**THE HEART OF THE SERVANT**

Sunday School Lesson 2

*Servants of Christ*

Psalm 100:2

8/13/2023

**Introduction:** In our first lesson on being the servants of Christ, we looked at the heart of the servant. We observed that servants of Christ must serve the Lord with singleness of heart. Man cannot serve two masters. The Bible tells us that he will hate the one and love the other. As servants of Christ, we must give the Lord our whole heart. Additionally, we observed that servants of Christ must continually examine who we are trying to please. This goes hand and hand with serving one master. Your master is the one that you seek to please and obey. You cannot say that you are a servant of Christ if you are constantly seeking the leading and pleasing of men. Your work as a servant will not be pleasing to the Lord if you do it for eyeservice and to be seen of men. Finally, we observed that servants of Christ must serve the Lord with good will. This is good will both toward the master and to those whom we minister to as a result of serving Him. We ought not to serve the Lord with a begrudging attitude. He is not an unreasonable taskmaster. He is the loving and king Master. When it comes to others, we must keep a right spirit toward them even when they are difficult to minister to. Additionally, we are not to serve Him with greed and selfishness in our hearts. We are not doing the work of Christ for worldly gain and stature. Moving on to today’s lesson, we are going to wrap up what we were unable to consider from the first lesson and then consider a few more thoughts as well.

1. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE MUST SERVE THE LORD WITH JOYFULNESS AND GLADNESS.**

* Deuteronomy 28:47 Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; 48 therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. Psalm 100:2 Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. In continuing our thought about not serving the Lord with a begrudging attitude, we understand that we are expected to serve the Lord with joyfulness and gladness. This has to come from the heart. It requires the love for the Lord that we mentioned above. It requires seeing His will as a good work to be done. It requires for us to want to please Him and not men. Serving others for their approval will inevitably lead to a place of frustration, anger, and even disappointment. We ought to serve the Lord with the attitude that we get to work the greatest work in all of the world. We ought to stand in awe of the fact that we get to serve Him. A person who does not enjoy the work that he does will be challenged to continue in that work for a sustained period of time. We are expected to be servants of Christ for our entire lives. If we do not even enjoy it, how long will it be before we burn out and quit on our Christian faith? How many of our brothers and sisters in Christ have already done so? We ought not to grow weary in well doing. Even in tough times, the work of Christ is a wonderful thing to be a part of.

1. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE MUST NOT ALLOW LAZINESS AND APATHY INTO OUR HEARTS.**

* Matthew 24:48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 and shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, In looking at the parable of the wicked servant, we see that he allowed laziness to enter into his heart. He said in his heart that the master wasn’t coming yet. This means that he did not want the master to come. He was too consumed with his own activities to focus any efforts on the work of the master. There are many Christians who are in a similar position today. They have become very lazy and apathetic toward their service to Jesus Christ. It is an inconvenience to their weekly schedule to have to do any service in the church. This is a servant with a wicked heart toward the things of God. Each of us ought to examine ourselves to see what our attitude toward Christian service truly is. If we moan and groan any time we have to do anything, that speaks to our attitude and lazy disposition toward our Heavenly assignment. We ought to examine how far down the back burner we’ve allowed our service to Christ to slip to. If the Lord were to return today, would He find you faithfully serving Him? Too many Christians have allowed the cares of this world to distract them and even make them lazy in their Christian walk. What would happen if Christians spent as much time serving Him as we do watching television and looking at our cell phones?

1. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, OUR SERVICE IS A WILLFUL ACT OF SUBMISSION TO THE LORD.**

* Matthew 20:27 and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. As mentioned in the intro, a servant voluntarily submits his will to another. When we think about the heart of a servant, this has to start with one who is willing even to see himself as a servant. We know that even Christ came with a ministry of service. As servants of Christ, we ought not to think that we are above the work of service. What pride of heart there is for the one who thinks he is too big to do the simplest acts of service for the Lord! We ought to be willing to simply carry a cup of cold water in the name of Christ if that is what is needed. It does not matter what “position” a church might assign a person. All of us have a responsibility of service to the Lord. Will we willingly humble ourselves to the position of servant and allow the will of God to be done in our lives. It really shouldn’t be a hard choice for us. The servant is not above his master. These are the words of Jesus Christ. May we remember them when our ego starts to get the better of us.

1. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE UNDERSTAND THAT OUR MASTER PAID OFF OUR GREAT DEBT.**

* Matthew 18:32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: 1 Corinthians 7:23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. 24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. We started this lesson by considering our need to serve the Lord with joy and gladness. If we understand the Biblical teaching about our debt as a servant, it will help us to have that joy and even thanksgiving in our service to the Lord. You and I were purchased with the blood of Jesus. We were slaves to sin, and we had a debt that we could never pay off. Instead of throwing us into eternal debtor’s prison (Hell), the Lord has forgiven us and then called us to serve Him with our life. This is the reasonable service of every Christian. We ought to see ourselves as indentured servants to the Lord. While we could never truly pay Him back for the debt that He paid, we ought to give our all to the Lord with an attitude of gratitude.

1. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE OWED NOTHING FROM THE LORD.**

* Luke 17:9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. 10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do. Job 41:11 Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine. Not only do we need to remember that we owed an unpayable debt, but we also must remember that the Lord owes us absolutely nothing. Jesus told His disciples in Luke 17 to view themselves as unprofitable servants even when they had done that which was commanded of them. While we have the confidence of God’s follow-through regarding any conditional promises that He offers us, we ought to understand that we are not owed anything of the Lord. Many Christians connect their service with what God does for them as a result of it. The disciples served the Lord faithfully, and their reward on this earth was martyrdom. A servant of Christ must avoid having an entitled mindset and realize all we have belongs to God.

1. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE OUGHT TO SERVE AS A SON SERVES HIS FATHER.**

* Galatians 4:7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Malachi 3:17 And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Philippians 2:22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. We’ve already mentioned how we ought not to serve the Lord with a begrudging attitude as if He were some difficult Master. That’s because He’s not just our Master. He’s our loving Heavenly Father. We ought to serve the Lord as a child serves His father. There is closeness in this type of service. There is a loving desire for the servant to please the Master when the Master is the servant’s Father. The prodigal son was willing to go back to his father because he knew that even the father’s hired servants had bread enough to spare. How much more had the father favored his son who served? Did he not tell the other son that all that he had belonged to him? Rejoice that we have a loving Father as our Master!