

## Study 26

# DO WHAT YOU DO, DO WELL!

First Peter 4:10-11

Disinterested students sat sprawled in the classroom. The frustrated teacher began to write the word A P A T H Y on the blackboard. One student curiously asked his class-mate, "What does 'APATHY' mean?". To which his class-mate replied "*I don't care*". And that was a perfect definition.

There has generally been an aversion to excellence in the Christian community. Excellence has been equated with worldly. But it is not. In fact, quite the reverse should be true. Christians should strive for excellence in all they do. There's nothing particularly spiritual or holy about being sub-standard, or offering inferior levels of service.

1. Note what Daniel was renowned for in Daniel 6:3?

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2. What kind of attitude, in this particular reference, to spiritual gifts, was the Corinthian church told to have? (First Corinthians 14:12)

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3. What six things were they told to *excel* in according to 2Corinthians 8:7?

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I have seen churches that operate on a "*she'll be right*" basis. Decisions were made for the immediate benefit, not for the long term benefit. Short-cuts were made which had to be patched up and rectified at a later date. On the other hand I have where a church has made decisions based on the long term benefit of the church which has actually led to stronger growth and better stewardship of resources.

4. What Old Testament principle found in Exodus 34:26a is applicable to anything we offer to God today?

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5. By submitting to God's will for our lives, what can we expect God to do with us? (Isa. 48:17)

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## GIVE AWAY YOUR GIFT!

What are you most passionate about? What are you most interested in? What sort of things do you have a deep appreciation of (which may have caused you to be critical of anything of inferior quality). Chances are this is your area of gifting. Perhaps God invests certain gifts in people from birth. Some people are born leaders, or sportsmen, or craftsmen, or writers, or engineers etc. Some people receive gifts from God later. Some "natural" gifts are "spiritualised" when a person comes to Christ. An example of this could be a person who has remarkable perception, discernment, and fore-sight. When a person like this comes to Christ, the Holy Spirit may be able to empower these abilities into prophetic insight.

6. What kind of gifts are mentioned in Romans 12:6-8?

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If a person can relax and accept their gift, they will learn their limitations and probably become more fruitful - even though we may think that our gift isn't as grand as another person's.

7. What does First Corinthians 12:22 have to say about this?

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8. If a person develops their gift, what principle can they expect based on Proverbs 18:16?

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Peter says that the believers should use the gift that they have received. When God gives a gift He expects it to be used.

9. How is this point made in the teaching of Jesus found in Matthew 25:14-29?

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10. According to verse 11, what should the result of using God's gift be?

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Whatever we do, we should strive for excellence. This should be seen in our workplace, our home and our church. Let's not be ashamed of achieving and maintaining excellence.

## GOD'S VARIED GRACE

God's grace is God's undeserved provision for our need. We most commonly think of salvation being the only expression of God's grace. While our salvation is certainly made possible by the grace of God, it is not the only expression of God's grace toward us. When we cry out to God to meet a particular need - and *He does* - this is also because He is gracious.

11. How is God's grace described in First Peter 4:10 and how does this verse support the statement above?

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12. According to First Peter 4:10, how is God's ποικίλης ("multi-coloured") grace ministered to others?

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The next time you pray for God's grace you might find that God's answer to your prayer comes in the form of a brother or sister in Christ.

*Amen.*