

Getting Things Done  
John 17:1-19, Jeremiah 1:4-10  
September 3, 2017

***“I have brought You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave me to do.”*** (John 17:4)

1. Jesus finished the work \_\_\_\_\_ gave Him to do.  
John 17:4 ***“I have brought You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave me to do.”***  
Luke 2:49 ***And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”***
2. Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ on God’s agenda.  
John 5:19 ***Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.***  
Luke 5:16 ***But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.***
3. Jesus knew how to say “\_\_\_\_\_.”  
Mark 1:35-38 ***35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. 36 Simon and his companions went to look for him, 37 and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!” 38 Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.”***
4. Jesus worked in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.  
Luke 4:18-19 ***“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”*** (Cf. Isaiah 61:1-2)
5. Jesus had \_\_\_\_\_ thing to do!  
Mark 10:45 ***“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”***  
John 19:30 ***When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.***
6. We \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ do what the God wants us to do.  
John 14:12-14 ***Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.***

7. Our \_\_\_\_\_ purpose is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.  
Psalm 100:3 **Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.**

Westminster Shorter Catechism A 1 “Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”

8. We need to \_\_\_\_\_ God’s agenda.  
Jeremiah 1:5 **“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”**

Philippians 3:12-14 **12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.**

9. We need the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit.  
Acts 2:17-18 **“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”** (= Joel 2:28-29. See Acts 1:8, John 20:22, I Corinthians 12:7 etc.)

John 15:5 **I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.**

Philippians 4:13 **I can do all this through him who gives me strength.**

10. We need to \_\_\_\_\_.  
Ephesians 2:8-10 **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

Exodus 20:9 **Six days you shall labor and do all your work,**

Colossians 3:23-24 **Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.**

11. There is \_\_\_\_\_ in heaven.  
Matthew 25:21 (=25:23) **“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’**

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***“I have brought You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave me to do.”*** (John 17:4)

- **INTRO:** Remember that little over-achiever in elementary school who always finished every test and every assignment before everyone else? The rest of us would be slaving away at our tasks when that child loudly slapped her number-two pencil on her desk and smirked smugly for the last quarter of the class. Maybe you were that kid.

I was not that kid. The rule at my house was that I couldn't go outside and play until my homework was done. So I didn't play much on weekdays. I'd sit down at my desk and doodle and draw, dilly-dally and day-dream. I'd do everything but what I was supposed to do. In that regard, I wasn't much like Jesus in my boyhood.

After the Lord shared His Last Supper with His disciples, John's gospel tells us that He prayed. And one of the first things He said to the Father in that prayer was this. ***“I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.”*** (John 17:4)

**Wow! Jesus was in His early 30's and He was saying that He finished His life work!**

Now, my work habits are far better today than they were when I was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, but I don't feel like I'm done with my life work. I don't feel like I've accomplished everything I'm supposed to do – and I'm about twice as old as Jesus was when He said that. Gee. I often don't feel like I finish my work for a single day!

How did He do it? How did He finish so quickly?

1. Jesus finished the work God gave Him to do.  
John 17:4 ***“I have brought You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave me to do.”***

- Jesus was already “about His Father’s business at age 12.

Luke 2:49 ***And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” (NKJV)***

2. Jesus focused on God’s agenda.

John 5:19 ***Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.***

- Jesus’ custom was to pray and spend time with the Father.

Luke 5:16 ***But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.***

3. Jesus knew how to say “No.”

Mark 1:35-38 ***35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. 36 Simon and his companions went to look for him, 37 and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!” 38 Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.”***

- Jesus didn’t do everything other people wanted Him to do.
- Perhaps He didn’t do everything He wanted to do.

4. Jesus worked in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 4:18-19 ***“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”*** (Cf. Isaiah 61:1-2)

5. Jesus had one more thing to do!

Mark 10:45 ***“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”***

John 19:30 ***When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.***

■ Gospel

6. We can and should do what the God wants us to do.  
John 14:12-14 ***Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.***

7. Our general purpose is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Psalms 100:3 ***Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.***

Shorter Catechism A 1 ***“Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”***

■ You awaken us to delight in praising You, for you have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until

they find rest in You.

