

Get Connected - Serving for the Good of the Church and the Glory of God

Hebrews 11:29-38

Sign Title: The Good of the Church and the Glory of God

November 15, 2009

This morning is an exciting day in the life of our church. We have a Ministry Fair. A Ministry Fair is a chance to discover how we can glorify God by serving others in our church family. Before we head to the gym for the fair, I want to persuade you of two things the Bible tells us about serving. **First**, every Christian has a spirit-empowered gift from God that empowers us to serve others for the good of the church and the glory of God. **Second**, I will share compelling reasons why we must not neglect our gift to serve others in our church family.

Every Christian has a gift from God.

Every Christian has a gift from God and we are responsible to use it for the good of the church and the glory of God. There are at least two passages of Scripture that make this point crystal-clear.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 4:10-11 (ESV)

This passage is a picture of the Christian life in action. It says *each has received a gift*. Every Christian has a gift from God and we are responsible to use it. For whom are we to use it? We are to use it for *the benefit of others* and *the glory of God*. If you are a Christian, there is a special way God's spirit wants to manifest himself in your life where he will empower you to serve others in the body so more glory will come to God. Peter gives us two broad strokes to describe the way the spirit manifests himself in our lives. He may manifest

himself by empowering us to teach or he may manifest himself empowering us to serve others. Every Christian has a gift from God in one of these two broad areas.

Paul teaches us the same thing.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:7 (NIV)

Does God's Spirit manifest (display) himself in every Christian? Yes, he manifests himself in each one of us. When he manifests his power in our lives, what will he do that for? Will he do it for our good? No! He empowers us for the common good. He empowers us to serve others. This is very important. If you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit wants to display his presence in our life and one of the ways he displays himself is by empowering us to serve others. Each of us is gifted by God not to serve ourselves but to serve others. Each of us has either some kind of a teaching or serving gift given us from God. It was given us not for ourselves but for the good of the church and to bring more glory to God.

Now perhaps you are saying, Pastor Kurt, I believe I have some type of a gift from God, but I am a busy person. Do you realize what my life is like? You are asking me to add something to a plate that is quite full. I am just too busy use this gift to serve. Let me share compelling reasons why we must use our gift.

Why use my gift when my life is already busy?

Serving others brings the experience of God's power.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. 1 Corinthians 12:11

When a Christian uses their God given gift to serve others, they do not serve others in our own strength. The word *empowered* is *energes* in the Greek. It means God literally energizes us to serve others. When we serve others using our gift to serve or teach, God promises to energize us to do it. Is your Christ walk limp and lifeless? How can you experience the spirit energy your life? Serve others. What an incentive. When we serve others, in the church for the glory of God and the good of the body, God promises to energize us to do it.

We will experience what it means to be carried along by the spirit. We experience what it means to be in the center of God's will for our life. We experience the wind of the Holy Spirit at our back. We experience the joy of God using our very ordinary efforts to make a difference for eternity in those we serve.

Serving others is the pathway to greatness.

It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:26-28 (ESV)

Would anybody here like God to be pleased with their life? What is the pathway to greatness before God? Serving! Pleasing God in our Christian walk isn't purchasing a patent leather King James Bible. It isn't wearing a three piece suit to church. It isn't perfect attendance. Greatness in our Christian walk is found in serving others with our gifts for the good of the church and the glory of God.

Serving others is a source of eternal joy.

For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy. 1 Thessalonians 2:19 (ESV)

Paul's used his spiritual gift of apostleship to plant churches in the ancient world. When he looked back on his life, what did he find was a source of joy for this life and would be a source of joy for eternity? Those he served with his gift. In eternity, those he served for the good of the church and the glory of God would be his joy. Those God empowers us to serve will be a source of joy for us in this life and forever. My friends, what could be better? Lasting joy comes from serving for the good of the church and the glory of God.

Conclusion

Let me review what we learned.

- Every Christian is empowered by God's spirit to teach or serve others in the body. This gift is given to us not for ourselves but for the good of the church and the glory of God.

Why should we add serving to our already hectic lives?

- Serving others is the means by which God unleashes the wind of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Serving others is a source spiritual vitality.
- Using our gifting to serve others is the pathway to greatness before God.
- Those we touch by our God empowered gift of teaching or serving become a source of joy in our life not just for this life but for eternity.

Ministry Fair

Before I pray and we take a field trip to the gym for the fair, let me tell you what to expect. You will receive a sheet of paper that has all the areas of ministry on it. Use it as your ministry map. There are leaders of these ministries

at tables. Go to the table to learn more about the ministry. If you are definitely interested in serving sign up at their ministry table and the team leader will connect you into the ministry. If you are unsure if a ministry is a good fit for you and would like more information or you have questions you didn't get answered, put a check mark next to the name of the ministry on your ministry map. When you leave, I ask that everyone turns in their ministry map in at the door. I will have a ministry leader contact you to discuss the ministry opportunities with you, no obligations to be involved.

Once again, if you are definitely interested, sign up at the ministry table. If you have questions, or want to think and pray about it some more, put a check marks next to the ministry names on your map and turn your map in when you leave.

Prayer

Father, thank you for supernaturally empowering us to serve one another. We ask the Holy Spirit will guide each one they connect with opportunities to serve for the good of the church and the glory of your name. Amen.



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