

# Welfare Christianity

by Derek Melton

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of laboring in the kingdom of God and serving others, rather than expecting to be served, and calls for repentance and a change of heart in the church.*

**Duration:** 1:01:28

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:16, Mark 10:42, Luke 9:24, Romans 12:1, Ephesians 2:10, 1 Timothy 6:17, James 2:17

**Topics:** "Welfare"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the need for Christians in America to have a mindset of mission and to actively engage in spreading the gospel. He criticizes the complacency and welfare mindset that he believes is prevalent in American Christianity. The preacher urges believers to be rich in good works, ready to serve and communicate, and to lay down their lives for the sake of the gospel. He highlights the importance of being a doer of the word of God and emphasizes the need for Christians to shine their light through their good deeds. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the need for believers to be prepared for His return.

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## Transcript

I told you last week I was going to continue on on the repentance series or the series on doctrine and talk about the marks of the repentant until I found out that over half the church was going to be gone. So I decided to keep that one in reserve until next week or whenever the folks get back from vacation because I want one to share that with the whole church. And so the Lord gave me a word today to speak to you about welfare Christianity.

Welfare Christianity, a Christianity that sows nothing, that labors none, but yet desires to reap the dividends and the benefits of Christianity. So we're going to pray, ask the Lord to speak to us and to show us if we're on welfare because the Lord's calling all of us to get off of it and to be laborers and faithful stewards and servants in his kingdom. Say amen.

Well, Father, open up the eyes of our understanding, Lord. Enlighten us with the truth of the word of God. Father, I pray, Lord God, that we would pass, Lord, from death to life.

Lord God, from lethargy, Lord God, to sufficiency. And Lord God, that we might be overcomers, victorious in the battle, or as the song says, victorious in the strife. And Father, I pray, Lord God, that we, Lord God, would be filled with the Holy Spirit and power, strength.

Lord God, that we might be endued. Lord, let your grace and the power of the Holy Ghost be within us and upon us. Lord, that we might be witnesses of your son, that we might be doers of the word of God, not just sinners and listeners alone.

Lord God, you've called us by your name unto good works. You've saved us for such a time as this, and Lord, also such a work as this. Lord, help us today to understand, Lord God, that you've not called us to coast, but Lord God, to stretch forth our hand to the plow and to go forward in your name, for your glory in Jesus' name.

Amen. The first thing I want to say to you is we're not saved by good works, but we're saved for them. I can say amen, and we can all go home and eat fried chicken and have a good bounty, have a fullness of that.

If you just think upon it, good works are not going to save you. We're saved by God's free gift of grace as we began to trust in the sufficiency of Christ for our sins to be washed away, for his pardoning grace and his wondrous power to work in us, to transform us from citizens of the kingdom of darkness to citizens of God's dear son. We put our trust in him and his grace works in us, not something that we're doing, but something that he does unto salvation for good works.

I think there's such a spirit in this world today, and you see this anytime you find preachers that are speaking on the truth, by the Holy Spirit speaking out against laziness in the church and against the coasting mood that we have that's in the church, that you see people began to on their posts and their columns on these forums on the internet began to assail these godly men with all of these religious slanders saying, oh that they're trying to get us back into works. Let me tell you something, there is no overdoing of works in this generation. If there's anything that's being left undone, it's that we're not laboring.

The church is coasting, the church is on cruise control instead of on the victorious frame of mind and the going forward and the militant mindset that we should have advancing for the kingdom of God. I don't think that there's anyone in this church alone, much less others, that have to worry about working for salvation. Now I don't see any of you out on bicycles trying to sell magazines on Saturday.

Are you with me? Trying to earn your way into heaven. We all know that salvation is a free gift, but beloved Jesus Christ has saved us for a purpose. And there's a mood that is in the church today, my friend, that is a welfare mentality that has crept in unawares to whereby we want all the benefits of redemption.

We want all of the gifts that Christ has died to provide for us, but we don't want to do anything. We want to sit. And you know, I agree with what is in the bulletin, that statement that Alistair Begg made, that you have 22 people on the football field that are in need of rest and you have 40,000 in the stands that are in need of exercise.

And that's the way that it is in the church today. And we have a welfare Christianity to where we do not, and we have not taken up on ourselves the form of a servant. We do not have our hand up on the plow.

We're perfectly comfortable to sit back and watch others labor in the kingdom of God and have their hand up on the plow day and night, laboring even unto weariness. But no one is there to lift the arms and to help to ease the burden. Jesus Christ died on the cross that we might labor, that we might work.

You're saved by a free gift of grace unto good works. Now, are you there in Mark chapter 10? I do have intentions of speaking on repentance and the marks of repentance next week. So I want us to be prepared to receive that with an open heart.

Now, where I'm going to start in verse 42, I want you to see that Jesus came to serve. Verse 42, Jesus called them together and said, you know that in this world, kings are tyrants and officials lord it over the people that are beneath them. But among you is talking to the elect.

It's talking to the saints of God. It's talking to us, the people that have been chosen by God almighty. It should be quite different.

Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant. And whoever wants to be first must be slave of all verse 45. For even I, the son of man came here not to be served, but to serve others and to give my life as a ransom for many.

