

# You Want Me To Do What?

March 10, 2024

- Last week we talked about getting serious concerning our relationship with God. The goal was to make sure that you knew that you knew that you were in good standing concerning your salvation.
  - I hope you had to wrestle with that, and I hope you took the test so that you would know.
  - Am I counted as one of His or am I not?
  - We do not want, nor do we need to wander through life with incorrect doctrine or thinking that we are more good than bad and that will be enough to get us into heaven.
    - That is just not biblical.
  - Most everyone wants heaven but very few want Jesus to be the way to get there.
    - If you are still in doubt, we must understand that God did not ask us to clean our life up and then come to Him, He asked us to lay our lives down for Him.
      - He is not looking for good people, He is looking for good followers.
  - By the mere fact that you came back again this week, I hope all of that is settled in your heart and we can move forward with the “Now what?” question.
    - There is absolutely zero doubt in my mind that as we move towards a closer relationship with God, that our enemy, the devil and his little demons, will do everything they can to trip us up or discourage us in our pursuit.
    - The devil is not happy about our choice to follow Jesus, but since he can no longer have control of our life, his desire is to make us as ineffective as possible.
    - My goal this week will be to give effective, proven things we can do to remain strong and diligent in our walk with the Lord.

- The title of today's message is "You want me to do WHAT?" and the meaning behind it is that God asks us to do things that work against our very nature.
  - You can also rest assured that when you make that commitment, it is going to be tested.
  
  - I have had people come to me and state that as they looked around our congregation, it appeared that everyone had their life together, they all seemed to be happy, and they don't seem to be fighting any hard battles in their lives or have serious problems.
    - They have said, "I feel like I am the only one here that must struggle."
      - I usually say that they have a vision problem.
      - Because when I look out over our congregation what I see is a bunch of sinners.
      - I see people that struggle daily with something in their lives.
      - I see a group of people that must get up every day and decide who they are going to serve.
        - Am I correct church?
  
  - There is a common misconception amongst new believers or believers that have not matured, that life is supposed to be perfect for Christians.
    - How many Christians here would be willing to say that is absolutely not the case?
      - The only people that actually have that are either delusional or drugged, it doesn't work that way.
        - Sin is ever present; it is always around us and the consequences of it affect everything we do and see.
        - Life is hard and being a Christian in this life is hard.
  
- As followers of Christ, we are called to be different.

- Let's go to Romans 11:36 to understand something that Paul was telling his audience that they needed to understand so they might be willing to do what was asked of them.
- This was Paul's best attempt to explain the awesomeness of God.
  - Romans 11:36 *For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.*
    - **Of Him** – Everything that exists is because God said so. It was God's plan, He thought of it, and He owns it.
    - **Through Him** – Not only is He the owner of the plan, but He is also the one that made it happen, He spoke it into existence.
    - **To Him** – This one is a little harder to grasp. All things created show His glory and bring honor and glory to Him.
      - Everything God made is perfect and reflects His perfection.
        - Does God or has God ever made a mistake?
        - You may think so if you look around and need someone to blame for the craziness of this world.
        - You would be wrong, God made everything and as our building block answer for today stated: Everything He made was very good!
          - It was man and his desire to not be under the authority and protection of God that brought all these problems.
        - For further reference you can go to Job 38 and see the difference between man's wisdom and God's wisdom.
- With that background, we can go forth into our text study today.

- Romans 12:1-2 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*
  - The word beseeched here means to earnestly invite or strongly encourage.
  - So, he is encouraging believers based on what he had just stated in 11:36 and really throughout the first 11 chapters of Romans about the mercies of God.
    - Has God been merciful to us?
      - Not given us what we deserve?
      - God would be just in giving us what we earned, but He had mercy on us.
  - Because of that, what should be our reasonable (logical) service be back to Him?
    - To present our bodies as a living sacrifice.
    - That it would be holy (Set apart).
    - Acceptable to God.
  - A sacrifice happens when one party gives up something so that another party may gain.
    - For instance, someone may sacrifice their time, energy or even money for a cause they believe in.
    - The ultimate example of a sacrifice would be Jesus lowering Himself to suffer death at the hands of His creation in order to save those He created.
- Paul described this in Romans 5:7-9
  - *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still*

