

MIDDLE SCHOOL IDENTITY IN CHRIST

10

UNITE
I AM CALLED

SERVANTS OF JESUS FAITHFULLY ENDURE

SERIES:
GOD IS THE MASTER — I AM A SERVANT



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Chief Contributor and Editor:
Jennifer Thurman / January 2021

UNITE: I AM CALLED

The Unite Year is an exploration of what it means to be united in Christ as the family of God (Romans 12:5). When we are saved, we are given a spirit of adoption as sons (Romans 8:15-16), are made a child of God, and we are also saved into a family- the Church. The Unite Year explores how we are to live as a part of a family, and to live in light of our calling as servants and disciples of Christ. We use our gifts to build up the church as we pursue unity, humility, and gentleness with our brothers and sisters in Christ (Ephesians 4:1-2).

BIG TRUTH: SERVANTS OF JESUS FAITHFULLY ENDURE**BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 24:45-46**

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.”

BIG IDEAS

- Faithful servants walk in obedience to their master’s commands.
- Faithful servants avoid the temptation to live distracted.
- Faithless servants will experience the master’s judgment.

BIBLE PASSAGE: MATTHEW 24:45-51**SERIES AIMS****[KNOW] Every student should know that...**

- They are a servant of Jesus
- They have been forgiven an unimaginable debt
- To be a servant means to lay down their lives

[DO] Every student should strive to...

- Forgive anyone who has wronged them as Jesus has forgiven them
- Walk by faith instead of giving into anxiety
- Be known by their allegiance to Christ and the gospel

[FEEL] Every student should feel...

- Awe at the forgiveness they have experienced in Christ
- Thankful for the grace that brought them from death to life and into God’s family
- Unworthy of the mercy and grace they have received

[WANT] Every student should desire to...

- Be faithful and pursue obedience to God
- Sacrifice their comfort and control for the sake of the gospel
- Be committed to Christ above all else

STUDENT WORKOUT OVERVIEW:

Faithful servants will endure to the end. This week we will consider what it means to walk in obedience. We will pray for hearts that do not live distracted lives and we will practice living faithfully.

FAMILY WORKOUT OVERVIEW:

Faithful servants do not grow weary in doing good. This week we will consider how to discuss with our son or daughter what it means to be a faithful servant. We will pray with them to have hearts that are undistracted and we will lead them to practice living faithfully to the end.

BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 24:45-46

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.”

Jesus followers are faithful servants.

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household...”

- When God calls us to Himself and saves us, He calls us to follow Him and to serve Him. Jesus followers are servants of God and they live lives that are marked by faithfulness to Him and His Word.
- Believers serve faithfully in this life as they look toward and live for the next life when they are united with Jesus forever. Serving faithfully means setting aside the things of this world and fleshly desires in order to put God’s commands first.

Jesus followers faithfully obey.

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.”

- To serve faithfully, Jesus followers must obey. Obedience means living each day according to God’s Word. This type of faithful obedience requires a faithful pursuit of Jesus that leads to a love and desire to obey Him.
- Obedience is important and necessary every day because no one knows when Jesus will return. This means that we must live every day prepared and ready to meet Him, having lived according to His Word and for His glory.

Faithful servants are blessed by the master.

“Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.”

- Those servants who remain faithful until the end will experience the master’s blessing. They will receive the blessing of eternal life with Jesus. Being a faithful servant requires a perseverance and endurance to the very end.
- A faithful servant will endure many things in this life in order to experience the eternal presence of Jesus in the next life. Our goal in serving faithfully is to reach the end goal which is life with Jesus forever. That is our true blessing. Along the way, faithful servants will experience living in harmony with Jesus.

BIG IDEA #1: FAITHFUL SERVANTS WALK IN OBEDIENCE TO THEIR MASTER'S COMMANDS.¹

[THIS]

Faithful can be defined as being steadfast in affection or allegiance. Believers are called to be faithful servants of Jesus. In order for believers to be faithful, they must know His commands. Unless we know what is expected of us and have an example set before us, we do not know how to obey God. In order to become a faithful servant, our lives must be marked by a daily pursuit of Jesus. We must abide in Him and His Word, planting it in our hearts and growing in our knowledge of Him. As we grow in our knowledge of Him, our love for Him will increase. It is our love for Him that compels us to obey Him. The faithful servants mentioned in Matthew 24:45-47 knew their master and his commands. They understood his expectations and they did them. They didn't wait for the master to return to begin their faithfulness. They were faithful even when he was away in anticipation of his return.

[THEREFORE]

How does God's Word help us live faithfully?

As we study God's Word, we will grow in our knowledge and understanding of it. Doing this will help us obey Him. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that it is God's Word that teaches us and helps us become more like Christ. John 17:17 reminds us that it is God's truth found in His Word that sanctifies us or makes us more holy. This is how we can live faithfully to Christ.

[THIS]

A faithful servant knows and does what the master expects. He or she doesn't just grow in knowledge and become puffed up with all that he or she has learned. A faithful servant lives out their knowledge in a life of obedience. Jesus' commands are not burdensome, and He equips us with the Holy Spirit to help us walk in obedience. This also helps us endure during hard and difficult times. Obedience to God's commands is necessary to faithfulness. Today is the day that we must live in faithful obedience. We do not know when our Master, Jesus will return, so we cannot delay in obeying Him. Today is the day that we must live for Him and seek to know Him. A faithful servant does this and seeks to live every day in obedience.

[THEREFORE]

What are some ways that you may grow in knowledge, yet fail to walk in obedience?

Often we are tempted to disobey when we care more what our friends and other people say than God. Acts 5:29 shows us that in order to be faithful, our allegiance must be to God and not man. James 1:14-15 reminds us that our fleshly desires can lure us away from a life of obedience.