You know, Jesus is our example. The word of God says, be therefore imitators of God as dear children. But we are to take upon ourselves the cloak of a servant.

But we are saved by God's free gift of grace. We rejoice in that free gift. We're thankful that we have partaken of God's nature that beloved.

What have we been saved unto? What have we been saving? And we know we've been saving by, but what have we been saved unto? And there's a difference there. We've been saving, but saved by God's grace is something that God has worked in us, not of our own doings, but of his free gift alone, but for a purpose, for a reason that we might serve, that we might put our hand to the plow and become labors in the fields that are white and ripe and to harvest. And how many of us this week have given a thought to people that are dying and going to hell? One of the first things I think you'll see if you pull up our church website is how many people die and go into eternity every second.

And by the time you spend a little time surfing on our website and maybe download a sermon and listen to that sermon or read a few quotes or a few articles that that have been written by the ministry here, you'll see that thousands of people have passed unto eternity, most of which very few people have any regard for their condition of their soul. And beloved, we are the people of God. We are the church of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And God has called us not only to labor for the kingdom, but also to intercede and to labor in prayer with a burden upon us concerning the lost. And, you know, my daughter was married a couple of weeks ago on Saturday, three weeks ago, I think Saturday, three yesterday. We've lost track of time.

It was it was spinning real fast to yesterday. By the way, they're on their honeymoon and having a great time. But that really bothered me, you know, just that my children have grown, you know, and you look back over the course of their life and you remember when they were little and now they're big and you don't know how it happened.

It's like you just turned around with the busyness of life. And a lot of my time was was busy working and providing a living for my family. And I missed a lot of that.

And it was it was very grievous to me in one way. I'm thankful that she's married. I'm thankful that she has a godly husband.

And this is all that we've prayed for since she's been born and believe God for. And God has answered our prayers and has brought a godly man into our daughter's life. And so we're very happy in that regard, but yet very saddened in regard to that she's not at home with us any longer.

And just the memories and all that just begin just to overtake you. So I'm just sobbing like a baby for weeks. And I told Stacy, I said, why can't I cry like this for the lost? And I said that to her a couple of times.

So, you know, this is ridiculous that I'm sobbing in regard to my personal life, but I can't sob like this for the lost. Like, Lord, give me a heart like that for the lost, you know, where I can solve and intercede and lay my life down for those that are lost, that they may receive Christ, you know, and I want to see that in all of our hearts, you know, and there's so much turbulence in what's called the Lord's Church. There's so much turbulence.

People being grieved by this or that are offended by this or that. In fact, the ones I see that get offended, that are getting grieved and that that leave and never want to come back again are those that never do anything. They set back and they nitpick everything that's going on, none of which do they have any involvement with.

Their hand is not up on the plow, they do not fast and pray with the people of God in the church. They do not spend time pouring and investing in the lives of others. They have a welfare mentality.

They want to come to church on Sunday morning and have an investment in them that cost them nothing. And it's welfare Christianity. And beloved my friend, it is not a Christianity of all at all.

And the word of God proves that it is not. It is religion. Religion demands to be served.

Christianity requires us to serve. Never get that mixed up in your mind. If your Christianity is not requiring service from you, my friend, you are not born again.

You are yet in your sense. And if you're wanting a Christianity that will serve you and wash your feet and comb your hair and brush your teeth and provide for your every need and every desire in every way, my beloved, you're religious and you will be offended because you're demanding everything serve you. But you're coming into the church, the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the kingdom of almighty God that demands you be a servant and not being served.

And you wonder why you're getting your feathers all ruffled up. You're on the wrong side and you're in the wrong kingdom. You're wanting to be served.

The kingdom of God is speaking to you for you to be a servant and to get off this welfare trip that you're on, waiting on everyone to wait on you instead of being a servant that you might lay your life down for others that you might live. The church has become anemic and sick with this malady and this disease. And we believe that we have we must repent of it and turn to almighty God, even our Lord, the one that we that we love and we worship, the one we say we love and that we say we worship.

That laid his life down, he came down here and he humbled himself and he became a servant. He didn't come down here to be served, but to serve and were to fashion our life after him. Yet we're waiting on everyone to serve us.

No one called me this week, put a pacifier in that baby's mouth. Are you with how many people do I had a lady come to me one time and she she said, so I didn't come to church three weeks in a row on purpose. I'm like, OK, she said I did it just to see if someone would call me and no one did.

I said, well, how many people did you call? I said, I'm serious, ma'am. How many people in the church did you call this week and check on them? And then she started getting mad. She's done.

The Bible says so and you'll reap. You want people to love you? How about you love people? You want someone to check on you? How about you check on someone else? That's the way things work. You've got to sell yourself.

If you want to be loved, you've got to sell love. If you want to be have friends in your life, you've got to show yourself friendly first. And we've got this welfare mentality, want everyone just to make over us.

You know what? Sick people have to have people make over them. We're not sick people. We're the people of the kingdom of God.

We're alive. We've been infused the very life of God, the very righteousness of God. And we're still sitting around whining.

Why? Because our eyes are up on ourself waiting to be served, thinking that we're in the kingdom, but yet we're shut out. That concerns me. The church is to be a militant force of Jesus Christ followers that give no thought to themselves, but their thoughts are up on Christ.

