

SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

Serving Aint Easy

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor
September 6, 2026



1) Serving Jesus will cost us.

2 Corinthians 6:4-10 (NLT) In everything we do, we show that we are true ministers of God. We patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind. ⁵ We have been beaten, been put in prison, faced angry mobs, worked to exhaustion, endured sleepless nights, and gone without food. ⁶ We prove ourselves by our purity, our understanding, our patience, our kindness, by the Holy Spirit within us, and by our sincere love. ⁷ We faithfully preach the truth. God's power is working in us. We use the weapons of righteousness in the right hand for attack and the left hand for defense. ⁸ **We serve God whether people honour us or despise us, whether they slander us or praise us.** We are honest, but they call us impostors. ⁹ We are ignored, even though we are well known. We live close to death, but we are still alive. We have been beaten, but we have not been killed. ¹⁰ Our hearts ache, but we always have joy. We are poor, but we give spiritual riches to others. We own nothing, and yet we have everything.

2 Corinthians 11:23-30 (NLT) ... I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. ²⁴ Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. ²⁶ I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. ²⁷ I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm. ²⁸ Then, besides all this, I have the daily burden of my concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak without my feeling that weakness? Who is led astray, and I do not burn with anger? ³⁰ If I must boast, I would rather boast about the things that show how weak I am.

- **Faithfulness to Jesus doesn't guarantee favourable circumstances.**

2) God's grace sustains us, when serving costs us.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NLT) Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.¹⁰ That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

3) Our weakness can magnify God's glory.

2 Corinthians 4:7-10 (NLT) We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves. ⁸ We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. ⁹ We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. ¹⁰ Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies.

Galatians 6:9 (NLT) "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up."

Big Idea: Faithful servants keep serving because God's grace is greater than the cost.

- **Remember God's grace.** "My grace is all you need."
- **Refuse to quit.** "Let's not get tired of doing what is good."
- **Redirect the glory.** "Our great power is from God, not from ourselves."
- **The goal isn't to have a comfortable life. The goal is to have a faithful life that glorifies God.**

Galatians 6:9 (NLT) "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up."



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
live out our identity as a
Family of Servants on Mission.
To get plugged in email:
impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

Serving Aint Easy
#4 of 6 - September 6, 2026

Context

1. What do we learn from the context of 2 Corinthians 6:4–10 and 11:23–30 about the kind of life Paul understood he was called to as a follower and servant of Jesus? What stands out about the cost of his ministry?
2. Paul says he served whether he was honoured or despised, praised or slandered (2 Corinthians 6:8). What does this reveal about what motivated Paul to serve?

Observation

3. Look at 2 Corinthians 12:9–10. What does Jesus say to Paul about his weakness? What words or phrases in this passage stand out to you, and why
4. In 2 Corinthians 4:7–10, Paul describes believers as “fragile clay jars” carrying a great treasure. What does this picture teach us about our weaknesses, God’s power, and who ultimately gets the glory?

Meaning

5. Why do you think God sometimes allows the difficulties and weaknesses that make serving Him harder rather than simply removing them? How can weakness actually deepen our dependence on Christ?
6. The sermon says, “The goal of following Jesus isn’t comfort; it’s faithfulness.” What is the difference between making decisions based primarily on comfort and making decisions based on faithfulness to Jesus?

Application

7. Where are you most tempted to quit or pull back right now because following Jesus or serving others has become costly, inconvenient, disappointing, or difficult? What would faithfulness look like in that situation?
8. This week, how could you live out the three applications: *Remember God’s grace, Refuse to quit, and Redirect the glory*? What is one specific step of faithful service Jesus may be calling you to take?



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
live out our identity as a
Family of Servants on Mission.
To get plugged in email:
impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

Serving Aint Easy
#4 of 6 - September 6, 2026

Context

1. What do we learn from the context of 2 Corinthians 6:4–10 and 11:23–30 about the kind of life Paul understood he was called to as a follower and servant of Jesus? What stands out about the cost of his ministry?
2. Paul says he served whether he was honoured or despised, praised or slandered (2 Corinthians 6:8). What does this reveal about what motivated Paul to serve?

Observation

3. Look at 2 Corinthians 12:9–10. What does Jesus say to Paul about his weakness? What words or phrases in this passage stand out to you, and why
4. In 2 Corinthians 4:7–10, Paul describes believers as “fragile clay jars” carrying a great treasure. What does this picture teach us about our weaknesses, God’s power, and who ultimately gets the glory?

Meaning

5. Why do you think God sometimes allows the difficulties and weaknesses that make serving Him harder rather than simply removing them? How can weakness actually deepen our dependence on Christ?
6. The sermon says, “The goal of following Jesus isn’t comfort; it’s faithfulness.” What is the difference between making decisions based primarily on comfort and making decisions based on faithfulness to Jesus?

Application

7. Where are you most tempted to quit or pull back right now because following Jesus or serving others has become costly, inconvenient, disappointing, or difficult? What would faithfulness look like in that situation?
8. This week, how could you live out the three applications: *Remember God’s grace, Refuse to quit, and Redirect the glory*? What is one specific step of faithful service Jesus may be calling you to take?