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“He that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.”

Proverbs 16:26

This verse means that the threat of hunger keeps us working, even when we may not want to work. Our appetite for food and shelter works for us by urging us forward unto labor.

But, what happens when people who are able to work can get food, shelter, and clothing without working? They become lazy, spending their time on gossip, quarrels, games, and trouble. The Apostle Paul instructed the new Church in Thessalonica not to feed people who would not work,

“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all,

but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.”

II Thessalonians 3:10-12

Welfare, whether from family, church, or civil government, that does not urgently encourage work, or that is structured so as to make it irrational to earn more money, sabotages the connection God made between work, and eating. It keeps a person’s appetite from working for him.

Some people, of course, cannot work, and should be voluntarily helped with food, clothing, and shelter by those who can. But, wise moms and dads, along with wise churches and societies, will not sever the relationship between work and eating that God has established. A worker’s appetite should be allowed to work for him, his belly urging him on to work.

Most of our food today is not grown on our own property so it becomes easy to disassociate food with work. But, make no mistake about it, some one had to work to put food on our tables. Someone, usually a lot of some ones, picked up the tab.

As I looked around our kitchen the other day, I tried to identify where all the food came from. The easiest answer to that, of course, is the supermarket; and for many people that’s the beginning and end of the thought process. Most of the canned foods came from a factory here in America. The bananas probably came from South or Central America. Olive oil came from Spain and spices came from different places around the world. Vanilla extract comes from the island of Madagascar. Coffee probably came from Peru and the tea came from India. My Diet Dr. Pepper must have come from heaven itself.

Every time I sit down for a meal we should take a moment to be thankful. Often, from places far away the food has been harvested by people often earning very little money. Our food has been transported by rail, trucks, ships, or cargo planes. If any of those chains were to be broken by drought, war, strikes, or economic collapse then, the food might not be on my plate at all. In fact, we know that there are going to be shortages from time to time and prices are going to go up. We may think food prices here in America are going up too much but what about the poorest countries? We have recently read of impossible price rises in places where people have the least money to pay. The point is, no one eats for free. Even if you grow your own food, you still have to pay for it with labor. If you are on welfare, you still need to understand that someone still has to pick up the check.

Someone Had to Invest

Farmers invest a lot of money each year just to prepare the soil and then buy seed and fertilizer for the crops. The rancher invests a lot of time and money to purchase or breed livestock that will one day be placed on your table. Two million farms dot America's rural landscape, and 98% are operated by families – individuals, family partnerships or family corporations. One U.S. farm feeds 166 people annually in the U.S. and abroad. The global population is expected to increase by 2.2 billion by 2050, which means the world's farmers will have to grow about 70% more food than what is now produced. That is going to take

a lot of investment of money and hard work. But, someone does it and because someone does it, I can have food on my table.

Someone Had to Nurture

Only heroic efforts by farmers and ranchers have kept American supermarket shelves supplied. In many ways, buying our food from the supermarkets has made us forget how much work is involved. The harvest is also a bit of a gamble. Truth be told, failed harvests happen somewhere in the world all the time. Remember the blight that wiped out the potato crop in Ireland in 1845. One million Irish people died and another two million emigrated to the United States and elsewhere; and the memory still lingers on.

Even today, floods, drought, and disease can wipe out the farmer's investment long before the harvest ever comes. It takes a lot of work and money to keep the food flowing to your table.

Someone Had to Harvest

A peach, a strawberry, a tomato that is good today may not good tomorrow. That's how quick things

can ripen. Even more forgiving crops, like bell peppers, have a short harvesting window of two to five days. The harvest is critical for the farmer. They need skilled and unskilled laborers to work their fields, and a reliable supply chain to deliver their goods. Increased fuel costs have made operating harvesting equipment more expensive than ever. It took a lot of work to put that food on your table.

Someone Had to Process

It's always been tough to get people to work in a food plant, but recently empty grocery store shelves reflect how labor scarcity is now the major issue for many food processors. It is often the cause of the kinks that upset the entire food supply chain. Grocers are having trouble getting orders filled. One manager of a local chain store indicated that he was only receiving about 40% of what he ordered from many of his suppliers. Indeed, without workers to process the food there would not be food on your table.

Someone Had to Transport

Even if the farmers and ranchers produce the food, the food supply chain relies on a complex web of





interconnected infrastructure to get it to your table. For example, a lot of grain produced throughout the Midwest is transported to the Port of New Orleans for export. The infrastructure along these waterways has not been overhauled since their construction in 1929. They represent a serious bottleneck, slowing down innumerable supply chains nationwide, including that of grain. If they were to fail entirely, then commodity transport and supply chains would be completely disrupted for months. Railroads are also important for moving grain. Fresh produce, on the other hand, is often moved around the country by refrigerated truck.