And they're going forward with the message of the gospel to reach the loss in the name of Jesus Christ who weren't too busy being upset because no one called us this week. Well, if you'd have had your tail in church where you should be, you shouldn't, you wouldn't be mad to begin with. Instead of setting it home, seeing if someone's going to call and check on you to see if that church is worthy of your attendance or not.

Maybe you should have stayed home. I told her I was going to preach on welfare Christianity. She said, I'm staying home.

Matthew chapter 23, we're going to look at what religion demands. Religion demands to be served. Beloved at some time, we've got to get past this.

Sitting at home, just biting our nails, waiting on someone to call us. Well, honey, are you okay? You know, no, what we're doing a lot of times is we're feeding a sickness instead of addressing it with the truth. And this precious lady, I loved her enough to tell her the truth.

And I think that was the last time I saw her. I told her, you know, you need to quit setting on the other side of the fence, waiting on someone to crawl through the fence to get to you. You need to crawl through the fence yourself and come join the people of God.

You know, you need to come to the house of God and say, Hey, what, what do I need to do? Is there anything that needs to be done? And you get the mindset that you're here to serve instead of the mindset that you come here to be served. If we, if we call ourselves saved, we call ourselves by Jesus name. Now, listen, if we're, if we're, if we're yet in our sins and lost, we are called to serve them.

Let's serve them. The truth, the gospel, when we're not called to cave into their whims and desires, but we're called to bring them the truth that will set them free. They may not like it, but we're called to take it nonetheless.

But at some point in time, we've got to get past this mentality that we come to church to find which church serves us the best cup of soup. Did you read the other statement in the bulletin or other quote? I found it to be quite interesting as well. Listen to this one.

Church attendance is infected with the malice of conditional loyalty, which has produced an army of ecclesiastical hitchhikers. The hitchhiker's thumb says you buy the car, you pay for the repairs and you pay for the upkeep and the insurance. You fill the car with gas, and then I'll ride with you.

But if you have an accident, you're on your own. In fact, I'll probably sue you. So it is with, so it is with the credo of so many of today's church attenders.

You go to the meetings and you serve on the, it says, you go to the meetings, you serve on the boards, you serve on the committees, you grapple with the issues, you do the work of the church, you pay the bills, and then I'll come along for the ride. But if things don't suit me, I'll complain and I'll probably bail out for my thumb is always out for a better ride. And that is the credo, the creed of many church attenders today.

I'm looking for somewhere that will serve me better. I do not hear the voice of Christ in that. Do you? It sounds to me like the voice of the flesh sounds to me like the voice of the one that spoke up in the 14th chapter of Matthew.

It says, I will be like the most high God and everything will serve me. Everything will, will serve me and honor me. And we know what happened to that voice.

It was silenced as it was cast from heaven. And we know who that was. It was Lucifer that was cast to the earth as a devil of hell.

In Matthew chapter 23, we see Jesus warning the religious leaders of the day religion. Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are official interpreters of the scriptures. So practice and obey whatever they say to you, but do not follow their example for they don't practice what they teach.

They crush you within possible religious demands, and they never lift a finger to ease the burden. That is religion, isn't it? Religion sets back with its arms folded and says, we'll watch you serve. We'll watch you work.

We'll watch you stay after the church luncheon and clean up all the mess on the floor while others leave and allow others to work. We'll allow you to put food on our plate, but we will not put any on yours. Look at verse, um, verse six and how they love to sit at the head of the table at the banquets of the most prominent seats in the synagogue.

You know, they, they have the banquet set up and they said in the, in the seats of prominence. Why? Because they want to be served. They want to be, to be noticed as dignitaries, but yet having, having no reason to be dignified, not having a servant's heart, not having a servant's attitude, but setting in a place of prominence so that all will recognize their place and their position.

And then all will come and serve them as being the chief guy, the chief gal, but not being willing to get out on the floor and to get down on their knees and to clean the mess up, to sweep up the spilled foods into the, the, the dustpan and to serve, not being willing. And religion, my friend wants to be served, but it's not willing to serve. And it's not the spirit of Jesus Christ.

It should not be named among God's people. It should not be in the house of almighty God. It should not be in the church of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ.

We are servants. We have not come to be served, but yet to serve. We have not come to be waited upon, but yet to wait upon.

We are the very hands and feet of Jesus Christ and beloved. We should put those hands forward to serve in the kingdom of God and to keep our mouths quiet. A servant doesn't have a voice.

A servant just does what their master has asked and beloved. I don't have a voice. I just must obey him.

I should not say all, but I have a right, but I don't have a right. I forfeited and relinquish those rights upon the new birth whereby I laid down my life for the one that laid his life down for me. Chapter 17 of Luke.

Let's see here. The motive of our service says when a servant comes in from plowing in verse seven or taking care of sheep, he doesn't just sit down and eat. He must first prepare his master's meal and serve him his supper before eating his own.

Sounds to me like an interesting discourse for a pastor, doesn't it? And then you think that pastor Derek's duties are done whenever the sheep are fed. No, there's the serving of the master, the waiting on the master and ministering to the needs of the Lord. But this does not only speak to pastors, it speaks to all of us.

Verse nine says this and says, and the servant is not even thanked. He's not even thanked because he's merely doing what he's supposed to do in the same way, Jesus said, when you obey me, you should say, we are not worthy of praise. We are servants who have simply done our duty.

