

Spend five days this week living with the weekend message.

## Play Your Best! September 1–2, 2007

*My best is determined by key relationships and attitude*

### COLOSSIANS 3:22-25 (The Message)

Servants, do what you're told by your earthly masters. And don't just do the minimum that will get you by. Do your best. Work from the heart for your real Master, for God, confident that you'll get paid in full when you come into your inheritance. Keep in mind always that the ultimate Master you're serving is Christ. The sullen servant who does shoddy work will be held responsible. Being a follower of Jesus doesn't cover up bad work.

### GALATIANS 6:7-10 (NIV)

<sup>7</sup>Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. <sup>8</sup>The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. <sup>9</sup>Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup>Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

### MALACHI 1:6-8 (NIV)

<sup>6</sup>"A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?' <sup>7</sup>You place defiled food on my altar. But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' By saying that the LORD's table is contemptible. <sup>8</sup>When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your

governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty.

### MALACHI 2:4-6 (NIV)

<sup>4</sup>"And you will know that I have sent you this admonition so that my covenant with Levi may continue," says the LORD Almighty. <sup>5</sup>"My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. <sup>6</sup>True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin."

### MALACHI 3:14 (NIV)

<sup>14</sup>"You have said, 'It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty?'"

### COLOSSIANS 3:12-13 (NIV)

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>13</sup>Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

### MALACHI 2:8 (NIV)

<sup>8</sup>"But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi," says the LORD Almighty.

### I CORINTHIANS 10:32 (NIV)

Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God.

### Day 1

Read Colossians 3:22-25 and Galatians 6:7-10. These passages speak to our motivation for work. For Christians that motivation comes from our relationship with Jesus. How can focusing on Christ help you give your best?

List 2-4 "challenges" that can tend to take your focus off of giving your best.

What specific ways could you daily remind yourself that giving your best flows out of your relationship with Jesus? (eg – memorize Galatians 6:9; or post it in a place that you see frequently throughout the day)

### Day 2

Read Malachi 1:6-8. In Malachi we see priests performing their role poorly. Identify a few possible attitudes that were affecting the priests' performance of their duties. List 2-4.

As you re-read the passage, what is God disappointed in? Why do you think this matters?

Take a look back at the challenges you identified on Day 1. How do these affect your attitude?

Attitude test: Pay attention throughout your day to your attitudes. What are they? How can your relationship with Jesus lift them higher?

### Day 3

Read Colossians 3:12-13 and Malachi 2:4-6; 3:14. Sometimes we compare our spirituality to someone like Levi (who is described in Malachi 2:4-6) and if we don't measure up, we begin to get the futile attitude described in Malachi 3:14.

Do you ever play the comparison game? What do you tend to compare about yourself with others?

How have you seen this game impact your relationship with others? God? And your ability to give your best in a given situation?

God treasures you (Colossians 3:12-13)! How can this fact influence your attitude toward life? Be specific.

### Day 4

Read Malachi 2:8 and I Corinthians 10:32. We affect others by our actions and attitudes. List five people that you influence—people in your family, neighborhood, workplace, etc.

Look back over the last month, think through specific examples of how you have influenced them (both positively and negatively). Use your attitude, actions, and words as a grid to evaluate yourself.

List 2 specific ways you can help others give their best in the next week.

### Day 5

Re-read the scripture we looked at over Days 1-4. What comes to your mind as you read these scriptures?

What might be one or two things that you could do in response to His Word? Be specific.

What specific plan can you make as a next step? Think actions like: post Colossians 3:22-25 in a place I will see it numerous times during my day.

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