

You Were Shaped for Serving God

2 Corinthians 6: 4-10

3-28-04

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A little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, was running to church as fast as she could, trying not to be late for Bible class. As she ran she prayed, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!" While she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her clothes dirty and tearing her dress. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again. As she ran she once again began to pray, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! But please don't shove me either!"

Thankfully the Lord will not shove us into ministry!

This is our 4th purpose for our life and it's called our "ministry" or service. You shaped to serve God. We will look at 4 reasons why we all are called to minister. Most people when they hear the word "ministry" they often think of pastors, missionaries, or someone who works or serves the "church" – the bible corrects our thinking and tells us otherwise. Rick Warren points out from scripture that you and I were:

Created to serve God
Saved to serve God
Called to serve God
Commanded to serve God

You see, when you are a child of God, each of us are called to ministry, and each of us are called to serve. We were created to serve. But, if you are a child of the world, it's just the opposite "it's all about me, how I can serve myself, my needs, or who will serve me! That is why those without Jesus wander through life aimlessly and without a purpose! They ask and do not receive, they seek and do not find, they knock, but the wrongs doors open!

Turn to 1 Peter 2:9

But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are a kingdom of priests, God's holy nation, his very own possession. This is so you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

You are chosen
You are a priest
You are to be holy
You are God's possession

We didn't wake up one morning and Say "Gee, I want to follow Jesus".

This is our 1st reason for ministry

Why? You were created by God so you can show the goodness of God by serving others. When you serve others you are serving God!

Did God save us to be asleep or to serve?

As you continue this week to read the “Purpose Driven Life”, Rick Warren will help you better understand what on earth am I here for.

The 2nd reason for ministry is:

- We were saved to serve God!

What does it mean “we are saved” – doesn’t that sound smug or snooty? The word “saved” or “salvation” means we were saved or delivered from our sins.

Turn 2 Tim 1:9

Here Paul writes to young Timothy, stating

It is God who saved us and chose us to live a holy life. He did this not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan long before the world began — to show his love and kindness to us through Christ Jesus. NLT

The bible says we didn’t deserve it, but it was God purpose and plan for us. Was it free? N O – it cost Jesus his life! Jesus told his disciples that

“He came to seek and save that which was lost, and give his life as a ransom for many”

He came looking for you – just like in the Garden after Adam & Eve sinned, they hid, but God came looking and asked “Adam where are you”. Each of us is hidden in sin but Jesus knows it, sees it and came to deliver us from it! He did this by the cross. Jesus said in John 6:40

“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

If you have seen the passion, you will have a better understanding of God’s love and how much Jesus suffered (*paschein*) to save us. Rick Warren writes “we don’t serve God out of guilt or even duty, but out of joy, and deep gratitude for what he has done for us”.

When Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law she immediately began to serve or wait on them. When Jesus healed the man with leprosy, he went to spoke freely about Jesus. When Jesus healed the man with the legion of demons, the man begged Jesus to let him go with him.

The 3rd reason for ministry is:

- We are called to serve God!

The Greek word used here is *klesis* (klay'-sis) which is God's invitation to man (you & me) to accept the benefits of salvation. God's calling for all to be saved comes with the call to serve.

The Lord did not call you to salvation, call you to receive the gift, call you to the cross for you to sleep in you salvation! He called you to serve.

Whenever you serve others you are serving the Lord –

In China, they welcome the new believers to the church by saying “Jesus now has a new pair of eyes to see with, new ears to listen with, new hands to help with, and a new heart to love with”.

Eyes to see with – The Lord will open your eyes to see the need of others.

Ears to hear with – The Lord will open your ears to hear & understand the need.

Hand to help with – The Lord wants your hands to heal the needs of others.

Heart to love with – The Lord wants your heart to show his love to others through you.

Turn to Matt 25: 31 - 46

In this week's reading, Rick Warren will talk tell you about how you are “shaped” for serving God. The acrostic is SHAPE

S	Spiritual abilities	Given only to believers to serve.
H	Heart	Passion & desire to serve.
A	Abilities	What you are good at to serve.
P	Personality	How and where you use your spiritual gifts and ability
E	Experience	God uses your experiences to serve others.

[Did God save us to sleep or to serve?](#)

The 4th reason for ministry is:

- We are commanded to serve God

We must look to Jesus for our example. His life was one of giving and serving. It was one of willingness and submission. The apostle Paul was another who followed Christ's example. Paul tells us his ministry to others.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 6:4-10

Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything. NIV

Paul tells us how to serve no matter what the circumstances are –

“in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God.

Jesus was understanding and patient with the disciples and he is with each of us!

Jesus modeled love in everything he did.

Jesus spoke the very words of God.

Jesus' ministry was in the power of God.

Jesus' attitude was one of serving.

Jesus' attitude of love

Turn to John 13:1 -17

Here was love in action. Jesus taught that spiritual maturity is never an end in itself. Maturity is for ministry. We grow up to give out. Just as in little children, they require much attention; they take in so much and give out so little. In this simple act of humility, Jesus was showing them the extent of his love and servitude – Here was God in human flesh bending down, taking upon the lowest servants job in the house. He was washing the feet of his creation – the creation that would reject him, deny him, mock and eventually crucify him.

Yet his love for his disciples, who represented the world in which he would die for would to learn a great lesson – in verse 16 he says

“I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them”. NIV

In a small Jewish town in Russia, there is a rabbi who disappears each Friday morning for several hours. His devoted disciples boast that during those hours their rabbi goes up to heaven and talks to God.

A stranger moves into town, and he's skeptical about all this, so he decides to check things out. He hides and watches. The rabbi gets up in the morning, says his prayers, and then dresses in peasant clothes. He grabs an axe, goes off into the woods, and cuts some firewood, which he then hauls to a shack on the outskirts of the village. There an old woman and her sick son live. He leaves them the wood, enough for a week, then sneaks back home.

Having observed the rabbi's actions, the newcomer stays on in the village and becomes his disciple. And whenever he hears one of the villagers say "On Friday morning our rabbi ascends all the way top heaven," the newcomer quietly adds, "If not higher."

The nature of ministry is service.

The motive for ministry is love.

The measure of ministry is sacrifice.

The authority of ministry is submission.

The purpose of ministry is the glory of God.

The tools of ministry are the Word of God and prayer.

The privilege of ministry is growth.

The power of ministry is the Holy Spirit, and the model of ministry is Jesus Christ

This week as you discover your 4th purpose for your life – remember that

You were created to serve God.

You saved to serve God.

You are called to serve God.

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