

2-13-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: Serving the Lord Every Day

Purpose: Show people the benefit of serving the Lord and provoke them to dedicate their life to serving Him.

Truth for Today: Mature believers serve the Lord every day.

Text: Romans 12:11

Topic: Serving, Ministry, Significance, Reward, Judgment

Series Title: The Big 10...the Path to Spiritual Maturity

Series Purpose: Provoke people to actively pursue spiritual maturity by applying the Big 10 causes for spiritual growth.

Serving the Lord Every Day

I. Introduction **ushers hand out big 10 flyer**

- A. Our mission is to 'Make disciples of Jesus Christ by Connecting people to God, Friends, Ministry, and the World.' That's what we do. The Big 10 is a way to practically experience it.
- B. Review series, The Big 10, The Path to Spiritual Maturity. It's about the power of daily disciplines and experiences proven to produce spiritual maturity. **Pic Big 10**
- C. Today we'll focus on a key word in our mission statement, 'Connecting to Ministry', i.e., #7, 'Find a place to serve God', i.e., use your abilities, experiences, and resources to serve the Lord. **[Ro. 12:11 (NLT)]** Never be lazy, but work hard and **serve the Lord enthusiastically.**]
- D. Title: Serving the Lord Every Day
- E. Truth for Today: Mature believers serve the Lord every day.

II. **Everyone wants to live a life of significance** (Tie in to serving the Lord)

- A. When we're young and ambitious, we want to succeed and accomplish a lot in life. We're pursuing dreams of houses, trucks, hobbies, and success on the job. When we get older, we start thinking about the significance of our life. What did we do that really mattered? Did I do anything that has eternal value, or did I spend all my life on things that won't last. **[Mark 8:36 (NLT)]** And what do you benefit if you **gain the whole world but lose your own soul?** We're motivated by more than going to heaven, it's our desire to hear the Lord say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'
- B. **Serving the Lord has eternal significance.** Paul, a servant of the Lord, **[2 Corinthians 4:17-18 (NIV)]** For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an **eternal glory** that far outweighs them all. **18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal]**
 - 1. **Video:** Joy and fulfillment in serving. **[Psalm 100:2 (ESV)]** **Serve the Lord with gladness!** Serving the Lord isn't a dreaded obligation but a joy.
 - 2. **Picture** Inside look, At COTR you'll find an opportunity for significance. E.g., **Picture** missionary in underground church. Olives and Pita bread for Christians who were former Muslims. We invested the \$ you gave in something significant.
- C. Contrast wasted lives, missed opportunity, and invested lives:

1. Wasted: a man molests young girls and spends his life in prison...a drug addict steals to survive and lives on the street...a gifted athlete that would rather party than go to the weight room. Everyone knows they wasted their life.
2. Missed opportunity: **Movie** the Natural, “What else is there”. God gave him an ability to play ball, a platform to tell people about Jesus like Tim Tebow but he missed the opportunity. Also, our passion for hobbies/ work can consume us by being driven to get the longest turkey beard; biggest bass at Lake Fork; best company; biggest gun collection and serving Jesus gets forgotten. Our challenge is to find a balance between following our and passions and serving the Lord. Better yet, let’s find a way to use our passion to serve the Lord like Tim Tebow.
3. Invested lives produce eternal value: Sending money for Bibles to reach Muslims in Pakistan; Teaching kids John 3:16 in KidZone; Feeding the hungry in a dump in Africa or a school in Haiti; Harriet Tubman, a Christian made 13 trips freeing slaves on the Underground Railroad; William Wilberforce, a Christian, used his political position as voice against slavery in the British empire.

III. God gives us abilities and resources. What we do with them is up to us.

- A. Context: Parable of the talents, a call to serve the Lord while He’s away.¹ **[Mt. 25:14–30 (NLT)]**...the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of **a man going on a long trip**. He called together his **servants** and **entrusted his money to them**...¹⁵ He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—**dividing it in proportion to their abilities**. He then left on his trip.
 1. Parables are stories from everyday life that represent spiritual principles. The man is Jesus; his servants are people, and the money represents the abilities, experiences, and resources He has entrusted to us. The message of the parable is we can use what the Lord has given us to serve Him or waste it.
- B. **Vs. 16** “The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. 17 The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. 18 But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money. 19 “After a long time their master returned ... and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. 20 The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’ 21 “The master was full of praise. **‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities.** Let’s celebrate together!’ 22 “The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’ 23 “The master said, **‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities.** Let’s celebrate together!’
 1. The Lord makes no distinction or comparison between the one who had 5 or 2. The issue is being faithful with what God has entrusted to us.
 2. In heaven, God will reward our faithful service. What we do in heaven depends on how we served the Lord on earth.

3. Vs. 24 “Then the servant with the one bag of silver...said...25 I was afraid I would lose your money, so **I hid it in the earth**...26 “But the master replied, ‘**You wicked and lazy servant**...27 why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’ 28...‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. 29 **To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away.** 30 Now **throw this useless servant into outer darkness**, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ (The wicked servant is not a true follower of Christ.² A 2nd application is a warning to Christians who waste life.
4. 2 invested their life and 1 wasted his. His wasted life is a warning against living a self-centered life. In our culture of hedonism, it’s hard to serve the Lord.
5. Summary: (1) God entrusts all people with abilities, experiences, and resources, expecting us to be good stewards. (2) God’s people will be rewarded for serving Him. (3) Those who fail to use what God has given them for His service will lose the opportunity for reward.

IV. Where/ how do I serve the Lord to find eternal significance and reward?

- A. Change how I see myself, i.e., see myself as a servant of the Lord. [James 1:1 (NIV) **James, a servant...of the Lord Jesus Christ**...] Therefore, when we go to work, it’s not just to make a living, it’s to serve the Lord. When we go shopping, it’s not just to buy stuff, it’s to serve the Lord, e.g., Atwoods. When we go to eat it’s not just to be fed and entertained but to serve the Lord, e.g., staff lunch at Reys Mexican in Hooks.
- B. Go thru open doors; seize opportunities. [1 Cor. 16:8–9 (NLT)]...I will be staying here at Ephesus until the Festival of Pentecost. 9 **There is a wide-open door for a great work here**, although many oppose me.] E.g., ask kids coach if you can lead in prayer.
- C. Follow your passion, e.g., Traci Walker loves to read and started a small group with prayer, Scripture, and discussion; P. Mike played pro football and offered to be chaplain of HS football teams. Cammie and Gisela started a 5k group for exercise that starts with a devotion and prayer. Serving the Lord in your passion/ sweet spot = joy!
- D. Let God do something good with your failures and struggles, [Ro. 8:28 (NLT)] And we know that **God causes everything to work together for the good** of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.] Karen Rayfield was a single mom living on the street. She turned her life around and started Grace House. Terry Bryant started MADD after her son was killed by a drunk driver.
- E. See a need and fill it just because you can, e.g., need KZ workers Sat night. If you love kids, volunteer once a month.
- F. Go through the Connect class and meet with the coaches.

V. Conclusion

- A. When our lives are over and we stand before God, what will He say to us? That depends on whether we used our abilities, experiences, and resources to serve the Lord. I want Him to say, ‘Well done...good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord.’ How about you?

VI. Response

A. Prayer: Lord help us faithfully serve you every day.

B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Barbieri, L. A., Jr. (1985). [Matthew](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 80). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
2. Blomberg, C. (1992). [Matthew](#) (Vol. 22, p. 374). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers. Blomberg, *Parables*, 214.