8. We need to focus God's agenda.

Jeremiah 1:5 ***“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”***

Philippians 3:12-14 ***12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.***

- Phil Cooke has written a book called *One Big Thing: Discovering what You Were Born to Do*. He says the way to excel in life is to find the one big thing you're supposed to do in life and focus all your energies and talents there.
- Maybe its teaching. Maybe it's music. Maybe its business. It varies. What's your one big thing?
- These two are tied together, aren't they? Like with Jesus, your one big thing, my one big thing is to bring glory to the Father by doing the work He has given us. But we each have specific purposes. God has a particular purpose for you.
- Soon after I committed my life to Jesus Christ when I was in my early teens people began saying to me things like, “Rod, I think the Lord has work for you.” I knew what they meant. They thought I was supposed to become a preacher. But I wanted to be a musician.
- After all, being a preacher isn't the only way to serve God, to do God's work. God calls musicians too, and teachers and nurses and scientists and parents and plumbers and so on.

- And we were both right. I was right in that we can serve God in many different ways. But they were right in that, it turns out, my particular work is to be a preacher.
- What's yours? What is the work the Father has given you? How does He want *you* to bring glory to Him on earth?
- The specifics vary. You can glorify and enjoy God by preaching, and banking and doing good, honest work as a mechanic ...You glorify God by being a good husband, wife, parent, child, friend ...

■ **Rocks in a jar.**

Remember the story about the professor who showed his class a jar full of rocks and asked if the jar was full. They said it was. Then he poured in some sand, which filled in around the rocks. Again he asked if the jar was full and again they said it was. So he poured water into the jar, which mixed in with the sand.

The point, he said, is this. If he had put in the water or the sand first, there would not have been room for the rocks. The rocks represent the important things in our lives. For us, that means the things God calls us to do. The work God has given us. Be sure to do those things first, the professor said. Don't let them be crowded out by trivia.

- The most important thing you have to do each day and in all of life to discern God's will.
- ➔ **Set aside time every day – maybe an hour – to pray, to listen to God, to plan. Half an hour in the morning, half an hour at night.**
- We must spend much time in prayer and Scripture study and reading.
- If you don't have an hour a day to pay attention to what God wants you to do, you're probably wasting time! Maybe wasting your life.

- We can say “no.” We have to say “no” to some things.

9. We need the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:17-18 ***“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”*** (= Joel 2:28-29. See Acts 1:8, John 20:22, I Corinthians 12:7 etc.)

John 15:5 ***I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.***

Philippians 4:13 ***I can do all this through him who gives me strength.***

- ***As we noted last Sunday, if you’re going to do all things through Him who gives you strength, you have to DO something!***

10. We need to work.

Ephesians 2:8-10 ***For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.***

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11. There is reward in heaven.

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Will He say to you, “Well done?” Did you invest your talents? Imagine you’re in heaven. Jesus is coming toward you. You hear him say to one person, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Your **teaching** was so faithful and really helped people follow me.”

Then to another, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Your **prayers** were so powerful they moved heaven again and again.”

Then to someone else, “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have no idea how many people you nudged closer to me with your **witness** and how many are here in heaven, in part, because you pointed them to me.”

**Then to another and another and another.**

Finally he comes to you and says, “I hope you enjoyed those **dancing cat videos.**” (Or those soap operas or sit-coms, or your travels, or your lucrative career, anything besides what the Father gave you to do.)

**God has work for you and me to do.**

There is no better way to finish this life than to say, “I have finished the work God gave me to do.”

There is no greater reward in heaven than to hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

So let’s devote ourselves daily to discerning what God wants us to do, and let’s do it.

**Let’s get things done.**

- Multi-millionaire and motivational speaker Jim Rohn says a key to success is to work harder on yourself than you do on your job.