

05 | Why Should We?

FULFILLING YOUR CALLING Series

Welcome to the last teaching of the series, and today's title is "Why Should We?" Well, let's go back to Ephesians 2:10, and it says this, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." We should walk in them. Why should we walk in the works that God has prepared beforehand? Well, let's start with Galatians 2:20, it says, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Notice when you are in Christ now you have to recognize that you have been crucified with Christ. The old you, it's dead. It's no longer here. It was crucified and buried with Christ. Now the new life that you have is no longer your own life, but it's actually Christ living in you. Think about that. The life that I live is no longer mine, but it's Christ who lives in me. Well, what do you think Christ wants to do? What did Christ do while He was here on Earth? He went about preaching, and teaching, and ministering, and bringing healing, and wholeness, and restoration. Well, it is the same Christ living in you.

So, guess what? Your life is going to look like Christ living in you. That's what our lives are supposed to look like because our old life, our way of being without Christ, that was buried. But now this new life is Christ living in me. And now we live this life in the flesh, we're still in the flesh, but we live it by faith in God who loved me and gave Himself for me. So, the life that we live now is no longer our life, we lost that one, but the life that we live is now Christ living in us. That is why we should. Matthew 6:33, you probably know this, it's one of my favorites, but it's not just a good Christian Bible verse, it is calling us to a response, it's calling us to an action. Matthew 6:33 says, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." This was Jesus talking to His disciples and to the crowds, and He was saying, Listen, your job is to seek first the Kingdom of God. Your job is to first and primarily and foremost, seek after what God is after. Seek after His righteousness. His way of being right. Seek after Him, His kingdom. And then all the things that others who have no God have to work for and exchange their lives for, is that God will add these to you because your priorities are in the right place. What is your first priority? Seeking the Kingdom of God, and seeking the Kingdom so that you find the Kingdom. Seeking His ways so that you find His way. So, our lives are not just about seeking something we'll never find. Have you ever given up on finding keys? I have. You're like, I have no idea what happened to them. I saw it and saw

it, and I gave up because I came to the realization that I'm not going to find them. Well, the kingdom of God is not like that. You seek and you find, and the more you seek, the more you find, the more you find of who He is and the more you find out about the plan that He's called you to. So, seeking first is a priority in our lives because we won't be able to walk in what we should walk in, the works that He's prepared for us, if we're not seeking God to know His kingdom and His ways and what He's prepared for us.

Now, you know, this is a little bit sobering, but do you know that we will be held accountable for the things that God prepared beforehand for us? We will be held accountable. We're not saved by works, we already settled that a couple of teachings ago. We were saved by faith, through grace, but we were saved, now for works. And we will be held accountable for those works. Romans 14:10-12 says this, "But as for you, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or you as well, why do you regard your brother or sister with contempt?" He's saying you're looking in and judging other people, but the Bible's bringing us to the real point, which is this, "For we will all appear before the judgment seat of God." In other words, don't worry about your brother and sister. They're going to have to appear before God. But it's also a reminder, but you're going to have to appear before God. Verse 11, "For it is written as I live, says the Lord to me, every knee will bow and every tongue will give praise to God." Listen to verse 12, "So then

each one of us will give an account of himself to God." We will give an account of ourselves to God. I want Him to look at me on that day, and this has been the cry of my heart, I've said, "Lord, I genuinely want You to look at me and say, 'You did what I asked you to do. You left nothing on the table. You went for it. You got up when you fell. And you got up again when you fell again. But you kept pursuing the plans that I had for you. And you completed what I had in store.'" "As I live every knee will bow, every tongue will give praise to God, and each one of us will give an account of himself to God." There won't be anybody there that you can say, "Well, it was their fault." My pastor didn't, or my spouse didn't, or my children. Nope. We get to give an account of ourselves to God of why we did or didn't do the things that He prepared beforehand for us to do.

Did you know also that there's rewards? We don't often talk about rewards because we don't live this life for God, for reward, but God wanted us to know that there are rewards. Listen to 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day," what day? The day that we are before God, "the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work." So, all these things that we do, it will be tested by fire, "of what sort it is." That's what the fire will

