

Who Wants to Be Used?

Intro:

- A. Upon considering our topic for discussion, “Who Wants to Be Used?” your first thought might be **“Nobody wants to be used.”**
1. But you would be wrong.
 2. Who remembers the song from 1972, by Bill Withers, that was about being used?
 - a. Part of the lyrics went like this: **“I want to spread the news that if it feels this good getting used, Girl, you just keep on using me until you use me up.”**
 - b. This song was in the top 100 popular songs.
- B. You might say, **“Nobody in their right mind wants to be used.”**
1. But this is not correct either because being “used” can be either **good** or **bad**, depending on **WHO** is using you, **HOW** they are using you and **WHY**.
 - a. If you apply for a **job** and convince the **interviewer** that you have the skills, knowledge, ability, and determination to do the job, he might say, **“I can use you, you are hired.”**
 - b. On the other hand, one who already has a job might miss too many days of work, without good reason, or make too many **costly mistakes** that result in the boss's saying, **“I can't use you.”**
 - 1) This is also expressed by saying **“You are fired”**— meaning "You are no longer employed here."
 - 2) Another colloquial expression is **“He got sacked.”** This expression came about when an employee was

given a **sack** in which to **put his belongings** and told to go home.

2. We want to impress on your mind the fact that there is **no honor** in being someone whom **no one** has a **use for**; and that being **used (useful)** can be a **very good thing**.

C. In our effort to **encourage** and **motivate** to let God use us, I've selected six relevant songs to help in our "teaching and admonition," which we will sing together as we get to them.

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|---|--------|
| 1) "I want to be a worker for the Lord" | P. 114 |
| 2) "Soldiers of Christ Arise" | P. 225 |
| 3) "Have Thine Own Way, Lord" | P. 84 |
| 4) "There is Room in the Kingdom" | P. 80 |
| 5) "The World's Bible" | P. 512 |
| 6) "Lord, Send Me" (invitation) | P. 81 |

Body

I. **God deals with people in much the same way that employers deal with employees.**

A. He (God) has a USE for some people and there are some He **"can't use."**

B. Throughout the Bible we see where God **used people** to carry out His will.

C. Conversely, some, whom God **previously** used, conducted themselves in such a way that God no longer had a use for them.

1. **Demas** is a good example.

2. Demas took himself off the job in forsaking Paul to go

back to worldly living (2 Tim. 4:10).

II. Jesus presented a parable that was the inspiration for a popular song, “I Want to Be a Worker for the Lord.” (*Sacred Selections*, p. 114. Text: Matt. 21:28 “go work today in my vineyard.”)

1. I want to be a worker for the Lord,
I want to love and trust His holy Word,
I want to sing and pray,
Be busy every day
In the vineyard of the Lord.

Refrain

I will work, I will pray,
In the vineyard, in the vineyard of the Lord.
I will work, I will pray.
I will labor every day, in the vineyard of the Lord.

2. I want to be a worker every day,
I want to lead the erring in the way
That leads to Heav’n above,
Where all is peace and love,
In the vineyard of the Lord. [Refrain]

3. I want to be a worker strong and brave,
I want to trust in Jesus’ pow’r to save;
All who will truly come
Shall find a happy home
In the vineyard of the Lord. [Refrain]

4. I want to be a worker; help me, Lord,
To lead the lost and erring to Thy Word,
That points to joys on high
Where pleasures never die,
In the vineyard of the Lord. [Refrain]

A. You just participated in singing this song, hopefully, but DO you really WANT to be a **worker** for the Lord?

B. Are you **willing** to let God **use you**—to **WORK** in His vineyard?

C. Do you not see the **necessity** of so doing (work)?

1. Not all do.

2. Many have been deceived into thinking salvation is **ALL grace.**

- a. They argue **against** the idea that **work** has anything to do with being saved or keeping saved.
- b. I debated **Dr. Lloyd Olson** in 2018 on this issue. It was supposed to have been printed in book form and used in some Bible college classrooms. Link:

<http://www.totalhealth.bz/EternalSecurity.pdf>

- 1) He contended that the Bible teaches that there is **nothing** at all for one to do to be saved, or to keep saved.
- 2) But he did not like the clear passages that had “**do**” and “**if**” in them, and he basically ignored them.

John 15:14 *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

1 Cor. 15:2 *By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*

2 Pet. 1:8 *For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Luke 13:9 *And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.*

John 15:2 *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away:*

- i. In these last two passages, Jesus teaches that **if** we do not **bear fruit**, like a **fruit tree that stops bearing fruit** and is thereafter worthless, **He no longer has a use for us**.
- ii. Indeed, many do not see the necessity of working.