Well, then how many times whenever we finally do put our hands to the plow, we want to pat on the back and our motive is so wrong. And beloved, we are servants to the Lord and the Lord does not and is not required to give us a pat on the back. Does the Lord bless obedience? We all know that he does.

But that's not the reason that we labor for him. That's not the reason that we go forward with the cause of the kingdom of God. That's not the reason.

The reason that I'm here this morning ministering to you, having sought the Lord and prayed in regard to this message speaking about welfare Christianity. I'm not doing this to get a pat on the back from God. I'm doing this because God has called me by his wisdom and by his decree to speak the truth, to preach the gospel to every living creature.

I'm simply obeying him because he has purchased me. I don't deserve a pat on the back. I am a servant.

The servant is not even faint because he's merely doing what he's supposed to do. I'm doing what God's called me to do. And I don't go into this expecting to be if I expected to be applauded, especially with the gospel of Jesus Christ and preaching it in its raw form.

Beloved, there is very few thank yous from man. In fact, there's a whole lot more of the other. There's a whole lot more of the other abandonment, loneliness, sorrow, a cup of bitterness.

That I must I must drink. And very few pats on the back. And I don't live for the pats on the back.

I live by the faith of the son of God. And, beloved, we must all get this mentality that Jesus Christ died, that I might be saved, that I might go forward and work and to be a doer and not just a hearer only and to be a laborer and to be an obedient and a faithful steward in the kingdom of God and not someone that sets him with the arms all folded up, critiquing and nitpicking everything that's said and done. I didn't like that song.

So I'm not singing it. I don't like that sermon, so I'm not going back. They didn't call me, so I'm angry.

You know, welfare Christianity, letting everyone else do all the work while we sit back and draw from it with no investment, with no investment. You know, the people in this ministry that stay hooked up to this minister, the ones that yield themselves to the Lord, that are faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, that labor in a forward motion alongside of my wife and I and we go forward together. They never complain.

They're as happy as they can be in that they the work of the gospel is going forward. Souls are being touched and saved. Lives are being transformed while the very in the very same building, hearing the very same messages with the very same people.

There are other people that are sitting back, getting angry, doing nothing, getting offended left and right, nitpicking everything that's said and done. And what's the difference between the two? There's two, one, the kingdom that they're in and secondly, the attitude that they have. Jesus Christ armed himself, even though he wasn't, even though he was, was a son of God, he armed and then he knew that he's a son of God, equal to God.

He knew that, but he took upon himself and he armed himself with the attitude of a servant, of a servant. Listen, we are all serving with the mindset of a servant. There are not very many opportunities for us to get offended and to get our feathers ruffled.

We're too busy going forward. We're too busy going forward and beloved. If there is an occasion for a fence, then we just simply go one to another in the spirit of meekness.

And I love the way Jesus Christ asked us to do. And we resolve things in the name of the Lord and savior, Jesus Christ, that the unity may continue unbroken. The fellowship may continue unbroken.

The reason that people won't come together and work out their faults because they don't want them worked out because they don't have the right mindset. They don't have the mindset of a servant. You know what it is that makes a marriage beautiful and makes a marriage work? Learn to serve each other, learn to serve each other.

God has created us to serve. He's not created us to be set in, seated in places of, of, of prominence that is reserved for Christ. But beloved, we are servants.

We are to be seated with Christ. But beloved, we are to serve. We are to serve.

Our Lord set example for us, serving, serving. We see him serving sinners. We see him scolding religious people.

He never came down to the demands, not even once. When they were setting back nitpicking, everything never bothered him. He just braided a whip and ran them out.

Are you with me? Religion never sat well with our Lord because why religion wants to be served. He came to vote. He came for those that didn't even feel that they were worthy enough to be served.

Those are the ones that he served. Those that were broken and contrite, not those that were propped up in their own conceit, but those that are broken and contrite before him. He was served.

When you see him, a sinner woman had been caught up in the act of adultery and then religion was wanting to what? Destroy her. But Jesus served her and said, your sins are forgiven. Go and sin no more.

A woman with an issue of blood for 12 years, sick, sick, fighting it to cling on to the very, the very essence of life itself. Jesus touched her and the power of God went out from him. She was healed.

We see a crippled man at the pool of Bethesda crippled since who knows when it was. I forgot how many years the boy had been crippled, maybe since birth. He couldn't even get to Jesus.

Jesus went to him and served him. He said, rise and walk, roll your mat up and leave. And he left rejoicing and walking.

And all through the word of God, we see Jesus serving, serving the hurting, serving the law, serving the sick, serving those that were bound, serving those that needed him. But those that didn't realize their need, he addressed them and scorned them, confronted them. Luke 22, over a couple of pages, we'll see Jesus here as a servant.

In verse 25, Jesus told them in this world, kings and great men order their people around. And yet they're called friends of the people. But among you, who's it talking to among who those that are called by the name of Jesus Christ, but among you, those who are the greatest should take the lowest rank and the leader should be like a servant.

Normally, the master set the table and is served by his servants, but not here. For I am your servant. You have remained true to me in my time of trial.

