



CrossRoads Notes:

Turn your Bibles to 1 Corinthians 3:6-8,11

Title: Controlling Desires

Theme: Beware of Becoming a Controlling Laborer)

Series: Laboring Together With God

Introduction: *A God-loving, Word-filled disciple-maker will be more concerned about his spiritual heart than about any unpleasant circumstance that he may be in. He will welcome everything in his life that will enable him to grow in Christ, whether in success in ministry or trials or chastisements. Ministry to the Lord is doing whatever He has called and gifted you to do. You fit in one of these categories in regards to being a laborer, 1.) An Undisciplined Laborer. 2.) An Controlling Laborer or 3.) A Trusting Laborer.*

All true churches are made up of Christians who want to see the hand of God working first in their lives, so they can be made usable to Him. Second, they want to be empowered by the Holy Spirit so they can fulfill their part in the "Great Commission." (Psalm 139:23-24)

Every child of God knows that his labors for the Lord must be done in a manner worthy of the gospel they preach. If they are lazy they will see the results that sluggard gets. If ministry it is done with a mean spirit, it will only set up huge stumbling blocks in the paths of those they hope to make disciples of. Christians can fulfill their responsibilities in teaching and proclaiming the Word of God, but that does not mean that they are disciple makers lead by the Holy Spirit.

There are those who become "Controlling Laborers," They do just as much harm to the work of the Lord as the "Undisciplined Laborer." Thus, the church that is going to be pleasing to the Lord and a blessing to the body of Christ will examine the Scriptures and ask the Holy Spirit to cleanse her own heart before she tries to deal with the fault of others.

Proposition: *I would propose to you that the condition of the sluggard and the controlling laborer is always destructive. From these the church needs to be rescued by the reproofs of God's Word. It must be understood that what is in the heart of the sluggard is also in the heart of the controlling laborer, pleasing self.*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just what are the early signs of becoming a controlling laborer?*

Transitional Sentence: *Since self is so destructive, both the sluggard, I spoke on last week and the controlling laborer need to face the truth about themselves and then surrender their hearts and lives over to the leading of the Holy Spirit.*

There is a principle set forth in the New Testament that the Holy Spirit wants us to obey so we can see how God deals with sin, even among His chosen people. The apostle Paul writes, *“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.”* (1 Corinthians 10:11) What Paul is warning about is not to become smug or arrogant in our stand for Christ or on Godly things. Keep alert lest we fall. (The Expositors Bible Commentary)

Consider with me some controlling actions of King Saul. In doing this we must understand King Saul’s position with the Lord. 1 Samuel 10:1 says, “Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Saul’s head and kissed him, saying, “Has not the LORD anointed you leader over His inheritance?” (1 Samuel 10:1)

The Prophet Samuel says, “the LORD anointed you leader...” It was by God’s hand that Saul would become king therefore, Saul must govern by God’s will and instructions and be totally dependent upon the Lord. It was Saul’s responsibility to learn and order the affairs of God’s people aright and live as one who would give an accounting to God. (Matthew Henry Commentary; The New Bible Commentary) Saul represented the authority and power of God. (The Pulpit Commentary)

Those who are Christians and who are hungry for God, seeking God and working to achieve God’s will may enjoy what Samuel told Saul, “...do whatever your hands find to do, for God is with you.” (1 Samuel 10:7)
(1 Samuel 10:26; 11) (1 Samuel 14) (1 Samuel 10:9) (1 Samuel 9:21) (1 Samuel 15:17) (1 Samuel 9:21)

Whom God calls to any service He will make fit for it by giving them the heart hungry to accomplish His will. He will advance them into another station under His authority giving them the power of the Holy Spirit power to serve Him. Many a born again Christian who is a hungry for God as Saul was at that time of his life, expresses a life of the sanctifying power of the Gospel.

