

Genesis 5:24

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[0 : 00] So, my text is going to be from Genesis, chapter 5, verse 24.

! Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. I am sure most of you might be familiar with Bob Dylan's song, You Are Gonna Serve Somebody.

But it continues, it may be the devil or the Lord, but you are gonna serve somebody. And I think that the order is important.

Why is that? Because it's always easier to serve the devil, but to serve the Lord, it takes an effort.

Let's take an effort to understand what really means to be called to serve, and to understand whom we are serving.

[1 : 21] I'm a foolish ignorant. I still don't know whether my ministry, my serving of the Lord is really good, or done in a proper way.

All what I know, I'm praying that it should be done for the glory of God, and should be done properly. And I'm still praying, as a foolish ignorant of all, that I might understand whom I am serving.

Now, that's an important point, because just recently I just realized that, I think most of Paul's letters would go like this.

He would praise the congregation, how great you are in love and in faith, and then he goes on.

So I am praying that the eyes of your heart might be open to understand the greatness or the depths of this love.

[2 : 30] So he's praising them, that they are exercising love, and then he says, but whoa, I'm desperate for you, because love without wisdom, without the wisdom of the spirit, can go blind, can go astray.

And that's what we take from our everyday experience, don't we? You have the best intentions, you want to visit somebody who is sick, and you want to say the right words, and it turns out that you say the wrong words.

And you think you are showing love, and after that you even realize, I might have humiliated him instead of comforting him.

That happens, well, maybe not with you, but with me, for sure. So, what is the difference between what we believe to be prayer, well, what is prayer?

Walking with God, no? Enoch walked with God. So, between what we believe to be prayer, and what God believes to be prayer.

[3 : 40] People think, when they want to adjust God to their own rhythms, that is prayer.

Come with me, Lord. Fulfill me with your love. Fulfill my desires.

They are holy desires, of course. Come with me. Bless my service, Lord. Well, even if we say, I'm doing it for you, I'm doing it for the sake of the kingdom, but this thinking, may I tell you, has nothing to do with prayer.

I feel judged many, many times. I think my prayer were not really done well.

Why I'm saying this. Because when you try to influence and manipulate the being that is much greater and much powerful than you, that's not prayer.

[4 : 56] And in a very nice Christian hypocrisy, we still think that it is. Prayer is different.

Real prayer is the opposite of what we tend to believe. God believes that real prayer means to adjust myself to God's rhythm.

God's rhythm. God's rhythm. God's rhythm. Enoch walked with God, and he was not. For God took him. Which means, you cannot be in hurry with God.

You cannot speed him up. If you try, you will be left hurrying alone. God won't follow you. We don't read that God walked with Enoch.

We read quite the opposite. That Enoch walked with God. Right? I think that's crucial. That Enoch was in tune with God's rhythm.

[6 : 11] He could catch God's beat. Moreover, the beat of God's heart. He moved according to God's drumbeat.

That is why he could be in tune with God. He could be called a man after God's heart.

He did not want to adjust God to his own drumbeat anymore, but he adjusted himself to God's. Do you hear the beat of God's heart?

That is a call to serve. Do you hear the beat of God's heart? Called to serve whom you are serving. If I answered that question in a simple way, the usual cliché type of answer would be, yeah, of course, of course I'm trying to serve him.

[7 : 15] Who would doubt that? But that's a cliché. The Lord Jesus Christ, of course, that's my heart is all about.

But the banality of that answer can trick me. I tend to think I am not serving anybody else save the Lord.

But someone can perhaps deceive themselves by declaring, I serve the Lord, yet he or she might not be in step with the drumbeat of God's heart.

Well, there is only two ways here.

Either I adjust myself to his heartbeat, or I will serve according to my own rhythm and according to my own melody.

[8 : 17] The ego of a Christian, if it is not crucified, will dictate his own heart's beat and melody.

The tune of egocentrism. And we can do a great job in pretending that we serve the Lord by that. I hope I am tough enough with me and with you. Are you with me? Or I should be more smooth on this issue?

Well, I'm clueless to myself. Why should I spare you? You see, the word of God doesn't matter me. So, we read that Enoch, by walking with God and not forcing God to walk with him, disappeared.

Simply disappeared. Enoch walked with God, and I like the SIV, it says that, and he was not, for God took him. He was not.

[9 : 25] The drumbeat of the big ego, the fat ego, disappeared. disappeared completely. For God took him.

Where did God take him? Come on. Where did God take him? Well, there is only one place between heaven and earth where our ego can disappear, and that is the cross of Jesus.

Right? God took him, and God takes us to the cross. There you can vanish. happily. Have you, have you been happy that your ego vanished?

Vanished completely. Oh, what a conqueror. When, by his cross, he could make me to disappear. And the people forgot about me. They were just marveling the grace of Jesus, and forgot about me. Right? Now, we always, we tend to say, Jesus said, your light so shine to the world that the people seeing your good deeds might praise you.

