

Serving Others

Scripture: Ephesians 5:15-17

Ephesians 5:15-17 (NIV)

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,
¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.
¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

The Message (MSG) ¹¹⁻¹⁶ Don't waste your time on useless work, mere busywork, the barren pursuits of darkness. Expose these things for the sham they are. It's a scandal when people waste their lives on things they must do in the darkness where no one will see. Rip the cover off those frauds and see how attractive they look in the light of Christ.

Wake up from your sleep,
Climb out of your coffins;
Christ will show you the light!

So watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times!

¹⁷ Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants.

Have you ever asked yourself the question: "What could I possibly do if I gave it my very best?"

If you are emotionally stuck in the same place – **Humble yourself**, and **Stop blaming God** or others – it won't help you get out of your situation.

Phil 2:2² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. (Unity throughout the body)

When we are like minded, united in the body –

- We don't have a critical tongue
- We have a desire to live in the Body
- We have a great love and compassion for serving the lost (They are not just people we pray for) and hope someone else will do the work.
- We have a compassion or desire to disciple and mentor others in need

John 15:5 (NIV)⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

What does it mean to remain in Christ?

1. Believing that He is God's son – **1 John 4:15**¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God.
2. Receiving Him as Lord and Savior – **John 1:12**¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—
3. Doing What God Says – **1 John 3:24**²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.
4. Continuing to believe the Gospel – **1 John 2:24**²⁴ As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father.

5. Relating in Love to the community of believers (The Body) –

John 15:12 ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

Key Scriptures:

Romans 12:4-8 (NIV)

⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully

The Message (MSG)

⁴⁻⁶ In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around. The body we're talking about is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of his body. But as a chopped-off finger or cut-off toe we wouldn't amount to much, would we? So since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvelously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't.

⁶⁻⁸ If you preach, just preach God's Message, nothing else; if you help, just help, don't take over; if you teach, stick to your teaching; if you give encouraging guidance, be careful that you don't get bossy; if you're put in charge, don't manipulate; if you're called to give aid to people in distress, keep your eyes open and be quick to respond; if you work with

the disadvantaged, don't let yourself get irritated with them or depressed by them. Keep a smile on your face.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (NIV)

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.

⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Serving others helps us mature and grow up in Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-14

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, **so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God** and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ **Then** we will no longer be **infants**, tossed back and forth by the waves, and **blown here and there** by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-14

Warning Against Idleness

⁶ In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching^[a] you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not

idle when we were with you,⁸ nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you.⁹ We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate.¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."

¹¹ We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies.¹² Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat.¹³ And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.

¹⁴ Take special note of anyone who does not obey our instruction in this letter. Do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed.

Romans 12:11 ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

We are accountable for our gifts.

- **Romans 14:12** ¹² So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

2 Timothy 2:24 ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.

John 13:15 ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

Jesus The Servant: Philippians 2:5-13

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!