*sinner, Christ died for us. Much more than, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.*

- **If** we believe that Christ died for us...
  - **If** we believe that we are now justified by His blood...
    - Meaning counted as sinless because He took our sin.
  - **And, if** we believe that He saved us from future wrath....
    - Should we have a sense of indebtedness or obligation to Him? Absolutely
- If a hero were to stand in front of you and take a bullet from a would-be robber or jump in front of a car and rescue your child from being ran over, you would have an incredible sense of gratitude and obligation to that person.
- That person would be a hero to you for the remainder of your life.
    - How much more so when we are spared from an eternity of separation from God.
  - Can we view that with the same gratitude we would with the hero in our previous story?
    - Is the sacrifice of Christ as real to us?
- If so, then Paul is telling us how that gratitude is to be shown.
- We are being asked to present our bodies as living sacrifices daily.
  - It does not matter if you became a believer today or you have been a believer for many years.
  - Every day we offer ourselves.
    - In the Old Testament, a sacrifice was made using an innocent animal, spotless or unblemished, and it was used to atone for a person's sins.
      - That animal was slaughtered, and blood poured out on an altar.
      - It was the death of the innocent to cover for the life of the guilty.

- In the New Testament, a sacrifice was made using an innocent Man, who was spotless or unblemished from sin, to atone for the sins of everyone.
  - That Man was slaughtered on Calvary and His blood poured out on the altar in heaven.
  - The death of the Innocent for the guilty.
  - The perfect sacrifice was made in so much as there would never be the need for additional sacrifices.
  
- Now the big question, what does it mean to be a living sacrifice?
  - Hopefully we get the obvious part of what that means.
    - In its most simple form, it means we are totally God's to be used as He sees fit.
      - It is taking my body and presenting it to God.
  
- 1 Cor 6:19-20 may be the clearest scripture on this.
  - *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*
  
- To best remember these points, let's look at a picture that illustrates what our sacrifices should look like.



- Our first item in question would be: Do we have the right relationship with God.

- This was what we spent most of last week discussing.
      - Am I right with God?
      - Do I think I am saved or am I really saved?
      - This is the one we absolutely have to get right.
      - Remember, you had to take the test!
        - Can I say that I love God with all my heart, all my soul and all of my mind?
      - Nothing else will work correctly unless you get this one right.
    - Our relationship with God is not to make our lives look or feel better.
      - It is not so we can have a better class of friends or have any friends at all.
        - It is to honor God and glorify Him.
    - Our first sacrifice then, is to offer ourselves completely to God.
      - “Here I am Lord! I belong to You!”
- The next item is to have the right relationship with the church.
  - Well that seems a little self-serving.
    - It is not because I do not mean the building.
    - Do you remember when Jesus told Peter, “And on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”
    - This was the response of Jesus after Peter acknowledged who Christ was by saying” You are **the** Christ, **the** Son of **the** living God.”
      - Jesus was making the point that the church – the whole body of believers – will be built on that same confession.
- If Jesus thought that the church was this important, then how should we look at the church?
  - The body of believers that make up the church is the center point of the plan that Jesus has to save the lost and mature those who are the saved.

