

## Matthew 9:37

*Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few."*

In the church, are you a laborer or do you stand on a street corner holding a sign wanting a free ride?

We see this every day in the world. We get off the freeway or we stop at a stop light and there they are, those holding signs wanting a free handout. Now don't get me wrong, there are those who really do need help, but I think for the most part, a large portion of those standing out there can actually get jobs, even if it's in a fast food restaurant. The problem is they make more money standing on a street corner for a few hours versus working in a low paying job. But still, it's no excuse for wanting a stranger to give you part of their money that they worked hard for because they refuse to work.

But this devotional is not about the world and handouts, but rather the church and how many are like those standing at the offramps and street corners wanting a free hand out spiritually. So many just go to church on Sunday morning getting a free ride off of the labors of those who are doing the work in the church, or even those who are giving financially.

They sit in a clean church, enjoy the lights and air conditioning or heating in the church. They stand and raise their hands in church because of what others have done to make that church service possible. It's like saying they are saying, *"You worked hard for this service to take place, now let me just kick back and enjoy the fruits of YOUR labors."*

I know this is a tough devotional today. But possibly one that some of you need to hear. Who are you? I have no idea, but you know who you are, and so does God.

God is not mad at you for not doing, instead, I would think it's the opposite. God wants you to be a part of the church and what happens there each day and week.

*"Well, I have a job and kids and I don't have that much time"* you may be thinking. True, but do think those people that volunteer in the church don't have jobs and/or kids as well? How much time does it take to be a greeter, or come in on a Saturday and sweep the floors or clean bathrooms. How much time can you pray each day for the church and your pastor? Five minutes? Hmm  $5 \times 7 = 35$ . So if you prayed five minutes a day for your church and pastor, that would be 35 minutes a week. I bet you spend more time than that just driving to work. Couldn't you pray for your church and the pastor part of that time?

I've said this before and I'll say it again, excuses are a fancy way of saying "no" to God. Sure, some may be legitimate excuses, but how many are just out of laziness and because you are to

busy enjoying the fruit of others labor, that you don't have time to be one of those laborers as well.

† *But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good. 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13*