

Postponement

In the mail I received a summons for jury duty for June 3. Since I will be up to my neck in preparation for moving, I called to see if I could be excused for that reason. (Short answer: NO!) The good news is that anyone summoned for jury duty can ask for a one-time rescheduling. I rescheduled for sometime in July! Since I will be living out of the state by then, I won't have to serve.

I thought that was a great idea as it pertains to serving on a jury, but it's a terrible idea as it pertains to serving God! Our Creator is eminently worthy of our service all the time. Postponing such service is tantamount to robbing God.

Someone says, "I know I should obey the gospel, and one of these days I will, but not now." Question: Why postpone it? You can't serve God acceptably while outside of Christ, so why not be immersed into Him now and begin giving the Lord the service He deserves? Are you waiting until you're "good enough"? That's upside-down reasoning! Baptism is "for the remission of sins." You should obey the gospel precisely because you aren't "good enough"! *"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (2 Corinthians 6:2).

But now we come to those whose names are on the church membership roll, but whose service to God is sporadic at best and non-existent at worst. It shows in everything from infrequent attendance to disinterest in anything other than warming a pew now and then. One says, "I need to do better, and one of these days I'll start." The question is the same: Why postpone it? Lukewarmness nauseates the Lord (Revelation 3:16). He deserves better from you. Repent, confess to God, and serve Him zealously! You have everything to lose and nothing to gain by postponing; you have nothing to lose and everything to gain by obeying promptly!

Take Up God's Cup

Because Jesus drank the cup of sorrow and sacrifice (Matt. 26:39, 42)...

...I have the opportunity to have the cup of salvation (Psalm 116:134).

Because I have taken up the cup of salvation...

...My cup of blessings continually overflows (Psalm 23:5).

...I no longer need to fear the cup of the Lord's fury (Isaiah 51:17)

...I should give cups of cold water to those who need it (Matthew 10:42).

...I am expected to keep my cup clean inside and out (Matthew 23:26).

...I can partake of the cup of communion with the Lord (1 Corinthians 10:16).

"O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup..." (Psalm 16:5).

--Edd Sterchi (Campbellsville, KY)

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IS THIS YOUR DOG?

As you cruise through social media, you're sure to run across a photo of a dog or two with the caption, "Is this your dog? This poor baby looked lost, and we just couldn't leave him alone." Well-meaning folks post photos of dogs they find at shopping centers, on the side of the road, or in the rain. Their heart-felt sympathy and concern is poured out on the poor unfortunate pooch, who may be abandoned or separated from its family.

Being long-time dog parents, we understand how humans can feel such compassion for our furry friends. Oh, that we would have as much compassion for people who are spiritually lost!

Jesus said that He came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10.) When He sent out seventy disciples to evangelize, He said, *"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest"* (Luke 10:2). So important was the mission of evangelism, it was one of the last things the Lord instructed His followers to do. Just before He ascended back to heaven, He told the Apostles, *"And you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"* (Acts 1:8). Now, some two thousand years later, the Holy Spirit inspired words of the Apostles are available around the world.

The bible says that we are to develop the character of Jesus, to walk just as He walked, following in His steps (1 John 2:6; 1 Peter 2:21). As one reads the story of Jesus in the Gospels, it is seen time and time again the Savior's demonstrations of compassion for the lost. If we think about the massiveness of humanity, we may become discouraged about evangelism. But please recall the story of the shepherd who searched for the single lost sheep (Luke 15:4-7), and that we can help that one lost friend, stranger, or family member come to Christ, causing joy in heaven.

Jay Launius (Maud, TX)

It takes a radical break to turn someone from earth's trash to heaven's treasure (Vance Havner).