

THE SUNDAY SERVICE

15th of May, 2022

SERMON

SERMON TITLE: The Diligent Soul
SERMON TEXT: Matthew 20:1 – 9
PREACHER: Pastor Adeyemi Timothy

MESSAGE

Our God that we serve is... I would call Him a Worker. God is a doer. He is an active God. In fact, I can say He is a labourer because the Bible says that from the first day to the sixth day, God was working and then, on the seventh day, He rested. He won't need to rest if he had not been working for the six days. So, God is a God who delights in labour. He is a God who delights in work. He is a God who delights in people doing something. This is why in the Scripture that we read, the Bible says the master of the house has a vineyard and he went out to hire people. He hired some people who were working for him, then he went out at the 3rd hour, found some people idle and he wasn't happy about it (this is a parable about how the Kingdom of God works; it is showing to us the principles of this kingdom). He told them to go into the vineyard and find something to do. He went out again in the 6th and 9th hour and found people idle again and He wasn't happy about it... Do you notice that he didn't even negotiate with them, he only told them to go and at the end of the day, he will give them their pay. He went out again at the 11th hour and also found people idle. He asked them why and they started giving excuses, he wasn't happy about it. If God wants to bless a man, usually, He focuses on the labour of his hands. The Bible says, God will bless the works of your hand. So, God wants you to work so that He can pour His blessings on your work. God is excited when people Labour, that was why he said, "Come unto me all ye that labour and I will give you rest." You won't need rest if you haven't been labouring. He is excited about people that labour, so he says, "Come unto me." God has declared this month as our month of Supernatural Harvest and if we will enjoy that harvest, we must play our own part.

Prov. 13:4 – "The soul of a lazy man desires and has nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich," some Bible translations say "...shall be made fat". There is fatness that God puts upon the labour of those who are His own. He wants to release His blessings upon people, but He wants to put it on their work. Sometime ago, I preached about the power of zero, anything multiplied by zero will be zero. God wants to pour his blessings on you, but there is nothing on your hand, that's zero. So, whatever God is pouring, the zero will turn it down.

Supernatural Harvest! A man will not go into the field if he hasn't sowed. Only a thief will go to the field to harvest when he hasn't sowed there. So, you must sow for you to also reap, for you to have that supernatural harvest, there is something you must do to provoke it. There is a time of sowing, there is a time to work and there is a time to expect the harvest. A man that is sleeping when others are sowing will still be sleeping when others are harvesting, because he would have nothing to harvest. If you must enjoy the supernatural harvest that God has promised us this month, you must diligently sow the seed.

Certain seeds that we must sow and how we must sow them for us to enjoy supernatural harvest.

1. You must Sow the Seed of Vision: A man who is expecting harvest has something in sight, there is something he is expecting, something he has set his gaze upon that, “By the harvest season, I want to have this kind of harvest.” He has a vision of what he wants to do and that vision propels him to sow in the time of planting. So, if you want to enjoy supernatural harvest, the first thing you must do is have a vision for life: what exactly do you wake up every morning for? There must be a vision for life – what do you want to achieve with your life, this year, this month? If you aim at nothing, you will gain nothing, that is why you must have a vision for life. The Lord was deliberate in teaching us in Genesis 26:12 – 13; the Bible verses didn’t say, “The Lord blessed Isaac and then Isaac sowed,” no, it was “Isaac sowed and the Lord blessed him,” this is because Isaac had something in mind that he wanted to achieve and that propelled him to sow in the land. There are people who wake up in the morning and the job they want to do for that day is to sleep. They wake up in the morning and on their to-do list, the most important thing there is to sleep. God would be unjust to bless a man who deals with a slack hand and God is not an unjust God, so he wants you to wake up to do something so that he can pour his blessings upon you. Remember the widow in 2 Kings, when she came to the Prophet to complain that creditors have come to pack her children, Elisha looked at her and realised that she had nothing she was doing, why? Maybe she was a full housewife and so, she could not raise the fund. Elisha then created a job for her. He did not pray for her that “God bless you” because there was nothing God would bless in her hands, so he had to create a job for her so that God can bless it.

It is vision that propels you to even want to wake up in the morning. Men of vision don’t sleep, I don’t mean that they don’t sleep per se, but that they don’t deal with a slack hand (Prov. 10:4). There is nothing a slack hand does; the hand is slack, it is loose and the Bible says, such will end in poverty but the hand of the diligent makes rich. So, I want to challenge you this morning to have a vision for life and that vision is what is going to spur you to want to do something, to want you to be diligent at whatever you do. We have a generation of people who only work because they want salary and they go to work thinking whether there is productivity or not, at the end of the month, let me get my pay and go. I tell you, God is not happy with them, God wants you to work diligently, because the soul of the diligent is made fat. When Jesus was looking for the disciples, show me any of the disciple that Jesus did not take at the point where he wasn’t working, I would like to see. God uses people who are productive. Have a vision for life. Vision keeps you alive, awake and valuable. You have a vision of what you want to achieve with your life, you are not taking the job to just collect salary, but there is a goal that you have in mind to achieve. Proverbs 24:33 – 34 says, “A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.” Rest is sweet after labour but when you rest before labour, it is bitterness because poverty is not sweet. Have a vision for life!

