

Why Not ME?

9/25/2016

A family that serves. Interesting thought, that.

So you look up serve, and what you find
is that we use this word “serve”
in all kinds of interesting ways.

1. A waiter serves you dinner. That’s a good thing.
2. A lawyer serves you papers. That’s a bad thing, usually.
3. You receive a serve in tennis or volleyball.

If you weren’t ready, that could be really painful.

4. In the military,
specialized people serve or service the weapons.

5. When you tie off the end of a rope
with a smaller diameter cord,
so that it doesn’t unravel,
that is called “serving” the rope.

So is serving- THIS...





or this?

This,

A promotional graphic for a spa service. It features a collage of four images: autumn leaves, a woman's face, a foot spa with pink flowers, and lit candles. The text "TO SERVE WITH LOVE" is prominently displayed in white on a dark background, with "BY JAI NEAL" underneath. At the bottom, a dark banner contains the text "LOVING, TENDER AND RELAXING NAIL & SPA CARE CUSTOMIZED TO YOUR PERSONAL NEEDS".



Or this?

Because when God thinks of gifts,
 he thinks of you offering yourself, your life,
 as a living sacrifice. Now THAT'S a good gift.

And unlike Jesus, who did it all at once,
 we do it daily, minute by minute, on the installment plan.

So let's zoom in on "dysfunctional church,"
 our brothers and sisters in Corinth,
 who have a knack for messing up even the good stuff,
 and see what we can learn from Paul's advice to them.
 (1 Corinthians 12:1- "Now about spiritual gifts...")

Spiritual gifts from God, a very, very good thing.
 But the Corinthians apparently,
 were elevating some gifts over others,
 and people who didn't have certain gifts felt bad,
 while people WITH the preferred gifts were like,
 really stuck on themselves.



(I'm sorry, I couldn't help myself...)

1 Corinthians 12:1ff (NIV)

Now about spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters,
 I do not want you to be ignorant.

² You know that when you were pagans,
 somehow or other you were influenced
 and led astray to mute idols.

³ Therefore I tell you that
no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says,
“Jesus be cursed,”
and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,”
except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.

⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

⁶ There are different kinds of working,
but the same God works all of them in all men.

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given
for the common good.

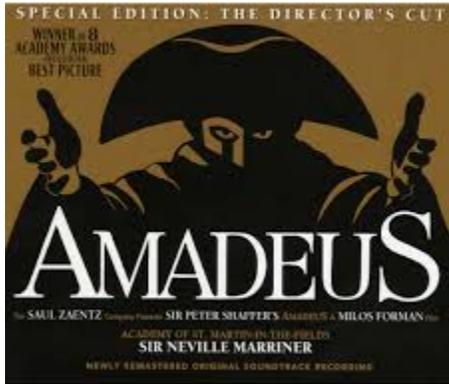
⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit
the message of wisdom,
to another the message of knowledge
by means of the same Spirit,

⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit,
to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,
to another miraculous powers,
to another prophecy,
to another distinguishing between spirits,
to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,
and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit,
and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Gifts good, but gifts are given for a reason-
to benefit everyone,
including yourself, but not limited to yourself.

Through the Holy Spirit,
**GOD decides who gets which gifts- HIS choice, not ours,
 and certainly not based on
 merit or intrinsic spiritual value of one over another.**
 There was a movie, Amadeus,



which was based on just this issue.

An incredibly musically gifted individual,
 who was a spoiled, rude, immature brat-
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.



And then there was this other person, a good musician,
 but clearly not even close to the same level of brilliance
 as Mozart, named Salieri.



**God, what are you up to, giving your incredible gifts,
if indeed all gifts come from you- (James 1:16-17)-**

Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.

**Every good and perfect gift is from above,
coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights,
who does not change like shifting shadows.**

**God, what are you doing giving your highest gifts
to a profane monster?**

“Why not ME?”

And you know what?

**We have been asking ourselves the same questions
since before Corinth.**

Why not me?

