

You can't do everything! You have to pick and choose!

➤ = next PowerPoint slide

➤ Intro:

- several years ago I realized it was impossible to do everything I wanted in life, even for the Lord as a preacher
 - recently reminded of that – share later
- lesson: You can't do everything! You have to pick and choose!

➤ Jesus and the apostles were focused, they didn't try to do everything

- Jesus: age 12 in the temple, focused at an early age (Lk. 2:41-49)
 - didn't waste time and energy with ambitions that weren't profitable, focused on doing His Father's business
- Jesus: earthly ministry, homeless and financially broke, dedicated solely to his mission, seek and save the lost
 - not concerned about accumulating wealth for Himself, or to leave behind after His death
- apostles: when called immediately stopped what they were doing, left their businesses and homes to dedicate themselves wholly to God's work, sacrificed, receive a great reward in heaven
 - Matt. 19:23-30 after parable of rich man, hard for rich to enter heaven, possible with God
 - apostles greatly rewarded for sacrifices on earth to serve God
 - all disciples rewarded – first will be last, and the last will be first
- you can't do everything, you have to pick and choose
 - are you picking and choosing the right things

- **As Jesus' disciples, we walk in His footsteps (1 Pet. 2:21)** – laser focus, not get distracted
 - **Col. 2:11-13; 3:1-5a** baptized, buried, made alive together, seek thinks above, **consider** (thinking) members dead to immorality
 - **laser focus to do God's will, not get distracted by world things** – sin, or anything that would slow us down

- - **Rom. 13:11-14** lay aside deeds of darkness, behave properly, **make no provision for the flesh**
 - **illus.: hike through desert**, take provisions for flesh (physical), water and food and clothing and shelter, so not die
 - **but we make no provision for flesh regarding sin** – put to death, not want sin to live in us
 - **then we can have laser focus to do God's will**, not get distracted by world things

- - **2 Tim. 2:3, 4, 5** suffer hardship, soldier not entangled in affairs of everyday life, athlete competing by the rules
 - **we have laser focus like soldier** in battle, and athlete competing for gold medal at Olympics
 - **neither can waste time or energy** on gratifying the flesh, takes everything they have to be soldier or Olympic athlete

- - **Eph. 5:15-17** careful how walk, making most of time (redeeming), **not foolish but understanding** will of Lord
 - **careful to be fruitful in God's kingdom**, or we'll die having accomplished only a fraction of what we could
 - **stay in our priorities:** all is for the kingdom, even when we rest and recreate, so we'll be ready to do more – laser focus
 - **Jn. 15:1-11** Jesus is vine, we are branches, if we bear fruit we're pruned so we can bear more because we glorify God, but if we don't bear fruit we are cut down and thrown in eternal fire
 - **Rev. 3:16** if we're lukewarm (neither hot nor cold) **Jesus will spit us out** of His mouth
 - **illus.: take a drink of milk that's spoiled**, violently spit out as quickly as possible

- - **Jn. 14:1-6** walking in Jesus' footsteps **our journey ends in heaven**, where Jesus is
 - **illus. Polly: reminded to have laser focus and stay in my priorities** when thinking of her life
 - **the last years of her life she had very little**, and couldn't do much with material things even if she had them
 - **when I compared her life to some others, I wanted to be like her**
 - **she spent her efforts at furthering the gospel and helping people**, rather than accumulating stuff, even when she worked at Penny's so she and Elwood could publish Searching the Scriptures
 - **she could look back and feel good about her life**, and not empty – **no regrets**
 - **she had precious memories and a sense of purpose**, rather than an empty life consumed with worldly ambitions
 - **she was humble about her future**, hoping to be with the Lord in heaven, rather than arrogantly thinking she had earned it
 - **she stayed true to her convictions**, even when persecuted by her own parents for becoming a Christian, and missed the Sunday night visitation at her mother's death, rather than forsake the assembly even once
 - **I want to leave this world like Ms. Polly**
 - **you can't do everything – you have to pick and choose** - are you picking a choosing the right things

- **We have to put God and His kingdom first to stay focused on our priorities**
 - **Matt 6:31-33** seek first **God's kingdom and righteousness** – stay focused, don't get distracted
 - **Jerry Flatt's sermon last Sunday:** if we're tired or too busy to do what we should working in the kingdom as Christians, we have to cut out some secular things to make time
- - **Lk. 9:23-26** deny self, **take up cross** and follow Jesus, **not exchange souls for wealth, not ashamed of Jesus**
 - **ordering our priorities, not getting distracted, staying on track**
 - **make the sacrifices that have to be made** - be as fruitful as possible
- - **Phil. 2:12-13** **God is at work in you, to accomplish His work** in you according to His will
 - **Is. 45:23; 55:11** **God sent out His word in righteousness**, that every **knee will bow** and every **tongue swear allegiance** to Him, His word will **not return void**
 - **1 Th. 2:13** **God's word performs its work in those who believe**
 - **you can't do everything, you have to pick and choose** - are you picking and choosing the right things
- **Questions we can ask ourselves before doing something**
 - **Will I be able to serve God the way I should if I do this?**
 - **illus.: job, school function, volunteer work, recreational activity** – time, energy, finances required
 - can't work some jobs, may have to change jobs – God will bless
 - **illus.: the finances needed to live a particular lifestyle**
- - **What will I have to give up in service to God, if I do this?**
 - **the activity may not be sinful, but it could result in sin** because of what we give up to do it
- - **Will this negatively impact me as a Christian?**
 - **illus.: evil companions corrupt good morals**
 - **illus.: will it take so much out of me I can't do other things** I should be doing in kingdom
- - **When you're lying on your death bed, would you be satisfied with thoughts of your material possessions, or all you've done in the kingdom of God?**
 - **illus.: Polly**
- - **What do you have to do today, so you have no regrets when you die?**
 - **illus.: thoughts I want to have when I die** – have to act today, so I can die in peace later
 - **you can't do everything, you have to pick and choose** - are you picking and choosing the right things

Summary / Inv.

- **you can't do everything, you have to pick and choose**
 - are you picking and choosing the right things
- **inv.:** are you choosing the right things, do you need to make different choices – become a Christian