

Everyday, Part 6

At CCC, we're starting 2010 with a series called "EVERYDAY" - so we can learn (or relearn!) some of the biblical steps that build us into disciples. None of them are dramatic. None of them are quick fixes. And none of them work if we only do them sporadically or if we quit after a week or two. But all of them are powerful if we just take a few minutes "EVERYDAY" to invest strategically in the only part of our life that will outlive our life! Some things you just need to do EVERYDAY.

Today we want to talk about the fifth of "five discipleship habits" ...

ENLIST (ministry)

VOICE (prayer)

EXTEND (evangelism)

READ (Bible)

YIELD (time, talent, treasure)

Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:46-47 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

THE LORD "ADDED TO THE CHURCH DAILY" PRECISELY BECAUSE HIS PEOPLE DID THESE THINGS DAILY! THEY "CONTINUED STEDFASTLY" IN THESE HABITS, WITHOUT A BREAK – **EVERYDAY!**

We've already talked about ENLISTING in ministry – that is where you use your gifts and abilities INSIDE the church to grow the church. And we've already talked about EXTENDING the reach of the church through evangelism – that is where you use your gifts and abilities OUTSIDE the church to grow the church.

Today, the message is about YIELDING your gifts and abilities – your time, your talent, and your treasure – to grow the church. It's all about growing the church – because living things grow, and dead things don't grow. It's that simple – if a church isn't growing, that church is DEAD.

But didn't we already cover this?! Not really. Because, while ENLISTING and EXTENDING are about finding a ministry you are gifted to do (and enjoy doing), YIELDING is about putting your abilities and resources to work in areas you are NOT specifically gifted for. Why in the world would you do that?! Because you are a SERVANT who is YIELDED to God.

Today's message originally was intended to take a teaching approach about yielding our time, talent and treasure to God. Basically that means:

- That in a culture where the AVERAGE person now spends the equivalent of a 40-hour workweek on television and internet every week of their life, we break the trend and YIELD our TIME to God. Allowing for eight hours of sleep every night, you have approximately 110 hours in a week – following the simple principle of the tithe, that means 11 hours in your week should belong specifically to God for church attendance, prayer and Bible reading, or volunteering in ministry. "You can't preach that, Pastor!" Watch me! God is raising up a hard-core, sold-out, no-holds-barred group of Apostolics in the last days ... and they have absolutely no problem giving one-quarter of the time you give to Facebook and TV sitcoms to their Lord!!
- That in a culture where many Christians are obsessed with climbing their particular corporate ladder, we break the trend and YIELD our TALENT to God. Real Apostolics refuse to use their expertise with the trades to build bigger and earn more while the house of God falls into disrepair or postpones necessary projects due to lack of volunteers. Real Apostolics refuse to use their education and strategic skill sets to earn a paycheck while their church languishes for lack of those same talents. Real Apostolics refuse to waste their sales skills just on pep rallies, sales seminars and conventions when there is a world going to hell and those very same talents could be used to teach Bible Studies and give a powerful witness!!
- That in a culture where the selfish spirit of "me-first" sits on the throne of every human heart, and where the constant song of materialism is "MORE!" we break the trend and YIELD our TREASURE to God. The Bible says that you CANNOT serve God and money! The Bible says that where your money is, your heart automatically follows! That means that you MUST put your treasure into God's kingdom! And God doesn't ask for much – He just asks for "tithes and offerings." Real Apostolics have absolutely no problem giving ten percent of their INCREASE back to God – that's a TITHE. And real Apostolics have absolutely no problem giving OFFERINGS above that! Why? Because God makes the rest go further! Never tried it? God says, "Prove Me in this! Put Me to the test and I'll show you how I can bless you!" It's not about money, it's about YIELDING!

Matthew 6:24 *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Matthew 6:21 *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

Malachi 3:8-10 *Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

“Pastor, that’s really an in-your-face message!” Well, I have only this to say – that’s what the message was originally supposed to be today. But that’s before God dealt with me this week and said “Your presentation of YIELDING to My people is too small! I do want to be the FIRST priority in their time, their talent and their treasure. But I want MORE than that!” So today, I feel a bit like Jude ... I set out to preach one sermon but God redirected me to “earnestly contend” for His Word today ...

Jude 1:3-5 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

Paul gives us the major passage in the NT where the word “YIELD” is used multiple times. The Greek word means “to exhibit, to substantiate, to prove, or to show.” **If you’re YIELDED to God, IT WILL SHOW!**

Romans 6:12-19 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

Paul says it very plainly – you once were a SERVANT to SIN, and now you are a SERVANT to RIGHTEOUSNESS. And it is “righteousness unto holiness” – if the JUSTIFICATION you’ve experienced on the INSIDE is real, it will show up in SANCTIFICATION on the OUTSIDE! We allow lots of time around here for babies in Christ to grow up – that’s the way it should be, because every believer is at a different age and stage in their walk with God. But hear the voice of the preacher today ...

God is not the least bit interested in being made over in YOUR image. He refuses to conform to your culture or comfort zone. He is totally convinced that since He alone redeemed (“purchased”) you out of sin, He OWNS you. And with God that is non-negotiable. God wants to make you over into HIS image – so if you have a Biblical salvation experience, it will CHANGE you in ways that you could not have previously imagined. Your DESIRES will change. Your PRIORITIES will change. Your THINKING will change. Your ACTIVITIES will change. Your DRESS CODE will change. In fact, your ENTIRE LIFESTYLE will change.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

If you have true righteousness in your SPIRIT, you will have true holiness in your BODY – because BOTH of them belong to God! I understand that many times, the generations before us did a good job of telling us WHAT to do, but sometimes not a very good job teaching us WHY we do it. We’re working diligently to correct that in this generation. But hear me well ... just because they may have overlooked the WHY doesn’t mean that they were wrong on the WHAT! Culture and churches may have become more liberal, but God has never changed His mind on what an Apostolic believer should act like, talk like, or dress like. We are now “servants of righteousness” – **servants don’t ARGUE, they YIELD.**

Because we are a church where EVERYONE is welcome to “belong before they believe,” and because we are a church that is patient with young believers while they GROW, we always run the risk of being misinterpreted. Jesus and Paul were misinterpreted, and we will be also! That means people will come here from time to time with an AGENDA ... to enjoy fellowship but not discipleship, to get all the benefits without any of the responsibility, to experience salvation but reject sanctification. **AND WE WILL LET THEM COME, AND WE WILL LOVE THEM.** But the reason every one of us is here instead of somewhere else is the power of God that is in our midst – and a holy God only manifests Himself only among a holy people who are YIELDED to Him. We will NEVER change our stand on HOLINESS, because it is a BIBLICAL stand. We will continue to YIELD ourselves, because that is what brings God’s power!