**FOCAL POINTS OF SERVICE**

Sunday School Lesson 8

*Servants of Christ*

2 Kings 6:17

9/24/2023

**Lesson Recap:** Last week, we continued our study on specific areas of service for the Christian. Before we move forward to today’s lesson, let’s take a moment to recap what was covered previously. First, a servant of Christ serves the Lord by caring for the needs of others. While we noted that the office of the deacon was established to help in this particular service, we ought to consider personally how the Lord might use us to help care for the needs of others. We ought to be both willing and seeking to meet needs. Second, a servant of Christ serves the Lord by offering spiritual edification to others. We are to edify others through joy, righteousness, and peace. You can serve the Lord by being an encourager and an exhorter of other believers. Sometimes, this is as simple as expressing joyfulness and peace in the Lord to others. Ushers and greeters are often used in this role. Third, a servant of Christ serves the Lord by the teaching and preaching of His Word. Hopefully, this is a very obvious area of service that is found in a Bible-preaching local church. God has chosen to use preachers and teachers in His churches. This generation is in need of men who desire to serve the Lord through the teaching and preaching of the Bible. The pastoral office is a good work (1 Tim. 3:1). Fourth, a servant of Christ serves the Lord by being an example to others. This is a simple area of service that all of us have a responsibility to. We are called to be examples to one another. Finally, a servant of Christ serves the Lord by doing everything heartily to the Lord. Being a servant of Christ is a full-time job. There is never a time that we ought to stop serving Him. For today’s lesson, let’s consider some key things that we should never lose sight of as servants:

1. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE PURITY OF SERVICE.**

* John 16:2-3 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. 3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. 2 Timothy 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; The Lord Jesus warned His disciples that there would come a time where people would kill them and think that they were doing God a service! Undoubtedly, the Jewish leaders who persecuted the early church had convinced themselves that they were doing the work of God. Church history is filled with stories of persecution at the hands of so-called “religious” men who claimed to be doing the bidding of the Lord. These events in history ought to cause today’s Christians to consider the purity of their service to the Lord. Do we find ourselves doing things that are contrary to the Bible and then justifying these acts under the guise of Christian service? Would a righteous God ever call us to serve Him wickedly? God forbid! Thus, we ought to check our every area of service against the purity of God’s Word. I think we could all agree that Paul is the best example of this in the Bible. He foolishly persecuted the church as a result of His religious zeal. Thankfully, his eyes were opened to the Truth, and he was able to proclaim his pure conscience.

1. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE PREFERENCE OF SERVICE.**

* John 12:4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, which should betray him, 5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Acts 6:1-2 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. While we observed last week that servants of Christ should seek to meet the needs of others, it’s important for us to never lose sight of the preference of our service. We are always to prefer service to the King above anything else. Judas tried to paint Mary’s service to the Lord as a waste of something that should have gone to the poor, but Jesus affirmed Mary’s service as more important. While we don’t see any evil intent with the Grecians in Acts 6, we do see that their murmuring was against the Jewish leadership in the church. Clearly, they felt that their focus was in the wrong area, and the widows needed more attention. We must be cautious not to allow others to convince us to take up causes that ought not to be the preference for the believer. It’s amazing how often unbelievers want to give input to a local church on how that church ought to be serving God. Let’s continue to prefer Christ above all!

1. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE PURPOSE OF SERVICE.**

* 1 Corinthians 14:22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe. Luke 10:40-42 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. 41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: 42 but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. The church at Corinth was very confused regarding the purpose and practice of prophesy, tongues, and observance of the Lord’s Supper in the church. Every one of them had a word of prophesy. No one wanted to be left out. The purpose of it had been totally lost on them. The story of Mary and Martha is a great example of losing sight of the purpose of service. While Martha was serving and preparing a meal for Jesus, she became frustrated with Mary’s lack of assistance. Mary was focused on staying at the feet of Jesus. What was Martha’s purpose for inviting Jesus into her home? Wasn’t it for the purpose of fellowshipping with the Master? It seems that she got too focused on the work and forgot what the work was all about. Jesus did not need her meal. He did not go into the home because of a meal. He went to fellowship with them. We must be careful not to lose sight of the purpose of our service. It can happen both easily and quickly!

1. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE PLAINNESS OF SERVICE.**

* Romans 16:17-19 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. 19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. We noted the need for purity of service, and this extends to purity of doctrine. If someone claims to be a servant of Christ but does not submit to the doctrines of God’s Word, there is a simple reason for this. They are not truly serving Christ. It does not matter how much they claim otherwise. It does not matter how flattering their speech is. It doesn’t matter how nice they might seem. They are servants of their own belly and not servants of Christ. Sadly, there is so much acceptance among believers today of people who the Bible clearly tells us to mark and avoid. We try to reason away why these false servants aren’t so bad, but we need to open our eyes to the plainness of service and Scripture. The Lord had an issue with the church in Pergamos because they had received into fellowship people who held to contrary doctrines. They might have thought they were doing something kind or acceptable, but all they were accomplishing was the destruction of the church!

1. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE PROFIT OF SERVICE.**

* Luke 15:27-31 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. 29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: 30 but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. 31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. The brother of the prodigal son provides us an example of a servant who lost sight of the profit of service. He looked at the reception of his brother, and he was angry that he had not received such a reception. He wanted to be recognized. He wanted to be celebrated with his friends. As a result, he chose to have a pity party for himself while the feast was taking place for his brother. His father had to come out and admonish him for his behavior. He tried to remind his son that he had his constant presence with him, and he joint possession of all of his items. Surely, this was much greater than anything that his brother had received. We must never lose sight of the profit of service. It may never lead to great wealth on this earth, but we have an eternal inheritance that cannot be destroyed. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

1. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE MUST SERVE THE LORD WITH SINGLENESS OF HEART.**
2. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE MUST EXAMINE WHO WE ARE TRYING TO PLEASE.**
3. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE MUST SERVE THE LORD WITH GOOD WILL.**
4. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE MUST SERVE THE LORD WITH JOYFULNESS AND GLADNESS.**
5. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE MUST NOT ALLOW LAZINESS AND APATHY INTO OUR HEARTS.**
6. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, OUR SERVICE IS A WILLFUL ACT OF SUBMISSION TO THE LORD.**
7. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE UNDERSTAND THAT OUR MASTER PAID OFF OUR GREAT DEBT.**
8. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE OWED NOTHING FROM THE LORD.**
9. **AS SERVANTS OF CHRIST, WE OUGHT TO SERVE AS A SON SERVES HIS FATHER.**
10. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF MEDITATING ON THE MASTER’S WORD.**
11. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF LOOKING TO DO THE MASTER’S WILL.**
12. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF INSTANT OBEDIENCE TO THE MASTER.**
13. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF COMING AND GOING WHEN WE ARE CALLED AND SENT BY THE MASTER.**
14. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF LOOKING UPON THE MASTER’S WORK WITH THE SAME CARE THAT THE MASTER HAS FOR IT.**
15. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF TAKING CARE OF THE LITTLE THINGS.**
16. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF SERVING OTHER PEOPLE.**
17. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF AVOIDING UNNECESSARY STRIFE.**
18. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF FEARING THE MASTER IN ALL THAT WE DO.**
19. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST MUST BE IN THE HABIT OF WATCHING FOR THE MASTER.**
20. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST IS SOMEONE WHO CONSTANTLY STRIVES TO THINK LIKE CHRIST.**
21. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST IS SOMEONE WHO HOLDS HIMSELF ACCOUNTABLE.**
22. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST IS SOMEONE WHO DOES NOT HAVE REGARD FOR HIS REPUTATION.**
23. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST IS SOMEONE WHO DOESN’T GET DISTRACTED BY TRIVIAL THINGS.**
24. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST IS SOMEONE WHO MUST BE CLEAN FOR SERVICE.**
25. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD THROUGH THE WORK OF PRAISE.**
26. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD THROUGH THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL.**
27. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD THROUGH THE WORK OF PRAYER.**
28. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD THROUGH THE WORK OF GIVING**
29. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD BY CARING FOR THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.**
30. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD BY OFFERING SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION TO OTHERS.**
31. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD BY THE PREACHING AND TEACHING OF HIS WORD.**
32. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD BY BEING AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS.**
33. **A SERVANT OF CHRIST SERVES THE LORD BY DOING EVERYTHING HEARTILY TO THE LORD.**

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. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. 3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Romans 6:20-22 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. 22But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.