

Advancing the Kingdom Through a Labor of Love

What Is a Labor of Love?

Performing an act of kindness with the heart of a servant to meet the needs of someone else.

Biblical Examples of a Labor of Love

- The Good Samaritan (Luke 10)
- The widow who used her last flour and oil to make the prophet Elijah a meal (1 Kings 17)
- Tabitha, also called Dorcas, who made tunics and garments for others (Acts 9:36-43)

How a Labor of Love Advances the Kingdom

- It can soften a hardened heart.
- It can cause people to question or ponder the selfless behavior of a Christian, opening the door for spiritual conversations.

Lessons from “The Little Red Hen”

The children’s story “The Little Red Hen” offers a simple picture of work, reward, and transformation. These three interpretations show how a labor of love can affect the body, reveal blessing, and point toward spiritual growth.

First interpretation: This applies to the physical body. Scripture teaches, “If any will not work, neither let him eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10).

Second interpretation: This applies to the blessings received by those who perform a labor of love. They reap the fruits of their labor, while those who did not join in the process receive no reward: no labor of love, no fruit, no reward, no blessing.

Third interpretation: This applies to spiritual growth, maturity, and fruitfulness. It pictures an individual who dies to self and is raised up as a new creation with a new purpose and much greater potential, represented in the story by a kernel of wheat.

We were once like a single kernel of wheat. When we accepted Christ as Lord and Savior, we died to ourselves so that we could live an abundant life for Him.

Then comes the threshing, where the straw and chaff are removed. In the same way, God separates and removes the things in our lives that are not fruitful from what is fruitful and life-giving.

Next comes the milling and mixing of the dough. This represents believers being knit together as members of the body of Christ for a common purpose.

Finally comes the baking of the bread. Heat and pressure represent the testing of God, which transforms us into a unified body of Christ, the Church, equipped to go into the world and spiritually feed others with the gospel message of salvation through Christ.

Just as Jesus physically fed the 5000 with five loaves and two fish, so the church, represented by the loaf of bread, can now become fishers of men, and go into all the world and spiritually feed all those who will die to themselves and live for Christ.

Doing Your Part Through a Labor of Love

- In your home
- In your community
- In the local church
- Going into all the world

A Practical Opportunity: Stateside Mission Trip

- **Dates:** Sept. 27-Oct. 2
- **Location:** Parker's Lake, KY
- **Purpose:** To be the hands and feet of Jesus and to perform a labor of love.

The Ultimate Labor of Love

Jesus laid down His life on the cross to make a way for all humanity to be reconciled to God. Out of thankfulness and gratitude we can choose to answer the call to represent Him through a labor of love, changing hearts and drawing others to Christ.

Closing Scripture: John 15:12-13

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.