

How To Give God My Best

Decades - Part 4
February 13, 2022

*“And I am praying that you will **put into action** the **generosity** that **comes from your faith** as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ.” Philemon 6 (NLT)*

Would you make a Decades commitment that expresses your faith and honors your Heavenly Father?

*“³By His divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know Him, the one who called us to Himself by means of His marvelous glory and excellence. ⁴And because of His glory and excellence, He has given us great and precious promises. ... ⁵In view of all this, **make every effort** to respond to God’s promises.” 2 Peter 1:3-5 (NLT)*

*“⁹Honor the Lord with your wealth and with **the best part** of everything you produce. ¹⁰Then He will **fill** your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.” Proverbs 3:9-10 (NLT)*

How do I give my best to God?

*“³Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴**Soldiers** don’t get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them. ⁵And **athletes** cannot win the prize unless they follow the rules. ⁶And hardworking **farmers** should be the first to enjoy the fruit of their labor.” 2 Timothy 2:3-6 (NLT)*

Lessons from a soldier:

1. I must define what I’d die for.

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” John 15:13 (NLT)

2. I must sacrifice my comfort

*“Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and **offered** Himself as a **sacrifice** for us, a pleasing aroma to God.” Ephesians 5:2 (NLT)*

Who are you sacrificing your comfort for right now?

3. I must eliminate distractions

“Soldiers don’t get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.” 2 Timothy 2:4 (NLT)

Lessons from an athlete:

“²⁴Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! ²⁵All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. ²⁶So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. ²⁷I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NLT)

1. I must intend to win.

How serious are you about being what God made you to be?

2. I must discipline myself

“All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.” 1 Corinthians 9:25 (NLT)

3. I must stay focused

“¹... And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. ²We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now He is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne.” Hebrews 12:1-2 (NLT)

Lessons from the farmer:

*“⁶Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. ⁷You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. ‘For God loves a person who gives **cheerfully.**’ ⁸And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. ... ¹⁰For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, He will provide and increase your resources and then produce a **great harvest of generosity in you.** ¹¹Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. ... ¹³As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, 10-11, 13 (NLT)*

If I want to reap a great harvest in heaven, I must plant generously today.

Two Promises Straight From Jesus:

*“Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, **running over,** and **poured into your lap.** The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.” Luke 6:38 (NLT)*

*“²⁸Then Peter began to speak up. ‘We’ve given up everything to follow you,’ he said. ²⁹‘Yes,’ Jesus replied, ‘and I **assure** you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for My sake and for the Good News, ³⁰will receive now in return **a hundred times** as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property—along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have **eternal life.** ³¹But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who **seem** least important now will be the greatest then.” Mark 10:28-31 (NLT)*

Why do some people trust God with their eternal salvation yet they don’t trust God with their finances?