And just as my father has granted me a kingdom, I now grant you the right to eat and drink at my table in that kingdom. And you'll sit on thrones and judging the 12 tribes of Israel. He's talking about about those that have a servant's heart, those that have come to serve, those that have the mindset, those that have armed themselves with the attitude of a servant.

Philippians chapter two, if you want to turn there, you don't have to, if you don't want to, I'm going to just flip over and read this passage to you in verse six. We'll start in verse five says your attitude should be the same as Jesus Christ had, though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing.

He took the humble position of a slave. The King James says a servant and he appeared in human form and in human form. He obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross.

And because of this, God has raised him up to the heights of heaven and gave him a name that's above every other name. So he, he, he, he had this, he armed himself with a mindset and attitude, even though he was God, he humbled himself to be a servant and beloved. How much more us are you called by the

name of Christ? Are you called by his name? Or have you been chosen by almighty God under this great salvation that you and I both enjoy? And you've been called to be a servant.

You're called to be a servant. You're called to be last and not first. And then you're being last.

You shall be first. We should believe the gospel. We should believe the gospel.

It's amazing that whenever we have a food-a-thon here, the rush for the first place in line, and I don't see very many fighting for the last place because we've not yet armed ourselves with the mindset of a servant. And there are always those that always choose to be the servers. And it seems that there are always those that choose to be served.

It's amazing. I even see those in leadership waiting to be served because we haven't cultivated that mindset yet, that we're not here to be served, but to serve in everything, even with food in every area of our life, in every area. I say, pastor, you know, once you get up there and go through the line with your family, I'll wait.

I'll wait. I want everyone to eat first. Let everyone be served.

Let everyone be served. Then I'll go last. There's nothing left over.

That's okay. I'll go last. Let everyone else have theirs.

If I don't get a portion, the Lord will be my portion. It'll be okay. Let everyone have their place and I'll be last.

Isn't it amazing that in the church of our savior that died for the church set such a supreme example that we do not have a contest for last place as we should. Next time we have a church lunch, nobody's going to eat. Everybody's saying, whoa, he's looking at me.

I'm not doing it. Listen, don't do it for me, but just take upon yourself, arm yourself with this mind that we have been called of God to be servants and to serve each other and to labor. My opinion doesn't matter.

Truth is all that matters. The kingdom of God and the advancement of the kingdom of God is all that matters. It's amazing how we trifle or we struggle over these little small things that amount to nothing.

We strain out a gnat and we swallow a camel. We fight over things that mean nothing and the things that means everything means that mean everything. We don't argue about it all.

We don't give much serious thought to, you know, we'll fight about the color of the carpet. We'll fight about if we should or shouldn't have a building project. We'll fight about who does or doesn't clean the bathrooms.

We'll fight about that. But how many of us are contending for souls are in serious debate about, about soul winning and intercession or the amount of time that we should spend in prayer and fasting. It's always over trivial matters that we see the church divided about how much money we're going to bless the preacher with.

Are you with me? We see people divide over those issues, but yet has there ever been a church divided over winning souls? You want too many souls this week. I'm not going to attend church here. Bless God.

Too much self-denial, you know, too much prayer and fasting. I can't be a part of that, but yet we allow things to come in to divide us that have so little value. We strain out the net, but yet while we're swallowing a camel, we're worrying about things we shouldn't be worrying about ignoring things of great significance in the body of Christ.

You know, it's amazing in the word of God, you see so much about, about servants. You see in the 24th chapter of Matthew, if you want to turn there, uh, about a faithful servant, everybody. Okay.

It's talking about the, the, the, the coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ. I'll go ahead and begin in verse 42. Men will be working together in the field.

One will be taken. The other will be left to women will be grinding flour at the mill. One will be taken.

The other one will be left. So be prepared because you do not know what day your Lord is coming. Knowing this, a homeowner who knew exactly when a burglar would be coming would stay alert and not permit its house to be broken into.

You must also be ready all the time. The son of man will come when least expected. Verse 45, who is a faithful, sensible servant to whom the master can give the responsibility of managing his household and the feeding of his family.

If the master returns and finds that servant has done a good job, there will be a reward. I assure you, the master will put on that servant in charge of all that he owns. But if the servant is evil and thanks, my master won't be back for a while and begins oppressing other servants partying and getting drunk.

Well, the master will return unannounced and an unexpected, and he will tear the servant apart and banish him with the hypocrites in that place where there'll be weeping and gnashing of teeth. That doesn't do some doctrines much good talking about servants being banished. Then it goes right into the story of the ten bridesmaids.

You see five foolish and five wise. What had the five foolish done that the wise or the foolish did not do that the wise did preparation serving, being faithful, doing something laboring while it is yet called the day. They were not prepared.

We see the five wise. They had extra oil in their, in their lamps. They were trimmed and they were prepared.

All were asleep, but there were five in their sleep being prepared, having labored, having worked, having being diligent. And those other were slothful. They had not laid up that only done what is best for themselves.

And they had not prepared in the laying up of that precious oil, which comes by serving. And then it rolls right into the next story, the parable of the three servants. These are all connected one with the other.

They're an unbroken harmony talking about foolish bridesmaids that had not served. Then going right into the three servants, we see one being given this many talents and another being given this many talents and another being given this many talents. And we see that the ones that had wisdom went and multiplied or they worked or made investment with the gift and the grace that God had given into them.

