

## To Serve

- The responsibility of every disciple of Christ is to serve!
  - The passages of scripture we address today will make this clear
  - They remind us that this service is not a drudgery
  - But rather a privilege, and one that makes total sense in light of Christ
  - And His sacrifice on our behalf
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- There are two primary definitions for the word serve in the New Testament
  - To submit or to yield
  - And to minister, or to render any kind of service
  - We are called to both - and will expand on that today
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- Let's begin by finding a passage that tells us to serve by yielding, submitting to God
  - This word is also translated slave in the New Testament
  - But is frequently used without any association to slavery, to mean submission

### Romans 12:10-11

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

- Obviously there are elements to serving others found here
- But it also simply tells us to submit
- To know what God says and to do it
- This includes right actions toward one another, but means so much more
- Another example

### Colossians 3:23-24

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

- We must act at all times with God's will in mind
  - Because we are His servants, yielded to Him
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- Over and over the scripture urges yielded service to God
  - It also urges ministry, using the same word we use today for deacon
  - This means exertion of effort on behalf of others - to serve them
  - Among other places, we find this in...

### Mark 1:13

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

- This is Jesus, during His time of tempting in the wilderness
- After this very difficult time, He is in need of help

- The angels come and minister to Him - they serve Him
- The word is also used in regard to our service to fellow Christians...

I Peter 4:9-10

9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

- We have responsibilities to one another, for service
- Because we are stewards of God's abundant grace
- In regard to service, it could be said this way...
- We must yield ourselves to God as servants, always offering ourselves as ministers to His people
- There are three more considerations I want to review
  1. We must serve God instead of worldly things
  2. We must consider the cost of service
  3. Christ must be our example
- There will always be a turning away from self
- One that may cost us - from a worldly perspective
- But one that is consistent with Christ's ministry to us

Matthew 6:24-33

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

- When this passage declares that we can't serve God and money, it goes on to explain

- Don't be concerned primarily with things of the world
- Place, always, a primary emphasis on serving God
- Put His kingdom first
- Don't let necessities distract
- God never fails to provide

"We must serve God instead of worldly things..."

I John 3:16-19

16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

- The kind of service God requires will cost something
- It takes total commitment - even the laying down of life and limb
- It also takes compassion - that means real life action, not just a feeling
- The service we render must be in deed and in truth

"We must consider the cost of service..."

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- The perfect model for our service as believers is Jesus himself
- The God of the universe, humbling Himself
- This is a powerful picture
- The One who will have all things in heaven and earth and under the earth to bow before Him
- Came as a servant
- And obeyed unto death

"Christ must be our example..."

*Christopher Harper, Take Note 2024*