



14 February 2025

## Doing your best?

How many times have you heard, or said, “Just do your best”? Often the idea is you don’t have to be or do better than someone else, or what you wish, or come in first, *just do your best, just do the best that you can.*



God wants us to do our best and enables us to be and do more than, to do better than our best on our own as He works in us to make us like Jesus. But what does *doing our best* mean? What’s our part?

There is a 123 year-old song which has dropped out of use and out of our hymnals that describes some of what doing our best means, *Give of Your Best to the Master*.

- We are to give our best to God because He expects, He demands it of us. When God put the sacrifices in place for Israel, He told them that they were to give the best, and that to present “an ox or a sheep which has a blemish or any defect ... is a detestable thing” (Deuteronomy 17:1). The principle remains true for us. We are not just to say that God is worthy of our best, but we are give Him the best that we have.
- The second phrase of the song calls, “Give of the strength of your youth.” We recall King Solomon’s words in Ecclesiastes chapter 12, “Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth.” Whether young or old, the starting place is to *remember God*, to keep your focus on Him. A later line sings “Give Him first place in your heart; give Him first place in your service; consecrate every part.” Doing our best begins with dedicating ourselves to God, His truth, His way in all we think, say and do. Proverbs chapter 16 instructs us, “Commit your works to the LORD and your plans will be established” (3).
- The song’s second phrase calls us to give our strength, that is to go beyond best intentions to best efforts. The apostle Paul instructs, “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance” (Colossians 3:23). Heartily, not casually, not fuzzy-focused, not half-hearted. A quarterback’s half-hearted pass is most likely to fall incomplete or be intercepted. We are to be like Caleb who testified “I followed the Lord my God fully”, and Moses told him that

he would have an inheritance “because you have followed the LORD my God fully” (Joshua 14:8-9).

- The song challenges, “Clad in salvation’s armor, join in the battle for truth.” We are to remember that “the battle is not yours but God’s” (2 Chronicles 20:16). But we are to engage this battle taking our place having put on “the full armor of God.” We are to “be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might”, to “put on the full armor of God, so that [we] will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil” (Ephesians 6:10). The apostle Paul goes on with some of the details of that armor,

“Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (14-17).

- Let’s close with some action steps for doing and giving our best that flow from Psalm 37. I am just going to list them. Take time to read the Psalm and think through them.

“Delight yourself in the LORD” (4).

“Commit your way to the LORD” (5).

“Trust also in Him” (5).

“Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him” (7).

We come back to the question, *are you doing your best?* In light of who God is and that He gave His best for us—His Son to take our sin upon Himself to save us and give us abundant life—why would we not give Him our best?

Pastor Lyle