15** ]

The word we see for **scheming** is [1] **meth-oh-DEE-ee-an** and translates to **'a predictable method used in organized evil-doing or well-crafted trickery.'** The deception Satan brings to the church is brought by anyone who is not fully-fledged and operating under Satanic influence. And as I've said many times, Satan is constrained by a limited playbook. This makes it easy to spot his schemes and ruses. I hate to tell you this, but if the preaching at your church doesn't sound very similar to these audio sermons, the

clergy occupying your pulpit might just be within the realm of false prophets. And you are the target of their scheming and deceit. The word we find for **deceit** is [6] **PLAN-nes** and means '**deception, delusion or fraudulence.**' **Fraudulence** is defined as '**the intentional perversion of truth in order to induce someone to part with something of value or to surrender a legal right.**' Satan's only goal is to prevent us from joining the path to holiness and barring that, to get us to wander away from it without our being aware its happening.

[ **L** **Salvation Come with Oneness with God** **16:15 thru 17:39** ]

As you can doubtless tell, the words coming out of Scripture time and again are very consistent. Until we attain oneness with God via our individual faith in and knowledge of Jesus Christ, as measured by our having gained the status of being a mature Christian, evidenced by our completion of obtaining an intimate relationship with Him, we are not saved. We have not satisfactorily completed our intellectual offering before the LORD. And until we do, our offering will be rejected, just as Cain's was back 5800 years ago. Nothing has changed. If you aren't deeply involved in a program similar to **Discipleship Training 101**, you are just being blown around by the winds and waves of false teaching, which is driven by the modern version of organized religion. The reason I am saying this is I too attend services at many institutions around our nation, and I observe very few which are fulfilling the obligation Christ laid on us at what we describe as **the Great Commission** before He departed for Heaven to be with His Heavenly Father.

[ **Z** **Some Final Thoughts** **17:39 thru 18:43** ]

Some believe that Paul in **Ephesians 4:13 & 14** is speaking of the unity of the church. He is, but as we just saw, that is the *secondary* outcome of the words from those verses. God doesn't care about the unity of the church when compared against the lost souls of individual people. And let's face it, what good is a church filled with unsaved people, who are surrendering to their fleshy side, causing strife and dissention, instead of focusing on leading others to the path of salvation which is in Jesus Christ. Going to church and going through the motions of being a mature Christian does not satisfy our Heavenly Father. In the next message we will continue with our discussion of the first sacrifice. **So, until next time my beloved, this has been Pastor Jefferson, speaking in God's Holy name and for His glory alone. Amen!**