

December 4, 2005 by Steve Brandon



Do You Serve The Church?

Ephesians 4:12-16

1. Serve to Build the Body (verse 12).
2. Serve to Mature the Body (verse 13).
3. Serve to Stabilize the Body (verse 14).
4. Serve to Grow the Body (verse 15).
5. Serve to Build the Body (verse 16).

Two weeks ago, I asked you the question: “Do You Love The Church?” In that message, I sought to give you reasons why you should love the church, because Jesus Christ loves the church. I challenged you with three characteristics of how love acts. And I asked you whether or not you love the church, because it will show whether you do or not. Last week, I asked you the question: “Do You Know The Church?” In that message, I described the church from God’s perspective. The church is God’s grace. The church is God’s surprise. The church is God’s wisdom. The church is God’s plan. God is thrilled that the church exists. The church ought to thrill all of our hearts as well.

This week, I want to ask you another question: “Do You Serve The Church?” Once again, I want to quote from the book that we have handed out to the church, “Stop Dating the Church,” by Joshua Harris. Beginning on page 16, Joshua Harris writes, ...

“Can you spot what I’m calling a church-dater? Here’s a quick profile. Do you see one or more of these characteristics in yourself?”

First, our attitude toward church tends to be *me-centered*. We go for what we can get--social interaction, programs, or activities. The driving question is, “What can church do for me?”

A second sign of a church-dater is being *independent*. We go to church because that’s what Christians are supposed to do--but we’re careful to avoid getting involved too much, especially with people. We don’t pay much attention to God’s larger purpose for us as a vital part in a specific church family. So we go through the motions without really investing ourselves.

Most essentially, a church-dater tends to be *critical*. We are short on allegiance and quick to find fault in our church. We treat church with a consumer mentality--looking for the best product for the price of our Sunday morning. As a result, we’re fickle and not invested for the long-term, like a lover with a wandering eye, always on the hunt for something better.

Take my friend Nathan. He attended *two* churches on Sundays--one because he liked their music, the other because he liked the preaching. And his involvement in both went no deeper. At the first church he’d slip out just before the last song wound down and drive to the other church five minutes away. He even factored in time to stop by McDonald’s for an Egg McMuffin. He timed it so that he’d be walking into the second church just as the pastor started to preach.

I guess you could say Nathan was two-timing. If you see yourself in any of these descriptions, I want you to hear this from a former church-dater: *God has something better for you and me than dating the church*. What practiced daters like Nathan ... don’t realize is what they assume is working for their personal gain is actually resulting in serious loss--for themselves and others” (pp. 16-18). [\[1\]](#)

My heart for this church in this series is that none of us would be dating the church. My heart is for everyone one of us in this room might fully understand what the church is and how we ought to be functioning in the church. And so, I encourage you to read this book that we have given to you. Even if you tell me, “But, Steve, I’m not dating the church! I don’t need to read this book!” I know that many of you aren’t dating the church. For that, I am rejoicing. And yet, I would still encourage you to read the book. I believe that this book is profitable for you to read. As a pastor, this book was very profitable for me to read! It helped to cement what my commitment to this church should look like. I trust that as you read it, it will help you to cement your commitment to this church as well.

This morning, we will again focus on one question for application. Our question today is this: “Do You Serve The Church?” My text is Ephesians 4:12-16. If you haven’t done so already, I would invite you to open your Bibles to Ephesians 4. This is certainly a familiar passage to many of you. It is a key passage as to how the church should function. To catch the context, I’m going to begin reading in verse 11.

Ephesians 4:11-16

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every

wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

This passage gives an overview of the way that the church ought to function. It speaks about the different leaders that the Lord has given to the church. They are given for the purpose of equipping the people of the church "for the work of service." This morning, it is the "work of service" that I will focus upon as the idea of service governs our whole text, from verse 12 onwards.

