

# What Does God Expect of Us in This Life?

## A Study Outline

- I. None of us in today's ecclesia, like in centuries past, have really left much of a mark in this world.
  - A. The records of the saints in history have been cleverly hidden by historians:  
"History is a set of lies that people have agreed upon" (Napoleon Bonaparte).  
"History is the lie commonly agreed upon" (Voltaire).  
"History is written by the victors" (Niccolo Machiavelli).
  - B. We are all limited by the human power that God gives us, and we are weak: *"The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak"* (Matthew 26:41).
  - C. Yet, we see Jesus Christ as the One individual who turned the entire world upside down, and we are His brothers (Romans 8:29), and are to walk in His footsteps (I John 2:6). Christ did this in spite of our society being under Satan's sway (II Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2).
- II. Despite us being among the weak and foolish of the world (I Corinthians 1:26-29), we nevertheless need to understand that we are among those who have changed the world in a big way just because our Creator has worked through us. We have that same spirit of God which the patriarchs and saints of old possessed! Here are three examples of individuals whose legacy is remembered to this very day, people like us who changed the world.
  - A. Abraham.** He confronted Nimrod and destroyed his idols (Jasher 11:33-34), was cast into a fiery furnace and survived (Jasher 12:21-29), was taught by Noah and Shem (Jasher 9:5), left his homeland in Mesopotamia not knowing where he was going (Genesis 12:1-5), raised a son in his old age (Genesis 21 to 23), and was promised land and innumerable descendants that would bless the nations throughout the earth (Genesis 26:3-5).
  - B. David.** He served as Saul's personal attendant (I Samuel 16:14-23), slew the Philistine giant (I Samuel 17), and was king of Israel for 40 years (II Samuel 5:4).



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**C. Moses.** He confronted the Pharaoh of Egypt (Exodus 5 to 12), led the Israelites out of Egypt across the Red Sea (Exodus 13 and 14), headed the establishment of the Israelite nation in the wilderness (Exodus through Deuteronomy), and led them by God's hand to the Jordan River (Numbers 33:48-49).

- II. What has our heavenly Father declared that we need to do in this life, whether we leave a noticeable mark on it or not?
  - A. We need to recognize that we are the "called out ones" from this society [Greek ecclesia], and as such we have essential responsibilities.** We are "... a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of

*Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.” (I Peter 2:9-12; see also I Peter 4:10 and Romans 12:6-8).*

**B. In all cases we are designated to be servants, to our Creator, to the ecclesia, and to those in the world.** Matthew 20:25-28. *“But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”*

**C. Our “spiritual vocation” is well-defined.**

**1. Our essential functions are embedded within the spirit of God that inhabits us. |**

Corinthians 12:1-30. Note especially verses 7-11 and 18-20. *“But the manifestation of the spirit is given to each one for the profit of all; for to one is given the word of wisdom through the spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same spirit, to another faith by the same spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.... But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.”*

Matthew 6:33. *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”*

## Ten Commandments

1. You shall have no other gods before me
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol
3. You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God
4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy
5. Honor your father and your mother
6. You shall not murder
7. You shall not commit adultery
8. You shall not steal
9. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor
10. You shall not covet

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**2. Walk uprightly, work righteousness, and speak the truth.** Psalm 15:1-5. *“Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; he who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the Lord; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change; he who does not put out his money at usury, nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved.”*

**3. Do good to all, but especially to the brethren.** Galatians 6:7-10. *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”*

**4. Exercise the “whole duty” of man as described by Solomon and Micah.** Ecclesiastes 12:13. *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.”*