The other God had given them a gift and a grace. And they said on it, just like a welfare Christian will do. God has divided the gifts severally and to the church, according to his will and beloved.

He's called for us to produce with what he's invested in us. We are to be profitable servants. We're to labor.

What is called the day we're to put our hand to the plow. We're to serve our God and serve humanity. But there are those that have this welfare Christianity mindset.

They want to take that gift. They want to bury it in the ground. They want to sit on it.

They want to come to church and listen. But yet they don't want to do. They want to listen, but they don't want to do.

And it's a welfare Christianity. My friend, that is not a Christianity at all. We see the one that the Lord came and gave him a gift.

He did nothing with the gift other than buried it in the sand. And the Lord said, at least you could have invested it in the banks and draw where it would have drawn interest. You know what he does? He cast him into outer darkness, the servant.

And there are going to be those that come before our God in that great day and say, Lord, Lord, they just say, depart from me. You're a worker of iniquity. I know you're not unprofitable servants in the church with the welfare Christianity mindset, waiting to be served with no desire to be a servant, wanting to be waited upon, wanting this, wanting that wanting this, wanting that, but doing nothing, not lifting one finger to ease the burden of the church, the call of the church wisdom, which is to go into the nations and to make disciples of all men to go into the nations.

It's amazing to me that people get offended about missions work. God has called us under the nations and that people will get angry and quit the church because we have a stance on missions. We give ourselves the missions.

We raise money for missions. We go into the nations of Jesus. I said to be missionaries and to serve our God there and die there if need be.

And people get angry when I lift one finger to ease the burden and they leave. And that's where the apostle said they went out from us because they were not of us. And I'm listening.

I make no apology for it. I will not apologize for missions work. I will not apologize for sitting Lillian.

I will not apologize for sitting Tim and those that go on our missions trip into foreign countries. I want to apologize for our stance. I want to apologize for sending money and reaching the nations for Jesus Christ.

I will not apologize for the direct mandate of my Lord. And the saying that the money would have been well spent on the church in America is vomit. What is the church in America doing that needs another investment? She's already proved herself to be unprofitable and yielded no return to our God.

And America has rejected the gospel. We've rejected it. And I know that there is a beloved remnant.

I thank God for the beloved remnant of which you're a part. I know the beloved. There are those that fill churches, my friend, that are unprofitable servants.

They're set against God in the name of God. And it should not be. A lot of the nations are open to the gospel.

It's amazing to me, my first trip into, into the nations to preach the gospel. I was preaching at the Bible school in Thailand with 20 or 30 kids from the tribal area setting there. And I preached for an hour and a half or two hours.

Lily was there. And when I got done preaching, they said, don't quit, preach to us some more. I've tried already preached for an hour and a half or two hours.

I said, come on, preach some more. In America, we're begging to go home. The nations are open for the gospel.

The fields are white and ripe into the harvest, but we have such a, a welfare mindset in Christianity in America. We're setting it home while we're clapping and cheering on our missionaries that are dying, that are tired, that are weary. Those 22 on the field while the 40,000 are sitting in the stands and need of some exercise, just like Alistair said in need of some exercise and we're cheering them on in vain.

Beloved God has called us to put our hand to the plow. What's wrong with you? Why can't you go? Who will go for me as the Lord's bait in this hour? Who will go for me? I applaud Bob and Jean Moffitt that are in their late eighties, still going to the war zone of Burma, facing peril and danger on every front. In fact, Mama Jean came back and was so crippled from the rough rides of the roads in Burma, she couldn't even hardly walk, but yet was willing to go back again and did that mindset.

Well, but there is no welfare mindset in them. They're, they're embracing the Lord and the high call of Christ in age. Beloved is only a relative thing.

They're going. They never consider the weakness of their frame. Just like Sarah and Abraham.

They know the promises of God and they're going to live and they're going to preach Christ. And if they go there and die, they're going to die in Christ and receive a reward, a crown of life. But we must arm ourselves as God's people with the same attitude.

So I don't feel God's called me. We'll get saved and he will. Matthew chapter 28 says, go ye not go.

He is for you. Then I'm not saying that in a belligerent way. I'm saying that in a way of truth.

When you come to Jesus Christ, literally come to Christ. You have the call to go. So I've never felt led.

I never felt led either. I just went and God blessed it. I went because he said, go quit running by the seat of your feelings.

And you might actually get somewhere for Christ because the feelings that you go by are manipulated by the prince of the power of the air anyway. And you need to denounce him. You need to get rid of it and go simply because he said, go, go, go ye.

We need to get off our tails, but we're not to sit here to be connoisseurs of sermon. This is to be a message from the heart of God that stirs you to get up and to go forward in faith in the name of the Lord and savior, Jesus Christ, and to be a doer of the word of God and advancing Christian, a true Christian. That's a servant.

Ephesians 2 10 says you've been your God's masterpiece. It's amazing how well we quote the first part, but we forget the second part. I'm God's workmanship created in Jesus Christ unto good works.

When no one told me that part, the Lord tells you you're created as God's workmanship in Jesus Christ unto and for good works to do something with the faith you say you have, because if you have no works with your faith, your faith is what is crippled. Does it do anybody any good? Not even you. The word of God says in Matthew 5 16, let, let, let men in darkness, see your light and by your good works and your good deeds, thereby glorify God, your good deeds.