Before we actually get to our outline, I want to tell you the story of three men. These men were in building Sir Christopher Wren's cathedral in London. A journalist, thinking that he would do a report on those who were actually doing the building, went down to the construction site and interviewed three men. He asked all of them the same question: "What are you doing?" The first worker replied, "I'm cutting stone for 10 shillings a day." The second answered, "I'm working for 10 hours a day on this job to support my family." But the third said, "I'm helping Sir Christopher Wren construct one of London's greatest cathedrals." What a difference a perspective makes! When you see the end product of your labors, it is easier to work and toil and labor.

I remember reading about Elton Brand a few years ago. He was a great college basketball player for the University of Duke. Once his college career was over, he began training for the NBA. He hired a personal trainer to push him to train hard so as to impress the NBA scouts who would come and evaluate him. One of the things that the trainer constantly used to motivate him was a simple phrase: "Number One." He would often call Elton, "Number One." "Come here, Number One." "You can do it, Number One." "Keep going! Number One." "Number One" signified the first pick in the draft, which was his goal. Indeed, in 1999, the Chicago Bulls drafted him as the number one selection in the entire NBA draft.

Having a long-term perspective helps to keep you going today. My outline this morning is in the form of goals that you ought to have as you serve the church. I want to give you far reaching implications of your service to the church. I want to show you that any labor that you might put into this church has a God-glorifying end in sight! This is what Paul said. You should, ...

1. Serve to Build the Body (verse 12).

The leaders of the church are to equip the saints "for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ." Acts of service "build up the body of Christ." When Paul speaks about the "body," he is obviously referring to the church. Several times in this epistle, Paul connects these two things. Look back at chapter 1. In verse 22 we read that God "put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to church, which is His body." The church is "His body." We see this connection in chapter 5, verse 23, where Paul writes that "Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body." (Eph. 5:23).

And so, the purpose of your serving is that you might "build up" the church. Do you want to see Rock Valley Bible Church grow and prosper? Then serve the body, and it will grow! Perhaps you don't want to see the body grow and prosper. Perhaps you are content with the way that things are. You like this group of people. You like what we are doing in this church. You like the size of the church which allows for many things to be personal. You like our missions emphasis upon foreign lands. You like the trips that we have taken down south to help the victims of Katrina. You want to see things continue just as they are. There may well be people who think this way. There are people who think this about their children! Oh, my children are so cute. I especially think of my three year old. He can walk and talk and has such a simple view of life. Oh, I wish that he would never grow up. Perhaps there are some who think this way about the church. "I like the church how it is right now!" If this is you, please realize that God wants to see us grow as a body.

The way in which the Lord has established the church is seen right here in verses 11 and 12. God gives leaders of the church with the specific purpose of equipping the saints so that they will perform works of service, which has its goal in building up the body of Christ. Now, I don't believe that Paul is speaking here about numerical growth. I believe that he is talking about building the depth of spirituality and love for Christ. That is his emphasis in verse 13. And so, the work of service that he is addressing here has to do with service to one another within the life of the church. The work here has to do with building up one another.

Now, how do you do this? How exactly do you perform "works of service" so as to build the body of Christ? At the core is an "others-centeredness." By this, I simply mean a focus upon the needs of others. The one who dates the church is only in it for himself. He is involved in church to the extent that the church will help him. In the quote at the beginning of this sermon, Joshua Harris described them as "me-centered," "independent," and "critical." The day that the church doesn't meet his needs is the day that he gives up on the church and looks for another that will meet his needs. But, service is focused upon meeting the needs of others.

And so, by concerning yourself with the needs of others instead of yourself, you will begin to build up the body of Christ. This is how the church began. Jesus started the church by giving Himself up for the church. He said, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). Do you see this radical focus on others? When Jesus came into the world, He didn't focus upon Himself and upon His own needs, demanding that others serve Him. Rather, Jesus came and focused His attention upon the needs of others and gave Himself for them! This is service in the body of Christ: self-sacrifice for the sake of others.

