

As a result, churches are filled with bad examples seeking to discourage the good examples from living out their faith the way God intended.

God doesn't want that kind of work ethic. He needs hard workers for a plentiful harvest. And while mediocrity might meet with peer approval, it wastes the precious time God has allotted to us.

How long have you been "on the job" for God? Has your work for Him become drudgery? Have you lost your enthusiasm for the task? Do you assume that God accepts the halfway effort that seems to work for everyone you know?

Think again. God's harvest awaits. He says it's plentiful. It needs only workers.

If the work seems too much for you, it is! That is why God sent His Holy Spirit—to provide the supernatural energy you need.

When you approach ministry that way, you will not do it half-heartedly. You will apply your whole heart to God's work. You'll feel like "the new guy" every day! —John Carvalho

REFLECTION

- How do I approach ministry—as an enthusiastic recruit or a [jaded veteran](#)? Why?
- How can I become like a new person in my ministry?
- What are some of the urgent needs I see around me? (Matthew 9:36-38).

We won't see a harvest if we don't go into the field.

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The New Bloke

Pity the new bloke on the job. He starts out with lots of enthusiasm—always on time, works hard. But sooner or later, he catches on (with the help of the senior workers, whom he is outdoing). They teach him that a 75-percent effort is plenty, and that "team players" protect the laziness of co-workers.

This attitude seems to have trickled down to Christianity. New Christians start out enthusiastically, wanting to obey God fervently. But sometimes "older" Christians are living a mediocre faith. When they see an excited new Christian, they figure that time will certainly quell such youthful enthusiasm (and they do their part to dampen it).



Work Ethic



Living Delight Mediocrity Won't Work

(1 Timothy 4:7-8) "... exercise yourself toward godliness. {8} For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come."

(1 Corinthians 9:25-27) "And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. {26} Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. {27} But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."



Ephesians 3:14-19 describes two factors in moving from mediocrity to abundance

1. _____ Christ to _____, verses 14, 16-17

(Revelation 3:20) "'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."



2. _____ Christ's _____, verses 17-21

Paul expresses his prayer point in four different but related ways:

◆ R _____, verse 17

(Romans 8:35) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall



tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" **(Romans 8:38-39)** "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, {39} nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

◆ G _____, verse 17

(Jeremiah 31:3) "... Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."

◆ G _____, verse 18

◆ K _____, verse 19