do. It will bring out what was this work made out of? Verse 14, "If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward." That means that that work was, yes, built on the foundation of Christ, but what was built was something that God prepared beforehand, so therefore it endures. Psalm 127 says, "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it." In other words, you can still build works that have nothing to do with God, but it won't remain. And on that Day, those works that were not built because that's what God had prepared. Those will become the hay, and the wood, and the fire will poof, cause it to dissipate. Only those things, the works that we did that were the works that God prepared beforehand, those were the works that will not only endure, but he will receive a reward. I don't know what that reward looks like, I have some thoughts, but I do think, wow, Lord, that's so amazing that though we're not saved because the works we'll enter into heaven because of Jesus. But yet there's even rewards for eternity because of what we did here on Earth. That's pretty amazing. Verse 15, "If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." So, notice again, your salvation is not because you completed all these works, you'll be saved but you will suffer a loss. So, you know, again, I have some thoughts on what that could be, but nevertheless, what it is saying is we will come before God, we will give account for ourselves, and based on the works that we did, whether they were of ourselves or they

were of God, they will either stand and then we receive a reward or they will be burned up and we receive a loss. Though we will still enter into heaven because salvation is not by works. So, there is a reward. Now listen to Revelation 22:12, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." Towards the end of the whole Bible, Jesus says, "Behold, I'm coming quickly and my reward is with me to give to everyone according to his work." You and I will be rewarded according to our work. I don't know what those rewards are, but I can tell you this, there will be great delight with whatever reward it is that God is giving to us. Isn't that awesome? I look forward to finding out what those rewards are, though. I don't do them for rewards. It's like that extra treat that God says, I've got everything in mind, I'm even going to delight you with rewards because you are doing what matters most to me. You're following what I've prepared for you.

Now, why else should we do the works that God has prepared beforehand? Again, this is a sobering thought, but one of the reasons why we should is because eternity is a long time. Eternity is a long time. So you and I are saved. Our eternity is secure. But listen to John 5:24, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life." So notice it's the person who believes in Jesus who passes on into everlasting life, and doesn't come into

judgment. But for those who don't believe in Jesus, they will come into judgment. Now, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 explains it a little bit more. It says this beginning in verse seven, "When the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God, and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus." Verse nine, listen to this, "These people will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." "These people will pay the penalty of eternal destruction." You know, destruction is bad enough, but destruction for eternity, I don't know of anything worse. I don't think there is. There is nothing worse than eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord. Remember, God never intended for man to be away from the presence of God, and when man sinned, God set in motion the plan of salvation so that man could, even, while being here on Earth, still subject to sin, to being in the world, he could still have the Holy Spirit inside of him, dwelling in, abiding in us, the Spirit of God communing with us. But then when we are in heaven for eternity, not just communing with Him, but being in his presence face to face, how beautiful that is. But for those who don't believe in Jesus, those who refuse Jesus, it says that these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction because they will be removed from the very presence of God and from the glory of His power. When you think about eternity and how long it is, I don't know about you, but it compels me to

not take people's destinies lightly. To not just casually think about my neighbors, like, "Well, I wonder where they're going to be." No, eternity is a long time. Lord, help me to convey the gospel. Help me to show them that You're real. You know, we're not responsible for every person making Jesus Lord. People have decisions to make, but our responsibility is to be the ambassadors who live the life of Christ, compelling people to be reconciled to God. That's our part. That is our part.

Why else should we walk in these things that God has prepared beforehand? Well, I'll tell you why. Because we're it. We're it people. There is no plan B. You and I are the ones that are left to carry out this assignment. I want to remind you of Mark, chapter 16. I want to read to you. Versus 15 through 20. And this is Jesus speaking. And He said to his disciples, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes in his baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." He who does not believe will be, for eternal destruction, apart from God's presence. So, He said, you go everywhere and tell them, preach the gospel, the good news. "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." So, Jesus is saying, when you go out, you're not just going out with the gospel, you're

going out with the evidence of the gospel that brings restoration and evidence of who God is right on the spot. He said, you're called to do the works that I did. You go out and you do what I did, heal the sick and so forth. Verse 19, "So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into Heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God." He was received into heaven, He had fulfilled His part, He had done everything that God had prepared for Him to do, and now He was taken up into Heaven, and He is seated at the right hand of God. But notice His disciples didn't sit down. No, verse 20 says. "And they went out." He sat down. They went out. Jesus is seated at the right hand of God, we go out. Verse 20, "And they went out and preached everywhere." They proclaimed the good news to every person, everywhere. And "The Lord was working with them and confirming the gospel," confirming the message, confirming the Word, "through the accompanying signs." So why should we work? Why should we do the things that God has prepared beforehand? Because, Jesus is seated, and He has passed on the baton to us. If we don't do it, it doesn't get done. This is how God instituted the reconciliation of man to God, that He would use human beings who would no longer live their own lives, but the life that they would live would be Christ living in them, with the values, and the pursuits that are in Christ, that we would be yielded to Him, to live this life, to become the ambassadors that would pursue people, and compel them to come to Christ. Compel them to be reconciled to God. There is no plan B. It

is human beings who are filled with the Holy Spirit, who have made Jesus Lord, going out and sharing with others the good news, and Jesus said, but I'll accompany the good news with the signs that cause them to recognize, you don't just come with the story. You come with truth, and a powerful truth.