There are various different ways to do serve the church. You can do it through physical acts of service, by doing something for others. You can also do this through words of encouragement, by saying something to others. This can be in an official capacity in the church, such as arranging the chairs on Sunday morning, working in the nursery, bringing refreshments, or playing music. This can also be in an unofficial capacity, such as helping someone in the church with some sort of home repair, praying for a family in need, encouraging a downcast soul, or teaching the Bible to your children.

2. Serve to Mature the Body (verse 13).

This comes from verse 13, which says, “until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.” This verse describes the goal of the church. Businesses aim for a profit. Football teams aim for a bowl game. Movies aim for the Oscars. Students aim for grades. Doctors aim for health. And, churches aim for maturity. Each of these phrases in verse 13 point to maturity.

a) The unity of the faith. This comes about when the entire body is unified in their faith in Jesus. As a result, each and every member of the body are functioning together properly. And there will be no complaint or grumbling or murmuring among the members of the church, for all are unified.

b) The knowledge of the Son of God. If you have a New American Standard version of the Bible, the footnote reads, “the true knowledge of the Son of God,” which is describing a full, perfect, complete knowledge of Christ. It describes the time in which the whole body knows Christ fully and completely. It describes a mature faith and trust in Christ.

c) A mature man. The picture here is of a full-grown man, as opposed to a boy. There is no more growing to do. He has reached his full stature. He has only to live and love for the rest of his days. This mature man pictures the end product of what we are to strive for as a church.

d) The measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. This phrase is simply describing the coming of age. It may refer to maturity in height. It may refer to maturity in age. All of which points to a finished, final product, rejoicing in the fullness of Christ. These are the things that we as a church are to “attain to.” These are the things that we are to “come to.” These are the things that we are to “reach for.” It’s as if the church is traveling to reach a certain destination. And that destination is a mature, complete body, where there is no division, where every one of us fully knows Christ, where we are mature, where we are fully grown.

These things are describing the perfect church. And we will never fully attain to all of these things. We live in a sinful world. In case you haven’t noticed, the people of the church are sinful as well. Whenever you place sinful people together in a group, it will simply stir up more sin. It is only “when He appears, [that] we shall be like Him” (1 John 3:2). Until that day, the church of Jesus Christ will be immature and not fully what it ought to be.

But, these things describe where we are going. Last week in my message, I made a comment that generated a bit of discussion. I said that the aim of our service and the aim of my preaching was to the mature. I fear that some of you may not have understood what I meant by that. I didn’t mean to imply that we would do only those things that would benefit the mature in our midst. I know of a man who sought to plant a church by preaching very academic Hebrew & Greek-oriented sermons. There were some in the congregation who really loved what they were learning. But very few visitors would stay at the church because it was too high and heavy. I don’t want to do this. I want to preach in such a manner as to bring the immature to maturity, and to sufficiently challenge the mature.

How do we reach such maturity? It is through service. You have to connect verse 13 with verse 12. It is the work of service that builds up the body of Christ. In building up the body of Christ, we are aiming at maturity. We are not aiming at increasing our numbers. We want each member of the body to be mature and complete. Maturity comes through the process of people in the church serving one another.

3. Serve to Stabilize the Body (verse 14).

Paul wrote in verse 14, “As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.” This verse brings us to a picture of the sea. Paul describes it like a boat, floating on the top of the water in the midst of a storm! The waves are high and the swells are big! They push the boat up and down and from side to side. He’s talking about a storm in which one big wave is followed by another big wave, which come crashing over the boat, tossing it about. And then, there is a small lull, before a gigantic wave, which twists the boat around.

When Paul applies the analogy, He isn’t talking about waves of the sea, he is talking about “wind of doctrine” that sweep over the church. He isn’t talking about the waves of water, he is talking about the men who come in their “trickery” to deceive those in the church. Such people come into the church. Paul warned Timothy of those who would come into the church, “teaching strange doctrines” (1 Tim. 1:3). They focus their attention upon “myths and endless genealogies” (1 Tim. 1:4) and “fruitless discussion” (1 Tim. 1:6). They desperately want “to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand what they are saying” (1 Tim. 1:7). Paul said that there would be those who would come into the church, “holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power” (2 Tim. 3:5). These types of men “enter into households and captivate weak women” (2 Tim. 3:6). They will be “deceiving” (2 Tim. 3:13). They will be “being deceived” (2 Tim. 3:13).

