Everyone Has a Part to Play

Moving from Spectators to Servants
Main Text: Exodus 17:8–10, 13
Supporting Texts: Romans 12:4–8; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Ephesians 4:11–12

Introduction: You Can't Win the Game from the Stands

Imagine a football team where only three players show up to play. The quarterback arrives, the running back arrives, and one receiver arrives. The rest of the team sits in the bleachers and cheers. They may have enthusiasm. They may have team spirit. They may even have great ideas about how the game should be played.
But they are not going to win many games.

Why? Because a team cannot function when only a few people are willing to participate. Unfortunately, churches can fall into the same pattern. A few people do the work while everyone else watches. A small group teaches the classes, leads the ministries, welcomes the guests, cleans the building, and organizes the events.

And those faithful people keep working until they become exhausted. But God's design for the church is different. The church is not meant to be an audience watching a few performers. It is a body in which every member has a role.
In Exodus 17, Israel faces the Amalekites. Joshua leads the soldiers into battle, while Moses stands on a hill with the staff of God. Each person has a responsibility, and the victory involves their combined efforts. This passage reminds us that God has not called us merely to attend His church. He has called us to participate in His mission.

1. God's Work Is Bigger Than Any One Person

Scripture: Exodus 17:8–10

When Amalek attacked Israel, Moses gave Joshua an assignment: choose men and go fight. Moses himself would stand on the hill with the staff of God.
Notice the different assignments.

- Joshua led the fighting men.
- The soldiers fought the enemy.
- Moses stood on the hill.
- Aaron and Hur would later support Moses.

They did not all have the same responsibility, but they were working toward the same outcome.

A. God gives different gifts and assignments.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul compares the church to a human body. The body has many parts, and every part serves a different function.
The hand cannot tell the foot it is unnecessary. The eye cannot dismiss the ear. Every part contributes to the health of the whole.
The same is true of the church.

Some people teach. Others encourage. Some lead, organize, give, serve, or show mercy. Some work comfortably in front of a crowd, while others prefer serving quietly behind the scenes.
The important thing is not whether your assignment resembles someone else's. The important thing is whether you are faithfully using what God has entrusted to you.

B. No assignment is insignificant.

Imagine if everyone in your church wanted to preach but no one wanted to teach children, work in the nursery, greet guests, or care for the building.
You might have plenty of preachers, but the church would struggle to minister effectively.

The person who prepares the room for a Bible study may never teach the lesson, but they help make the lesson possible. The person who welcomes a family may never preach the gospel from the pulpit, but their kindness may help that family feel comfortable enough to hear it.

A ministry assignment does not have to be visible to be valuable.

C. The church is strongest when every member participates.

Ephesians 4:11–12 teaches that church leaders equip God's people for works of service.
The goal is not for the pastor to do everything. The goal is to prepare God's people to do the work of ministry together.

A healthy church is not built around one person's gifts. It is strengthened as many people faithfully use their gifts for God's glory.
Application: Ask yourself, “What has God given me that I can use to serve His church and reach people for Christ?”

2. **Attending Church Is Not the Same as Serving the Church**

Scripture: Romans 12:4–8

There is a place for worship attendance, spiritual growth, fellowship, and receiving the Word of God. These are essential. But the Christian life also involves giving, serving, and ministering to others. Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, learn from Him, and participate in His mission.

A. We are saved by grace and called to serve.

We do not serve to earn God's love or purchase our salvation. We serve because God's grace has reached us and Christ has called us to follow Him.
Our service is a response to what God has done for us.

When we understand how much Jesus has given us, we begin to ask what we can give in return—not to earn His favor, but out of gratitude and love.

B. Every believer should ask, "Where can I help?"

Instead of asking only what the church can do for us, we begin asking what God might do through us. Could I help in children's ministry? Could I welcome guests? Could I pray for people? Could I visit someone who is homebound?
Could I help with an outreach event or encourage someone who is struggling?

Not everyone will serve in the same place. But every believer can look for ways to strengthen the body of Christ.

C. Serving is part of discipleship.

Jesus modeled servanthood. In John 13, He washed His disciples' feet and instructed them to follow His example.
Serving is not simply a church program. It is one way we become more like Jesus.

Illustration: A church volunteer may spend an hour preparing a classroom before children arrive. That task may seem ordinary, but the volunteer is helping create an environment where children can learn about the love of Christ.

Ordinary service can have an extraordinary spiritual purpose.

3. **The Mission Moves Forward When We Do Our Part**

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:58
Joshua could not fight the battle and simultaneously stand on the hill with Moses.
Moses could not lead the army while carrying out his own assignment. Each had a responsibility.
The work advanced as they fulfilled their respective roles.

A. Stop waiting for someone else.

It is easy to notice what needs to be done and assume someone else will do it.
But a servant asks a different question: “Lord, are You asking me to help?”
A church grows stronger when people stop waiting for a perfect volunteer, a new program, or someone else to take the initiative.

B. Faithfulness matters more than recognition.

Not every servant receives public applause. Not every contribution is acknowledged from the platform. But Colossians 3:23–24 reminds us to work wholeheartedly as serving the Lord.
When God is the One we serve, no faithful act is wasted.

C. We serve because people need Jesus.

The ultimate purpose of serving is not simply to fill volunteer schedules. It is to help the church fulfill its mission. We serve so children can learn Scripture, families can receive care, guests can encounter Christian hospitality, believers can grow as disciples, and people who are far from God can hear the gospel. Every assignment connects to a larger purpose.

Conclusion and Response

Church, imagine what could happen if every believer began asking, “Where can I serve?”
Imagine a church where no small group of volunteers has to carry every ministry. Imagine people discovering their gifts, stepping into opportunities, and working together to reach their community.

The question today is simple:

- Am I participating in God's work, or am I only watching?
- What gift or ability can I offer?
- What is one practical step I can take to serve?

You do not have to do everything. You simply have to be willing to do your part.
Closing challenge: “Lord, show me where I belong in Your work, and give me a willing heart to serve.”

Bridge to Week 2: Once we recognize that everyone has a part to play, we discover another truth: even the most faithful servants become tired. Next week, we will see why the church must not only serve together but also learn to hold one another up.