# Serve One Another: How God Calls Every Believer to Be a Minister

Most of us have sat in a church service and quietly evaluated it like a movie on the way home. The music, the message, the atmosphere. But what if that mindset is actually the opposite of what God calls us to? First Peter 4:7-11 makes it clear that every believer is called not to be served, but to serve.

## What Is Consumer Christianity and Why Is It a Problem?

There is a growing phenomenon in the modern church called consumer Christianity. It is the mindset that attending church is about what you can get out of it. People church-shop based on music style, the pastor's personality, or personal preferences, and then evaluate the experience on the way home.

The problem is simple: it is not biblical.

The New Testament church knows nothing of this mindset. Not a single believer in the New Testament asks, "What's in it for me?" Every believer asks, "How can I serve?"

## What Is the Priesthood of All Believers?

In the Old Testament, only those born from the tribe of Levi could serve as priests. These priests acted as mediators between God and His people. But in the New Testament, that system is replaced by something far more inclusive.

Peter writes in 1 Peter 2:9: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light."

Every believer belongs to this royal priesthood. That means two things. First, Jesus is our great High Priest. Second, you and I have direct access to God. No mediator needed.

But with great privilege comes great responsibility. First Peter 4:7-11 describes exactly how this priesthood is meant to operate in everyday life.

## How Should Christians Live in Light of Eternity?

Peter opens this passage with a sense of urgency: "The end of all things is at hand." He is calling believers to live with eternity in view. And when you do that, it changes how you treat the people around you.

Peter outlines several responses to living with that eternal perspective:

- Pray (verse 7)

- Keep loving one another earnestly (verse 8)
- Show hospitality without grumbling (verse 9)
- Serve one another with the gifts you have received (verses 10-11)

The heart of the entire passage lands on one command: serve one another.

## Why Aren't More Christians Actually Serving?

Research shows that approximately 85% of churches in America encourage their members to serve. Yet only about 30% of believers actually do. That means over 70% of Christians did not serve a single time, in their church or community, in the past year.

So the question worth sitting with is this: How is your serve?

To be a Christian is to become like Christ. And to become like Christ is to become a servant. That is not optional. It is the definition of discipleship.

## You Are Gifted: What the Bible Says About Spiritual Gifts

Here is the main point of this passage, and it is good news. If you are a believer, you are gifted.

Peter writes in verse 10: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace."

The word "each" means every single person. Age, background, gender, ethnicity, marital status, none of it changes the fact that the Holy Spirit has given you a gift.

Paul echoes this in 1 Corinthians 12:7: "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good."

The New Testament lists spiritual gifts across four passages: Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, and 1 Peter 4. Scholars have identified around 21 distinct gifts, generally grouped into three categories:

- Team gifts
- Enabling gifts
- Supernatural gifts

And it is worth noting that most scholars agree this is not an exhaustive list. There may be other gifts at work in the body of Christ beyond what is named.

## Do You Have to Know Your Gift Before You Can Serve?

Here is something worth considering. The New Testament never actually tells us how to discover our spiritual gifts. There is no step-by-step process outlined in Scripture for figuring out what your gift is before you start serving.

Spiritual gift inventories can be helpful tools. But the more important question might be this: instead of waiting to identify your gift, why not just find a need and serve there?

Jesus modeled this at the Last Supper. No one washed the disciples' feet that night. So Jesus took a towel and a bowl of water and washed every single pair of feet in the room. He saw a need and He met it. Then He said, "Do you understand what I have done for you? Now go and do likewise."

Stop waiting for the perfect role. Stop making excuses. Find a need and serve.

## What Does It Look Like When Every Member Serves?

In the early 1970s, a magazine sent a writer to investigate a rapidly growing church in California. The church had about 900 members. After spending several days interviewing people and observing the community, the writer published an article. The title was: "The Church with 900 Ministers."

From what he could see, there were no pew sitters. Every member was viewed as a gifted minister called to serve. That was the culture. And it was producing something remarkable.

Imagine what a church looks like when every member serves. The joy. The enthusiasm. The morale. The movement of the Holy Spirit. That is the kind of church worth belonging to.

## You Are Expected to Be a Good Steward of Your Gift

Being gifted comes with an expectation. Peter says to use your gift "as good stewards of God's varied grace." The gift was not given to sit unused.

This is the entire point of the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. The master gave his servants different amounts and then went away. When he returned, the servants who had been faithful with what they were given heard these words: "Well done, my good and faithful servant."

Many people say they want to hear those words one day. But there is a direct connection between hearing those words and how faithfully we steward what God has given us right now.

## Who Gets the Glory When We Serve?

Peter closes this passage with a clear reminder. We do not serve for recognition. We do not serve so others will think we are impressive. We serve so that God gets the glory.

Verse 11 says: "Whoever serves as one who serves by the strength that God supplies, in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

God supplies the strength. God receives the glory. That should be more than enough motivation.

Ministry happens when God supplies the strength we need to serve one another for His glory.

## Life Application

This week, stop waiting for the perfect role or the perfect moment. Find one specific need in your church or community and step in to meet it. It does not have to match a perfectly identified spiritual gift. It just has to be done with a willing heart and a desire to honor God.

Ask yourself these questions as you reflect on this message:

- Am I approaching church with a consumer mindset, focused on what I get, or a servant mindset, focused on what I can give?
- Am I currently using my gifts to serve others, or am I sitting on the bench waiting for the right opportunity?
- If someone observed my life this past year, would they say I served my church and community, or would I be part of the 70% who did not serve at all?
- When I serve, is my motivation to be seen and appreciated, or is it genuinely for the glory of God?

You are gifted. You are expected to use that gift. And when you do, God gets all the glory. That is the one another life.