When a church is immature, these things might easily happen. But, the mature church won’t be like that. Once again, we are forced to link verse 14 with the previous verse. Verse 14 is a contrast to verse 13. In verse 13, Paul was talking about a man. In verse 14, Paul describes children. In verse 13, Paul described a maturity that is characterized by steadiness, stability and security. In verse 14, we see the wavering, uncertainty, insecurity of a child. Paul writes that the mature church won’t be the church that is open and susceptible to this wind of doctrine and that wave of doctrine. It’s the immature child who is gullible and ready to believe any new teaching that comes along.

But, here’s the million dollar question: What is it that will keep the church stabilized when the winds of doctrine come into the church? I’ll give you a few hints. It’s not great preaching. It’s not great Bible knowledge. It’s not great doctrinal statements. It’s not great theology. It’s the “work of service” that people perform in the church. This is where the surprise of text surfaced in my study this week. In my mind, I had always thought of combating doctrinal error through right teaching. Though that must certainly be done, it is not the solution that Paul gives in this passage. It’s the “work of service” that matures the body and protects it from the various doctrines which find their way into many churches.

This is my point: We need to serve in order to stabilize the body. How does this happen? How is it that “the work of service” protects against

the winds of doctrine that blow against the church? I believe that it goes something like this: When the church is functioning properly, with the saints faithfully serving one another, there is no need for anyone to come into the midst of the church and say, "Here is what you really need. You need to believe this... and you need to believe that...! You need this program, and you need this 40-day study. You need this music, and you need to follow this method." Those in the church will simply say, "Why do we need that? We have the gospel right here. We have the Word of God taught faithfully and modeled appropriately. We have seen the effect of what it produces in our lives. When we look at what your doctrine produces, we don't see harmony and affection and good will toward one another like our message does. Thank you very much. You can go on your merry way."

Do you want to protect Rock Valley Bible Church from doctrinal error? Serve The Church!

4. Serve to Grow the Body (verse 15).

Look at verses 15, "But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ." The literal meaning of this text is "truthing in love." The idea is that our lives mix and mingle with one another in the context of truth and love. Every translation that I looked at translated this correctly as "speaking the truth in love." There are "love people" and there are "truth people". But the Bible calls us to be both.

Your words can go a long way toward the building of the church. I believe that most of us initially think of "work of service" as things that we do, and not things that we say. However, the Bible places a strong emphasis upon how the things that we say can build up or can destroy. Look at chapter 4, verse 29. Paul writes, "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear." In this verse, we are told the sorts of words that aren't to proceed from our mouths. We are also told the sorts of words that are to proceed from our mouths. Unwholesome words shouldn't proceed from your mouth. But, edifying words should proceed from your mouth.

Unwholesome words are those words which tear down and destroy. The Greek word here translated "unwholesome" gives the picture of rotten, decaying fruit. On the other hand, edifying words are words that build up. The Greek word here translated, "edification" is the same word used in verse 12 to describe the "building" of the body of Christ. This is what "edification" means. It means "building." It means "growing." So, what's one way to "build the body"? By speaking forth edifying words.

This was another surprise to me in my study this week: You can build the church with your mouth! How easy is that? We aren't talking about long hours of heavy labor here. We aren't talking about massive hours of time commitment here. We aren't talking about long meetings. We are talking about speaking. We are talking about talking. Last time I checked, we all were capable of doing this. All of us can talk. Some of us can talk more than others, but all of us can talk. But here is the thing: when you talk, are your words edifying? Your words can build up, or your words can destroy. When you talk with others in this church, are your words chosen specifically to build them up?

I love how verse 29 ends. "... that it may give grace to those who hear." We often think of grace as only something that only God can give. We often think of grace only in terms of our salvation. We were dead in our sins, and yet, by the grace of God, He made us alive. And yet, the Bible tells us right here that we can give grace to others. Do you want to give grace? Then, speak edifying, encouraging words to each other.