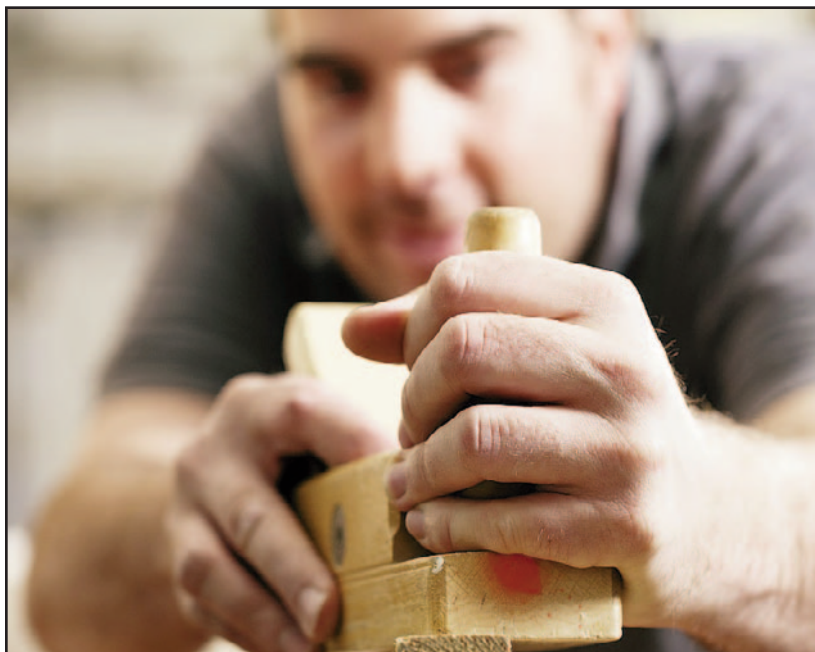
Micah 6:8. "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"

**5. Do not be motivated by fear in anything.** I Timothy 1:7. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

D. The "servile work" we do to earn a living is also dealt with in Scripture.

**1. We ought to have a good idea of what our talents and abilities are, and work primarily in these areas.** Romans 12:3. "For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."

**2. Paul admonishes us to work with our hands.** I Thessalonians 4:10-11. "And indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you." Paul himself was a tentmaker. Acts 18:3.



**3. Solomon tells us to eat, drink, and enjoy our work.** Ecclesiastes 2:24-26. "Nothing is better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of God. For who can eat, or who can have enjoyment more than I? For God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who is good in His sight, but to the sinner He gives the work of gathering and collecting, that he may give to him who is good before God. This also is vanity and grasping for wind."

**4. Remain in the work you were doing when you were called, but if you can improve your situation**

**then by all means do it.** I Corinthians 7:20-24. "Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called."

**5. Do not be concerned that you are not wealthy, by the world's standards, since few rich men are called.** Matthew 19:16-26. "Now behold, one came and said to Him, 'Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' So He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.' He said to Him, 'Which ones?' Jesus said, 'You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and your mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' The young man said to Him, 'All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?' Jesus said to him, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.' But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom



*of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, ‘Who then can be saved?’ But Jesus looked at them and said to them, ‘With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”*

III. We can be certain that even though our personal impact on the world may be minimal, we still are having an effect, at least to the extent our Father wants us to, for He has placed us in life where He wants us.

A. Jesus said that we can do even **greater things** than He did. We cannot measure these “greater things” by the world’s standards. John 14:12. *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater [meizon, “larger, stronger”] works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.”*

B. Our futures are magnificent beyond our wildest imaginations, to be kings and priests in the coming age. Revelation 5:10. *“And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.”*

Revelation 20:4. *“And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”*

C. If Jesus Christ said we are lights shining forth in a darkened world, then we must be having an effect in spite of our limitations. Matthew 5:14-16. *“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”*



D. We know that these “good works” do not save us, as Paul explained in Ephesians 2:8-10, but we also know that *“faith without works is dead”* (James 2:17-18). Thus, we see that the “good works” of keeping the commandments of God is a *consequence and evidence* of the spirit living within us, not the way to attain eternal life. That way is a gift!

E. Jesus Christ and Paul tell us to be continually looking forward, pressing on towards the prize of our high calling, not to be looking back once we put our hands to the plow. Luke 9:62. *“But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”*

Philippians 3:13-14. *“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

F. We can be absolutely sure that every last bit of effort we put into serving our Creator will not go unnoticed, and while we are never going to be looked upon as great in the eyes of this world,

our abilities to accomplish good things will be beyond comprehension in the coming age ... the future for which we were born.

*1 Corinthians 2:9-10. "But as it is written: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God."*

*Romans 8:22-23. "For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."*

G. We can, however, leave a great mark on this world, but in a way not recognized by this world, because the standard by which we are being judged is far different than that of this world where Satan is the god, who elevates athletes, entertainers, politicians, and actors who dominate the media.