The point is, you and I routinely purchase food that was grown more than 1000 miles away and transported to our local grocery store. The cost of transporting our food is often very high. Trucks, trains, and ships, all of which consume fossil fuels, are the primary methods for transporting

large quantities of food around the world. It costs these shippers a lot of labor and money to put food on your table. No, you are not eating free. You never have.

Someone Had to Merchandise

Food companies and supermarket chains' costs are rising as they struggle to operate with fewer employees. We should be thankful for all the people unloading the trucks, stocking the shelves, cleaning and helping us purchase our food. It takes a lot of money and a lot of work to keep the doors open at our local market.

If You Are On Private or Government Assistance, Someone is Working For You

The last report I saw, showed that an estimated 52 percent of American households received benefits from one or more government programs. It is probably higher than that now. Rational people have long dreaded

the day when we crossed the halfway mark because of all the implications for individual and fiscal responsibility. As Benjamin Franklin reportedly said, ***“When the people find that they can vote themselves money, that will herald the end of the republic.”*** The country has crossed the entitlement tipping point. The only hope is to try to get millions of Americans off the government benefits roll.

So, I challenge you, especially during this harvest season that when we look at the food on our plates, remember those who cooked it, but remember too where the food came from; who planted it, who nurtured it, who harvested it and who brought it to market. And if you are on some form of government welfare, remember who paid for it, because someone always has to pick up the check.

And let us be thankful, that when we look at how complicated it is just to get me a banana, yet in God's goodness most of us have never been unintentionally hungry. Those plates of food that you have for lunch today, have overcome the uncertainties of the weather, politics of the market, and shortages of labor and fuel to find its way on to our tables. For that we should be thankful. You see, it was not easy. Someone had to work very hard. Nor was it free because someone always has to pick up the check.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry for over forty five years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries and Christian Bible College.



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Do You Have Time For That?

“I just don’t have enough time to do all the things I need to do. There are never enough hours in the day to get everything done.”

We’ve all said these statements before. Some of us say them every single day! The to-do list is long enough to keep ten people busy, but there is only one person to do it. It’s so easy to feel overwhelmed as we are caught up in the hectic pace of this world. In a sermon about this subject, the late Dr. Adrian Rogers had this to say about time;

“There is enough time in every day to do everything God wants you to do and to do it gracefully. It is an insult to God to say you don’t have enough time. If you don’t have enough time, you are doing something that God did not intend for you to do. It is something you have imposed upon yourself or something you’ve allowed others to impose upon you... Most of us don’t need to learn to work harder, we need to learn to work with more power and more effectiveness.”

One of the main points of his sermon on this subject was the importance of beginning each day by spending time in God’s Word and in prayer. By doing so, you have God’s guidance to fill up your to-do list with His priorities before your own. Be empowered by the Holy Spirit every day and

allow Him to direct your steps. God has equipped us with the tools we need to be successful for Him.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

II Timothy 3:16-17

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Provoked People with a Passion

It seems that the people who actually accomplish something in life are usually people who have found something to provoke them. This might be a provocation to do good or harm; but a provocation none the less. Many books, movies, and television shows are about someone who has been stirred into action - stirred to do something good, stirred to do something evil, stirred for justice or vengeance. These are the stories of those who have found a passion that directs their lives day by day. These are the people who have found a purpose. These are the people that change the world, for better or for worse. Might they be described as *provoked people with a passion*?

Complacency falls softly, even gently, over a sleeping soul. It's no less powerful than a good provocation, but it is vastly different. Complacent people may still do a lot of things, but most of the things they do are for themselves. They love something called *"me-time"* (*which is not necessarily a bad thing*). But these folks always look for the easy paths. They shun what matters most, or what requires more of us. Few of us, of course, think of ourselves as complacent. Life is often hard on all of us. We can all be overwhelmed and exhausted at the end of the day, but underneath,

there's an eerie stillness; not the stillness of peace and security and joy, but of a stagnant pond. Like a child in a car seat during rush hour, the harried rhythms of life slowly singing our souls to sleep.

Notice the charge in **Hebrews 10:24–25**:

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works."

Notice the word *"provoke."* It means to stir or to agitate. The Word of God is saying that we should shake one another, unsettle one another, upset one another — *with a loving but holy interruption* — until love and good works spring to life. That is one of the ministries of the **GoMix Share-A-Thon**. It serves as a holy interruption to encourage good works within the church.

