

## **1 Cor. 15:58, 2 Thess. 3:13, Galatians 6:9 – Pressing Forwards**

“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.” “As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.” “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”

How do you see the church? Like a hospital, to come to when you are desperate? A supermarket, to come and get something for yourself? Like a movie house, to come for a good show? It should be like two things: a family – the people you belong to; and an army – being trained and going out to fight for the kingdom.

### **1. Every believer a worker: the “working church”**

These commands, about keeping working, were given to all the church; all the brothers – not just a group of leaders. All members of a church have a duty to find areas of service and ministry to serve the Lord in and to advance his kingdom and glory in. Ephesians 2:8-10 says that God saved us freely so that we could do good works in serving him. The church is a body (2 Corinthians 12), and a body has no useless parts. Every person has something needed to give. This does not mean that all members are the same, or that all members are pastors. Someone may say “I am not gifted”, but Christ gave every believer gifts. Someone says “I am too busy” - they should stop being too busy! Someone says, “I know little of the Bible”, but we must learn as we serve, not before. Imagine how different Kenya would be, if every person who was in a church was seeking for ways to serve the Lord in the world!

### **2. The danger: weariness**

People become weary (tired). Paul knows this danger, so he warns us against it. People get weary because of our three-fold enemy. The flesh is fallen and desires an easy life. The world is showing us a wrong example and tempting us with other desires. The devil is always fighting if we try to advance Jesus' kingdom. Fighting is tiring – but we must fight on until we win. God's ways are not like our ways. He is patient. The work of the kingdom is like a farmer's work. We must sow and water and watch and wait (1 Cor. 3:6). Then comes the harvest, later. There are no short-cuts. But God is faithful; we will reap in the season. 1 Cor. 15 is about the resurrection of the dead; on that day we will have a great reward.

### **3. The fight: keeping going**

Paul says we must be “steadfast”. This means the same as “immovable”. We must be fixed, not changing; we have begun the Christian race and must continue, not falling down or giving up. Jesus is alive and worthy. Despite every problem, setback and grief: he is still alive. Keep your eyes on him! Paul says we should be “abounding” or “overflowing” in our labours. We should always be looking how we can serve more and better. Perhaps at home, or with your neighbours, or at your school or workplace, or on the street, there is something more you can do to serve Christ. Will you? A healthy church depends on every member, not just one.