

## The Call to Serve *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow?*

Take a look at your life today. What opportunities do you have to help others? It may be as simple as guiding your young children in their development. Perhaps you are a caregiver – official or unofficial – for a family member. Maybe you have a role in the community, serving on a non-profit board or as a volunteer at church or as a civic club member. Maybe you reach out to neighbors on your street when you see a need. Some people seek to become friends with someone who needs a friend. People who need friends the most are often the hardest to reach. Maybe you are the custodian at a school who provides a clean learning environment and always has a friendly smile for students and faculty. It doesn't matter. We all have opportunities to serve the Lord in different ways. (Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 about many gifts, but one Spirit.)



What have your life experiences prepared you to do? Perhaps you had an addiction that you have overcome. People who have been through difficult times often relate the best to others who are now experiencing the pain they once endured or are in the process of overcoming. Perhaps you grew up in a difficult home situation, and have the wisdom to provide a better upbringing for your children than you experienced. Or, conversely, you had wonderful parents as your example, and you are sharing that positive environment with your children. Maybe you love to read. Share that love with children, or read the scriptures at your church's worship services.

Some people's passion for children has led them into education or non-profit work. Maybe you worked at summer camp or attended church retreats and are motivated to help others because of your positive experiences. Perhaps you are good with numbers and have transformed that skill into financial leadership at work or at home. Maybe your love of the environment has led you to create opportunities for others to appreciate God's creation better.

Past experiences have prepared you for what you are doing today. Thanks to God's Grace, we are positioned where He needs us. Is God calling you to use the gifts, abilities, and experiences in order to make an impact on the world around you. If God has blessed you financially, you may be able to contribute significantly to church or community charities.

In our lives, we pass from one season to the next. Each season has the potential to build on past experiences. And the present prepares you for the future. What you do today, in careers, experiences, or service opportunities, prepares you for future roles. Even how you respond as you approach the end of your time on earth may be an example of courage, strength, and love that can inspire others when they encounter difficult times. If the Lord has blessed you financially, you may have "paid it forward" by setting up education funds for grandchildren, making bequests to church and charitable organizations, or helping to secure your families' future in your will. It can happen in the business world, too. Successful businesses can enable worthwhile charitable activities with their financial support. Just think how God will bless your efforts if they match His will for you!

The opportunities to serve are endless, just as our opportunities to influence current and future generations.

People look at not only what you do but why you do it. Christians serve without any expectation of a return. *Jesus came to serve, not be served* (Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:45, and John 13:1-17). Followers of Christ serve because it is what God wants them to do. It is not a calling if it is for our benefit. We serve God when we serve others. What an inspiration your service can be to help others grow in their faith!

**Biggest Question:** What do you think God wants you to do with your life today?

**Closing Prayer:** Dear Lord. You lead us through the trials and richness of our lives to prepare us to be a blessing to others. We show our gratitude and love for You by loving and serving others. Amen.