[10 : 40] Am I quoting it right? No, they might glorify God. We try to make our deeds, good deeds, to be seen, and we, we are craving some, some, reaction.

I'm very smooth. But, it goes to me, or it goes to him. God takes us to the cross.

There, we can vanish. As Paul writes in Galatians chapter 2, I'm sure you know that, verse 20 and 21, he says, I have been crucified with Christ.

It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

I do not nullify the grace of God, concludes Paul. If he does not nullify the grace of God, then the grace of God will nullify him.

[11 : 54] That's the joy of the Apostle. And that is at stake with our proud ego. I cannot nullify my ego, I need God's grace for that.

And I nullify God's grace if I don't accept that I am dead. I am dead with Jesus and I am alive to God.

This happened on the cross and was sealed when I was baptized. I can't remember when I was baptized, I was just a baby.

It doesn't matter because God sent his son to accomplish my salvation on the cross and Jesus forgot to counsel me whether I like it or not, whether I want it or not.

He did it without my consent and he did it gloriously. baptism is a seal of death. That it happened as in Romans 6 we read that we are dead with Christ and we are resurrected with him.

[13:11] So, Enoch walked with God but God would not walk with anybody. He has his own rhythm but Enoch did not mind walking with God and God in return took him and he was not.

So simple. We are making so complicated because we don't want to surrender, we don't want to accept that we are dead and dead forever in Christ.

when it was the last time you were celebrating your dead? Well, you can. If you are not rejoicing that you are dead then you are very much still alive.

I mean your pride, what you call yourself. It's a false self-identification. We are not our grown pride. We are sons and daughters of God.

And he takes me on the only place between, as I said, between heaven and earth, on the only place which is not glorious at all.

[14:30] I'm sorry, the cross is a dirty place. It's not glorious. It's full of blood and agony. And people were mocking the one.

who was crucified there. It's not a comfort zone. It goes against your comfort zone, against your pride, against your egocentrism.

And I call you there. I call you, come with me there. For you have died, we live in Colossians, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

That's possible because of the cross. If I am evil, I go unnoticed, and yet I don't mind. You can test yourself. I did.

And there were times when I could not say I don't mind. in fact, it hurts me. I felt offended. I didn't feel glorious.

[15:34] well, if God calls, if Jesus calls somebody as a disciple, he tells him, come and follow me and die.

I'm quoting Bonhoeffer. I'm not sure whether I'm right. I'm translating in my brain into English. So anyway, but that's it.

But there are too many visible servants and too many services to God which are in the spotlight. That is not what we are called to. We are called to serve and go unnoticed. Your left hand should not know what the right is doing.

However, this service cannot be blatant. It has to be hidden. It has to be invisible rather, and let's look to Matthew 6 where we read, when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret and your father who sees in secret will reward you.

[16:53] The secrecy and modesty of our service is the test whether I serve the Lord because I am really cold or I am serving the Lord by self appointment.

That's the issue at stake. And we are taking the Lord's Supper. So it's time to seek our hearts. How am I going to serve him? Is it self appointment? If it is so, I am ashamed by Hebrews 5 verse 4 and 5.

No one takes dishonor for himself, but only when called by God just Aaron was. So also Christ did not exhort himself to be a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, you are my son, today I have begotten you.

Real and genuine service, my dear brothers and sisters, is begotten by the father and that makes us sons and daughters.

[18:15] Now I am in the west right now and western thinking is that I have to build up my identity by acting. And once I acted well I became somebody.

So acting first and then being next. But in my Bible we see the other way around. At least being comes before doing.

Being comes before acting. And you have to become first a son or a daughter to God and not a servant to God.

Right? There is only two types of Christians. I don't know if I am allowed to call Christians the second type.

But the first type is that you first you are born from above as a son. You have got the spirit of sonship and then you act.

[19:25] The false Christianity is that I try to act and work and do something in order to be accepted by God that God might favor me and might forgive me and then I become somebody.

False. Completely false. And somehow the tendency in this age post modern age can penetrate even into the church into the mindset of a Christian today.

We are so much self made men that we want to act in order to become somebody whereas Enoch just simply walked with God.

Well we need to be put to death with Christ and to be resurrected with him as I said before.

What can produce this life giving death? The question occurs how that change can be taken place. Right? How that change can be produced in our lives?

[20 : 42] Well if you ask me that question my answer would be that it is with the love of Christ. The passionate love of Christ which alone is compared to death in your scripture.

The Song of Solomon right? Oh what a romantic love. Oh we are very sentimental about this but all the sentimentality disappears when you hear that it's tough like death.

Right? Because it says love is strong as death. Against whom does death show its power?

Against the one whom death carries off. can you help yourself against that? No.

It will carry you off. Right? Now if I want to see my lover's love proved strong I need to feel I am carried off by that love.

[21 : 59] to be taken away to be swept away without being able to resist is both the metaphor of passionate love and of death.

So love is there is united in the mindset of God. So he kills your ego and your egocentrism in order that this passionate love might work in you and through you.

