

“What’s In It For Me?”
1 Corinthians 9:15-18
Fractured: How God Restores a Broken Church
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You got your hands _____. With love and care, you planted the seeds and faithfully watered the flower pot and provided sunlight.

- But nothing has appeared above the soil.

Of course, once you’re convinced... you won’t experience the results you desire, you would quit altogether, right?

The planting and watering of the flower pot... serves as a great _____ of the Gospel-centric work that Jesus calls us to do.

- Why would you stop serving at church? After all, you love Jesus. (2 Cor 5:14-15; Rom 12:1)
 - Is it because you’re not feeling appreciated enough?
- Why would you stop praying for that someone’s salvation? And being a witness? After all, you love people.
 - Is it because they’re not accepting you? Or not thinking very highly of you?

Here are some real-world examples of _____ motivations in regard to serving: The faithful church volunteer, the factory worker, the parent with the wayward child, the one-sided marriage, the snow-shoveling neighbor, the caretaker for an aging parent, the employee with unquestionable integrity, the grandparent who keeps praying, the friend who’s always reaching out...

This leads me to the following questions:

*If my faithfulness depends on receiving something in return,
how faithful will I remain when there’s nothing coming back?*

*What if there’s a kind of reward that doesn’t depend on other
people’s appreciation, recognition, or visible results?*

Let’s learn all about this in our main passage. 1 Corinthians 9:15-18.

1. **VV 15-16...** Let your _____ motivate you more than your compensation. (2 Cor 5:14-15; Col 3:23-24)
 - Living a Gospel-centric life is NOT a life lived for personal benefit!
 - *Ask yourself:* Would I remain faithful to my calling if I wasn’t appreciated or rewarded?

TURN OVER

2. **V 17...** Let your _____ to serve God be driven by your obedience, not your feelings.

- Your responsibility remains regardless of whether you receive a personal reward or not.
- *Ask yourself:* In the past, have my feelings determined whether or not I would continue to serve in a particular area in ministry? (Jn 14:15; 1 Cor 4:2)

3. **V 18...** Discover the _____ of serving Jesus without expecting anything in return.

- Paul found ultimate satisfaction in offering the Gospel freely, without insisting on compensation.
- *Ask yourself:* Can I relate to experiencing the sheer joy and fulfillment in simply knowing that I'm doing what Jesus called me to do? (Matt 6:3-4; Heb 6:10)

All of this starts with experiencing a supernatural revelation of the _____ of God!

- We are just – in the most natural way - responding to the overwhelming, never ending, reckless love of God! (Rom 5:1-11)
- It all starts with His grace → then, we respond in faith → then, we give our lives in service to Him.
- Why? What's our motivation? Is it compensation? Recognition? Accolades? No. Our motivation is HIM!

**HE IS OUR REWARD! HIS LOVE IS BETTER THAN LIFE ITSELF (PSA 63:1-5)
AND IT TRANSFORMS US INTO WITNESSES AND DISCIPLES!**

CALLS-TO-ACTION AND GOING DEEPER

Here are some practical, measurable ways to apply Paul's teaching. Take the time to really think through these ways and write down your thoughts so you have some great things to share with your Growth Group, or your family/friends/coworkers/neighbors/schoolmates this week.

1. **Examine your motives.** What *really* motivates you to serve Jesus? Obligation, appreciation, recognition, reward...?
 - a. Think about this and write down your thoughts. _____
2. **Remember your calling.** Identify one responsibility God has entrusted to you and recommit yourself to fulfilling it.
 - a. What is that ONE responsibility? _____
3. **Serve without applause.** Do something meaningful for someone without telling anyone or expecting recognition.
 - a. Write down that meaningful act of service. _____
4. **Choose obedience over feelings.** Follow through on what God has called you to, even if you don't feel motivated.
 - a. What specifically has He called you to do? Why is it hard to follow through? _____
5. **Celebrate the honor and privilege it is for you to serve Him in your Gospel/life-mission!** Thank Jesus daily this week for the opportunity to participate in His work, regardless of the results.
 - a. Describe in detail what your personalized Gospel/life mission is. _____