As I have read some material by C. J. Mahaney, it has helped me understand this better. Mahaney says that edifying words are not polite words. Edifying words are not socially nice words. They're not words of flattery or words of complement, which are man-centered or man-exalting. Edifying words are words that reveal the character and the promises and the activity of God. Edifying words are rooted in and derived from Scripture that identify the active presence of God, working in another person. [\[2\]](#)

How can you speak edifying, encouraging words to each other? I can say it no better than C. J. Mahaney says it. He says, ...

Let us pray, "Lord, help me discern what kind of grace this person needs." For those who are legalistic or feel condemned, we want to bring justifying grace into their souls. To those struggling with a besetting sin, we want to bring sanctifying grace. To those experiencing suffering, we want to bring comforting grace. To those who are just weary, we want to refresh their souls with sustaining grace. The list goes on and on.

Through each and every interaction, however casual, however brief, I want to impart grace through my words, for that's God's purpose in granting us this gift of speech. And in effect we have God's promise in this passage that when our words are edifying and appropriate, they give grace. So we have to ask ourselves: Is this the effect of my speech upon others? Is this their common experience in our conversations? Do they experience grace in and through my words?" ...

God has so composed His church that when we're together in a larger corporate gathering or in a small group or even in casual conversation, we can both receive grace and communicate grace through the exchange of edifying and appropriate words. Every conversation has this potential. [\[3\]](#)

And so, I say this to you, church family, never, ever, ever, ever despise any time that the church can get together. Whether it is in the fellowship after church, whether it is at one of our flock Bible studies, whether it is in your home with other members of the church, whether it is on the phone with others, whether it is sending an email, or whether it is writing a note. Every single one of those opportunities is an opportunity to serve the body by giving grace to build up an individual in this church, which will grow the body.

5. Serve to Build the Body (verse 16).

Let's turn our attention to verse 16. Paul wrote, "From whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love." Once again, we find

Paul talking about the church as a body. He says that your labor and ministry in serving one another isn't simply random acts of kindness that have no purpose at all. Rather, every member of the body is performing a certain function within the body. When it all works together, it achieves the final goal of "the building up" of the church.

To help us in understanding this, I want to take a look at 1 Corinthians 12. When you think about the way in which the body of Christ functions, you ought to think about the way that your own body functions. This is what Paul does in this chapter. The church is like a body. It is made up of many members, each of which are different from one another, each of which has a different function, and yet, each of which are a part of the body.

1 Corinthians 12:12-20

For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now there are many members, but one body.

Do you catch what Paul is talking about in these verses? He's talking about the church and comparing it to a human body. The descriptions he is using is almost humorous! You see the members of the body almost arguing with one another. Just imagine the conversation in verse 15 going something like this:

The foot cries out, "Hey, you hand over there!"

Hand: "Who? Me?"

Foot: "Yeah, you!"

Hand: "What do you want?"

Foot: "Did you know that I'm not a part of the body?"

Hand: "What are you talking about?"

Foot: "I'm not a hand. Therefore, I'm not a part of the body."

Hand: "C'mon, be serious!"

Foot: "I am. In fact, I'm leaving."

And what happens when the foot leaves your body? You end up limping around, walking on a peg-leg. In verse 16, we see the ear and the eye having a similar argument. Without our ears, we are deaf. Without our eyes, we are blind. They are both a part of the body. In verse 17, Paul describes the catastrophe that would take place if everybody were the same! If we were a giant eye, we could see, but we couldn't hear very well. If we were a giant ear, we could hear pretty well, but we couldn't smell. If we were a giant nose, we could smell, but we couldn't go anywhere. If we were a foot, we could walk, but we couldn't see where we were going. In verse 18, we see that God has perfectly formed the body, so that it functions properly together. It properly functions as each part does its task. But, if a member fails to do its task, the entire body suffers.

