

Built To Serve God (Part 2)

Introduction:

1. The Bible is quite clear. Nobody is saved from the penalty of sin by being good enough. We are saved by God's grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ.
2. You were created by God as a new person in Christ for the purpose of doing good works. God desires to fully equip you to serve Him and do good works for Him. 2 Timothy 2:21, 3:17
3. God likens the body of Christ to a building (Ephesians 2:21), and each of us are bricks in that building (Ephesians 2:22). You have been built to serve God!
4. There are several building blocks that God will use in your life to prepare you to serve Him effectively and to make an impact on others for Christ.

First building block: your past

Second building block: your heart

1. When the Bible talks about the heart, it is not referring to the organ inside of you that is pumping blood. Your heart is the real YOU! It is not the person that people perceive you to be, but it is who you really are in your innermost being.
2. In Matthew 22:37, Jesus said to love God with "*all your heart.*" Proverbs 23:7 exclaims that as a man "*thinketh in his heart, so is he.*"
3. The heart refers to the seat of your emotions, your mind, your desires, and your passions.
4. Have you ever noticed how one believer can be passionate about a certain subject, and another believer is not as passionate, but has a burden for another area of service? Why is this? After all, they both love God and want to serve God. So, why are they so different?
 - It is because each of us has a heart that is unique to us. No two people's hearts will be absolutely identical.
 - As we come to understand this truth, it will help us to not be so critical of others, and not to get our feelings hurt when others aren't as excited as we are about certain things.
5. Some people make the Christian life very spooky and mysterious. They say you must seek God's "perfect will" about where and how you should serve the Lord.
 - Of course they then look for some sort of "signs from God" to reveal His "perfect will" to them, or they look for some sort of inner promptings from God. They are listening for that "still small voice." Do you know who that voice sounds like? YOU!
6. If you are walking with the Lord daily, you don't have to fear making decisions and following your desires. Your desires are synonymous with your heart. If your heart is following after God and His Word, your desires won't be sinful or wrong.
 - Let me give you an example. How does a person know if he should be a pastor? Do you look for signs and look for God to "speak to you?" No! Let me shock you. Read 1 Timothy 3:1.

- It's a desire! You love God's Word, you love studying it, you love teaching it, and you say to yourself, "I'd like to do this with my entire life and being." Then you start preparing and working towards that. It's that simple.
7. Colossians 3:23 is a key verse. When you serve the Lord, God wants you to do it from your heart. "*Heartily*" means "from the heart; with all the heart; with zeal; eagerly."
 - In other words, whatever you do for the Lord, you ought to be excited over it!
 8. Look in our text at 1 Peter 4:9. The context of this passage is ministering for the Lord. Notice it says, "*without grudging* (grumbling). "
 - You may be serving God in a ministry, and you're grumbling about it and thinking, "I wish I could do that instead." Do you know what the answer is? Do it!
 9. If you don't have a heart for what you're doing, and you don't enjoy it, you are in the wrong ministry. This isn't to say you won't have bad and frustrating days. But by and large, you should enjoy your ministry for the Lord.
 - **Example:** Exodus 36:2 (building the tabernacle)
 10. When you are serving from your heart, you are excited about it, and you tend to excel at it because you are doing what you are wired to do and what you love to do. People that love what they're doing tend to be good at it.
 11. This point ties in with our first point. You are built to serve the Lord. We have covered two building blocks: your past and your heart.
 12. Many times, your past is what gives you a heart for a certain ministry.
 - **Example:** bus ministry, AWANA, teens, GriefShare, Freedom Found, etc.

Third building block: your abilities

1. Your abilities are the natural talents you are born with or have developed. You say, "God can use those?" Absolutely!
 - Before Paul was saved he had learned the craft of tent-making and was obviously pretty good at it. After he got saved, he used his tent-making ability to provide income while he sought to win souls at Corinth, and he also used it as an open door to evangelize and disciple a couple by the names of Aquila and Priscilla.
2. When we minister, we do it according to the ability that God gives. The word "*ability*" carries the idea of power or strength. 1 Peter 4:11
3. We all have strengths that we were either born with or have developed. They are still God-given and God expects you to use those for His glory. Romans 12:1, 5-6a
4. Over and over again, the Bible mentions people who were cunning or skilled at different abilities (working with brass, woodwork, playing a musical instrument, hunting, stone workers, timber workers, sewing, working with gold and silver, engravers, embroiderers, singing, inventing, leading, oratory skills, skillful at war, etc.).

5. In the book of Exodus, God's will was for His people to build a tabernacle in which they could worship Him. So how was God going to get it done?
Exodus 35:30-35
 - God provided people with abilities to make this thing happen.
 - Look at the next chapter (36:2-7). Other people had the ability to earn wealth so they could contribute the materials needed to build the tabernacle.
6. What are you good at? What has God given you the ability to do? Use it for His glory! Use it to reach people. Use it to minister His grace and further the cause of Christ through your local church.
 - I've heard people say, "I'm afraid God is going to 'call me' to do something that I have no heart for and no ability for."
 - This takes us back to the false notion of the mysterious "calling." God **has** called you to serve Him and minister for Him, but God allows you to decide where and how to do that.
 - God treats you like an adult and gives you the responsibility to use wisdom and discernment to serve Him in a way that will be expedient and useful.
7. Your abilities were not given to you just so you could edify yourself and further your cause. God gave them to you for ministry, so you could serve Him and be a blessing to others. 1 Peter 4:11
8. Notice how our first three points tie in together. Your past could have a strong influence on what your heart and passion is for, and whatever your heart is burdened for will many times be your areas of strongest ability. Why? Because your heart is in it!
9. You have been built to serve God.
 - **Illustration:** Apollos was a great public speaker. He had great oratory skills. What did he do after he learned Paul's gospel? He continued to use those skills! His past and his heart also dictated how he used them. Acts 18:24-28