

The mercies of God are the motivation for diligent, fervent service for the Lord. Paul first gives us the negative, then the positive, and then the focus of the command.

1. The mercies of God call out: “Don’t be lazy, but be diligent in serving the Lord” (12:11a).

“not lagging behind in diligence.” “lagging behind” translates a Greek word that means “lazy.”
[Matthew. 25:26](#) [Proverbs 6:6, 9](#)

Being in the service of the Lord gives cause for motivation [Galatians 6:9](#), “[1 Corinthians. 15:58](#)
Question? “Do you work hard to serve the Lord?” [Colossians 3:23-24](#)

God has given you spiritual gifts to be used in serving Him, and when you use those gifts to serve His kingdom purposes, He energizes you with His power. [Romans. 12:3-8](#), [Colossians. 1:29](#)

When you do what God has gifted you to do in the power that He supplies, it energizes you. You may be tired, but you’ll also be deeply satisfied. [Galatians 6:9](#),

2. The mercies of God call out: “Be fervent in spirit as you serve the Lord” (12:11b).

“fervent in spirit.” “fervent” literally means, “to boil.” Paul is describing a holy zeal or passion for God and His kingdom purposes.

Paul is describing those who are boiling over with zeal to the point that they probably would want to get involved in just about every opportunity to serve the Lord that comes along [1Peter 4:11](#)

3. The mercies of God call out: “Serve the Lord” (12:11c).

“serving the Lord.” These three simple words are packed with some important practical truths.

A. ALL BELIEVERS ARE CALLED ON TO SERVE THE LORD.

Paul wrote this to the entire church at Rome, not just to the pastors or church leaders. [John 13:12-17](#)

B. WE SERVE THE LORD AS HIS SERVANTS, NOT AS HIS VOLUNTEERS.

The Greek word for “serve” means to be enslaved. Since the Lord bought us with His blood out of the slave market of sin, we are not our own. [Romans 12:4-8](#), [Galatians 1:10](#)

There is a fundamental difference between servants and volunteers. Volunteers choose when and how they serve; servants are on call day and night, whether they feel like serving or not. [Luke 17:7-10](#):
[Psalm 100:2](#)

C. SERVING THE LORD MEANS THAT WE ARE NOT SERVING OURSELVES.

Paul warns the Roman believers about those who serve themselves, not Christ [Romans 16:17-18](#)

D. SERVING THE LORD MEANS THAT WE ARE NOT PRIMARILY SERVING OTHERS.

We need to beware of serving ourselves rather than serving the Lord. [1 John 3:16](#).

If you’re a servant of Christ, then you aren’t dependent on the praise of people. [Galatians. 5:13](#), [6:2](#)

E. SERVING THE LORD MEANS THAT WE SERVE THE ONE WHO LOVED US AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR US WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS.

So how should we serve the Lord? First, make sure that your motivation is right. You serve Him because of His great mercies toward you in the gospel.

That motivation moves you not to be lazy, but diligent in serving Him. Serving Christ becomes your passion, so that you do it fervently. And remember that you’re serving the Lord Himself.