

40 Weeks of Purpose

Week 29

Accepting your Assignment

Review from Last Week:

POINT TO MEDITATE ABOUT FROM LAST WEEK:

There are no shortcuts to Maturity

- It took you years to learn all of your bad habits...
 - It's reasonable that it's going to take a long time to change

VERSE TO MEMORIZE THIS WEEK:

- James 1:4 (Message)

4) *So don't try to get out of anything prematurely.*

* Steep in the juices... It's for a purpose

QUESTION TO CONSIDER THIS WEEK:

In what area of my spiritual growth do I need more patience?

Or maybe, in what area DON'T I need more patience?

- You were put on earth to make a contribution.
- You weren't created just to consume resources
 - God intended you to make a difference with your life
- This is our **FOURTH PURPOSE** – Ministry or Service
- You were created to serve God
- Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)
 - 10) For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

- Whenever you serve others in any way, you are serving God
- You were placed here for a purpose
 - Over the next few weeks we will talk about how to find that purpose
- Why were you saved?
- 2nd Timothy 1:9 (NLT)
 - 9) 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.
- We weren't saved because we deserved it
 - We were saved because God has a plan for us to serve Him
- We aren't saved BECAUSE we Serve people
 - We are saved SO THAT we can Serve
- We shouldn't serve God out of guilt, or fear or even a sense of duty
 - We should serve God out of a deep sense of gratitude for what we have been forgiven
- Romans 12:1 (NIV)
 - 1) Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.
- Just how each member of the Body is important regardless how small
- All acts of service are important to the Ecclesia, regardless how small
- There is no such thing as insignificant service
 - Some is visible, and some is behind the scenes, but it's all valuable
- Some of the best things that you can do to serve in your Ecclesia don't even happen in the Ecclesial Hall
- What's the most important light in your house? The large chandelier that hangs over the dining room table, or the tiny night light that keeps you from stubbing your toe on the way to the bathroom in the middle of the night?
- There is no correlation between size and significance or visibility and importance

- Matthew 20:28 (NLT)

28) For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many.”

- Service isn't optional

- It's not something to fit in your schedule, if you have the time

- Service is the heart of your life as a Christian

- We've talked quite a bit about Discipleship, and growing to Maturity

- Spiritual Maturity is not an end unto itself

- You grow so that you can serve better

- You grow up in order to give out

- You can't just keep learning more and more and more

- You have to act on what you know, and practice what you believe

- IMPRESSION without EXPRESSION causes DEPRESSION

- STUDY without SERVICE leads to SPIRITUAL STAGNATION

- If we never put that service into action, we never mature, we never grow, we never become who God wants us to become...

- ***We stagnate!***

- We have a great object lesson in the two Seas found in the Promised Land

- The Sea of Galilee is alive, because it takes water in, ***but it also gives water out***

- The Dead Sea is dead, because it takes water in, ***but it has no outflow***

- ***Don't look for another Bible study in your Ecclesia***

- ***Look for an opportunity in your Ecclesia in which you can SERVE and exercise your spiritual muscles***

- Serving is the opposite of our natural inclination

- You normally look to the Ecclesia to meet your needs

- The mature follower of Christ looks to the Ecclesia to see which needs need to be met

- We are only fully alive when we are serving others
- Jesus says one phrase over and over (5 times in the Gospels)
- Matthew 16:25 (NLT)
 - 25) If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find true life.
- If you aren't serving, you are just existing
- The fact is that you are probably going to give your life for something...
 - A Career, a Hobby, A sport...
- Service to God and the Ecclesia is the only path that has promise
- God wants to use you to make a difference in the world
 - He wants to work through you
- What matters to God is not the **DURATION** of your life
 - But the **DONATION** of it
- Not how long you lived
 - But how much you gave while you lived
- What excuse have you been using to not get involved and serve the Ecclesia?
 - Abraham was old
 - Joseph was abused as a child
 - Moses stuttered
 - Gideon was poor
 - Samson was codependent
 - Rahab was immoral
 - David had had an affair
 - Elijah was suicidal
 - Jeremiah was depressed
 - Johan was prejudiced
 - Naomi was a widow
 - John the Baptist was an eccentric (to say the least!)
 - Peter was hot-tempered
 - Martha worried a lot
 - The Samaritan Woman had several failed marriages
 - Zacchaeus was unpopular (and short!)
 - Thomas had doubts
 - Paul had poor health

- But, God loves making His power shine through weak people

- He will do the same for you if you let Him!

POINT TO MEDITATE ABOUT THIS WEEK:

Service is not optional.

VERSE TO MEMORIZE THIS WEEK:

- Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

10) *He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do good things*

QUESTION TO CONSIDER THIS WEEK:

What is holding me back from serving?