So, do you need provoking today? You may not want it, but do you need someone to lovingly stir your heart out of the soothing calm of complacency? Or, might you be that loving storm for someone else? We are all called to be *"provoked people with a passion."*



People Change

Mrs. Sherry Worthington

As a child, I was afraid of both of my grandfathers. One of my grandfathers was very wealthy, at least until the end of his life. He was a very proud man and wanted everyone to know about his accomplishments. He did not treat my grandmother well, and divorced her for another woman. My grandfather used to walk into church singing to make sure everyone knew he was there. He would lift weights to show his physical strength and brag about what he was able to do. My grandfather only cared about himself and what other people could do for him. I am not being disrespectful; it is just who he was.

He hurt my dad in many ways, and he was not there for him. He worked in a lumber yard, and he basically made that his life. My grandmother picked up the slack. My grandfather was miserable most of his life. He thought that life was about making the next dollar and the pleasures money could buy.

When he divorced my grandmother, he married the other woman. He bought her a nice home and the finest things money could buy. My grandmother had a stroke when she was in her fifties and lived the rest of her life in a nursing home. My dad took great care of her, but he had to get stern with my grandfather

in order for him to help take care of some things that she needed. We would have gladly taken care of it, but it was the principle of the thing. I had very little respect for my grandfather.

I tried to witness to him on several occasions. He would tell me that he asked God to forgive him every day, but that he knew that a loving God would not send him to hell. I tried to explain that God did not send anyone to hell and that we send ourselves. I told him that when he chose not to ask Jesus' forgiveness, he had made the decision to go to hell. He had a selfish heart for the 83 years that I knew him. His

caretaker said that he had asked the Lord to save him one week before he died. Only God knows if he really accepted Jesus. If the thief on the cross could be saved, my grandfather could be saved, too. I only hope so.

My other grandfather was tempered quite differently, but I was still afraid of him. He was generally a quiet man, but he seemed stern. He sat in his chair with his dog, and you better not get in the way of the television set. I didn't know what he would do if he got angry.

When my mother was growing up, my grandfather was a weekend alcoholic. He would work all week and then stay drunk on the weekends. Grandmother kept the family together. As he got older, he had health issues and stopped drinking to my knowledge.

My dad had witnessed to him, and I am sure other family members had as well. We had lay people from the church come by his house, and we had been praying for him. When my grandfather was 58, he was in the hospital. We had a new pastor at our church, and he came by to see him at the hospital. My grandfather needed to shave, and the pastor offered to give him one. This touched my grandfather's heart in a strange way, and he was able to lead my grandfather to the Lord.

There was a change in my grandfather that was amazing. I was no longer afraid of him. I would spend the night at my grandparent's house, and we would play checkers and a card game called Rummy. He always beat me. He never let



me win. I had to earn it. I invited him to church, and he came one time to hear me sing in the choir. Grandfather had a muscle disease which made it difficult for him to sit for long periods of time. He never came to church again.

I knew he had gotten saved because I had seen such a change in him. The last four years of his life I actually had a grandfather, at least the kind you dream about. My grandfather passed away when he was 63. My grandmother showed me his wallet that was full of my pictures. My grandfather taught the little girl that had been afraid of him most of his life that people can change.

Is there someone in your life that you have given up on? Is there someone in your life that you are uncomfortable around or even afraid of? Don't give up! Keep

praying for them. I prayed for both of my grandfathers for many years. One of them may or may not have gotten saved a week before he died. His caretaker said he made a profession of faith. I hope he did. My other grandfather made a profession of faith four years before he died. I was able to observe the change in him. I felt in my heart that my grandfather had gotten saved. Both of these men were saved when the Lord brought other people into their lives. He did not use me, but he used others. I am so thankful that God brought these people into my grandfathers' lives. It is never too late! People change!



Mrs. Worthington has five children and twelve grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



From Surviving... To Thriving!

Dr. Glenn Mills

“And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.”

Matthew 19:29

Challenging times have served as a catalyst for creativity, innovation, and accomplishment throughout human history. Tough times have a way of causing us to just hunker down, tighten up, and do what it takes to ‘just’ survive. Our human instinct to survive says, *“If you can just hold on, maybe you will make it another day, week, month, or possibly a year.”* And that will work for a time in the physical realm.

However, having this mentality in the Spiritual realm can keep us from releasing our faith, dreaming of the impossible, or pursuing any God-given visions. If we don’t believe we can win, we will not run as fast, jump as high, try as hard, climb as far, swim as long, or trust as much.

God never intended for us to just break even, but instead He made us to break out and break through. Just surviving opens the door to a Victim Mentality. It makes us hold on to thoughts like, *“They hurt me,*

left me, overcharged me, neglected me, lied to me, or overlooked me.”

But I have great news! God is still in control. If no one loves you, God always will. He has great plans for all of us if we will but trust Him. We all have difficult times in our lives, but God works best in our storm. Jesus is still in the miracle working business. The Holy Spirit still leads and empowers. The Word of God is still relevant today.