In 1 Samuel 24 there is a brief argument between David and his men. Both believe that God had arranged matters so that Saul was at their mercy. They were both right in believing that Saul was David’s enemy and deserved death. There were two choices. One would be allowed by God the other more pleasing. The opinion of David’s men was to take control of the situation which was to do away with the constant pursuing of Saul and his men. David’s suggestion was no, leave Saul in God’s hands and let Him be in total control for it was God who raised up Saul as king. He would take Saul down from kingship in His time and way. (Daily Bible Study)

In 1 Samuel 13 we read of what happens to a man who wants to be a controlling laborer. The heart of a controlling laborer is really someone who does not have faith in

God. He is fully able to understand God's will, but wants to take control because it satisfies self. (1 Samuel 13:7a-14)

The fact is that Saul had not obeyed divine instructions and obedience is always better than sacrifice. (1 Samuel 15:22)

The question the Holy Spirit has for us today is, "How often have we taken control and justified taking matters into our own hands?" We know God's instructions, but our way of drawing near to God, seeking His direction is outside of seeking through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and through written Word.

Transitional Sentence: *Without us taking the time to learn the early warning signs of becoming a controlling laborer, we can find ourselves defeated by that which we dread.* There is a fleshly draw that causes us to justify being a controlling laborer. There are character traits that mark a person who could succumb to being a "lording over" leader or cause people to withdraw from what God has called them to do. The controlling type personality is found in the home, the work place and even the church.

This controlling type of person is not like the sluggard we took a Biblical look at last week. This type of laborer knows very well the benefits of keeping God's law of plowing, planting, watering, weeding and harvesting when he should. He knows the more diligent he is the greater the outcome he will receive.

Transitional Sentence: *Just as there are character traits to a controlling laborer, there are early warning signs as well.* Just as Saul showed all the signs of wanting to be in control from early on in his calling, there are signs that warn us that we are becoming a controlling laborer.

The fleshy, self pleasing heart of a controlling laborer is seen in the great depression or anger that comes out when one has done his best, but did not get the results he thought should be. He does not enjoy that fact that the Lord made a way for him to get his work done and seeing the Lord raise up workers to help him in his God given task. This is because he forgets it is the Lord's work and He brings forth the growth that He wants.

In Closing: *Like Saul, who in the very beginning of his God ordained call could not leave things totally in God's hands and fully obey the instruction of the Lord, the controlling laborer just can't surrender completely his God anointed tasks over to the Lord for the end results.* He just has to make that last minute change to satisfy self. It is the result of not being able to have faith in God and satisfaction of what He is doing.

When confronted with his sin the controlling laborer takes to heart the only thing that can put and keep him on the right track. The words of Jesus come to his mind, “Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.” (Luke 22:25-27)

The Christian who easily becomes a controlling laborer will make sure that he keeps himself in a servant positions.

Being a Christian who can be a controlling laborer, the Lord often calls me to serve ministries that I would rather not serve, ministries that often fall into the sin of slothfulness. There are times throughout the calendar year the Lord has called me help slothful laborers to help them promote the events that they put together, and there are times I do not even get to go to the event. But, the Holy Spirit has given such a joy and peace when I exercise my gift to help them and they saw the Lord bring forth a growth and success in what they were called to do.

One event in particular was our last “Thanksgiving Ministerial Alliance” community service. Someone else put it all together and I battled a critical heart because of the way it was being done. As I listened to the Holy Spirit, He revealed to me that although there were Biblical reasons why I could not find peace about it, there was a theme that was pleasing to God. They were raising money to help the needy and that deserved my full attention. I focused on that theme and helped with all I knew how and the Lord brought forth a harvest of people to attend, finances and most of all the joy of knowing that I can get victory over a critical attitude, do what the Lord told me to do and leave the results in His hands. It is always good to sense the pleasure of the Lord when I do right.

By “Servanthood,” Christians can defeat all the sins that come with wanting to be a “Controlling Laborer.”

Let us Pray!!!