



BECOMING ONE OF GOD'S KINGDOM PARTNERS



'...He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord's good plan will prosper in his hands.' Isaiah 53:10

We know God has the capacity to masterfully orchestrate His plan. We also know that people are key to the fulfillment of His plans, so He is always looking for people to partner with Him to execute His agenda. While it is often said that God just needs people that are available, availability is just the starting point.

This means that those who may desire to be key partners in expanding the frontiers of God's kingdom are signifying that they can be entrusted with more responsibility. Knowing that God is extremely intentional about seeing His agenda through, then it stands to reason that there will be additional things He will look for in selecting those He can work with/through.

This series we are looking at 5 key areas the Bible has shown us that the Lord pays attention to in entrusting people with more. We pray that as we go through this series the Holy Spirit will open our eyes and hearts and prepare us to have the privilege of being those the Lord can consistently point to as those that can be entrusted to prosper His plans.

Day 1

A Heart for God

"Now the Lord said to Samuel, "...go to Bethlehem. Find a man named Jesse who lives there, for I have selected one of his sons to be my king."" 1 Samuel 16:1

"...Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, "Surely this is the Lord's anointed!" But the Lord said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart"" 1 Samuel 16:6-7

When the Lord rejected Saul as king over Israel, He gave Samuel instructions on how anointing the next king and in the process we and Samuel learned something about God's selection criteria: the condition of our heart. Even Eliab had the physical stature of a king, God was rejected him based on the state of his heart.

"But now your kingdom must end, for the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart. The Lord has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."" 1 Samuel 13:14

"I have found my servant David. I have anointed him with my holy oil." Psalms 89:20

"But I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives..." Jeremiah 17:10

Though far from perfect, David was keen to please God and quick to repent whenever his errors were pointed out to him. This means that God isn't only interested in what we do but the heart with which we do it. Do we seek to glorify Him or ourselves? Are we seeking to please Him or people? Do we take the time to inquire from Him what His plans are and put in our best in doing our part? These may seem like small things to us, but they matter to God.

"The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him..." 2 Chronicles 16:9

God is constantly searching for those whose hearts are fully committed to Him, knowing that such people will play a critical role in expanding the frontiers of His kingdom here on earth. As the Lord searches may we be found among those He can count on.

Prayer: Lord search me and show me where my heart isn't right towards You. Help me grow daily in love and undivided commitment to You

Day 2

Obedience

'If you love me, obey my commandments.' John 14:15

We know that the Lord is searching for people whose hearts are committed to Him and one of the ways commitment is demonstrated is through obedience. No one will entrust critical matters to a person who is disobedient and the Lord is no different in this regard. Loving the Lord means obedience and obedience is an assurance that we can be considered credible kingdom partners.

During the course of Biblical history, we see the Lord partnering with people (Noah, Abraham, David, Paul, etc.) who were willing to obey Him. Understandably one of the most critical projects the Lord had to undertake was the birth and earthly ministry of Jesus. This would have received a lot of heaven's attention especially regarding Jesus's earthly parents as His caretakers during the early years. Of the several criteria Mary and Joseph may have met, one thing that immediately comes out when we look at their lives is obedience.

"...the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife... When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife.' Matthew 1:24

'...an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return..." That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother' Matthew 2:13-14

"Get up!" the angel said. "Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel..." So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother.' Matthew 2:20-21

It's fair to surmise that the Lord would've observed Joseph's obedience in other areas before entrusting him with the care of the child Jesus as he was clearly a man of prompt obedience regardless of the personal cost to him. He married a bride who was already pregnant, abandoned his business and hometown to protect the newborn child and moved immediately again when it was time to return to Israel. None of these could have been convenient, likely costly to his business and he may even have looked foolish to his friends and family, but he still obeyed.

The challenge Joseph's life throws to us is our own willingness to drop or take on whatever the Lord asks us to without question and with promptness as clearly there is a link between obedience and responsibility.

Prayer: Lord give me the grace to put obedience to You ahead of my personal convenience or comfort.

