

Are you working to have something to offer the Lord on his return? July 27, 2014

Our daughter, Sonja gave us two tomato plants for a gift. We are not gardeners, but we took the plants home and Leroy planted them in pots and placed them in front of our house. He tends to them every day, watering them and making sure the sun gets to them. Bees have come by and buzzed around them so we were hopeful. Well, the plants are around six feet tall now and there are clusters of tomatoes all through the branches and both of the plants have green tomatoes on the branches and they are beautiful. We would not have had success if we hadn't worked at it. The plants would have withered up and died if we had not watered them. So it is with our lives. God gives us salvation and he calls us to follow him. I would like you to check out the story of the talents in Mathew 25:14. As we read these verses take notice that the master gave each man what he was able to do. He didn't give them more than they were able to work with. I've had people say to me "If I ever come into some money, I'll give some to you to build a new church." God doesn't work that way. He calls us to do what we can while we can. The master gave one man 5 talents, one was given 2 talents and the last person was given 1 talent. The master left for a long journey. After a long time, he returned and called the servants to give account of what they did with the money he entrusted in them. The one that had been given 5 talents made wise investments and gained 5 more. Likewise the man who had been given 2 talents also doubled his and he proudly showed his master the 4 talents he now had. The man who had been given the 1 talent stood by and listened to the wonderful commendation that the master gave to the first two men. He called them good and faithful servants and invited them to enter the joy of their Lord. He also told them that they had been faithful over a few things and he would make them ruler over many things. The servant with the 1 talent began immediately to make excuses for not being productive. He was afraid and so he dug a hole and buried it and he offered the talent back to the master. He accused the master of being a hard man who gathered where he hadn't strewn seed and reaping where he hadn't sown. The master was angry and called him a wicked, lazy servant. Even if the things had been true that the servant accused him of, he should have at least gone to the bank and allowed the bankers to invest the money so that there would have been some interest. He took the one talent that the man had and gave it to the one who had 10 and commanded that the worthless scoundrel be thrown out into outer darkness. One of the things that I teach prisoners who write to me is this: If you want me to invest in you, then you must invest your time into being productive while you are in prison. There are church services, Bible studies, Christian radio and TV and numerous Bible courses that are free and that are what I suggest you spend your time doing until the day you are released. Don't

just sit around and wait for the years to go by and be idle until the day you walk outside the gate. God wants you to make something of your life with no excuses!

If you have ever read the Scriptures where Jesus called his disciples, you will find that he called workers to be his disciples. Look at Matthew 4:18. Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee and saw two brothers; Simon called Peter and his brother, Andrew, casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." The most amazing thing happened. They straightway left their nets and followed Jesus.

That's not all for look at the next verse. He left there and saw two other brothers, James and John, sons of Zebedee preparing their nets. Jesus called to them and they too, immediately left the boat and their father and followed Jesus. Imagine, Zebedee as he had spent years teaching those sons the tricks of the trade so they could become fishermen. He had plans for those boys to carry on his family tradition. Along comes Jesus, a carpenter and a son of a carpenter, not exactly a lucrative business, and he called to those boys and before any one could say "Jumping catfish" they dropped their nets, left their father to take care of the boat and off they went, following Jesus. It didn't stop there. Look at Matthew 9:9. Matthew was tending to his tax booth collecting taxes and he was use to people hating him and saying evil things about him. Jesus walked up close enough for him to hear and said, "Follow me".

Matthew got up and followed Jesus and he became an evangelist right away. In the very next verse, it says that Jesus was having dinner with Matthew at his house and the place was filled with tax collectors and sinners who had come to hear Jesus words. Matthew put on a banquet and invited people he knew to come. He knew how to get a crowd. Sounds like my home baked beans, rolls, coleslaw and apple pie dinners. Never have had to eat them alone for people come when there is good food. Oh, but the religious, unproductive Pharisees and teachers of the law asked, "Why does the master eat with sinners and tax collectors?"

Jesus said, "The healthy don't need a doctor, but the sick do. I haven't come to call the righteous, but the sinners to repentance." Praise God I fit in that group and he saved me! I've heard people say, "I am waiting on God for I don't know what he wants me to do." Aah wrong answer. Get into your Bible and let us find God's will for you right now. Look at 2 Timothy 2:15. His will is for you to study the word so you can impart the truth to those who need to hear the word of God. This will enable you to correctly impart the gospel to others. Avoid godless chatter. Don't give religious opinions. Stick to the word of God. Those who indulge in conversations that are not based on biblical truth will become more and more ungodly and their teaching will spread like gangrene. Be careful that you speak TRUTH.

Read Ephesians 5, Proverbs 3:5, 2 Corinthians 15:58, and the book of James. (1 Peter 3:14). Do not be afraid. Set Christ apart as Lord in your heart. Always be prepared to give an answer to those who ask you to give the reasons for the hope that is within you. Get to work!!!