

Shaped for Serving God

Purpose #4

The Purpose Driven Life - Part 5

Welcome back to 40 Days of Purpose.

Ephesians 2:20 We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

1. What matters is not how long you live, but how you live. What matters is not the duration of your life, but the donation of your life. We're created to serve, saved to serve, gifted to serve, and commanded to serve God. God uses five things to shape you:

- **S**piritual gifts,
- **H**ear—what do you want to serve? How would you like to serve?
- **A**bilities—what abilities do you have that you can use for others?
- **P**ersonality—are you more of an extrovert or introvert? Are you more a doer or relater?
- **E**xperiences—God uses especially your painful experiences.

2. Those five things make you different from anybody else in the world.

1 Peter 4:10 Each of us should use whatever gift he's received to serve one another.

3. Your talents are not for your benefit. Remember the first line in the Purpose Driven book? It's not about you.

DAY 1: I serve God by serving others.

4. The Bible calls this "ministry". A minister is not someone wearing a funny collar! The Bible says every believer is a minister. Not every believer is a pastor, but every believer is a minister. Ministry is helping someone in the name of God. In the Bible the word "servant" and "minister" are the same word.

5. God not only created us for service, He gave us a model. He came to earth and said, "This is how you serve. Watch Me." You were created to be like Christ. What did Christ do on earth? He served.

Matt. 20:28 Jesus said, "Your attitude must be like My own, for I did not come to be served, but to serve."

6. Jesus tells a parable about some who served and others who did not serve. He tells the ones who served people this astounding truth.

Matthew 25:40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

7. Serving people, and thereby serving God lifts our everyday serving to the highest purpose.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Serving like Jesus means being available. Time.

Matt. 20:30-32 Two blind men shouted, "Lord, have mercy on us!" Jesus stopped and called them. "What do you want me to do for you?"

1. Jesus stopped. If you want to be used by God you must be willing to be interrupted. A lot of Jesus' ministry involved interruptions--the blind man, the lame man, sick people, the paralyzed man, the dead child...all were interruptions. People like to follow the steps of Jesus. You ought to follow the stops.

Prov. 3:28 Never tell your neighbors to wait until tomorrow if you can help them now.

2. Servants don't procrastinate. They say, "I'm in!" John Wesley's motto was, "Do all the good you can by all the means you can by all the ways you can in all the places you can at all the times you can to all the people you can as long as you can." To serve God you must be available. What keeps you unavailable?

3. People are searching for self-worth and significance. They look in all the wrong places! You don't get self-worth from success or status. You don't get self-worth from sex or a salary. You get self-esteem from service.

Mark 8:35 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? ³⁷ Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

4. What keeps us from serving like Jesus?

- Self-centeredness.

Phil. 2:4 Forget yourself long enough to lend a helping hand.

5. I've got my agenda, my plans, my goals. You know what the problem is? We hang this ("do not disturb sign") on the door of our heart.

- Perfectionism.

Eccl. 11:4 Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap.

6. One paraphrase has this, "If you wait for perfect conditions, you'll never get anything done."

- Materialism.

Luke 16:13 "No servant can serve two masters. You cannot serve both God and money."

7. The most important decision you're going to have to make in life once you become a believer is, "Will I be a kingdom-builder or a wealth-builder, a people builder or a home-builder? You won't take wealth with you to heaven, but you will take your character. What keeps people from serving?

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 3: Serving means being grateful. Attitude.

Psalm 100:2 Serve the Lord with gladness.

1. We serve God, not with a sense of duty, but with a sense of delight. We serve Him with gratefulness because He's given life to us through Jesus Christ. He saved us! If He never did anything else for us, that is enough to be grateful for the rest of our lives to serve Him.

2 Tim. 1:9 It is He who saved us and chose us for His holy work not because we deserved it but because that was His plan.

3. What keeps us from serving with gratitude?

- Critical heart.

4. We torpedo our own attitude with a critical heart.

Rom. 14:4 Who are you to criticize someone else's servant? The Lord will determine whether His servant has been successful.

5. We're all *His* servants. What matters is His opinion, not my opinion. We're on the same team.

- Wrong motivations.