3. But Jesus himself **defeated** that ideology when He said,

“Come unto me, all ye that **labour** and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 **Take my yoke** upon you, and **learn of me**; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matt. 11:28, 29).

- a. A **yoke** is a symbol of **work**.
- b. “A yoke is defined to be: Fitted on the neck of oxen for the purpose of binding to them the traces by which they might draw the plow, etc.” (Easton’s Bible Dictionary).
- c. To be yoked **with** or **to** Jesus is to **serve** and **obey** Him.
- d. Everyone is yoked to **someone** or **something**.
 - 1) One can be yoked to the power of sin and become controlled by it.
 - 2) Some are yoked in a relationship with **unbelievers**, which the Bible warns against (2 Cor. 6:14).
 - 3) We must be careful that we are not **USED** by the world or worldly people for worldly causes.
 - 4) Only Jesus promises “**rest for your soul,**” and that is only if you **take on His yoke**.

III. Whom Does God Use?

A. First, God uses **evil people** to carry out punishments of nations.

1. But those being used for this purpose have not considered Christ’s appeal (Matt. 11) and are not going to **find rest** for their souls.
2. **Hitler** could be an example of one God used to punish Israel for their **sins, rebellion, and impenitence**.
3. Perhaps you can think of some evil men in **our day** that God may have used (or is currently using) to punish our own nation,

with the intent to open eyes to truth and turn people from worldliness to Him.

- B. Second, God uses those who **genuinely seek rest** for their souls through the **grace** that He offers.

1 Pet. 4:10 (ISV) *As good managers of God's grace in its various forms, serve one another with the gift each of you has received.*

1. Let us take a moment to look at what is involved in this word "*serve.*"
2. First, Peter is commanding Christians to **DO** something—to **SERVE**.
 - a. Through Peter's words God is seeking to bring in soldiers—people who are willing to be **used**—to **work** in His kingdom.
 - b. **Synonyms for Serve:** *"work for, be in the service of, perform duties for, be employed by, have a job with, obey, be obedient to, carry out the wishes of, be of service to, be of use to, help, assist, aid, minister to."*

- C. A popular song, written by Charles Wesley in 1749, is "**Soldiers of Christ, Arise.**" (*Sacred Selections*, p. 225. Text: **Eph. 6:10, 11.**)

- #1 Soldiers of Christ, arise,
 And put your armor on,
 Strong in the strength which God supplies
 Through His eternal Son.
- #2 Strong in the Lord of hosts,
 And in His mighty pow'r,
 Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
 Is more than conqueror.
- #3 Stand then in His great might,
 With all His strength endued,
 And take, to arm you for the fight,
 The panoply of God;
- #4 That, having all things done,
 And all your conflicts passed,

Ye may o'ercome through Christ alone,
And stand entire at last.

- #5. Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul,
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole.
- #6. From strength to strength go on,
Wrestle and fight and pray,
Tread all the pow'rs of darkness down
And win the well-fought day.

1. The duties expressed by the poet require **faith**.
2. The Hebrew writer said, "**But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him**" (Heb. 11:6).

D. Calvinism teaches that **God** chooses who comes to Him—that God **draws certain people** in some **mysterious** or **miraculous** way, and if you are not one of them there is NOTHING you can do.

1. Where do they get the idea that God **draws** people?
 - a. Did they just make it up?
 - b. No.
 - c. But they took a biblical passage out of context to make it say something that was never intended.
 - d. Let's look at the text and the context:

John 6:44 **No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me **draw** him: and I will raise him up at the **last** day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all **taught** of God. Every man therefore that hath **heard**, and hath **learned** of the Father, cometh unto me.**

2. Yes, God "draws" people, but it is **through the gospel**.

- a. People come to God by faith.
 - b. He doesn't just **pick** people He wants to be saved and then there is nothing that person can do to **resist** (another component of Calvinism called "irresistible grace").
3. A passage that adds to verse 45 (above) is **Romans 10:17**: "**So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**"
4. If you are not **yet** convinced as to **how God draws people** to Him, look with me back to **verse 14**:

"How then shall they **call on him** in whom they have not **believed?** and how shall they **believe** in him of whom they have not **heard?** and how shall they **hear** without a **preacher?**"

- a. Through these rhetorical questions we are clearly taught **three truths**:
 - 1) there must be a preacher;
 - 2) one must hear the word; and
 - 3) one must believe.
- b. If you want God to **draw** you to Him then **build faith** by hearing the word of God, **learn**, and then go to Him in humble obedience, **not questioning** what conditions God has given or what He has said to **do**.
 - 1) In **2 Kings 5**, we read about a man by the name of **Naaman**, a captain in the Syrian army, who had leprosy.
 - 2) To make a long story short, to be cured he was told, by the servant of a prophet of God, to **dip** in the **Jordan River 7 times**.
 - 3) But he was **angry** with what he considered **silly** or **foolish**, and was about to go on his way when his

servant said to him, “If he had bid you **do some great thing** would you not have done it?”

