

servicing God or material-money, but not both at the same time (Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13). One chief example is the Apostle Paul who "served the Lord with great humility and with tears." (Acts 20:19) Examples of other faithful servants of the Lord are Elizabeth (Luke 1:38, 48) and Simeon (Luke 2:29; cf. Acts 2:18). Although God's people are strictly servants obliged to do God's will, yet through the saving grace of Christ, the Savior calls them his friends (John 15:15). But as God's servants the believers are to be careful not to count themselves superior in any way to their Lord (Matt 10:24; John 13:16; 15:20). Looking to the future, as good servants of God, the believers will share in the "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matt 25:21,23; Luke 19:17). In recognizing that they are servants of God, the believers are to pray and depend on God for the ability and circumstance to do his will (Acts 4:29-31). And each believer is at all times to be a faithful and wise servant of God and thus he will receive God's blessing (Matt 24:44-47). In contrast, the wicked and disobedient unbeliever who acts selfishly and irresponsibly will receive eternal punishment (Matt 24:48-51). God's people should be recognized as "servants of the Most High God" (Acts 16:17); those whose works cause men to praise the believers' Father in heaven (Matt 5:16).

The Gospels and Acts also teach that man is to be the servant of others, not trying to lord it over men (Mark 10:42-44), but serving them (cf. Luke 10:30-37).

The Gospels and Acts recognize another secondary goal in work: to receive a reward or wages for one's endeavors. Jesus states "the worker deserves his wages" (Luke 10:7). Those wages are sometimes the spiritual blessing and satisfaction (John 4:36) one will receive in hearing the "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matt 25:21, 23; Luke 19:17). That reward of enjoying God's approbation will be great in heaven (Matt 5:12; cf. Matt 5:46); even those who are considered insignificant by the world's standards, but who are faithful, redeemed servants of God, will be blessed in heaven (Matt 10:41).

God's blessing will come to his people as, for his glory, they give to the needy and in humility serve him (Matt 6:3, 6).

Serving God faithfully, humbly, and unselfishly will mean that God's people will be storing up treasures in heaven (Matt 6:20).

Conclusion

The teachings of the Gospels and Acts regarding work in all its forms is much the same as it is in the Pauline Epistles.

Inherently, work in the Gospels and Acts is depicted as natural, purposeful activity exemplified first in the purposefulness of God's activity (Acts 13:41; cf. Hab 1:5) and that of his Son, Jesus Christ, who does the very work which the Father has given him to finish (John 5:36). The good and perfect works of God (John 10:32), which includes his creative acts (Acts 4:24), his saving work through Christ (Acts 13:41), and his continual faithful providential acts among men (Acts 5:17), are to be the model for the finite works that the believers whose lives and activities are