2. You must Sow the Seed of Passion: It is not just enough to have a vision of what you want to achieve in life, it is also important to pursue that vision with passion. A vision that you do not pursue with passion will end up becoming a failed mission. Be passionate! Diligence talks

about passion – putting your life into what you do. Whether you are a labourer in the vineyard of God or in your secular job or business, God wants you to be passionate about what you do. If it is singing, God wants to see you being passionate about it and that passion is what makes you to want to rehearse, what takes you to the secret place to pray, spur you to want to develop yourself. Be passionate! If you do a business that you are not passionate about, the business cannot work. If you want to have supernatural harvest, God expects from you to actually do something and do it passionately. When God is talking about supernatural harvest, He is not just talking about you having money, there is more to life beyond money, God wants to bless you and bless your life.

If God wants to do something in this vineyard, he will do it for those who labour. Some of you have been in this church for many years and there is nothing you are doing for the Lord, God is telling you just as he told those people, why have you been idle all day? For you to know how God works, he going out in the 11th hour means there is no time that is too late, so if you haven't been working, the best time to start is 'now' and work passionately. If it is Ushering, do it with passion. If it is in the Media team, or whatever God has called you to do, do it with passion. The parents of Jesus were looking for him and wondering where he could be, when they finally found him in the temple, he said, "Don't you know that I must be about the business of He who sent me?"

Business talks about busy-ness, it means being passionate about what God has called you to do. A farmer who sows, and after sowing is expecting harvest will only reap weeds. For those who attended vigil, this was a part of the prayer. If you sow a seed and are not passionate about it, weed will take it over and you won't be able to maximise that harvest. Passion drives you to pray, work, do something. Be passionate! 1 Corinthians 15:10 – "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." Paul is saying here that he labours more abundantly. When God puts grace upon you, he wants you to put that grace to work (Prov. 14:23).

You know, it is funny when people say that there is no job. Everybody has an excuse to blame the government now, but before this present economy, what were you doing. In this economy you complain about, do you know how many people are becoming millionaires everyday? God will not bless nothing, He will bless something in your hands. He told the disciples that he wanted to feed the people, but he needed something to multiply, so he asked if they had anything, they gave him five loaves of bread and two fishes and with it, he fed 5,000 people. If there is anybody in this congregation who is doing nothing, God is challenging you today, if you must enjoy, don't allow this grace for supernatural harvest to go in vain, start doing something so that the Lord can bless the works of your hands.

3. Sow the Seed of Consistency and Excellence: Mastery is not doing something great only once, it is doing it consistently. In Philippians 3:13, Paul says he does not count himself to have apprehended, to have achieved, to have arrived... There is consistency, Paul doesn't have the arrival/satisfaction mentality that where we are now, we have tried. There are people with the arrival mentality who believe that there is no more they can do, but Paul as an example to us says he does not count... compare it with 1 Cor. 15:10, the same one who gave this testimony about himself says despite all his labours, he still does not count himself to have arrived, but then he pressed on because there is still more to do – that's the spirit of excellence.

Consistent work, consistent labour in the vineyard and even in your secular job. In your office, let them know you to be somebody excellent. Growing up, the kind of secondary schools we had then can be called “egusi” secondary schools, because when teachers come to class, they ask students to crack melon and you expect God to bless that? Work with the attitude and the spirit of excellence consistently and with excellence! Proverbs 22:29 – “Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men.” Be known for diligence, diligence puts you in front of Kings. Let everybody know you for diligence, that if they give you that assignment, they can go to sleep, if they give you that responsibility, you will put your all into it. Not that if they give you responsibility, they are checking back to see if you will do it or not because you have not proven yourself. HODs, Leaders in church complain that there are no people to work with and on the list of registers, you will see millions of people but there are no people they can rely on because people have not shown themselves to be diligent and reliable. THFites, let us be known for diligence. “Do you see any man who excels in his work, he will stand before kings, he will not stand before unknown men.” Kings don’t patronise mediocre. Kings look out for excellence.