Second Corinthians nine, eight says all grace abound unto you that you having all sufficiency may abound unto good work, grace abounding unto you that you might have all sufficiency to abound, abound. You know what that means? That's launching forward, launching forward, advancing, overcoming, laboring. And is there heartbreak? Yes.

Setback? Yes. Challenge? Yes. But shipwreck? No, no, no shipwreck.

There's heart. There's heartbreak. There's challenge.

There's disappointment. There's crises. There's deficiencies in body, deficiencies in mind, but blood is no shipwreck.

He's not called us under failure, even though it may seem to at the time you may be failing. The only thing that deems you a failure is when you throw your hands up and quit and walk away from Christ. Beloved, if you're going to be in Jesus Christ, you're going to be in him and he's going forward and he's still serving.

And if you're in him, you will be too. It's a good point to check your heart. Are you serving? Are you serving? Are you laying your life down? Because if you're not, you may not be in Christ.

Albeit, you may think you are because if you're in Christ and Christ is in you, you'll be serving. You'll be doing, you'll be going, you'll be loving, you'll be laying your life down. You'll be doing the good works that Christ has called you unto.

Colossians chapter one. I'm going to promote myself to the King James here. First hand says that you may walk worthy of the Lord.

What does walk mean? It denotes some energy. Going somewhere. Purpose.

Walk worthy of the Lord and pleasing unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work. Being fruitful in every good work. Beloved, how are you going to become fruitful if you're not working? If you're not putting your hand to the plow, if you're not serving, if you're not laying your life down and giving your all for Christ and then increasing in the knowledge of God.

Fruitful in every good work and then increasing in the knowledge of God. My last scriptures in first Timothy, if you want to turn there, chapter six. Is it our Lord wonderful? You can't get mad and stop out.

You're my son. Verse 17 says, charge them that are rich in this world that they may be not high minded nor trust in a certain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life. Beloved, that scripture right there should sound sirens on the inside of you.

We should charge that they do good and be rich in good works, ready to distribute, ready to serve, willing to communicate, willing to lay their life down and thereby laying in store for themselves. Do you see this for those that are losing their lives, for those that are laying their life down, that they're laying up for themselves a certain foundation against the time to come that they may hold on eternal life? It's good stuff. It's good stuff.

Doing some research into these scriptures, all through the New Testament, I'm seeing servant, serving, servanthood, laying our lives down, surrendering our all, putting our hand to the plow, laboring, the fight of faith, war of good warfare. I'm seeing this and I'm looking at the church today and I'm seeing such a welfare mindset that we're waiting on those that do work to serve us and we're going to reap the dividends of their of their labor. They're putting their hands to the plow.

They're laying up and we want something to come out of what they've invested. We want to draw a check on someone else's labors. We want to reap a reward of someone else's diligence, of someone else's hard work and ingenuity, someone else's dedication and loyalty, someone else's sacrifice, and we want to draw from it.

We want the benefit of it without the consequence or without the investment that they've made. We read in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, these great heroes of the faith, and we see that they have inherited a great reward. But beloved, we don't want to go through the trials and scourgings that they have experienced.

The word of God says that we need to walk worthy of a calling of God. We've got to walk worthy of it. We've got to be diligent laborers in prayer, diligent laborers in the word, diligent laborers in the serving of humanity without waxing weary or giving into it anyway.

It's amazing those 22 guys on the field, they keep fighting until it's finished and they don't give up while the onlookers just look on and clap their hands and enjoy the ride. Isn't it amazing how that's come into the church? Now we, this is not to mention going into the 12th and 14th chapter of 1st Corinthians. We're talking about the body of Christ of which all of us are members in particular and God has invested something in us to contribute and to give and to work out in the body of Christ.

And whenever the time comes, we'll stand before God, we're going to give an account for those gifts that he's given us. There are many in the body of Christ that have tremendous giftings. They don't even know that they have the giftings because those giftings are never manifest until you begin to operate in faith.

Just because the Lord says, go and do. I never knew the Lord would give me a gift to preach while I was setting and doing nothing. And then by faith, I began to step up and to see a need and hear the call of God and begin to preach the gospel and then begin to recognize that God had imparted to me a gift to which I would stand before God on judgment day and give an account for.

But I never realized or recognized the gift and call of God until I stepped out in faith. I didn't have to fill out one of those little stupid questionnaires to see what my gifts are. And if you've done one of those, I'm not

condemning you.

I'm not saying it's stupid because there was a point in time I would have filled one out too. You know what the lazy are always looking for an easy way out. Well, maybe if I fill all this out and I can identify what I am, then I can just have that, but do nothing with it.

And I've seen so much of that frivolous nonsense in the church. I've had people come up to me and say, I have this gift. Well, if you have the gift, you don't have to tell it.

Do I have to come to you and tell you I'm the preacher. You have figured that out by now that I'm the preacher. Why? Because I'm operating in that gift of preaching.

If you have the gift of healing, you don't have to go. Oh, guess what, Tim? I have the gift of healing. It reminds me of my little sisters when they were like four years old.

