

## Session 11

### Doing God's Kingdom Work

#### Key Scriptures:

Ephesians 2:10	Created for good works
James 2:17-20	Faith without works is dead
Isaiah 14:12-15	Kingdom rebellion by Satan
Colossians 2:13-15	Satan defeated at the cross
1 Corinthians 2:7-8	Demons did not understand the cross
Luke 17:20-21	Kingdom of God within you
Psalms 2:7-9	Ruling the nations
Philippians 2:9-11	Every knee will bow
1 Corinthians 15:22-28	Handing the kingdom to the Father
Ephesians 1:19b-23	Christ's authority over the angelic realm
John 17:1-4	Christ's authority over people for eternal life
John 5:26-27	Christ has authority from the Father to judge
Matthew 18:18-20	Authority given to church to make disciples
Matthew 16:19	Authority given to the church to bind and loose
Ephesians 3:10-11	Church displays God's wisdom to angels
Ephesians 6:12	Struggle is not flesh and blood
Acts 26:17-18	Salvation against a backdrop of warfare
Romans 16:19-20	Satan will be crushed under our feet
Matthew 5:13-16	Salt and light
Matthew 13:31-33	Mustard and Yeast Influencers
2 Corinthians 5:18-21	Kingdom ambassadors
1 Corinthians 1:22-24	Declaring the cross
2 Timothy 4:2	Declaring the Word of God
Matthew 28:18-20	Great Commission
2 Corinthians 5:10	Judgment Seat of Christ

Objective: • to understand how we participate in advancing God's kingdom

#### The Big Picture

Doing the works of service for God's kingdom should be the pleasure and life-worship of every believer." For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10). We are not only created to do God's works, but He has actually set them out for us to accomplish before we even engage the tasks. The "good works" we do for the Lord should come as a natural response of our hearts fully devoted to Him.

With this session we move into the fourth of our acrostic units: 1) Agreeing with God; 2) Being in Relationship with God; 3) Changing to Be Like Christ; 4) Doing Works of Service for God.

We are to give God glory in all that we do by accomplishing through our works of service what He wants. But that raises an immediate question: “What does He want?”

In this session we will not simply talk about volunteering at church. Our conversation goes well beyond that. Neither will we be limiting our conversation to volunteer work in general. Rather, we will be talking about how we participate in the advancement of God’s kingdom.

God’s “kingdom” refers to His rightful reign—over all the earth just as in heaven. We are not simply talking about volunteering or about doing kind deeds. We are talking about being used by God as kingdom influencers. He is establishing His kingdom over the hearts and minds of people in the face of Satan’s competing kingdom of darkness, which stands in rebellion to God and seeks to keep people in sin and bondage—separated from God.

### Teaching Points:

#### I. Being THEN Doing

A. What we do as works of service for the Lord should come from who we are in Christ.

1. We have discussed in previous sessions how “being” should come before “doing.” In other words, all the works of service we do should come in response to our intimate relationship with the Lord.
2. Doing works of service for God without standing in close relationship with God, can leave us frustrated and tired at best, or detached, empty, and even separated from God at worst.

B. We are to offer our lives as “living sacrifices,” which is our “spiritual act of worship.” (Rom. 12:1)

1. Our lives, offered as “living sacrifices” means that everything we do—any kind of work of service—should be dedicated to God. In other words, our good works come from our devotion to God—from our intimate relationship with Him. Our works, as part of our lives, are ways in which we respond in worship to God.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship.  
(Romans 12:1)

2. The Bible also is clear that action accompanies our faith relationship with God (James 2:17-20). So, works of service are not optional to the Christian life, but necessary manifestations of our relationship with the Lord.

<sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. <sup>18</sup> But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that-- and shudder. <sup>20</sup> You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?  
(James 2:17-20)

## II. What we do for the God is supposed to further His kingdom.

### A. What is God's kingdom? [Chart]

1. God's "kingdom" refers to his rightful reign over all creation.
2. His kingdom rule was challenged by Satan and the fallen angels (Isa. 14:12-15).
3. Satan's rebellious kingdom extended over mankind (Gen. 3).

<sup>12</sup> How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! <sup>13</sup> You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. <sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." <sup>15</sup> But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.  
(Isaiah 14:12-15)

4. Jesus defeated Satan's kingdom at the cross (Col. 2:13-15).
  - a) At the cross Jesus laid the foundation for our salvation.
  - b) At the cross Jesus defeated the devil's kingdom.
  - c) The powers and authorities did not understand the cross or they would not have crucified Christ (1 Corinthians 2:7-8).

<sup>13</sup> When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, <sup>14</sup> having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

(Colossians 2:13-15)

<sup>7</sup> No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. <sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

(1 Corinthians 2:7-8)

5. Jesus said the kingdom of God is within us (Luke 17:20-21)
6. The church is to advance His kingdom (Mat. 28:18-20)
7. At the Second Coming, Jesus will visibly establish His reign and then hand the kingdom over to the Father (see next point).

<sup>20</sup> Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, <sup>21</sup> nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."

