

1 Appointed to Serve

2 Scripture Text

- I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength to do his work. He considered me trustworthy and appointed me to serve him, even though I used to blaspheme the name of Christ. In my insolence, I persecuted his people. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. Oh, how generous and gracious our Lord was! He filled me with the faith and love that come from Christ Jesus. (1 Tim 1:12–14 NLT–SE)

3 The Best Jobs

- If you go to the Internet to search for the best jobs ever, you'll get a number of suggestions.
- For example, you might see articles entitled;
 - “The 10 best jobs in the world,”
 - “The 10 best jobs in 2013,”
 - “The 10 best jobs from home,” or
 - “The 10 best jobs for moms.”

4 What's Your Job!

- In fact, when you're around people for very long, what do you usually ask them?
 - To a child . . . “What do you want to be when you grow up?”
 - To someone new . . . “So, what do you do for a living.”
 - Or at a party . . . “What is your dream job.”

5 Jobs are Work!

- Work. Jobs. Career. Occupation. Profession.
- Love it or hate it, most people spend at least a third of their waking hours working for someone else.
- This is called a job. Unless you're born wealthy or your last name is Kardashian, you will spend a lot of time working.
- So if you are going to spend 1/3 working, how do you find the best job?
- How do you capture that dream job?

6 Getting that Dream Job

- A lot of people today, would be happy just to have job, not to mention a “dream job.”
- But what would you say, if you met someone who's a cruise ship chaplain or a European river boat guide?”
- Wouldn't you be a little envious?

7 Dream Jobs

- According to one online source, the best jobs ever—if you can get them are as follows.
 - Paradise Island Caretaker (However, this job has been taken and is no longer listed.)

- Luxury Bed Tester (\$45,000/month, sleep in bed and write a “sleep survey,” once you wake up.
- Google Bike Rider (Bicycle around France and use a special google camera to take pictures of the countryside that cars can’t go on.)
- Candy Taster (Working in a chocolate factory and in charge of quality control)
- Resort Water-Slide Tester (Travel around the country shooting down water slides)

8 The 25 Best Jobs of 2013

- According to the US News and World Report magazine, 2013’s best jobs are as follows . . .
 - Dentist (\$142,740, 0.7% Unemployment)
 - Registered Nurse (\$65,690, 2%)
 - Pharmacist (\$113,390, 3.1%)
 - Computer Systems Analyst (\$78,770, 2.5%)
 - Physician (\$183,170, 0.6%)
 - Database Administrator (\$78,190, 1.3%)
 - Software Developer (\$89,280, 4.0%)
 - Physical Therapist (\$78,270 1.8%)

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- continued . . .
 - Web Developer (\$77,990, 4.7%)
 - Dental Hygienist (\$69,280, 2.8%)
 - Occupational Therapist (\$73,820, 0.4%)
 - Veterinarian (\$82,900, 0.6%)
 - Computer Programmer (\$72,630, 3.7%)
 - School Psychologist (\$67,880, 1.4%)
 - Physical Therapist Assistant (\$51,040, 3.4%)
 - True Apostle (Low Pay and Lots of Suffering, retirement, however, is out of this world!)

10 The Job of an Apostle

- To understand this position and know its qualifications and responsibilities, we might want to look at the life of Saul of Tarsus—whom we know as the Apostle Paul.
- Responsibilities of an Apostle
 - Signs, Wonders, and Miracles
 - Write letters . . .
 - Travel—via boat, donkey, ox-cart, and foot.
 - Spokesman for a new movement
 - Visit homes, synagogues, and palaces.
 - Jail time—on numerous occasions

- Tell sinners everywhere how Jesus Christ has come to rescue people from their sins so that they can escape the wrath of God to come.

11 Saul's Unsavory Past

- Paul didn't get this job because he was better than everyone else.
- In fact, Paul was probably the last guy in the world you'd predict would become the leading spokesman for the Christian faith.
- Before his conversion, would anyone imagine Saul would even be a candidate for "Christian Employee of the Year."
- According to 1 Timothy 1:16, part of the responsibility for being an apostle is to be an example for those who would believe on him [Jesus].
- Wouldn't Saul's unsavory past keep him back from getting this job?
- He frankly admits as much: I was a blasphemer, a persecutor and a man of violence (v. 13).
- The guy was a "man of violence." Who in their right mind is going to hire him?