Matt. 6:1 When you do good, don't show off. If you do, you won't get a reward from your Father in heaven.

6. Though we like to believe that we are serving as the Good Samaritan, we will inevitably have to face that we also serve to get something out of it for ourselves.

7. Self-promotion and servant hood don't mix. Service can be self-serving. We serve to get others to like us. We serve to be respected or appreciated. We serve to validate ourselves or have others validate us. We serve as sort of a bargaining chip with God..."God, I'll serve and You take care of me." We serve thinking we're noble.

8. That's the struggle of service. I have wrong motivations and you have them. How do you know if you have a wrong motivation? Simple: grumbling or gratitude?

9. If you want to learn to serve like Jesus, you have to learn to serve gratefully with a generous heart.

10. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: Serving like Jesus means being faithful. Perseverance.

1 Cor. 4:2 The one thing required of servants is that they be faithful.

1. At the end of Jesus' ministry on earth, He said...

John 17:4 "I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work You gave me to do."

2. I want you to be able to say that when you get to heaven-you completed the work God gave you to do. Jesus didn't give up. You retire from work but you never retire from service. What motivates us to stay faithful?

a. Being grateful for all the past that God's forgiven in our lives. If God never did another thing for me, I owe Him the rest of my life for what He's already done for me.

b. Future rewards. He said, "You'll be rewarded forever for what you do here on earth."

c. What we do matters. Be honest, most of what we do in life isn't going to matter next week much less in eternity. Any time you're serving in Jesus' name, no matter how small, it matters.

1 Cor. 15:58 Throw yourselves into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for Him is a waste of time or effort.

3. With God there's no **little** service. He said, "If you give a cup of cold water in my name to a child that counts."

4. To learn to be a servant of God, you must learn the difference between **significance** and **prominence**. Ears are prominent, but I could lose my ears and still live. While they're prominent they're not significant. On the other hand, my heart is not prominent, but if I lost it I'd be dead.

5. People think if something is given visibility it's important. Not true. The parts of your body you don't see are more important than the parts you do see! The same is true in the Body of Christ. With our limited perspective we can't see how small acts have big impact!

6. Two teen boys came to church but couldn't find seats. They decided to leave. An usher said, "I'll find you seats." That night both boys became Christians. One was Billy Graham who has led tens of millions of people to Christ. Do you think that usher is going to get any credit in heaven? I'll say! We have no idea of the significance of small acts. Real servants do every task with equal dedication because they know it all matters.

7. You do not attend church to sit and soak. It is foolhardy to believe that you can become mature like Christ without serving like Christ.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: Serving for what will outlast you

1. When you boil it all down, you can do two things with your life...you can fritter it away on trivia or you can invest it.

The best use of life is to invest it in that which is going to outlast it.

2. It's going to pay dividends over the long haul. Not every investment here on earth pays off. All we need to do is check out how your retirement accounts fared in 2022.

3. One day God will ask you, "What did you do with what I gave you, the talents, the abilities, the background, the experiences?" Will you respond with, "God, I was a busy with my plans? I never got around to serving You."

Heb. 6:10 He will not forget how hard you've worked for Him and how you've shown your love to Him by caring for other Christians.

4. On earth they give awards for 10 years of faithful service? In heaven you're going to get eternal rewards.

Matt. 25:21 "Well done good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things so; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness."

5. More than anything else I want God to be able to hear God tell you, "Well done! You did what I put you here on earth to do. You worshiped me, you loved people well, you grew in character to be like Christ, and you served Me. Well done! Come on in and enjoy eternity and all the rewards I've planned for you."

6. Is God going to be able to say, "You spent your life serving Me. Well done!"?

7. Is there a time in your schedule where you're giving back unselfishly, or are you too busy? Napoleon pointed at a map of China and said, "There lies a sleeping giant. If it ever wakes up it will shake the world." I look at the Pacific family and I think, "There is a sleeping giant. If everybody who came here served, what kind of spiritual chain reaction would we see in Orange Co.?"

8. I make no apology in saying to you that the most important thing you'll ever do with your life is serve God in ministry. It's far more important than your career and your hobbies. It's more important than trinkets and trophies. They won't last. But this will. You were put here on earth to make a difference by serving.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?