

### Saved to Serve

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Exodus 18:13-27 serves as a hinge to the second half of Exodus, a prologue to the giving of the Law. This practical text talks about the importance of serving. The Israelites had been serving the oppressive ruler Pharaoh, but God set them free—for a purpose – to worship God and serve Him forever!

No one person has it all. We can't live independently. No one can accomplish life's mission without help. The sooner we realize this, the better. Moses was striving to resolve everyone's disputes. The workload was not good for Moses, and it was not good for the people! Jethro observed the problem and gave Moses wise advice. "What you are doing is not good. You can't handle it alone. Select capable people—who fear God, who are trustworthy, who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them to help you." (See Exodus 18:17-18, 21-23.)

Moses' motives were good, but he was robbing others of the privilege of serving! Jethro didn't ask Moses to step down from his leadership. He provided the support system that Moses needed to thrive in his calling. Moses would continue to lead people, but the workload would be shared with other spiritual people who were trustworthy.

Delegating the work also benefited those who came forward to serve and share the load. They would grow in spiritual maturity and their gifts would be utilized in God's service. And in turn, the people wouldn't have to wait to be served.

Christian ministry is not a one-person show. It requires teamwork. The church is a body in which every member has a vital role to play. The church advances not because of one person's heroics, but through the collective efforts of God's people. The Apostle Peter says in 1 Pet 4:10, "**Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others.**"

That's a call to every Christian believer. There should be no idle Christians. Every Christian has received one or more spiritual gifts from God. The New Testament lists a variety of spiritual gifts – teaching, leadership, discernment, wisdom, administration, hospitality, evangelism, and other gifts. These gifts should be put to use to serve others, to bless others, and to build others up.

If you find the Christian life dull and boring, it may be because you are not using the gifts God gave you. For Christians, serving is not optional. It is the heart of the Christian life. We are saved to serve! When we honour God, and give Him priority – He does great and mighty things.

Now that the pandemic is over, we are seeing an increasing number of people returning to services, and there are many needs. Our children and youth ministries are thriving and need help. We are turning away kids because we don't have enough people serving in those ministry areas. What an incredible opportunity to invest your time in shaping the next generation!

Other areas in which you can serve are guest services, special needs ministry, and tech ministries. Or open your home, host a group, and serve the needs of your neighbourhood!

Don't be content to watch online. If you are physically able, come and be fully engaged in one of our campuses. Take the time to be here in person and use your gifts to bless others. We need every Christian believer to play a part as God uses us to make a difference in the world.

Every single one of us has a role to play and every single role is important. He saved us so we can serve Him! Serving is an act of worship.



# EXODUS

## sermon study guide

### IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Which superhero or fictional character do you think best embodies the idea of taking on the world's problems single-handedly?
2. What is the most unexpected way you have found support and encouragement when you were feeling overwhelmed?

### UP – PURSUE GOD

Read Ex 18:13-27.

3. What problem did Jethro observe? What solution did he suggest? How do you think Moses felt about this suggestion? What was the result?
4. Read 1 Peter 4:10.

What does the verse say about spiritual gifts? Who are the recipients of these gifts? How are we supposed to use our gifts? (Additional references: Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 28-30)

### OUT – PURSUE MISSION

5. In what ways might our society perpetuate the idea of the "one-person show" or the hero who saves the day on his or her own? How can we shift this mindset in our own lives and in our communities?
6. How can we encourage and empower others to discover and use their spiritual gifts, even if they may feel unsure or inadequate?

#### For Personal Reflection / Prayer:

***This one life is all we have. We cannot afford to waste it. We are saved to serve. Every single one of us has a role to play, and every single role is important. You are invited to identify your spiritual gifts and use them for God as an act of worship.***

### THE WORD (NIV)

#### Exodus 18:13-27

<sup>13</sup> The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. <sup>14</sup> When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?"

<sup>15</sup> Moses answered him, "Because the people come to me to seek God's will. <sup>16</sup> Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and instructions."

<sup>17</sup> Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. <sup>18</sup> You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. <sup>19</sup> Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. <sup>20</sup> Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. <sup>21</sup> But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. <sup>22</sup> Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. <sup>23</sup> If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied."

<sup>24</sup> Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. <sup>25</sup> He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. <sup>26</sup> They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves.

<sup>27</sup> Then Moses sent his father-in-law on his way, and Jethro returned to his own country.

This week's writers: | Elsa Henderson, Jem Ong, Jared Harrison, Cheryl Smele

