

Accepting Your Assignment Series

October 13, 2021

Scripture: Genesis 2:15, Ephesians 2:10

Genesis 2:15

15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

Ephesians 2:10

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Summary: Serving is to be at the core of our lives- that's what we were created for.

Accepting Your Assignment

Are you concerned more with what you receive from something or with what you can contribute to something?

Is coming to church a matter of getting something or giving something?

Is going to school a matter of getting something or giving something?

Is going to work a matter of getting something or giving something?

I know what many of you might say, because of the environment, which we are in, here, today.

But what do you think would be the reality, out there, away from here?

What might you say, there? What might others say out there?

I think it's safe to say that many of us are more concerned with consuming and using resources and taking up space, than we are with making a difference with our lives.

Yet, at the very beginning, God gave us all our marching orders and they had to do with giving, rather than getting.

Genesis 2:15- we are here to tend and keep the garden.

15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

We are here to put into and to build. That is the instruction given at the very beginning, once creation was fully in place and when Adam and Eve received their first instruction from God.

This defines, then, your fourth purpose in life, or the fourth purpose for your life.

You were created to worship God.

You were created to belong to God's family.

You were created to grow more and more mature within God's family.

And, you were created to minister or to serve, not to consume and to use.

You were created to add to life on earth, not just take from it!

This might come as a surprise to you because what we see around us is people very much concerned with what they are getting from life. What we see is people wound up about getting value and stuff, and not being taken advantage of, and the like.

But what we see is not what comes from the heart of God.

1. You were created to serve God: Ephesians 2:10b- *created in Christ Jesus unto good works*

These good deeds are your service.

Whenever you serve others in any way, you are actually serving God, and this is very pleasing to God.

Matthew 25:31-46

Many see that doing good for others is the ultimate test and responsibility for the Christian. Upon this passage, in fact, entire theologies are based, including that of the Salvation Army, and other churches with a huge social responsibility component to their church work. They are right, in that this is important to God and needs to be for us. You were placed here to serve God, through your involvement with people.

2. You were saved to serve God. 2 Timothy 1:9-

9Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

God redeemed you so you could do his holy work. You were saved so you could serve- so God had more people on earth doing the good things He wants done. As Christians, we must take this responsibility seriously. We tend to hide from issues and from opportunities and feel that it's up to someone else to do them, but we cannot take that approach.

Paul encourages us, in Galatians 6:10- to do good when we have the opportunity.

10As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Notice how Jesus spoke of this:

Luke 10:30- 32

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

Some thought it was someone else's job to do and, besides, they had important other things to do. But how did Jesus feel about this? How does he feel about this today? Are you able to do something good for others? Do you have opportunity, or education, or money, or time to do things for others? Then do them. Don't sit around thinking you have done what you can do.

Jesus paid dearly for your salvation so you could do good things for others-

1 Corinthians 6:20

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Because of this, offer yourself in whatever way he chooses for you- offer yourself as a living sacrifice-

Romans.12:1

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your* reasonable service.

You were saved so you could do good things.

It might appear that you're doing exactly the same things as someone who is not a believer, but you're not. If you do the 'same things', remember that you're doing them with the activity of God's Holy Spirit in you, and that takes the 'doing' to a higher level than is possible for others. Never forget that the opportunity for this came at the incredible cost of Christ's life.

Your ministry is to serve others. Why aren't you simply taken to the kingdom of God when you are converted and baptized? Because, in this fallen world, God intends to use you for his goals. God has a ministry or service for you in his church and a mission for you in the world.

3. You are called to serve God. So this puts a lot of emphasis on this matter of serving. We weren't born or saved or called to get for ourselves. Every Christian is called to service. No matter what your job or career or hobby, when you were called, you were called to 'full-time Christian service'. That is not just something for those called to pastoral ministry or to missionary work, and the like.

Romans 7:4 tells us that we are to produce good deeds or works for God.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

How much of the time are you being useful in the service of God? In reality, every time someone new is called and responds to that call, God gains an additional pair of eyes, ears, arms, legs, and all the other parts of a body for doing his work in the world of that person. Each new person called adds to the hearts that are available to love people for God and who are able to be channels of God's grace to this suffering world.

**Your service is desperately needed in the body of Christ- 1 Corinthians 12:27
27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.**

No one is indispensable. Each of us is necessary and wanted. God has no unwanted children. Each of us has a role to play and I want to encourage you to become active- and more active in your service here and outside the doors of this building.

Ephesians 4:11-13

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Those of us with pastoral gifting are supposed to really be using that to help you become better prepared to serve and do the work of the church. Sometimes we've had this all upside down and backwards and we've looked at the pastor as the one who is supposed to be visiting everyone and teaching everyone, and the like.

4. You are commanded to serve God. Jesus' example is clear-

Matthew 20:28

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

See how and why he came, and take your cue from him. Service is not optional and something to be added to our schedule if we have time. Service is the heart of the Christian life and is the priority, as it was for Jesus. Jesus said we are to 'serve' and to 'give'- this is what he did and this is what we must do, too.

Many people go out looking for a church that meets their needs and blesses them/me. There is an expectation that others will serve us. But God wants us to be servers. I can tell you from experience, as can many others, that when you serve, you get far more from the experience than you give. The way to receive is to give!

Conclusion

In four ways, you have been brought to a time of decision for serving. You were created to serve, saved to serve, called to serve, and are commanded to serve. That's very strong propulsion toward serving, isn't it? The mature Jesus follower doesn't ask, "Who's going to meet my needs?" The mature Jesus follower asks, "Whose needs can I meet?"

As you go out from here today, I want you to ask that question, as well as each day this week. Ask yourself, "Whose needs can I meet today?" Be certain that God will put the opportunities before you. They might be in your family. They might be at your work place, or school. You might not be able to meet all the need, but you will be able to contribute toward that need. I guarantee you that as you make this your focus for the week, you will know blessings, yourself, that far exceed what you can imagine right now. I guarantee you that you will come back next week with stories to tell about how you saw God working through you to improve the life of someone whose life crossed yours this week.