- One of my favorite analogies is to compare the church to a hospital.
  - A hospital requires that there be a building for the sick to go to.
  - An effective hospital must be clean and sanitary in order to treat the wounded and sick.
  - A hospital must have trained, educated, diligent doctors and nurses who can treat the patients.
  - A hospital must have a staff to assist the doctors, keep the records, maintain the building, collect the money, and promote recovery.
  - A hospital exists because the doing-it-yourself plan is no longer a viable option at some point.
    - The problem is bigger than a band aid.
  - A hospital is a place where the physically sick and hurt go to get well.
    - If you were to take away any of these, it is no longer an effective place to be treated.
- How about the church?
  - An effective church requires that there be some place for the people to meet.
    - This place comes in many varieties whether it is an individual's home or a 50,000-seat stadium.
      - Where the people of God are gathered to worship and honor Him, that is where church happens.
    - A church, operating under the power of the Holy Spirit, requires that there be holy (set apart) men and women who live surrendered lives to serving the Lord.
      - Diligent in studying God's word, treating each fellow believer with love, teaching, discipleship, caring for the needs, suffering with them and sharing in their joy.
    - A church building exists because the do-it-yourself plan doesn't work.



- Someone may say: “I will just stay at home and watch the service on T.V.”
  - That person misses the whole point of church.
    - Yes, a person can grow in biblical knowledge by just watching a service.
    - Of course, we understand that there may be reasons that an individual may not be able to attend, which is the whole reason we put the services online.
      - But what purpose is biblical knowledge if it is not used to glorify God.
        - Does God just want you to be smarter?
        - Or does He want you to use that knowledge to benefit others?
        - If I know how to share the gospel but I never put it into practice, what good is that knowledge?
  - Just like a hospital, a church that has a building, requires a staff to assist the Pastor’s in their duties, maintain the building, collect the offerings and promote spiritual health.
    - And just like the hospital again, if you take away any of those functions, it loses some of its effectiveness.
    - Everyone who claims Jesus as their Savior has been given gifts to edify the function of the church.
      - What a shame when the gifts that are given by God are hidden within the believer while the church struggles needing that gift.
  - A church is designed to be the place where the spiritually unhealthy go to be treated.
    - Whether it is care that leads to salvation, care that strengthens them, or care that helps the lost find their way back home.
    - Where the analogy ends between the hospital and the church is that everyone who gets treated at a hospital eventually dies.
      - Although we strive to live forever, we lose that battle every single time.

- Those who get treated at the church and receive the offer of eternity through Jesus Christ, live forever.
- Next our target is to be right with unbelievers.
  - Wait, why do I care about that?
    - It is the only reason you are still here on this earth!
    - Anytime someone is struggling with “What is their purpose in this life?”
      - The answer is quite simple.
      - You exist to know God and make Him known!
      - Our function is to go into an unbelieving world that absolutely hates you and show the same love that was shown to you through Jesus Christ.
- It has taken all that I have stated so far to get us to the title of this message “You want me to do what?”
  - “You want me to love people that hate me?”
    - In the sermon on the mount Jesus gave us this charge.
    - Matthew 5:43-45 *“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven..... ”*
  - Our ability to do this is virtually impossible unless you are willing to be used by the Lord and are a fully committed follower of Jesus.
  - Our tendencies are to be with people that identify themselves in a similar manner to us.
    - If you like to sew or play golf, you have your favorite sports team, etc. you like that commonality with people.
    - It is the same experience that we get when we come to church and have fellowship with other believers.
  - This is something God placed in us when He stated, “It is not good that man should be alone.”

- Because the devil and man doing what the devil and men do, we mess up everything that God says is good.
    - We divide, we separate, and we segregate.
      - One of the dangers that all churches face is that they can become an exclusive membership club.
        - If you don't walk like us, talk like us, dress like us then you are not one of us.
          - If we limit ourselves to only those who like us and think we are awesome, we cannot then do what Jesus asked us to do.
            - We will not be able to love or bless or to do good or pray for others because we do not know who they are.
    - When God asks us to be like Jesus, this is what He meant.
      - Although we are not of this world, we are to go into the world and be difference makers.
        - Not conformed to this world... Not looking like they do.
          - Our speech and our actions should be a dead giveaway that we are different.
          - Anywhere and at anytime.
      - We are called to be salt and light to this world.
        - We bring flavor to life and open the eyes of the blind.
        - We are the carriers of the medicine that the world needs.
          - And the world hates this medicine.
- Has God ever asked you to do anything that was uncomfortable?
  - Have you ever had to fight the temptation to not do what you knew He wanted you to do?
    - I can tell you that I have, and there are times I have failed and times I have been obedient.
      - There are times when I knew I should have stepped in and said something and then talked myself right out of it.

