

Serve In A Ministry – 1 Pet 4:10-11

1 Pet 4:10-11; We're in the middle of a mini-series called **Fully Engaged**

Talking about what it means to be a fully engaged follower of Christ

The first part of which is going to church (**Review**)

Fully engaged believers make church a priority

To obey the Lord

To learn about the Lord

To worship the Lord

That was week one (**Summary**)

➤ Last week, it was – Connect with others (**Review**); Far from thinking they're an island unto themselves . . .

Fully engaged believers connect with others

In what the Bible calls *fellowship* – belonging together in mutual partnership

- **Just like the early church (Acts 2:42-47)**
- **Just like the apostles (1 Thess 2:8)**
Who shared not only the gospel, but their very lives
- **Just like Jesus (Mk 3:13-14)**
Who not only preached to the masses but connected with a few
- **B/c that's God's design (Rom 12:4-5)**
Members one of another that we are, we ought to connect our lives (**Summary**)

And do so . . .

- **For encouragement (Rom 15:1-2)**
- **For support (Gal 6:2)**
Bearing one another's burdens *Lean On Me* style
- **For exhortation (Heb 3:12-13)**
Speaking the truth to one another, every day; B/c the stakes are so high
- **For accountability (Acts 19:18)**
Which is mutual submission to the scrutiny and wisdom of others . . .
- **For perseverance (Heb 3:14)**
To *hold [your] original confidence firm to the end* (Heb 3:14)

That was *last* week (**Summary**); And I encouraged you to stop by one of the tables or kiosks in the lobby to get more information, and get involved . . .

Which you can do this week via the **insert** in your bulletin (Connect With Others)

➤ That said, the focus this week is serving in a ministry

Fully engaged believers serve in a ministry (1 Pet 4:10-11)

That is, they work or give of their time and effort, for the benefit of someone else – someone else in the church

The church, b/c **Gal 6:10** says – *So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

That's the church; And it's to be our first priority in service*****

But it's 1 Pet 4:10-11 that gets at this idea of service most

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: [11] 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. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Speaking on God's behalf and serving for his glory, is ministry

And fully engaged believers do it; They serve

And do so with their *gifts* – their spiritual gifts; Which every single one of us has *received*

That's what it says in v10a – *each has received a gift*

Every single follower of Jesus Christ has been given at least one heightened ability, one spiritual gift – for the common good, the good of the church (1 Cor 12:7)

➤ And those gifts are empowered by the Spirit who gives them

1 Cor 12:11 says – *All these [gifts] are empowered by one and the same Spirit*

Every single one of us has received a gift, and the Holy Spirit fuels us, or empowers us, to use it; I think that's obvious*****

What might *not* be so obvious, is that to the extent you serve, you grow

Spiritual growth, or spiritual maturity, is proportional to service; Those who serve most, grow most; It's not a guarantee, but it sure is a correlation

Service and maturity go hand in hand

So fully engaged believers do it; They *serve one another in love* as Paul says (Gal 5:13)

They serve in a ministry; And do so . . .

- **To use their giftedness (v10a)**

Just like Peter *tells* us to do in v10 – *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one*

another; *Use it* he says; Either that or lose it – watch it atrophy

Use it to benefit your brothers and sisters in Christ; Use it to bless your family

Use it to edify others; Use it to encourage and benefit people in general

That's what *fully* engaged believers do – they use their giftedness

➤ *Even when they're afraid*; Even when they're scared to death of what will happen; Or what it will require of them

Like Moses was some 1400 years before this was ever written

He had a gift of leadership, but was scared to death to utilize it, and leery of the

consequences; But use it he did; And God met him every step of the way

Giving him just what he needed, at just the right time – to ensure just the right outcome, in just the right way

And he'll do the same for you, when *you're* afraid; Or uncertain; Or don't know what to expect; God will give you what you need . . .

When you use your giftedness to *meet* a need

➤ Fully engaged believers use their giftedness even when they're afraid, and *even if others don't*; That was Joshua, Moses' protégé; Remember him?

