

Just One More - Part 2

1 Corinthians 15:58

At the Battle of Okinawa in World War II, Army medic Desmond T. Doss refused to carry a weapon because of his Christian convictions. When his unit was forced to retreat from battle on Hacksaw Ridge, hundreds of wounded soldiers were left behind, but, while others withdrew, Doss *stayed*. Again and again, he crawled into enemy fire, located wounded men, dragged them to the edge of the ridge, and lowered them to safety with a rope. Each time he returned into danger, he prayed a simple prayer: *"Lord, help me get just one more."* One more soldier, one more rescue, one more life saved - and by the end of the battle, he had rescued seventy-five men.

1 Corinthians 15:58 NIV

"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

When we push our chips all the way to the middle of the table, we're saying, *"Everything goes. Not just a few things, not just some things, but everything."* The question today is, *are we all-in?* Are we fully giving ourself to the work of the Lord? That's the real question to ask. What we do for him and for his honor matters. If we look up *grace* in the Bible, there's a flip side to that and it's that we get to do the work of the Lord. We *get* to do this. It's not a have-to. It's not just because we're obligated or because we feel like we owe God something. It's because the love of God and the grace of God is so poured out on our lives we say, *"We want to do this."*

We have the best church in the world. Our people are amazing, and we're in this thing together. Last week, the big idea was that the kingdom of God *advances* when ordinary believers, people like us, decide not to quit. The difference between *breakthrough* and *regret* is often found on the other side of *"just one more."* There's some things we need to repeat. Many times we've come up short, where we realize that if we had continued to go just one more yard, we would've gotten over the goal line - we would have literally broken through. How many times were we *one thing away* - one foot, one step, one decision, one choice, one more prayer, before the breakthrough? How many times did we take a stand but then get weary and tired and give up - *right before our breakthrough?*

We need to understand this - there's a very real devil who resists us on a daily basis. There's a very real *enemy* who gives his greatest resistance, not at the beginning, but at the *end*, just before the breakthrough. If we're sensing an increase in resistance around our life, congratulations, we're right there - just one more foot, just one more prayer, just one more encouragement, just one more verse, just one more cry to God. We're just about there if we don't give up and don't quit.

During the battle, Desmond Doss stayed again and again while others withdrew. He crawled into the enemy fire, located wounded men, dragged them to the edge of the ridge, and lowered them to safety with a rope. Each time he returned into danger, he prayed a simple prayer: *"Lord, help me. Help me get just one more - one more soldier, one more rescue, one more life saved,"* and by the end of the battle, he had rescued seventy-five men.

Millions of people have been impacted by this story, and by the movie Hacksaw Ridge. It's one of those movies about facing our giants and the coach is yelling, *"You can do this. You can do this. Just one more yard. One more yard."* Sometimes we think, *"Well, that's just grit. That's just determination. That's just will."* No, it's a *decision*, a quality decision to finish what we start - a decision to follow through - a decision to go back for just one more. That's what Desmond Doss did.

Here's what the Spirit is saying to us in this message, *"Don't quit. Don't stop. Don't settle."* The first point is stand firm. Don't quit before the miracle. Don't come up short. Don't give up just before the breakthrough. Number two is give ourselves fully. Live on-mission. We've been given an assignment to *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, and as you're going, disciple nations, teaching them everything that Jesus has taught."* - Everything.

And then he says, *"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* He's going to be with us, but we've got to be on-mission, on his mission - with him, saying, *"Lord, just one more. Just one more person for me to share the gospel with. Just one more person for me to disciple. Just one more person for me to tell my God-story to - my two-minute miracle - my story. Just one more."* Christianity is not a spectator sport. Jesus did not save us merely to attend church. He saved us to join his mission - together - *with him*.

We need to wake up every day with a kingdom assignment: one more person to encourage, one more prayer to pray, one more invitation to extend, and one more act of kindness. And this is the practical part - to ask each morning in prayer, *"Father, who is my just-one-more today? Who is my just-one-more?"* Maybe there's more than one. Some days there's two or three - but who is our *just-one-more*?"

Who is our just-one-more?" Have we stopped to ask that question? *"Lord, who is it that You want me to engage today? Who is it You want me to interact with for the cause of the mission - of the gospel?"* It may not be us telling our whole story. It may not be us giving another "Evangelism explosion" presentation, the four spiritual laws. or the "Roman road." It could be just as simple as *breathing life* into somebody. We make this thing so complicated and it's *not*. It is not complicated. Get some business cards printed up and start handing them out. Ask each morning, *"Father, who's my just-one-more - just one more neighbor, just one more family member, just one more co-worker, just one more prodigal, just one more opportunity?"* Because the gospel moves forward *one person at a time*.