12 Does Saul have Talent?

- A quick glance at Saul's résumé tells us all that we need to know. He clearly demonstrates leadership abilities.
- Shortly after Christ's death and resurrection, he was able to galvanize supporters who would help him with activities such as the murder of Christians, the torture of disciples and the slaughter of the innocent.
- He was even willing to be a "hands-on" manager -- if he couldn't find someone else to carry out the job of making the lives of Christians miserable, he was more than happy to roll up his sleeves and get it done himself.
- He was a hard worker who was not shy about sharing his convictions.
- He was brilliant at follow-through; his rampage against Christians went from village to village. He believed in the adage, "Any job worth doing is worth doing well."

13 Overcome Weaknesses

- Saul may not have been much of a public speaker, but he allowed his other talents to prove his worth.
 - He was confident that his reputation would speak for him. People literally trembled at the mention of his name.
 - His goal was to destroy the hopes and dreams of early Christians, and he did his job well.
 - If Saul had gotten a job interview and was asked to describe himself in a few words, he would have freely said, "I am your worst nightmare. I am a man of violence."

14 Called by God . . .

- So when considering who to call to be a promoter of God's love and mercy, would the Apostle Paul's name come to mind?

- If the personnel department of Christian evangelism was looking for a candidate to carry forth the message of God reconciling Himself through Jesus Christ, would Paul's résumé make the cut?
- And yet -- here he is, preaching the gospel and somehow judged ... faithful and appointed to the service of Jesus Christ.

15 Paul's Hidden Résumé

- When seeking for a devoted disciple, God saw more in Paul than simply his past.
- God did not define Paul by his résumé and did not pass over him because he was a blasphemer, persecutor, and a man of violence.
- His past was not his future.
- God, who can make all things new, opened up the door to new life and invited Paul to enter in.
- Because Paul was a faithful man and had committed his sins in ignorance and unbelief, it became a major plus in landing Saul of Tarsus the job of Apostle to the Gentiles.

16 Our Résumé

- Our past does not have to dictate our future.
- Because of God's mercy, we are not victims of our résumés.
- We, like Paul, may have done stuff that's totally contrary to what God wants.
- God reminds us that our past does not have the final word.
- Our past can merely be a prologue—an introduction to what God can do through individuals with bad résumés, who turn from ignorance and unbelief and serve God faithfully.

17 Our Résumé

- So, what's our excuse?
- If God can transform a Saul to a Paul, if God can "appoint to his service" a mean-spirited, blaspheming man of violence like Saul -- what are we waiting for?
- Why do we think that God probably has not "appointed" us to serve?

18 A Trustworthy Saying . . .

- Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the worst. (1 Tim 1:15 NIV)
- But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. (1 Tim 1:16 NIV)

19 Amazing Grace & Mercy

- One example of someone who received mercy and went on to live a life that mattered was John Newton, who wrote the hymn Amazing Grace after repenting of his work as a slave boat captain.

- He was not only a slave boat captain, but once murdered his captain, and was so troublesome on another ship that his sea mates kicked him off the ship and sold him into slavery.
- Rescued by his father, John was converted on the voyage home to England and began reading his Bible and gave up profanity, gambling, and drinking.
- In 1757, Newtown applied to be ordained as a priest in the Church of England and in 1804 along with William Wilberforce, helped end the slave trade in the British Empire.

20 God's Mercy & Grace

- If God can use a state-sponsored terrorist like Saul of Tarsus or even John Newton and make them into great men of faith, what can he do with us?
- God can take liars, cheats, slanders, drunks, drug addicts, and those who are sexually impure and transform them to serve Him.
- All we have to do is turn from our ignorance and unbelief and we will find mercy and grace.
- If God can have unlimited patience and transform Paul, He can also give us grace and transform us as well.
- So don't give up! Keep pressing in!
- God's not through working in us yet!

21 Doxology

- Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.
(1 Tim 1:17 NIV)