- 1. Why can't I have a voice like Nancy or Emily,
or decorating ability like Cathy Ryon?**
- 2. Why can't I handle finances like Don Gibson,
or have the computer sense of Bob Hoagland,
or David Gelwick?**
- 3. Why can't I have the creativity of Neil Smith,
the energy of Randi Cooper or Bill Powell,
the organizational skills of Carolyn Martin,
the hunting smarts of Dan Singhas,
the climbing ability of Sam Cooper,
the artistic ability of Abi Turner,**

the kid-managing skills of Michelle McCain,
the hunger for spiritual depth, of Amy Ragland.

God, why not **ME**?

As a preacher, why can't I have

the philosophical insight of Randy Harris,

the theological depth of N.T. Wright,

the ability to charm a crowd, like Jeff Walling?

God, why not **ME**?

Because it's not about "me,"

the individual, getting the spotlight,

basking in our own brilliance.

it's about Jesus,

and what **HE** wants to do for **HIS** body, the church.

What gift **DO** you have, that you can use in his service?

1. We got folks who know how to hang light fixtures.

(Aren't you glad?)

2. We got folks who know how to cook

some mean desserts. (Aren't you glad?)

3. We got people who know how fix plumbing

and air conditioning. (Aren't you glad?)

4. We have people who are phenomenal with little children,

5. People who are great bookkeepers or accountants,

6. Tech-savvy people, horse-savvy people,

7. Bible scholars and walker tote stitchers.

You know what?

You can't do **EVERYTHING**, but you can do **SOMETHING**.

**You can't do everything, but you can sure do
what God has given you the passion and ability to do,
for the building up of the body of Christ.**

**God gave you YOUR gifts, and someone else THEIR gifts,
for the building up of the Body of Christ.**

Two things- one specific, one general.

Here's the specific-

You do grocery shopping at your house?

You go to Walmart, Target, Giant or Safeway?

Then you can make life easier for a homeless person.

- 1. You can bring bags to make mats.**
- 2. You can learn to make the mats yourself.**

**A symbol of excess American consumerism can become
a symbol of hope and comfort for our dispossessed.**

**We can't do everything for the homeless among us,
but we can do something.
And from this, maybe we will become inspired to do more.**

This Wednesday, 7:00, Fellowship hall-

let's learn how to make mats for the homeless.

**Bring your plastic bags, scissors, cutting boards,
cutting wheels, whatever you got... bring it...**

That's the specific.

Now for the general thing we can do-

**When you wake up, resolve in your prayer to God,
to do at least one good thing for someone else**

that provides no direct benefit to you.

There is a path to spiritual maturity

that goes something like this-

1. I do good to avoid punishment.
2. I do good to win the approval of others.
3. I do good because it is just the right thing to do.
4. I do good because I love God and want to please Him.
5. I do good because, like God,

I really love the people I am serving.

So where are you

on your spiritual path to maturity...in serving?

Wherever you are, that's just where you are,

neither good nor bad. But don't stay there. Keep moving!

1. But I don't have whatever this spiritual gift is that I want!
2. I'm not good at WHAT I WANT to be good at.

(Wait! Let's look at that sentence.)

Is it about what YOU want,

or what God wants- from you and for you?

3. Why not ME?

Because God in his love and wisdom knew that

- a. You had other gifts that are just right for you.
- b. You might have abused or misused that gift.
- c. You might have fixated on the gift
and forgotten the Giver.
- d. The gift you received is EXACTLY what
this body of Christ needed for this moment in time.

So use it, to serve others, for HIS glory... AMEN?

And let's not just talk about serving, let's serve.

From Ann Voskamp-

Theology can be talked about on Sundays, recorded at conferences – but it's lived in kitchens or it dies at tables.

Doctrine in the kitchen is doctrine in real life.

Don't belittle everyday pots and pans – they are the means to carry theology into the everyday of our lives.

The mother in the kitchen is the one who can actually give life to the words of the speaker on the platform. **Platform words are dead words – until brave people live them out in the kitchen.**

(A Holy Experience, Ann Voskamp)