How can you live in faithful obedience this week?

James 1:22 and 4:7 help us understand how to live obediently to God. When we learn His Word and put it into practice, we will live faithfully to Him. James 4:7 teaches us that a life of obedience requires a submission to God, and this means a submission to His Word. By doing this every day, we will live in faithful obedience.

1. Matthew 24:46: Believers who are found faithful to Jesus will be considered faithful servants.

BIG IDEA #2: FAITHFUL SERVANTS AVOID THE TEMPTATION TO LIVE DISTRACTED.²**[THIS]**

Distractions are all around us. Our fleshly desires distract us, the world distracts us, and other people distract us. In Matthew 24:48-51, we get a picture of what living a distracted life can yield. Some of the servants mentioned in this parable were drawn away by their own desires for earthly things. They allowed the distraction of their flesh and the delay in their master's return to lead them away from a faithful life of obedience. Distractions are a danger to every follower of Christ. Our flesh will lead us away from God and will tempt us to disobey Him. Jesus is returning one day, but His return can feel a long way off and this can lead us to grow weary in serving Him on earth. Because of this, we are lulled into apathy and a pursuit of the world instead of Christ. Just as some of the servants in the parable were lulled into a life of worldly pursuits, the same can happen to us.

[THEREFORE]**How easy is it for you to think of Jesus' return as something that is far off?**

Luke 21:36 and 1 Thessalonians 5:6 serve as a great reminder to us. We are to always live as if Jesus' return is happening today. We do not know when He will return, so we can't give in to the temptation to push it from our minds. It's easy to think of Jesus' return as something that is way in the future because we get caught up in this life.

[THIS]

We may pursue Christ daily and live for Him, yet we grow weary in our walk. We may grow weary of the daily grind of living for Christ and living opposite of the world. Being different and living as a stranger in a strange land can cause us to grow weary, yet we cannot. This weariness can serve as a distraction from living faithfully for Jesus. We may not be caught living for the world, but we could be caught living apathetically and only half-heartedly pursuing Christ. We may grow lax in our service to Jesus and instead, content ourselves with making it through the day or living Sunday to Sunday. We must resist this temptation. We must live each day with fervor and commitment to Christ because it could always be our last. Just as the servants in the parable were surprised by the master's return, we, too, will be surprised when Jesus comes because we will not know He's coming. Faithful servants endure through even a monotonous life in order to be found faithful in the end.

[THEREFORE]**What has made you weary in your life? How can you combat this emotion and continue serving faithfully?**

When we do the same thing a lot, we can grow tired or weary of it. In serving Jesus, we may feel like we aren't making a difference, especially since we don't see what Jesus is doing all of the time. Galatians 6:9 and 1 Thessalonians 3:13 remind us to stay the course and to not grow weary in serving. We will reap a reward if we endure.

How does a pursuit of Jesus help you serve without growing weary?

Perspective plays a huge part in our we endure in this life. If our pursuit is this world and the things it has to offer, our focus will be on temporal things. If our hearts are tuned to Jesus and a pursuit of Him, we will not grow weary in doing good things because we will be working for Him and not this world as Colossians 3:23 tells us to do.

2. Matthew 24:48: *Those who live distracted lives will not please the Master and receive His blessing.*

BIG IDEA #3: FAITHLESS SERVANTS WILL EXPERIENCE THE MASTER'S JUDGMENT.³

[THIS]

In Matthew 24:45-51, the master returned and some of his servants were not prepared to meet him. Those servants were found to be faithless. Instead of serving the master and obeying him, they were living for themselves and mistreating the other servants. Their hearts were far from their master and his commands. Because of their behavior, they faced his judgment, while the faithful servants received his blessing. The faithless servants received punishment and were cast out into a place of torture and unending pain. Remaining faithful is important. God requires our faithfulness. He is our example, interacting faithfully with His people. Even those who do not confess that He is Lord experience His faithfulness because He sustains life here on earth. He is faithful to cause the sun to rise and set. He faithfully provides air to breathe and food to eat. The master is right to judge his faithless servants because he is their master.

[THEREFORE]

How does God's faithfulness help you to live faithfully?

Knowing that God is faithful and expects us to be faithful should help us live faithful lives to Him. 2 Timothy 2:13 teaches us that no matter if we are faithful or not, God's faithfulness does not change. We should seek to be like Him in our faithfulness.

Knowing that God judges those He finds faithless, how can you live more faithfully this week?

Faithfulness can seem impossible for us because of our humanness, but God helps us live faithfully for Him. We can choose faithful living because we know that our end reward is His blessing. Hebrews 10:23 and 2 Thessalonians 3:3 help us understand that God does not ask us to do something that He has and does not do Himself.

[THIS]

Those who are in Christ, or have saving faith will not face God's judgment. They will stand before Him and give account to their lives. Just as the faithful servants were found to be faithful and obedient, God's people will be found to be faithful to Him. A mark of a faithful servant is one who endures and perseveres to the very end. Those who are found to have no faith will be cast away from God and suffer eternal punishment. They will be cast into a lake of fire and spend their eternity suffering. Just as the faithless servants in Matthew 24:45-51 suffered a terrible punishment, those who reject God to the very end will also suffer a terrible punishment. Those who truly know God will endure difficult things to the very end. They will not be drawn away with distractions or give up. Instead, they will remain faithful to the very end.

[THEREFORE]

What helps you endure difficult things in order to be found faithful in the end?

Trusting God is key to being found faithful in the end. Proverbs 3:5, Psalm 9:10, and Psalm 28:7 help us understand the importance of turning our eyes to God and trusting Him to help us remain faithful. God works in us in this life to obey Him. With His help we can remain faithful to the very end and not face His judgment.

3. Matthew 24:50-51: Those who are faithless will receive punishment for their lack of faith.