

EFFECTIVE WORK FOR THE LORD

Lesson Aim: Abound in the work of the Lord; do not give up; so you can be rewarded.

Suggestion: Have the students read the Scriptures and answer the questions in the student lesson; then ask the following questions for class discussion.

The apostle Paul never gave up in his duty to minister the Word of God. He was constantly working, witnessing and walking to new places to spread the gospel. He won converts, organized them into local churches and watched after them by personal visits and letters or by sending his fellow workers to them. He suffered hardships, misunderstandings and persecution, but he kept true to his commission. He has set a good example for all believers.

How did Paul check a person's spiritual condition? 19:2

He asked; "Did you receive the Spirit when you believed?" If they have not received the Spirit, they are not saved (Rom 8:9). If they do not know that they have the Spirit, they need to examine their salvation to see if they have the Spirit and be sure that they are in the faith (1 Cor 6:19-20; 2 Cor 13:5). If they do have the Spirit, their lives will be changed (2 Cor 5:17).

Why did Paul lay his hands on John's disciples to receive the Spirit? 19:4-6

It was a sign to the unsaved Jews, when they spoke in tongues, that these Jewish men had been saved by their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 14:22). Even though they had the baptism of repentance by John, it was not sufficient to save them. They also needed to receive Jesus as their Messiah (Christ) so they could be baptized by Him with the Spirit (Lk 3:16).

Why was Paul so effective in spreading the gospel to all people that lived in Asia? 19:9-10

Paul diligently taught and persuaded the believers in Ephesus for a couple of years concerning the Kingdom of God, until they were able to show others how to enter His Kingdom (Jn 3:3, 5) and be good citizens in it (Mt 6:33). They shared this good news with lost sinners throughout Asia Minor (Turkey). This could be the time when several of the seven churches in Revelation were started.

What caused believers to confess and rid themselves of occult practices? 19:13-20

Paul's supernatural power from the Holy Spirit to cast out demons attracted the attention of some Jews who claimed to be exorcists. They decided to try to cast a demon from a man by Jesus without knowing Him as their Savior. Instead of delivering the man of his demon, these Jews were attacked by this demon-possessed man so that they fled from the house wounded and naked. The people of Ephesus heard about this incident and were afraid to practice the occult. Many believers, who had dabbled in occultic practices, confessed their sins and burned their occult books. As a result of this open testimony of separation from these sinful practices, the Word of God grew and prevailed over the hearts and minds of the people.

Why is Sunday, not Saturday, a good day of the week to worship the Lord? 20:6-7

Every day is a holy day for a believer, but Sunday is usually chosen as the special day of the week to worship God, because this is the day that Jesus rose from the dead and this is the day that the Holy Spirit first dwelt in believers and formed the first church in Jerusalem. The Sabbath day was a sign for the Jews (Ex 31:12-17), and as a shadow of things to come (Col 3:16).

Why did Paul testify that sinners needed to repent toward God? 20:21

"Repent" means to change one's mind. Unsaved people need to change their mind about sin and turn from sin in their lives. They also need to change their minds about God. He is their creator and judge. He loves them and has provided for their salvation from sin, but He will not forgive them if they refuse to repent of their sins and repent of their attitude toward Him.

How are pastors able to feed believers and make them strong? 20:28, 32

Pastors must feed the believers the Word of God to make them strong. Secular philosophy, history, sociology and psychology will starve the life of a believer. He needs God's Word to make him strong.