Drastic times call for drastic measures. If life shuts the door, God can open a window. If life shuts the door and window, God can blow the roof off, if needed.

Look at the promises found in **Isaiah 43:18-19**, *“Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.”*

God’s Word tells us not to be hung up on the past. Learn from it, but know God is doing new things. He is making a way. He is refreshing us, even in our dry places. He is able to do abundantly, exceedingly above ALL that we ask or think!

We find another promise in **Matthew 6:33**, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”*

God is not in a survival mode. He is not backing up. We can trust Him for miraculous increase and direction. If God can make a world out of nothing, what can He do with our paycheck, health, relationships, dreams, praise, worship, tithes, service, or life?

Life surviving and thriving is a state of mind. Focus on God’s promises. Stop allowing the economy to determine your condition. Stop allowing opinions to hinder you. Stop allowing fear to stop your faith. Give Jesus your basket of fish and bread. Give Him your water of doubt so He can make wine of joy. Give Him your dead things and watch for resurrection. Get out of the boat of complacency and go to Jesus. Stretch your weakness to Him so He can make you strong. Press through the crowd and touch the Master. Get loud, if needed, to get His attention like the blind man. Sit at His feet like Mary.

Refuse the enemy’s lies about just breaking even. God is ready to break you out into some really great opportunities. You don’t have to just survive my friends.

Take God’s promises to heart and apply them daily. Expect God to do a new thing in your life. If we put Him first and seek His will, we can expect Him to keep His Word and bless us. He can make a way where there is no way. Rivers of joy, love, peace, favor, and much more can flood your life as never before. Why survive when God’s desires for you to thrive? Change your mind and God will change your life!



Dr. Glenn Mills is a long time supporter of GoMix Christian Radio and a full-time Evangelist with the Glenn Mills Ministries. www.glennmillsministries.com

An advertisement for Sandpiper Seafood. On the left is a photograph of a red sign with white lettering that reads "SANDPIPER SEAFOOD". Below the sign is a smaller white sign with black text listing hours: "Hours Wed - Thur 3:00 - 9:00 Fri - Sat 3:00 - 9:30 Sun 11:00 - 8:30 Closed Mon & Tue". The background of the advertisement is a photograph of a large green tree in front of a building. Overlaid on the right side of the image is promotional text in white with black outlines. The text includes: "Seafood, Steak, or Chicken made just the way you like it!", "Seafood Varieties Include Flounder, Oysters, Scallops, & Deviled Crab!", "All seafood is broiled, steamed, or fried.", "Conveniently located on Highway 70 East of LaGrange!", "252-566-4067", and "Special Discounts apply for Senior Citizens!".

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The Voice of God

Wouldn't it be nice if God spoke to us in His audible voice? We would never have to wonder what He wants us to do. Satan would not be as likely to implant those "Hath God said..." doubts into our heads if we heard God's voice.

Have you ever heard God speak? What does His voice sound like? **Psalm 29** tells us that the voice of God is powerful, full of majesty, and capable of breaking cedars and dividing flames of fire. **Verse 3** says that His voice thunders on the waters. **Psalm 93:4** says, "***The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.***" After reading that verse, I was impressed with the idea of exploring the sound of many waters. So my husband and I took a trip to Niagara Falls. Britannica says, "*The Iroquois people named the falls Niagara, meaning 'thunder of waters,' because of the roaring noise the water makes as it plunges downward.*" Other online sources proclaim the thundering sound of Niagara Falls to be anywhere between 85-96 decibels. At 90 decibels, sustained exposure (more than three hours) can begin causing damage to the hearing. Many sources report that Augrabies Falls in South Africa is louder than Niagara. No wonder hearing God's voice instills fear!

The mighty voice of God would certainly gain my attention, but I have honestly never heard His mighty voice. **I Kings 19:11-12** says that God sent Elijah to stand before Him in the mountain. A strong wind passed by and broke rocks from the mountain, an earthquake followed, then a fire, but God was not in any of them. Afterwards, God showed up with a still, small voice. It is with that still, small voice that God most often speaks to me. His communications with us are most often not audible, but they are in the form of a prompting in our spirits.

Not hearing God's audible voice requires us to have faith. Listening to God takes practice and obedience. As we listen and obey what God tells us, we become more aware of His voice. In order to hear that still, small voice of God, we need to be quiet, undistracted, and focused on Him. We need to come to Him with a submissive spirit, and then we need to wait for Him to speak.

Charles Stanley said, "*No experience... I've ever had is even in the running with the sense of absolute and total contentment and fulfillment and completeness that is found in being alone with God.... That is the pinnacle of existence.*" Nothing surpasses meeting with the Creator of the universe, Who loves us deeply, as He speaks to us. Ponder that!



Mrs. Peters has two children and resides in Princeton, NC. She serves as an instructor at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



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