I want to close with Romans, chapter ten. It's a beautiful passage. Romans 10:11-15, "For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him." I want to stop there for just a moment. "Whoever believes in Him," whoever, wherever, whatever they've done, wherever they are today, "whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame." In other words, they won't be separated from the presence of God into eternal destruction. No, they will come into the very presence of God for eternity. And then it goes on to say there's no distinction between Jew or Greek. In other words, God's saying, there is no group that I'm leaving out. There is no group that I'm leaving out. That's why Jesus says go everywhere. Go into all the world because there's no group that I'm ignoring. There's no group that I'm not calling them to myself. Every group, every people group, every nation, every tribe, every person. He's saying no, I'm after them. I'm after them. There's no distinction in My heart, whether they're rich or poor, what country they're from, what language they speak, their background. I am abounding in riches to all

who call on Him. That's the qualifier. Whoever you are, if you call on Him, He is abounding in riches towards you. Verse 13, "For 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" Verse 14, "How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? How are they to believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? But how are they to preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!'" I want to go back to verse 14. How are the people groups, how are the different people all over the world going to call on Him if they don't even know about Him? They can't call on Him if they haven't believed in Him. But how are they going to believe in Him if they haven't heard that there's even a Jesus who saves, who delivers, who heals, who restores, who has eternal life? How are they going to believe if they haven't even heard about who He is? Who He truly is? In our nation there are churches everywhere. That doesn't mean that people have actually heard who Jesus is. Don't assume most people know who Jesus is, if they truly knew who Jesus was, He's irresistible. The majority of them would come to Him. They need to hear who Jesus is. They need to see who Jesus is. But how will they believe on whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? How will people hear and learn about Jesus unless there's preaching? And preaching, you know, don't think of the style like you stand up on a platform or you go out with your Bible and you thump it and you raised it up in the air

and you tell people "you're all condemned." No, no. Preaching just means proclaiming the truth. Proclaiming. But not just the truth. It's proclaiming the good news. The good news, the truth of the good news. How will they hear without a preacher? How will your neighborhood hear who Jesus is and how God wants to be reconciled to them without you declaring who Jesus is and declaring the heart of God? How will your own family know if they haven't heard who Jesus is? How will they hear without a preacher? But how are they to preach unless they are sent? You and I have been sent.

Part of why we're doing these series and these teachings is to say, no, no, no, listen, you're sent. God has sent you as an ambassador everywhere you go, to be a light that so shines before men that they glorify God because they recognize there's a God in heaven. You have been sent so that people can hear who Jesus truly is, so that they can believe who Jesus truly is, so that they can call on Him. And when they call on Him, regardless of who they are, the background, the ethnicity, the financial level, whoever calls on Him will be saved. Not just now, but for eternity. So much rides on us doing the works that God prepared beforehand that we should do. So much depends on that, because God left us to do these things, and these works become the light that speaks of who God is, and it causes people to be able to be reconciled to God. That's why this is a holy calling. It's not just, "Hey, what's your career? What's this? And you have a calling."

No, this is a holy calling. It is you surrendering to a calling to say, "God, use me to plead with others to be reconciled." And the end of verse 15, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!" How beautiful. How beautiful are the feet? You know, we don't normally think, oh, feet are beautiful. It's probably not a body part that we think that's just a beautiful body part. No, you think feet are kind of nasty, and smelly, and you try to cover them up and do the best you can with them, right? But the Bible says, oh, the feet that go where people are to share the good news of God reconciling them to Himself, those are beautiful feet. Those are magnificent feet, that they would actually walk in the paths that mean so much to God, that they would actually walk and do the things that God prepared beforehand so that people's lives are impacted. We are not saved by works. We were created for good works that we should walk in them because it will affect the eternity of many others. We don't receive that with this pressure and a heavy burden, but we should receive it soberly. It should call our attention to say, Lord, I need to refocus my priorities, and I need to focus on what matters most to You, and that is relationship with people. This is why we do all that we do. This is why God has called us to fulfill our plan. To fulfill the plan that He has for us, I should say, because His heart is to be reconciled, to be in relationship and fellowship with people, not just here on Earth, but for never ending, for eternity. You and I are it. Let's do this.