(Luke 17:20-21)

<sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

(Matthew 28:18-20)

B. In the kingdom of God on earth Jesus will rule.

1. Jesus will rule over the nations (Psalm 2:7-9).
2. To Jesus every knee will bow in heaven and on earth (Phil. 2:9-11).
3. Jesus will hand the kingdom over to the Father (1 Cor. 15:22-28).

<sup>7</sup> I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father. <sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. <sup>9</sup> You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."

(Psalm 2:7-9)

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

(Philippians 2:9-11)

<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. <sup>24</sup> Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. <sup>28</sup> When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

(1 Corinthians 15:22-28)

C. In the kingdom of God, Jesus has been given authority, and He has extended that authority to His church.

1. Jesus has authority to rule.

- a) Authority over the angelic realm (Eph. 1:19b-23)
- b) Authority over all people for eternal life (John 17:1-4)
- c) Authority from the Father to judge (John 5:26-27)

<sup>19b</sup> That power is like the working of his mighty strength, <sup>20</sup> which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

(Ephesians 1:19-23)

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. <sup>2</sup> For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. <sup>3</sup> Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

(John 17:1-4)

<sup>26</sup> For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. <sup>27</sup> And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

(John 5:26-27)

2. The church is given Christ's authority.

- a) Authority to make disciples (Mat. 28:18-20)
- b) Authority to "bind and loose" in the face of opposition from the gates of Hades (Mat. 16:18-19)

3. So, the works that we do as the church have the authority to advance God's kingdom rule.

<sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

D. Kingdoms in conflict—the battlefield is earth, so the church operates in that battlefield.

1. The church displays God’s wisdom to the angelic beings—both angels and demons (Ephesians 3:10-11).
2. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:12).
3. Salvation of unbelievers comes against a backdrop of spiritual warfare as seen in Paul’s ministry (Acts 26:17-18).
4. Paul tells the church at Rome that God will crush Satan underneath their feet (Romans 16:19-20).

<sup>10</sup> His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, <sup>11</sup> according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Ephesians 3:10-11)

<sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

(Ephesians 6:12)

<sup>17</sup> I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them <sup>18</sup> to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

(Acts 26:17-18)

<sup>19</sup> Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. <sup>20</sup> The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

(Romans 16:19-20)

E. Kingdom vision, mission, purpose, strategy

1. Vision: Establishing the reign of Christ (1 Cor. 15:22-28)
2. Mission: Great Commission (Mat. 28:18-20)
3. Purpose: Glorify God (Romans 15:5-6, 17; 1 Peter 2:12)
4. Strategy: Christ will build His church (Mat. 16:18)

<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. <sup>24</sup> Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. <sup>28</sup> When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

(1 Corinthians 15:22-28)

<sup>5</sup> May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ... <sup>17</sup> Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God.

(Romans 15:5-6, 17)

<sup>12</sup> Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

(1 Peter 2:12)

<sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

(Matthew 16:18)

### III. Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13-16)

#### A. As "salt" we are kingdom influencers (Matthew 13:31-33).

1. Mustard seed influencers (Matthew 13:31-32)
2. Yeast influencers (Matthew 13:33)

<sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. <sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

(Matthew 5:13-16)

<sup>31</sup> He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. <sup>32</sup> Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches." <sup>33</sup> He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."

(Matthew 13:31-33)

#### B. As "light" we are kingdom proclaimers of the Gospel.

1. Evangelism—proclamation of His Gospel, which leads to salvation and expands His kingdom rule over the hearts and minds of people.
  - a) We are kingdom ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).
  - b) Declaration of the Cross (1 Corinthians 1:22-24)
  - c) Declaration of the Word of God (2 Timothy 4:2)

<sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

(2 Corinthians 5:18-21)

<sup>22</sup> Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

(1 Corinthians 1:22-24)

<sup>2</sup> Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

(2 Timothy 4:2)

2. Missions—scope of His kingdom influence is worldwide (Matthew 28:18-20).

a) The works of service we do is intended to expand God's kingdom worldwide.

b) The work of the church is to move God's kingdom forward, not to circle the wagons.

C. We are ultimately judged for our works, not so much on the basis of what we accomplished, but how we accomplished God's works.

1. We will be judged for our works at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10).

2. We will not be judged necessarily by how much we have accomplished (Ephesians 2:10), but by how we accomplished what the Lord had given us to do.

<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

(2 Corinthians 5:10)

<sup>10</sup> For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

(Ephesians 2:10)

Group Discussion:

Warm-up Question: Have you previously looked at your works of service for the Lord as purposeful acts in advancing God's kingdom?

Discussion #1: Why do you think that our works of service for the Lord need to flow out of our deepening relationship with Him? Can you describe what it would be like to do works of service for the Lord without having a deepening relationship with Him?

Discussion #2: In what small ways do you see yourself as a kingdom influencer ("salt")? Why do you think it's important to God that we be an influence for His kingdom in this world? How does being a "kingdom influencer" affect our actions at work? In our neighborhoods? In our extended families? In politics?

Discussion #3: Discuss the kingdom vision, mission, purpose, strategy found on page 7 of these notes.

The Bottom Line: As the church, we are called to participate in God's kingdom works, which include being influencers of righteousness in an unrighteous world, and being proclaimers of the Gospel.