Day 3

Faithfulness

'Now, a person who is put in charge as a manager must be faithful.' 1 Corinthians 4:2

Faithfulness is a big deal to God. When we're faithful we demonstrate three key qualities: diligence, trustworthiness, and longevity. Diligence as we know a faithful person will show up consistently. Trustworthiness because a faithful person can be relied upon not just to show up but to do what needs to be done well. Longevity because faithfulness requires being where we need to be, doing what needs to be done over the long haul.

'If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities.' Luke 16:10

The manner we treat the seemingly little things matter more to God than we may realize. The Lord is more interested in our attitude to our areas of responsibility than the size of the responsibility. He pays attention to those who demonstrate faithfulness in the 'little' instructions, putting in their very best and serving with a heart that wants to please Him and not just look good to people around us. This cuts across every area of our lives, not just what we do in church related ministry. Can our family, employers/employees, neighbours etc. point to us as people that can be called faithful? Such are the type of people that can be trusted with more as they have demonstrated they won't abandon their responsibilities.

'But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness' Galatians 5:22

Faithfulness will be impossible without the Holy Spirit as He alone can give the grace needed to be truly faithful. God is faithful by nature and as we draw closer to Him, we take on more of His character and look more and more like Christ. So, it's possible to increase in our capacity for faithfulness as we let the Holy Spirit lead us and lean on the grace He makes available.

Prayer: Lord help me to increase in faithfulness. Give me a heart that isn't focused on pleasing people but on serving You. Help me to be diligent and trustworthy in every area of my life.

Day 4

Covenant Partners

'Gather My saints together to Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.' Psalms 50:5

God recognizes that there is a difference between giving to Him whatever He requires of us (time, energy, resources, etc.) from a place of convenience and a place of sacrifice. Though we live in an age that promotes putting 'self' first, God's pattern for progress is to always put Him first. And even then, there will be times that will require going the extra mile on our part.

'Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.' Matthew 6:33

We can choose to be part of those who partner with God based on convenience or based on what serves our needs at the time. We can also choose to be part of those who enter a covenant relationship with God. This means we identify specific areas we want to partner with Him such that come what may, we will always put God's Kingdom needs first and do our part in meeting those needs.

'Understand, therefore, that the Lord your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes his unfailing love on those who love him and obey his commands.' Deuteronomy 7:9

'When you make a promise to God, don't delay in following through, for God takes no pleasure in fools. Keep all the promises you make to him. It is better to say nothing than to make a promise and not keep it.' Ecclesiastes 5:4-5

God doesn't take covenants lightly and neither should we. He doesn't enter a covenant looking for loopholes or ways to get out if it becomes inconvenient. When we make a covenant with God, we enter a binding relationship as we commit to always do whatever it is we have promised to do, knowing that God will always do His part. Therefore, we need to think deeply before committing to becoming a covenant partner. However we know that should we do so, God will back us all the way even beyond our lifetime.

Prayer: Lord help me to be faithful where I am now. Help me also to grow in grace so I mature to becoming one of the covenant partners that can be entrusted with the expansion of Your kingdom here on earth.

Day 5

Love

'Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.'
1 Corinthians 13:13

The foundation of everything we do with and for God can be summarized in one word: Love. As simple as the word is, it's extremely powerful. God's love isn't based on emotions but on His character. For us to partner with Him, we must have a revelation of this love so we can share it with others as it's impossible to give what you don't have.

'But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.' 1 John 4:8

'And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.' Ephesians 3:18-19

'But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.' Romans 5:8

As we journey with the Holy Spirit and allow Him to lead us, we will find that even if our partnership with God started from us wanting to get something in return, it will impact our willingness to do all the things we mentioned in this study. Not from a place of human strength or compulsion, but from love. The love we have for the Father is demonstrated in the love we show to others. And this is what the partnering with God is really about – demonstrating His love in tangible ways as His representatives.

Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit will continue to reveal greater depths and dimensions of God to us so we can be more entrusted with the things that matter to Him.

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