So also the body of Christ. Each member of the church needs to perform its function if the church is to work properly together. Nobody in the body of Christ can say, "I'm not a part of the body." Oh, yes, you are. If you have come to faith in Christ, God has made you and given you acts of service to do within the body of Christ. If you fail to perform that service, you are working contrary to your nature. You are hindering the work of building the church. Plain and simply. This is my heart in my message this morning: "Do You Serve The Church?" Is your life a model of functioning in the church?

Turn back to Ephesians 4. This same concept comes in verse 16. Paul writes that "the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16). In this verse, we see Paul talking about this same thing. But, rather than talking about eyes and ears and hands and feet, he's talking about joints and ligaments all working together. The analogy is exactly the same. Should an anterior cruciate ligament say to the knee joint, "I have no need of you, I'm gone!" Well, if that was the case, then you cannot walk! You would need crutches. If the finger says to the flexor tendon, "I have no need of you, I'm gone!" Then, all you have left is a flabby tendon! The body needs to function together with every member doing its part. Or else, the whole body will fail to function. So, how do each of us in the church function? Through the work of service, which brings us back to verse 12. The leaders of the church equip the saints to serve, so that the body is built up. If you aren't serving in the church in some capacity, then you are hindering the growth of this body. You are not building the church.

Do you serve the Church? Are you serving Rock Valley Bible Church?

There are many things that take place in order for Rock Valley Bible Church to function the way it does. To give you an idea of what I mean, let me list a few of these things. Every Saturday night, this building is prepared for our Sunday service. Every Sunday morning, this room is broken down and packed away in the trailer for next week. Every Sunday, the sign on Bell School Road is set up and taken down. Every Sunday morning, refreshments are brought and prepared. Every Sunday morning, we staff a nursery. Toys are cleaned every week. With the exception of the last Sunday of the month, we staff children's church. Once a month we have a potluck which requires the involvement of many people to prepare foods and oversee the setup of the food. Every week a bulletin is prepared and copied for Sunday. Music is planned, copied, and rehearsed. Offerings are given. Church financial matters are administrated, and money is accounted for. Sermons are recorded each week, and uploaded to the church website. Sermon notes are prepared and emailed to the church. Every week, we have treasures to distribute for our children. During the week, many serve at AWANA with Elim Baptist Church. Several families host flocks in their homes twice

a month. People organize various events. There are meals for the sick. We hold Oratorios for the children. There are work days for the men and women. We have holiday gatherings like the Christmas party that includes much advance preparation. Welcome packets are prepared and arranged for new visitors. The church directory is kept up to date. Sermon CD's are prepared. Every week, we pray for the church, and we should never underestimate the power of prayer.

I know I am neglecting to mention many other works of service that are equally important to our church. What more is there to be done? Actually, there is plenty! We need more help with children's ministries including children's church and the nursery. More help is always needed at setup on Saturday nights. Keepers at Home needs women to teach skills to young girls. Contenders for the Faith needs men to help with that program. We need spiritually and musically qualified people to help with our music. A church library would be good to have in order to provide the church family with access to good CD's and books to read. I encourage you to dream of other ways to serve the body. There are plenty of opportunities. For example, welcome the new people who come to visit our church. Invite people over to your home to serve them and love them. Men, make an effort to conduct family worship in your home. That is a huge way to serve your family! Speak encouraging words to one another. Attend a flock. It will give you more opportunities, and that is where the focus of much service takes place. I especially am thrilled to hear of works of service that were being done and that I had no knowledge about. Just this past week, I found out that a few people went to the Wriedts house and cleaned it up before they returned from hospital. I also think of these flowers that sit on the podium here and look real nice. I have no idea who puts them there, but I am encouraged to see that people are doing works of service completely on their own initiative!

Do you serve the Church? Are you serving Rock Valley Bible Church?

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on December 4, 2005 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] Joshua Harris, *Stop Dating the Church*, pp. 11-12 (emphasis, his).

[2] C. J. Mahaney, *Humility*, p. 114.

[3] C. J. Mahaney, *Humility*, pp. 118-119.