He's the one who succeeded Moses and led the Israelites into the Promised Land

Serving the Lord even when others didn't

And eventually saying in **Josh 24:15** – “*Choose this day whom you will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*”

“I don’t know what *you’re* going to do, but I know what *I’m* going to do; I know what I’m about”

That’s a fully engaged follower; He used his giftedness to serve in a ministry, even if others didn’t*****

How about you? Do you care more about the social aspects of serving, than you do the spiritual ones?

That is, the people you’re serving *with*, instead of the people you’re serving?

I hope not; I hope you serve in a ministry to use *your* gifts . . .

Even if you’re afraid, and even if others don’t

2nd, fully engaged believers serve in a ministry . . .

• **To be a good steward (v10b)**

Once again, v10 says – *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace*

Stewards, as in servants with responsibilities; And *good* stewards, as in those who make the *most* of their gift and opportunity; Accomplishing all they can

And notice here, that our gifts are the result of God’s *varied grace* – his divine apportionment according to his goodness and will

Giving some gifts to some people, and others to others

None of which matters to a *good* steward; B/c they make the most of their giftedness *regardless* of others; Just like they serve regardless of others

- It’s like the second servant in the Parable of the Minas that Jesus told in Luke 19
He didn’t make 10 minas like the first servant; He only made 5
But when the nobleman returned, he commended and rewarded the guy, just like he did the servant who made 10

Which clues us in to the fact that being a good steward of our gifts is not about keeping up with the spiritual Jones’

Rather, it’s about making the most of what God has given *you*; It’s being a good steward of *your* gifts and *your* opportunities

You don’t have to have a PhD in ministry – at least not for every role; Nor is a list of great accomplishments on God’s list of prerequisites

He’s looking for people who are ready and willing to serve him with what they *have*
Ready and wanting to be good stewards of the grace *they’ve* been given; Regardless of others

- But don’t get me wrong; Being a good steward of your gifts doesn’t mean saying “yes” to every opportunity; Rather, it’s about saying yes to the ones you *should*
It means weighing the *actual* cost of a situation in terms of time and effort . . .
And weighing the *opportunity* cost – what you *won’t* be able to do if you say yes

It means saying no *sometimes*, so that you can say yes at the right times

It means saying no to *most* things, so you can say yes to a *few*, and do them well
Make the most of your gift, yes; But realize that every opportunity is not a mandate

3rd, serve in a ministry . . .

• **With the strength God supplies (v11a)**

After telling us to be good stewards of God’s varied grace in v10, Peter gives some examples in v11

Whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies

IOW if you have a speaking gift, instead of speaking your *own* words, you should speak *God’s* words; *His* oracles; *His* truths

That’s where the power is; That’s where the compulsion is; And the passion

It’s in speaking the things *God* wants you to speak; Not your own words, but his

And if you’re *serving* in a role of support or help, do so in *God’s* strength it says
Not your *own* strength, but his

- Don’t be trying to muster your *own* strength for the task at hand
Don’t be trying to go it alone, thinking you can grind it out without spending time with the Lord each day
Don’t be thinking you’ll get by on leftovers from yesterday, or last week
Or that you can put it on cruise and make it happen; Ain’t happenin’

But we sure do try, don’t we? We sure are *tempted* to go it alone, aren’t we?

And we sure do it; Especially when we’re down and out; Or running on fumes; Or overwhelmed

Why is it that when we need the strength that God supplies the most, we tend to seek it the least? Am I right? I think so

And it’s just the opposite of what we *should* do

Just the opposite of what a fully engaged believer does

Fully engaged believers serve *by the strength that God supplies*; The strength that comes from his presence *within* you

- I remember a particular basketball practice in college, when a former player attended and helped coach for the day; His name was Steve Clum
And though I hadn’t met him before that, I did know that he held every record in the books for rebounding; And not just at Wheaton, but in the conference

And his presence spurred *me* on to rebound that day, like I never rebounded before