4) He then did as was required and was cleansed.

c. Sadly, not all who have **heard** the gospel have **obeyed** it.

1) And not all who hear today obey.

Romans 10:16: "But they **have not all obeyed** the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" (BTW, this question was evidently asked to teach that faith does not save when no obedience follows.)

2) Faith is essential, but we do not want to be among the number that **refuse to “obey the gospel”** for whatever reason—maybe thinking it is **foolish**, that it is a **work**, or that it **nullifies** God’s grace.

i. If you have been led to believe that obedience to the gospel is not important, there is a passage to which you need to pay close attention:

2 Thes. 1:7 **And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that **obey not the gospel** of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;**

ii. If you can read this passage and not be convinced one must **obey the gospel**, then you might want to consider that you have been deceived by a

teacher of false doctrine and are having trouble seeing.

IV. God wants to use you.

A. Jesus presented a parable referred to as “The Parable of the Talents.”

1. It shows that people have different talents and that to “hide” your talent (**ability**) is a bad idea, for which there are grave consequences (Matt. 25:14-30).
2. The “one talent” man did not use his talent because he was “afraid.”
 - a. Others might **not** be willing to let God use them because they think they are too **sinful, weak, selfish, or inept**.
 - b. Still others might **reject His plea** because they see worldly pursuits as being more **pleasurable** and **fulfilling**.
 - 1) But the truth is, your life will never be **fulfilling** until you allow God to **use** you.
 - 2) The apostle Paul made it clear that you (if you are a Christian) were “*created in Christ Jesus for good works*” (Eph. 2:10).
 - 3) The **work of God** is the only place you will find real fulfillment because it is that for which you were made.
 - 4) Seeking material possessions or worldly achievements—spending your life **working** to become **successful, appreciated**, and loved in the world’s eyes—is more like a **treadmill** than a path to **abundant life**.

B. If you want to live an abundant life you must allow God to use you.

1. His motive in wanting to use you is **not selfish**.
2. He wants your life to **matter**.
3. He wants you to **have an eternal reward** for the behavior you exhibit here on earth because He is a good Father who longs to bless His children.

C. The apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12, goes into detail in his efforts to explain how the church works through its members.

1. He assures us that **every person** is **useful**.
2. (ISV) Verse 22: **“those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are in fact indispensable.”**

D. Yes, God wants to use each and every ONE of us.

1. Look briefly with me at some passages that confirm this and shed light on **why** and **how** God wants to use us.

Philippians 2:13 ESV **For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

Matthew 5:16 ESV **In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.**

1 Peter 2:9 ESV **But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**

2. This is not something “new” that was presented first in the New Testament.

Psa 35:27 **Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say**

continually, Let the **LORD be magnified**, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

3. God has made provisions to **direct us** in how He wants us to **live our lives**.
4. Are we willing to let Him have His way?

V. Have Thine Own Way, Lord

(*Sacred Selections*, p. 84. Text: Isa. 64:8.)

1. Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still.
2. Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Search me and try me, Master, today!
Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now,
As in Thy presence humbly I bow.
3. Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Wounded and weary, help me, I pray!
Power, all power, surely is Thine!
Touch me and heal me, Savior divine.
4. Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Hold o'er my being absolute sway!
Fill with Thy Spirit till all shall see
Christ only, always, living in me.

- A. God is our creator, and He knows what is best for us.
- B. Once we decide to let Him **have His way with us** our life changes for the better.

VI. There is “Room in God’s Kingdom” for you and there is a “place in the service for those who are loyal to him and true.”

(Do you recognize the lyrics?)

A. Room In God’s Kingdom

(*Sacred Selections*, p 80. Text: Matt. 10:42.)

1. There is room in the kingdom of God, my brother,

For the small things that you can do;
 Just a small, kindly deed that may cheer another
 Is the work God has planned for you.

