

# Serve the Lord

Matthew 25:23-30

Introduction: There will come a time in our existence when we will wish we had spent every opportunity serving God! After all, we all want to obtain heaven. So on that judgment day, will our service to God benefit us or will it betray us? Will the Lord say, “Well done good and faithful servant?” Or will the Lord say, “Depart, wicked and slothful servant” (Matt. 25:23, 26).

## I. We have our chance to serve God right now.

A. The rich man in Luke 16:19-31 wished he had served God after it was too late.

1. He’s tormented and wishes for relief (vs. 24).
2. Abraham said in essence, “You got what you deserve.” (vs. 25).
3. The rich man thinks of his family (vs. 27-28). Wouldn’t it be nice to have someone to come back from the dead to personally inform us of our spiritual condition? It doesn’t work that way.
4. He had his chance while he lived. Just like us! We have our chance right now (vs. 29-31)! It is a sad commentary when a resurrected dead person is no more persuasive than the living.

B. A brother in Cary, N.C. died while entertaining his family in lieu of attending Sunday morning services. I imagine he wishes he was serving the Lord that day! He had his chance to serve God that day but chose his family (who were not Christians) instead.

## II. Our primary goal is heaven.

- A. It’s when we lose track of our primary goal that we begin to falter.
1. No one who plans to follow Christ and neglects his calling is worthy of heaven (Luke 9:62). (Illustrate using plowing or mowing.)
  2. Luke 17:32 says, “Remember Lot’s wife.” Why? Because she lost her life while looking back! She was doing something she knew was wrong.
  3. We should live our lives as though we are in a race (1 Cor. 9:24-27). What happens to the runner who looks back? He loses time; he might fall and possibly loses the race (vs. 26).
- B. We can lose the race.
1. We too, can fall and be unable to stand (1 Cor. 10:12).
  2. Paul was concerned that he too could be disqualified from the race (1 Cor. 9:27).

3. We can also become disqualified in heavens race (2 Cor. 13:5). If we cut corners in the race (like not assembling at each service) could we be disqualified?

C. We must participate to win (James 1:22-25). A coach can teach us how to run; how to use proper techniques, etc. We can agree and approve of the things he taught. Then the coach tells us, "Get out there and win the race." If I don't participate, am I going to be rewarded because I know how to run? We must be doers of God's will, not just a hearer. Salvation comes with the doing!

III. We must give account of what we have done... not what we learned.

A. We will account for our actions or lack thereof (Rom. 14:12).

B. We will be rewarded according to our works; not for our knowledge of the Word only (Matt. 16:27).

IV. The Lord needs our service.

A. Jesus says the laborers are few (Matt. 9:37-38). Is it because there are few Christians or is it because there are even fewer Christians that labor?

B. We must press toward the goal (Phil. 3:11-14).

1. Not as if we have already attained the goal (vs. 12), nor as if we have achieved the goal (vs. 13 from apprehended) because we would no longer put forth an effort.

2. We must forget the past mistakes and inaction and press on to the goal (vs. 13-14). The Lord forgives when we ask and repent!

3. In life's race for heaven, should we lament over the spill we took when we tripped over the pothole in the road? Do we stand there until we get the hole fixed before we move on? I'm afraid many of us do just that. Let's look toward the goal and forget past mistakes that we can't change.

Conclusion: There will come a time in our existence when we will wish we had spent every opportunity serving God! After all, we all want to obtain heaven. So on that judgment day, will our service to God benefit us or will it betray us? Will the Lord say, "Well done good and faithful servant?" Or will the Lord say, "Depart, wicked and slothful servant" (Matt. 25:23, 26).