- “Well, now is probably not the right time”
  - “I don’t want to offend them”
  - “They are not going to listen to me anyway.”
- I can also tell you there are times when I did what God asked me to do, I had the privilege of watching Him do miraculous things.
  - I do not want to portray, at all, that there wasn’t fear in doing what God asked me to do.
- Nobody wants to get beat up or persecuted but that is one of the promises Jesus made to us in that if we do what He asks us to do, we’re going to be persecuted.
  - Please allow me to give you some examples of a broken man willing to be obedient:
    - God allowed me to walk past border guards and airport check station with hundreds of illegal bibles and I watched as systems failed and guards seem to go blind to my existence.
    - My wife and I have withstood and are still under the pressures to compromise our Christian values with family members and suffer being shunned by them.
    - I’ve had the experience of an 8-year-old girl asking me to pray with her that her mom would love Jesus like she loved Jesus.
      - I had the experience of three months later watching that little girl’s mom come to know Jesus.
    - I’ve seen grown men cry when Jesus moved on their hearts when they heard the gospel and accepted Jesus as their Savior.
      - I share these experiences, and there are many more, that have come from a willing vessel that simply said, “Here I am, use me.”
  - I also want you to know that unless we are fully committed to being a living sacrifice, we will not be able to withstand the lies and pressures that are coming our way.
    - To be wise as serpents and gentle as doves requires our complete trust in the Lord.

- Our last item on the dart board is to be right with society.
  - I recently watched a video from Jack Hibbs and he said our world is messed up because Christians refuse to get involved.
    - I couldn't agree more.
    - To my amazement, I have had more people come up to me and tell me that the "Church shouldn't be in politics."
      - If we are called to be "Salt and Light" in this world, where is it that we could have the biggest influence?
        - If the church were doing what it is supposed to be doing, then we wouldn't have hundreds of babies being slaughtered every single day in this state.
        - We wouldn't have children mutilating their bodies over something called gender dysphoria.
        - We wouldn't have legislators passing laws that keep parents from being informed of those choices.
- Is there anywhere that we would not want a biblical, Godly influence over?
  - Would we want that where we work?
  - Do we want that where our kids go to school?
  - Is that how we would like it to be at home?
    - We dream of a world that is honest, where people are trustworthy, where life has value and where truth is ever present.
- We understand that is not going to happen until the King of Kings and Lord of Lord reigns.
  - But we don't know when that is going to happen.
    - It could be very soon, or it could be some time from now.
      - Our role is to occupy until He comes.
      - As long as we live here, we should strive to give every child that is down that hall in Calvary Kids or our own children or grandchildren the best possible place to live.
        - Are they worth fighting for?

- I have put this target list together in a specific order.
  - Should you attempt to go out of that order you will fail.
    - There are many that try to do that, but they simply cannot succeed.
    - The Bullseye is the one you have to get first.
      - It is the hardest and most critical of all.
      - It takes a commitment, every day.
      - How do we do that?
  - Sitting Bull has a quote that sums it up.
    - “Inside of me there are two dogs. One is mean and evil and the other is good and they fight each other all the time. When asked which one wins I answer, the one I feed the most.”
- Staying close to God involves me feeding that part of my life.
  - To transform and renew our mind from one of sin to one that thinks biblically.
    - How do we do that?
      - Read His Word.
      - Love what He loves.
      - We make Him known through our voice and our actions.
      - We serve others rather than serving ourselves.
- The relationship we have with God should drive all things.
  - There are many people who try to be good people and have influence over the affairs of men, sway the unbelievers or have political power.
    - They quickly lose their way and get caught up in the ways of man because they do not have the love of Christ in them to succeed.
- We are allowed to watch God do some incredible things.
  - It just requires our participation.
- PRAYER