I am a secretary. They have little skirts. They just pull them and they look at mama and mama and say, oh, that's beautiful.

And my little sister, Melinda and Monica, she's a school teacher. She'd come up to mama. She have a little freckles on her nose.

She had a little skirt on mama, dressing like a little frilly princesses every day. And they'd got a little skirt. So they'd pull them out.

Mama, I'm a school teacher. Then my mom was a school teacher. She didn't tell anybody that she was a school teacher because people just figured that out.

And sometimes I've seen the body of Christ. So many people running around and flexing little skirts and say, I am a prophet. I have the gift of healing.

You know, I was telling a young man, he told me I had the gift of healing here not too long ago. So, you know, and the gift of healing is upon us. We don't have to tell people.

The gift will tell on you. The gift speaks for itself. And you start praying for folks and they start getting healed left and right.

The gift will speak for itself. When you have the gift of a prophet, it will speak for itself. I want you to notice whenever Nathan confronted David, he didn't come to him and say, I'm a prophet.

He just went to David and said, you're the man. You're a sinful man. And he recognized the anointing and the gift of God because the gift and the anointing of God has its own voice and it speaks for itself.

And you don't have to defend it. You don't have to declare it. You don't have to.

And that's child's play. And he said, Amen. Beloved, it's the will of God to get us off welfare and get our hand to the plow because beloved, you're more than able to work.

I remember being in the room with Anna Marie Southworth right before she passed into the hands of Jesus. Laying there myself and Cody, I don't know, was you with us? And Cody was there. Josh or Coley and some of his team were there.

Are you there? We know that one. And she was laying there dying. And I said, Anna Marie.

I said, don't lay there and feel sorry for yourself because you have life and you still use that to produce start interceding for the people of God. And she her whole countenance changed. She's like she I have I still have value.

I said, Anna Marie, you still have that gift of intercession. Pray, pray until that breath leaves out and you go, Jesus, you pray and intercede. And she looked at me and she took my hand and squeezed it and she grinned and close your eyes and started praying.

When I left there, she was praying in moments. It was a few hours later. She left her body and went to be with Jesus.

I remember Florence Rich, Sister Rich. Many of you knew that blessed woman that two thirds of her heart would completely quit working. And no one had to tell her, keep preaching Jesus.

She had a nurse in each arm and a doctor by the by the by the tie and pull them down and was preaching Jesus. And they're all just sobbing and crying. And she's preaching Jesus.

And I walked in, she said, Brother Eric, the Lord Jesus is coming soon, you know, and she's dying and she's thinking of nothing except laboring for her Lord, serving her Lord, nothing of herself. I never heard her complaints. I'm dying.

Never heard her whimper or complain. She was preaching the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to everyone that walked into her room and people were just the anointing of God was so tangible there, you could have cut it with a knife and people were getting saved. Nurses and doctors were weeping and come into Christ and her in her hospital room.

And just a few hours later, that last chamber of her heart quit working and she went into the rest of the righteous, the presence of God. As a woman that understood the kingdom of God, welfare Christianity, she never understood it because it's not real. The true Christianity, my friend, is about laboring so that we can share with others, so we can share with others.

There's no retirement plan in the kingdom. We labor while it was yet called today for the glory of God, for the salvation of souls, for the calling and the election that is upon our life as servants, servants of Almighty God. Amen.

You've not been called to set, Caleb, but to labor. It does me good to see you every Wednesday night up there using the gifts that God gave you for him. May they never be used for yourself or for the devil ever.

In the same way with you, Mr. Cody Melton, never use the gifts that God gave you for yourself or for the devil ever. And let me tell you, you don't have to be a guitar player or singer or a piano player or a preacher to have giftings to be used of God. Every one of those have been given them several according to God's will.

It wasn't the will of God that I sing like an angel. You know, like, yeah, boy, that's the truth. You know what? God's given me a gift to preach to the lost, to preach the church, to edify, to confront, to challenge, to exhort the people of God.

And beloved, I pray that that all of my life, I'll be faithful and labor within that calling that on that great day when the Lord comes, he says, welcome in good and faithful, servant, servant that washed my feet, served my people, advanced my kingdom, proclaimed my gospel even to the ends of the earth. I want that to be my legacy. What do you want yours to be the same? Amen.

That you're a faithful servant of God. What do you want your epitaph to read on your headstone? I go to the cemetery and I see loving father, loving mother, and those are all good. But beloved, that comes naturally to us, doesn't it? How many headstones are out there in that cemetery saying this is a servant of almighty God that lived their life for the glory of God.

You don't see many, do you? Leonard Ravenhill's tombstone reads this, are the things that you're living for worth Christ dying for. It's a man that drew his last breath, declaring the faithfulness of God. I want us to be that way.

God's calling us to this life of servitude. God's calling us. You teenagers, you can, you can.

I've seen teenagers setting the world on fire before, witnessing, handing out tracts, praying. I've seen teenagers praying for sick people and seeing them recover. We've got to get past this, this all-inclusive lifestyle.

It's all about us fulfilling the desires of our flesh because that will follow you through your whole life. Crucify it while you're young and use your life for its intended purpose and that's to serve and glorify God. Amen? Amen.

O'Connell, come forward. We're going to pray for you. Ms. Linda, can you come down? Let's pray for you too.

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