Jesus didn't say, *"All right, by tomorrow afternoon, go and make disciples of all the nations."* He didn't put a time limit on it. This is something we do *every day* for the rest of our lives. Dallas Willard called it *"a long obedience in one direction."* Tom Roth called it *"Do the right thing every day for a long period of time and you generate the flywheel effect."* Just do the right thing every day for a long period of time - long obedience in the one direction.

Here's today's point - know that your labor matters. Don't just *think it might possibly* make a difference. No, we need to know that what we do for God's kingdom *matters*. That doesn't mean we're going to see the results instantaneously. There are things we may *never* see on this side - but *our labor matters*. Eternity is attached to our labor for the Lord - to the things we do in his name - the things we do that he's asked us to do. He's given us assignments, and as we step out into it, he then gives us more again *"because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."*

What we do matters, but here's the thing - the enemy wants us to believe our efforts don't matter. Many hands make a light load, and we need every hand on deck - not just for the *church*, but for the people *outside* of the church. We don't serve the church *for the church*. We need to serve so that we build a *momentum*, and this place becomes a generation station, like a big generator for the rest of the city. But, it has to start *somewhere* - there's got to be a home base - and it might as well be the church. There were countless families last year whose kids school lunch debt was paid off who would beg to differ with the enemy because it *matters*. Our friends, family, co-workers, and strangers we were kind to would beg to differ because what we do *matters*.

Everything we do for Jesus and in his name matters - even if it's distributing gospel tracks. Who's to say that someone won't get saved because of it? There have been thousands - *hundreds of thousands* - of people saved through the years because they found a gospel tract, read it, and went, *"That's true,"* and then acted on it by faith. Don't think God can't use everything we do. Every prayer matters. Every seed sown of faith, hope, and love into another person matters. Every conversation matters. You may never see all the fruit this side of heaven, but God sees every act of obedience and says, *"I can work with that. I can bless that."*

Desmond Doss had no idea how many lives would be impacted by his courage. Seventy-five men certainly were, but think about all of the people connected to each one of those men. Many of them would have sons and daughters who never would have graced the face of the planet unless Desmond Doss had the heart of saying, *"Just one more."* There were wives these men went home to, or wives they eventually married, that would never have known their love - or never have had another family member come to be, if Desmond Doss had just said, *"I'm done. I can't do this anymore. I'm too tired. My hands are bleeding from the ropes. I'm going to get shot."*

Thousands, hundreds of thousands, and eventually *millions* would be touched because Desmond Doss had a mindset of just one more. *"Lord, help me. Help me get just one more."* We'll never know what hangs in the balance of one more act of faithfulness that we do.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7 NIV

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow."

We're just seed-sowers. We're just planting a seed here and a seed there. We can plant a seed, but just watching it won't make it grow. We sow seeds and then we keep moving, and over time, they get in the pipeline. Eventually the momentum tips and fruit begins to happen, *"But God made it grow."* We sow seed, but we trust *God* for the outcomes. We show up, but we trust God for the outcomes. The outcomes aren't on us, but the delivery of the message is. The life that we give out is on *us*. It's our responsibility. It's not our *pastor's* responsibility. It's not just the staff's responsibility here, but it's all of our responsibility.

It's all of us in this together sowing seed, planting, but *God* makes it *grow*. We need to remember that, when we're doing things and we think, *"Wow, I've been serving and I've been doing this. I've been sharing and teaching a Bible study but I'm not seeing a lot of fruit out of it,"* but that's not our responsibility. Fill the pipeline. Keep sowing seed. Keep staying the course because there's *just one more* that needs to hear that. And we never know that there's one in that long line of people we've been sharing with when we're getting a lot of rejection - we're getting a lot of people pushing back.

Who's to say that one of them is not the next Billy Graham, D.L. Moody, or the next great evangelist who's going to change the world. Somebody had to share the gospel with *them*. Could it be it was a seed? Maybe one that we sowed, but maybe somebody else watered it and it began to grow because *God* made it grow. Isaiah 55:11 says, *"So is my word that goes out of my mouth."* There's the picture - *his Word* - it's God speaking, so, it will not return to him empty or void.

