**THE HABITS OF THE SERVANT**

Sunday School Lesson 4

*Servants of Christ*

Matthew 20:27

8/27/2023

**Introduction:** During our third lesson on being servants of Christ, we looked at five habits that ought to be present among every one of the Lord’s servants. Let’s review those five before looking at five more habits during today’s lesson. First, we ought to be in the habit of meditating on the Master’s Word. If we are going to properly serve Him, we must continually consider His instructions for us. Second, we ought to be in the habit of looking to do the Master’s will. This speaks to a need for activeness among servants. We must follow the example of Christ and be ever looking for how we can serve the Father’s will for our lives. Third, we ought to be in the habit of instant obedience to the Master. Our flesh does not want to obey, but a good servant dies to his own desires and is quick to obey the commands that are given from the Master. We must train ourselves to respond immediately to the Lord. Fourth, we ought to be in the habit of coming and going when we are called and sent by the Master. This connects with instant obedience, and it’s the idea that servants don’t dictate their location or timing. They are always available at the beckoning call of the Master. There ought to be no ignoring or debating the Master’s call. Lastly, we ought to be in the habit of looking upon the Master’s work with the same care that the Master has for it. We are not hirelings. We are servants who are also sons and daughters of the Master. We serve with care for the work of the Master. We treat it as if it is our own work. If we develop the habit of thinking this way, it will help us to have the right attitude as a servant. Today, let’s consider some other habits that we ought to have and be forming in our service to the King.

1. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF TAKING CARE OF THE LITTLE THINGS.**

* Luke 19:17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. As we continue to consider the work of the servant, we must understand the need for the servant of Christ to be faithful in a very little. As servants, we do not have say over the work assignments that we are given from the Master. Sometimes, the assignments that we are given may seem little in nature or impact. Of course, there is nothing in the eternal work of God that is truly little or insignificant, but that’s how we might feel about it at times compared to other tasks. We must create a habit of taking care of the little things. This is what a good servant does. He realizes that it is not his job to dictate the importance of an assignment. It’s simply his job to take care of it. There are many practical examples of this that we could look at in the life of the everyday Christian. Perhaps, we could even start by looking at a small thing like being at church and playing our part to give exhortation to others. Does one service really matter all that much? Maybe we could look at our daily Bible reading or a particular prayer request that comes to our attention. Perhaps, the little thing that the Lord needs from us is just to handle someone with Godly kindness. What is our attitude toward the little things? Given that so many Christians neglect the biggest thing (sharing the Gospel), how many truly are faithful in a very little?

1. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF SERVING OTHER PEOPLE.**

* 1 Corinthians 9:19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 2 Cor. 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. Galatians 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. (1 Thess. 2:4-6; Matt. 20:27) One of the challenges that we have as servants of Christ is balancing our service between serving others and not seeking to serve for the purpose of pleasing men. A waiter at a restaurant is tasked with serving the customers of that business. That waiter is primarily focused on trying to please the customer, but even the waiter has limits to how much emphasis they place on the customer’s happiness. They cannot give away free food to everyone just to please them. This would cause the boss to not be very pleased. Even more so, Christians have restraints on our service to others. We are not called to focus on whether the people we serve are pleased with us or not. Our service is not done with flattery and vain words. How do we serve others the right way? How do we make people-serving a habit instead of people-pleasing? 1. We do all of our serving with a view of how that service elevates Christ. 2. We practice reliance upon Christ for our own needs. 3. We look for the needs of others with the help of the Spirit.. 4. We stay on guard against compromise.

1. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF AVOIDING UNNECESSARY STRIFE.**

* 2 Timothy 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 1 Peter 2:16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Here again we have a great challenge for the servants of Christ. We are not only servants, but we are also called to be soldiers for the Lord. The servants of Christ are not inclined to fight, but the soldiers of the Lord are conditioned to fight. How can we possibly be both? The answer is that we are not called to fight against those whom we serve. Our fight is against spiritual wickedness. Our fight is against false teaching. Our fight is not against man, but it can sometimes feel that way when wicked men carry the torch for the spiritual wickedness in this world. Obviously, we are not called to be servants of wickedness. How can we be a servant that is in the habit of not striving while maintaining our fight for the Lord as a soldier? 1. We must consider how the fight would elevate the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2. We must be willing to let the Master avenge wrongs against us. 3. We must consider how the fight would help us accomplish the service that we are called to do. 4. We must consider whether we are the servant whom the Lord is calling to that particular fight. Let’s be careful as servants to avoid unnecessary conflicts.

1. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF FEARING THE MASTER IN ALL THAT WE DO.**

* Malachi 1:6 A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? 1 Peter 2:18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. The servant of the Lord ought to have a healthy fear of the Lord. This should not just be a one-time-only fear. We ought to be in the habit of fearing the Master. The moment that we stop fearing the Lord, we can expect that our service will not be what it needs to be. The Master deserves to have a reverential fear from His servants. In order to build a habit of fear, we must be willing to listen to the Holy Spirit of God when He reproves us. As servants, we should never become numb to the chastening of the Lord. That chastening from the Spirit may come in connection with the reading, teaching, and preaching of the Word of God. The habit of fear also will come through keeping a proper understanding of Who our Master is. The parable of the wicked servant shows us a servant who did not fear his master. He claimed to know who his master was, but the master rebuked that claim. The servant behaved wickedly because he had no real regard for who his master was and what was expected of him. We ought to handle every task with the fearful sensitivity that we are doing something for the Lord Himself. We want to make sure that we do the task right!

1. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF WATCHING FOR THE MASTER.**

* Mark 13:34 For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. 35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Luke 12:37 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. This goes hand in hand with fearing the Master. If we fear Him like we should, then we will definitely be watching for Him. A wicked servant does not watch for his master because he does not want to see the master. He knows that he has not gotten his tasks done, and he’s hoping that he still has more time to accomplish them. As servants of Christ, we ought to be looking toward the heavens with great anticipation of the return of our Master. There is great rest awaiting the servant when the Master shows up. Also, when the Master shows up, it means that we can rejoice together that His work in its totality has been fulfilled. We have a tough job of doing a work that seems to never cease, but He will stand up one day and declare the end of all things and the beginning of new and wonderful things! This will be a great day for every servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.