

Built To Serve God (Part 3)

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

Fourth building block: your gifts

1. God gives every believer a spiritual gift to be used to serve Him. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7
 - This makes sense doesn't it? If it is God's plan for you to serve Him, and if you were created in Christ to do good works for God, then it only makes sense that God would enable you through His Holy Spirit to do this.
2. What do we learn about spiritual gifts from God's Word?
 - You can't earn them.
 - Otherwise they wouldn't be called gifts. They are gifts of His grace. Romans 12:6
 - Every believer has a spiritual gift. 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11
 - God desires to minister through every one of His children.
 - They are given for the purpose of ministry. 1 Corinthians 12:7, 25-27
 - "Ministry" means "serving others." This is God's plan. Your spiritual gift is not for your self-edification.
 - You will be held accountable for how you use your gift. 1 Peter 4:10
 - A steward is a manager or overseer and is accountable to the master. Colossians 3:23-25
 - When you stand before God one day, God will review your life and how you utilized the spiritual gifts He gave you.
3. What are the gifts? There are nine team gifts:
 - Prophecy – the gift of preaching, proclaiming, explaining and applying God's Word
 - Teaching – the gift of communicating and clarifying the details of God's Word in such a way that others will learn
 - Exhortation – the gift of encouraging and challenging others to follow God's Word

- Serving – the gift of working behind the scenes, performing necessary jobs and duties
 - Mercy Showing – the gift of ministering to those who are sick, suffering, or afflicted
 - Ruling – the gift of leading, organizing, and administrating
 - Shepherding – the gift of feeding, guarding, protecting, and overseeing a flock of people
 - Giving – a strong desire to give and share of material resources to help the work of God
 - Evangelizing – the gift of confronting sinners with the gospel of Christ
4. If you know Christ, you have been given a spiritual gift. You have been built to serve God, and one of those building blocks is the spiritual gift that God gave to you by His Holy Spirit when you got saved. God desires for you to grow and develop your gift.
- This is done through the faithful study and application of God’s Word to your life.
 - The Bible fully equips you to serve God and to use your gift with wisdom and understanding.
 - How can a teacher teach if he doesn’t know God’s Word? How can a mercy-shower bring comfort without a working knowledge of the Scriptures? How can we serve intelligently without a Scriptural understanding of God’s plan for today?

Fifth building block: your hurts

1. In the book of 1 Peter, Peter is writing to Jewish believers who had come under intense persecution for their faith. They were forced to leave their homes and flee. They were scattered, hurting sheep.
2. Look at Peter’s words to these hurting believers. 4:12-14, 16, 19
3. What is the point he is making? Here it is: God is going to take your hurts and use them for His glory. Don’t be ashamed of your hurts, but use them for His glory!
4. Remember this: many times your greatest ministry will come out of your greatest hurt. Many times, our hurts coupled with an understanding of God’s Word will equip us for ministry to others.
 - Without God’s Word, your hurts just hurt! You cannot make any sense out of them.
 - But once you begin to study God’s Word, understand what God has done for you in Christ, and understand what He wants to do through you, you begin to see that your hurts can actually be a tool for God’s service!
5. This is vividly demonstrated by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. Paul was taking his hurts and using them to minister to others!
6. There could be things in your life that have happened to you that you really regret or resent. There may be things that you want to forget or hide because of the pain associated with them.
7. Did you know God desires for you to use those things to help others? You are built to serve God, and one of the things that God will use is those hurts.

8. Whenever you think about hurtful memories you have been through or are currently going through, remind yourself of two truths:
 - I am not the only one. 1 Peter 5:9
 - Others need my help.
9. Whether it is divorce, health problems, the death of a loved one, an addiction, child abuse, marital problems, depression, etc., God can take those hurts and use them for His glory as you minister to and help others going through similar pain.
10. But for God to use those hurts, you have to be willing to share them.
11. Christ is our example. Hebrews 2:18

In Conclusion:

1. Review the five building blocks.
2. If you take your past, your heart, your abilities, your spiritual gift, and your hurts, do you know what they form? You!
3. You are uniquely built to serve the Lord. You can't be me, and I can't be you. You can only be you. You are one of a kind. There's nobody else just like you.
4. You are built to serve God. You must find your useful place of service.