When God's Word goes out, it's going to do things. It has power to *change* things. *"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword."* When we send the Word out, *we're* the mouthpiece. We have the Word. He's given it to us, and when we send it out, it's going to accomplish that for which it was released and sent, and it achieves the purpose for which God sent it. We are the hands and feet. We're the mouthpiece. We're the ones who represent Jesus every day where we live, where we work, and where we play.

What we do matters for his kingdom. It doesn't matter if only two people show up to our meeting. The numbers don't matter. We celebrate and we're thankful, but numbers are not the tell-all of success. We don't count how many people come to church, but how many *disciples* we have in church. That's the real number. That's the number that matters. We're here to make disciples and to make a difference. We're here to see the seeds grow when God touches them.

Here's how we make it real: Keep sowing. Stay the course. Keep serving - we're making a difference whether we think we are or not. Keep loving. Keep sharing. Keep giving it away. Heaven keeps perfect records of faithful obedience. Army medic Desmond Doss kept praying, *"Lord, help me get one more."* What if we embraced that same prayer? If we're waiting till we're perfect to feel like we're worthy, then we'll never pray this prayer. To truly be "perfect" means *being complete in Christ*. That's what the word literally means - *complete*. We're *whole* because of Jesus. We're not talking about perfection in terms of the physical world we live in.

What if we embrace that prayer and don't wait till we have it all together, or until we have it all figured out? We're still on the journey. What if we embrace the same prayer? *One more salvation, one more baptism, one more restored marriage, one more prodigal coming home, one more family member finding hope, one more person experiencing Jesus*. We can ask the Lord, *"Who is my just-one-more? Who is it?"* And what'll happen then is, we'll be in a conversation - in a moment - talking to a waiter and we share something life-giving to them and we make their day as they walk off and we go, *"Wait, that was a just-one-more!"*

This is the kind of stuff that happens even in the parking lot of a grocery store if somebody has a basket and the Holy Spirit says, *"You should get that basket for them."* We turn around because it's "just one more," and we say to them, *"Hey, I'm heading that way, I'll take that."* That's not epic like we're talking about here. It was epic in Desmond Doss' case, but for us, most of the time it won't be epic, it'll just be doing *the next right thing*, and as we do the next right thing, hopefully, prayerfully, it'll ignite a prayer in somebody's heart that says, *"Man, why do you do that stuff? Why are you so kind? Why are you so happy? Why are you living up in a down world? How can you do that?"*

Walking through a parking lot is a great opportunity to shed a lot of love. When we see a lady struggling and trying to get a 32-pack of water off the cart and into the back of her SUV, are we just going to walk by? This is getting down into the dirty, nitty-gritty weeds, but a Christian thinks this way: *"How can I serve someone today? What can I carry? What can I pick up? What can I do?"* And, if our eyes are open and our radar is on, we will see opportunities all over the place - non-stop. Everywhere we go, there's an opportunity to serve *someone* when we do it in the name of Jesus - not going "weirdo" on them - but just *loving* them. *Just do it.* And if they if they ask us, *"Why'd you do that?"* We can say *we're just showing God's love in a practical way.*

This is not rocket science. Just ask, *"Who's my Lord? Who's my just-one-more?"* And then respond with plain, simple obedience. We make Christianity so hard. It's not. It's not a theological discussion. It's just step-in and show-up and do something for somebody *else*. *Can we just be good Christians?* It's not that hard. It's not complicated. Just do what God *told* us to do. Our labor in the Lord is not in vain. Here's the bottom line: the kingdom belongs to believers who *refuse to quit*. Fully engage the mission and trust God for *just one more*. There it is. It's that simple. Our success will not be found in the numbers of people we win to Jesus, or how big we can get a church in a small town. That's not the measure of success. It's that we didn't *quit*. It's that we didn't give up ...*it's that we didn't let that one go.*

Prayer

Father, we've heard this and pray that there would be a massive flood of intentional acts of kindness as we're going - where we live, where we work, and where we play. The prayer in our heart, Lord, is "just one more." Who's the one more? In a parking lot, at the office, or out on the field working, wherever we're at. Who's the just-one-more? Holy Spirit, anoint us to be aware, empower us to take a step of faith to go out of our comfort zones to serve people in the name of Jesus - to show God's love in a practical way. Lord, would You drop it in our heart to have the passion to say, who's that just-one-more? Lord, who now? I know there's another one. Who is it? And Father, may our eyes be wide open as we navigate this week and do all these things for Your honor and Your glory. In Jesus name. Amen