

A+ Thou Good and Faithful Servant



“The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7b).

- What do those around you observe as they watch you minister to children?
- What does God see when he looks at your heart?

▼ Training Session

This Sunday your pastor may not be watching you. Your children’s ministry leader may not evaluate your lesson content. You may not have parents checking to make sure you taught their children well.

But remember that even though others might not be watching, God is. And it’s his evaluation that counts most.

Maybe knowing that God will evaluate how faithfully you’ve used your gifts in service makes you nervous. You’re painfully aware of your failures. You know your inadequacies. You wonder if you’re making a difference.

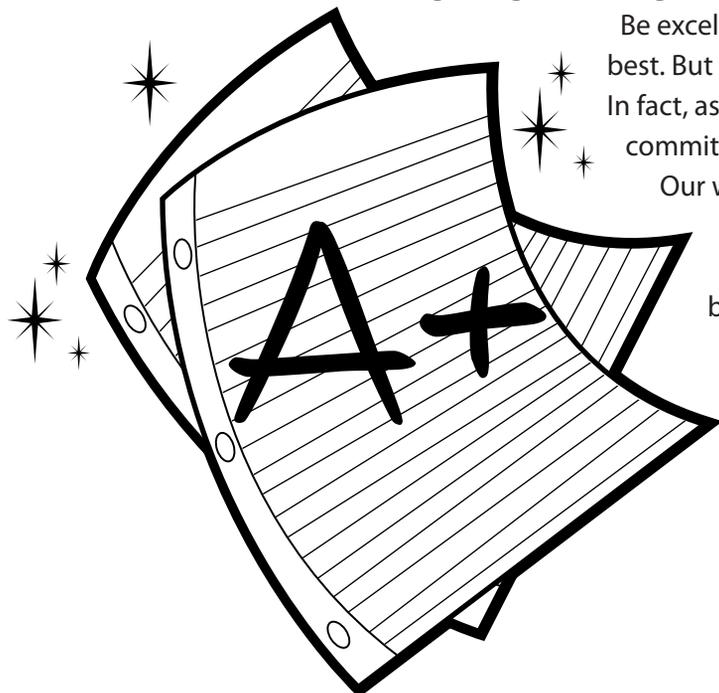
But awards and applause are misleading. God is less impressed by the outward signs of accomplishment and a perfect performance than by your heart. God approves when we depend on him. And when we’re faithful.

Here’s how it works: We rely on God, and he gives us what we need to serve him effectively. We pray for his work to be done, and he gifts us. We learn his Word, prepare, confess, and pray, and God uses us in a specific place of service.

God commands our obedience, requires our sacrifice, and demands our holiness. Those are tough standards. With Jesus as our example, the grading curve is high.

Be excellent in your teaching—your children deserve your best. But will you ever be perfect? Not quite...but that’s OK. In fact, as you recognize your faults and failures, you can commit *those* to God, too.

Our weakness yielded to God’s strength is a powerful combination. So don’t worry about being a perfect teacher—you aren’t. You never will be. But you *can* be faithful—and have fun in serving God!





Take this training deeper as you think over these questions:

- How can you rely even more fully on God?
- In what specific ways can you improve the way you serve God by focusing less on performance and more on dependence?

▼ Journal

Picture the dust finally settling around the edges of a busy day spent ministering to kids. You feel tired and drained, but because you were faithful you know God smiled on your efforts.

Today God smiled when . . .

If God can speak through a burning bush, a donkey, and—if need be—make the rocks cry out, surely he'll use a children's ministry worker who's on his or her knees. Take heart. God's ready and willing to use you!

▼ Application

Draw a heart.

Inside it, paraphrase the words of 1 Samuel 16:7b. As you meditate on what matters most to God, create a list of "Great Expectations." Write around the edges of the heart the inner qualities God calls "great" and the attitudes of the heart he "expects" to find in those who serve him. Circle the ones that you'll work on this week.