2. Just a cup of cold water in His name given
 May the hope in some heart renew;
 Do not wait to be told, nor by sorrow driven
 To the work God has planned for you.
3. There's a place in the service of God for workers
 Who are loyal to Him and true;
 Can't you say to Him now, "I will leave the shirkers,
 And the work Thou hast planned I'll do."

Chorus:

There is room, there's a place
 In the kingdom of God for you;
 There is room, there's a place,
 There is work that we all can do.

B. Indeed, there is something you can do.

1. You might not be able to **preach** or **teach** a **class** or lead singing or a **prayer**, but there are many things you can do:
2. You can be involved in **sending cards** to people in need of physical or spiritual help, or visit them personally.
3. You can make a **phone call** to someone who is lonely, or who may be slipping away from the faith; or you can make a personal visit.
4. You can take **food** to people in need or to those who have lost loved ones or are unable to work.
5. You can hand out **tracts** with messages of Jesus and His love, but that also teach of His requirements.
6. You can **say things** at appropriate times that will be a **seed** that just might grow into a faithful child of God, or that might bring someone back to the fold.

VII. We (Christians) are "The World's Bible" —perhaps the only

one they will read, which means we are His hands, His feet, and His tongue.

A. The World's Bible

(Sacred Selections, p. 512. Text: Gal. 2:20.)

1. Christ has no hands but our hands to do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet to lead men in the way;
He has no tongue but our tongue to tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help to bring them to His side.
2. We are the only Bible the careless world will read,
We are the sinner's gospel; we are the scoffer's creed;
We are the Lord's last message, given in word and deed;
What if the type is crooked? What if the print is blurred?
3. What if our hands are busy with other work than His?
What if our feet are walking where sin's allurements is?
What if our tongue is speaking of things His lips would spurn?
How can we hope to help Him or welcome His return?
—Annie Johnston Flint

B. What a great responsibility Christians have!

1. And what an OPPORTUNITY!
2. We have the opportunity to lead men in the WAY.
3. But what if we are **too busy** with **other work** than **His**?

Conclusion:

- A. It's a great honor for an **athlete** to be put into the starting line-up of a big game.
 1. I've seen football and basketball players **on the bench** say,
"Coach, put ME in."

1. But even greater than the honor of being **used** by the coach is to be **used by God**.
2. To be in His line-up (a player) you **don't** have to have a **great talent**.
 - a. But you must be a **cleansed person** who constantly **flees from sin** and pursues godliness.
 - b. When you hear Jesus say "**take my yoke upon you**," why not respond with "YES, **God, put me in the game**."
 - 1) "**Here I am, send me**"; and
 - 2) "Thank you for **making a place** for me in your kingdom to **do things** that **will help others** and make my life complete."

B. Before you can be used by God, which is a wise and honorable endeavor, you must respond to His conditions for family membership.

Eph. 3:14 **For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,**

The text below was preceded by Sermon about Jesus and what the Jews did, etc.

Acts 2:37-38 **Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, [Come up here to the alter and pray. No that is not what we read they were told to do, is it? Let us read the answer they were given.]**
Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Maybe you need to be baptized for the remission of sins.

- C. If you realize you have been of **little or no use to God** and understand that this **can mean your eternal reward might not be forthcoming**, repent and pray to get back in the contest.

If we can assist you in any way, come while we stand and sing.

(Invitation Song: “**Lord, Send Me**”)

Lord, Send Me

(*Sacred Selections*, p. 81. Text: Isa. 6:8.)

1. There is much to do, there's work on ev'ry hand,
Hark! The cry for help comes ringing through the land;
Jesus calls for reapers, I must active be,
What wilt Thou, O Master?
Here am I, send me.

Refrain:

Here am I,
(Here am I, send me, Lord, send me)
Lord, Send me;
(Here am I, send me, Lord, send me)
Here am I,
(Here am I, send me, Lord, send me)
Ready at Thy bidding, Lord, send me.

2. There's a plaintive cry of mourning souls distressed,
And the cry of hearts who seek but find no rest;
These should have my love and tender sympathy,
Ready at Thy bidding, Here am I, send me. [Refrain]
3. There are hung'ring souls who cry aloud for bread,
With the bread of life they're longing to be fed;
Shall they starve and famish while a feast is free?
I must be more faithful, Here am I, send me. [Refrain]
4. There are souls who linger on the brink of woe,
Lord, I must not, cannot bear to let them go;
Let me go and tell them, "Brother, turn and flee,"
Master, I would save them, Here am I send me. [Refrain]