I was doing things I didn’t know were possible; Not because he was somehow doing it for me, or teaching me some new technique – but just b/c he was watching

Just b/c he was *there*, I was a different player

And the same is true of our *lives*, with *Jesus* looking on; And his Spirit dwelling within
His presence *alone*, should spur you on; Just knowing that he’s *there* should fuel you and *strengthen* you

- Unfortunately, we often miss him b/c of our sin – blinded by the darkness instead of awakened by the light; We miss him b/c of our sin . . .
And grieve him the more we continue in it
So instead of drawing *strength* from his presence, we *quench* his presence

We reduce his effect; Rendering us power-*less* instead of power-*full*; Weak instead of strong

Better to make sure your heart is *right* and your motives *pure*

Better to make sure you're prayed up and stayed up, so as to be filled up and fueled up
It's not only the *best* way to serve with the strength God supplies, it's the *only* way
The only way to keep on when you want to quit, and reap the fruit that God intends

Serve, yes; But do so with the strength that *God* supplies
B/c anything less is flirtin' with disaster

And then last, serve in a ministry . . .

• **For the glory God deserves (v11b)**

11 – *Whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ*
The one to whom belongs *glory and dominion forever and ever*
Serve to glorify God, *through Jesus Christ*

Through Jesus, b/c he's the one who enables us to serve at all
If he hadn't died in our place and lived as our example – we wouldn't even be *able* to serve in God's strength; It wouldn't be available to us

But b/c it is; And b/c we appropriate it; B/c we *do* serve in the strength that he provides . .
B/c we walk with him and talk with him along life's narrow way . . .
B/c he gives us his Spirit to dwell within; B/c he imputes his righteousness and forgives our sin; B/c he holds all things together in the first place . . .
Everything we do is *due* to him, and *through* him
Including, serving in a ministry to glorify the one who sent him; Just like the verse says

We couldn't even *hope* to serve God's way apart from Christ
Apart from me you can do nothing Jesus said (Jn 15:5) – nothing of any God-glorifying, *kingdom* value

➤ And that's the goal; Serve *by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified*
That in everything, God would look good; God would be exalted; God would be magnified; God would be honored; God would be praised
God would be seen for who he is and what he's done, in all his splendor and grace

That's the primary reason we ought serve the Lord by serving in a ministry
That in everything, *everything* – he would be glorified

It's what Jesus did in the way *he* lived . . .
It's what we do when we obey him, and talk about him, and serve him . . .
And it's what others do when they *see* our good works – and do the same

Far from serving to check off an obligation; Far from serving to assuage our conscience
Far from serving to just use our gifts or bless others
We should serve to glorify *God*; For the glory *he* deserves

➤ Deserves, b/c he's God; Almighty God; Infinitely powerful, and all knowing
Creator of the universe and author of our salvation; Lord of all and Savior of souls
The one who blots out your transgressions and forgets your sin (Is 43:25)
The one who's rich in mercy and abundant in grace
Steadfast in love and never changing

B/c of all that and more, he deserves all the glory there is, and all the glory we can muster
Which we show and give, by using our gifts to serve in a ministry, with the strength he supplies; That's what a fully engaged follower of Christ does (**Summary**)

➤ And the opportunities to do that around here, are almost endless; Which you'll find on this insert (**Serve in a Ministry**)

There are 7 main areas in our church to serve – from CM to Service Teams, leaders to helpers, behind the scenes to up front, inside these walls and out
There's literally something for everyone; And everyone is needed

So if you have a talent, skill, gift, or willingness to serve – would you fill this out during the offertory, and give it to the ushers as you leave?

Truly the opportunities endless, and are waiting for more and more fully engaged followers of Christ, to serve

Pray – Lord, thank you for the gifts you've given us, and the strength to use them; Spur us on to be good stewards for your glory
We give now, for that reason and more

Close – **Invitations** – be praying and looking for people to invite
Inserts – drop in boxes at the doors
Visitor Bags – meet you