Well somewhere somebody said no one is indispensable everyone is irreplaceable. God's call to you is a particular ministry whether former or informal in whatever area of life or work be you an accountant or an elder in a church or even a parent or a pastor doesn't really matter this makes you irreplaceable until you have fulfilled that call.

You see the whole world is longing to be unique. Every human being wants to be unique. But real uniqueness consists on the fact that you cannot be replaced.

And that's your calling. The nose cannot tell the ear I don't need you. So the ear is irreplaceable.

The nose is irreplaceable.

[23 : 41] Right? Along the line of the Paulian understanding of the body of Christ. Christ. Now even when you are irreplaceable you can have the role of always replacing Jesus.

That's amazing. Right? The call to serve means you can be a Jesus to others. In order to protect the dignity of every single Christian how can you replace Jesus?

First of all look at Jesus. He could replace the Christians with himself. Right? That was all redemption that was redemption all about.

He's dead he stood in your place. He suffered in your place. That makes you irreplaceable that he replaced himself with you.

So that's funny. That's funny. Either mistaken grammar or love. Because a chap called Paul was running on well he was riding a horse of course on the road to Damascus and all of a sudden Jesus appeared to him.

[25 : 09] Now they never met before. And who you are and then Jesus introduces himself why are you persecuting me? Now that was a mistaken grammar.

He should have said mine my flock. But he said me. Paul could have answered I never persecuted you we never met.

But Jesus replaced so much himself with his own flock that he said I identify myself with my own flock.

So if you persecute a lamb you are persecuting me. Identification in love or mistaken grammar you decide now.

But look at the letter of Paul to Philemon. That's a wonderful letter. I used to read a lot.

[26 : 16] I can't I'm still full of joy when I read it. Because Paul told Philemon here is Onesimus his name means a useful guy right?

And he became useless to you but I talked to him he came to Christ and now I send you back because he is Onesimus again he is useful again.

But Paul would say that the once wandering away thief slave who robbed you should be received and treated as he would be me as he would be the apostle Paul because in verse 10 he says I appeal for my son Onesimus in verse 12 I am sending him who is my very heart back to you.

What kind of heart this Paul had? A useless slave. And then he goes on in verse 17 so if you consider me a partner welcome him as you would welcome me.

Right? So is that not the same what Jesus said? Whoever will listen to your words or will receive you will not receive you but will receive the one who sent you.

[27 : 44] Will receive the son but those who receive the son will not receive the son but the father who sent the son. Now love has to tackle with this kind of approach.

Onesimus is a Paul to Philemon and nothing less. See the dignity of Onesimus the restored dignity of Onesimus he is an apostle to Philemon and Onesimus should be a Philemon to Paul too.

It works both ways. So I I'm a wretched sinner and I am of no use and only God and my wife knows who I am how bad I am and yes you received me and you received us as we would be the apostle Paul no just some poor guys from Romania but still with a lot of love and respect you treated us but that's why I'm here for I want to convey the greetings of the Christians from my country who are praying for the ministry among the Levites and I want you to be in touch with them and them to be in touch with you because they are an apostle to you and you are an apostle to them see the point your value is equal with the value of the Son of God that is redemption is full restoration that is sun shape that is a holy replaceability of

Jesus for an irreplaceable human being which really makes that person irreplaceable although not indispensable and that's the human in it right because you cannot think too high of yourself you are not indispensable but until you are following the call in a particular service and before you don't fulfill that you are irreplaceable in that so everybody is important in God's service oh I have to conclude now yeah I have to be only 30 minutes so I give you a story at the end of my message a traveler once entered an inn the innkeeper came to his table and sat while his guest was taking his dinner the host somehow felt safe during the discussion so he started to open up himself to the innkeeper and he started to pour out his burden he told his guest how wretched he was he felt compelled to confess his sins he was not too much repentant but he still talked about what he did after a long evening!

guest is crying to God and he is telling God all the sins what he heard from the innkeeper but telling God that these are his sins and begging for forgiveness the innkeeper amazed by this replacement marveling at such an amazing love was touched deeply and he repented see how can we serve serving God means following Jesus as we read about these apostles wherever he goes right wherever he goes love means that I replace myself with those whom I love on any coast I leave behind anything and anybody and that's how

[32 : 44] I paradoxically become irreplaceable and this is how Ruth followed now my when she said where you die I will die well a disciple of Christ is called to die where his master died on the same cross now you are more fortunate as!

for you which is irreplaceable you are an irreplaceable replacement of Jesus do you hear the call? I read I read once that the musicians in Japan when they are playing the national anthem! there is no conductor during the play there is no conductor however they still can achieve harmony because they practice breathing along the same rhythm it is like being one organism one body for sure Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit on his apostles and once they learned to breath with him they were sent in mission they were sent to serve him alongside the same rhythm with the same keeping in pace in listening to the word of God that is how they became one body the body of Christ let us listen to the heartbeat of God get in tune be in tune with God listen to the drum beat of his service and walk with him and you may disappear
Amen