The reason you are employed is to solve problems and not create one (Isa. 60:2). There are employees who are problem creators and there are some who are problem solvers and when they want to downsize, who do they kick out first? If I want to employ somebody to handle my business, I want to employ somebody who will take headache off me. As long as you labour, there are people that will patronise you. You are a creator? General people, gentiles, will come to your light but when it comes to Kings, it is not just your light they come into, they come into something more than just light: the brightness of your rising (Isa. 60:3). Daddy was talking last week Sunday during the women program and what he said is a principle you must apply to your life that if you want to do any work, you must do it with excellence. Ordinary light doesn’t attract kings, it is excellence that attracts Kings.

4. You must Sow the Seed of Time: Diligence is reflected by the time you commit to a thing. How do we know that you are diligent? One of the ways by which we know you are diligent is in examining the time that you commit to that thing. As a worker in the vineyard of God, you are a music minister, how much time do you commit to that ministry? I am not talking about the display on the pulpit, but in the place of prayer and in personal development to become a better minister. We will know your diligence by knowing the amount of time you commit to a certain thing. Your time is an asset and so, you must invest it in a worthwhile venture. God has given equal opportunities to all men and that opportunity is called “time”. You may have money more than me, but you don’t have time more than me. That is an asset and how I invest it will determine the kind of result that I get. How I invest that time will determine the kind of harvest I get at the end of the day. If God is stirring you up, giving you a vision to write a book, commit yourself to it, give it time. If you have to research, go ahead and research. Commit time to it, that’s a test of diligence. God has given you a song? commit your time. Write the song. Start that business. Write that proposal, don’t just have it in your head. For some people, if you calculate the worth of businesses in their head, it is worth billions of dollars, but they haven’t started one. God loads you with a lot of ideas and opportunities but because you are not committing time to develop it... commit time and your harvest is sure to come. Your harvest is coming speedily in Jesus Name!

In Gen. 8:22, the covenant of the Lord to Noah is that while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest... I like you to know that there are three important words here: seed, time and harvest. The only thing between your seed and harvest is time. If you do not commit the time to sow that seed, you will have nothing to reap at the harvest. So, how you use your time will determine your kind of harvest. Be careful what you do with your time, it's a great asset that you must utilise well if you must enjoy the harvest God has prepared for you.

I don't know if you get this everywhere... Somebody was working for me on Saturday and he wanted to buy a material, but at 10am, the shop hasn't opened whereas Lagos people have done double the days work by that time. If you must enjoy the unusual harvest, you must also commit your time. This is your life, commit your time to it. Every passing hour, opportunities to make money is passing by. For instance, by that 10am when we wanted to buy something, we couldn't buy and thus took the money somewhere else.

5. Sow the Seed of Patience: Every farmer knows that you don't reap the day that you sow, so if you are impatient, in fact you will spoil your seed. You plant today and go there two hours later to check if it has started growing. No! It takes time; sow the seed of patience but while you wait, ensure that you do not waste that waiting time. There are times when it looks like God is not coming so early, you are expecting harvest in your own calculation, probably at 3 months but it is delayed and you are defining it as God holding back. Know that when it seems God is delaying, he is coming big. Maize takes 3 months to grow, cocoa takes a longer time, however, between cocoa and corn, which is more valuable? Cocoa. Patience! But be diligent, keep serving. Jesus said, "Occupy till I come." Keep on being diligent while you wait. That your life partner will come, that child you are looking for will come, that business breakthrough will come, that promotion will come, but he said, "Occupy till I come." God said, "Behold I come and I come quickly and I am going to give every man according to what his work shall be." Keep on occupying till He comes. Sow the seed of patience, it takes time. Don't waste your wait, ensure that you put in labour while you wait for that testimony (Isaiah 40:31). Sow the seed of patience!

Proverbs 13:4 – God wants to command His blessings upon you this morning and that was why he said, this month is the month of Supernatural Harvest. God is doing wonders in the midst of us and we have been hearing many wonderful testimonies. God wants to command his supernatural blessings upon you but he wants to bless something in your hands. The soul of a lazy man desires... he wants to ride the best car, go on vacation in Dubai, but he does nothing. God wants you to enjoy those things, but he wants to bless something in your hands. That which you call little – the bible says do not despise the days of your youth – is something big. That five bread and two fishes was turned into plenty. That which you call little is enough for God to bless you, so I challenge you, get something doing, both in the vineyard of God and even in the secular world. I want you to know that God wants to bless you. God is releasing upon you his supernatural blessings but he wants you to do something.

I pray for everyone, for the rest of this month, every thing you lay your hands upon to do, the blessings of the Lord that makes rich and does not add sorrows is coming upon it in Jesus Name. That which is little now is becoming something that you will feed thousand of people from in Jesus Name. God is giving you direction on what to do in the mighty name of Jesus. For everyone who

has been labouring and devourers are consuming the labour, the works of the devourers come to an end in the name of Jesus. As you labour for the Lord, you will not miss your reward in Jesus Name.

Prayer

Father, pour your blessings upon my hands as I labour both in your vineyard and in my business.