

LESSON 10

SERVING GOD



Scripture Texts: Mark 13:34-37; 1 Corinthians 12:18; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Colossians 3:22-25; Romans 14:17-18

What begins our service to God? Must we be placed or appointed? Can we work alone, or must others work with us? Our service to God begins when we first listen to a command from Him and obey it. It is a continuous work, even though our duties may be periodic. Our service consists of inward motives and outward acts. Our service to God depends much upon habits of prayer and Bible study. If our thoughts, feelings, words, and acts are sold out to the interests of God, then whatever our office or duty, our performance of service is to God.

MEMORY VERSE: *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.* — Colossians 3:23

Commissioned Appointments

Mark 13:34-37. **For the son of man is as a man taking a far journey.** . . . When Jesus led His disciples to Bethany and ascended beyond their sight, He went on a **far journey** and left His work in their hands—our hands. He appointed His church deputies to care for His interests until His return. Earth is an outpost of Heaven, a colony distant from home country.

(1) Jesus left His house here, that is, His church. Read Hebrews 3:6. (2) He **gave authority** to His followers by giving the power of faith. He gave the promise of answered prayer. See John 14:14. He gave "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 16:19), the Gospel Word and the Spirit, to use. Keys open and lock doors. The Gospel opens the kingdom to sinners who repent and locks it to those who do not. Thus Jesus gave authority to His church to carry on for Him. See Matthew 10:40; Mark 16:17-18. (3) He gave **to every man his work**. Each one is commissioned, none is left out. See 1 Corinthians 12. There are many different tasks, all necessary to God's purpose. (4) The **porter** in Jesus' parable represents each of us. Enemies are about. The devil and his servants seek to catch saints off guard and draw them into sin. Jesus warns us to watch.

That the **porter** is ALL of us is made clear when Jesus said, **Watch ye therefore . . . And . . . I say unto all, Watch.** He spoke to the twelve, but His Words apply to all, then and now. **Ye know not when . . .** Constant vigilance is necessary. Considering all things, it would seem that Christ's coming is now very near. Only those constantly ready will rejoice at His coming.

God Places Each Servant

First Corinthians 12:18. **God set the members . . . in the body.** What is our work? Ask God. How do we find it? Ask Him to lead you into it. He leads by impression or desire by the Bible. The Word and the Spirit always agree. With the work, He gives the ability to do it. The ability may be in elementary form at first, to be developed by study and use. It is not for man, in his own wisdom alone, to place God's servants in places of service or to keep them out. We can recognize and cooperate with God's choosing. Each should seek God's will as to his service to God.

Covers All Honorable Occupations

First Peter 4:10-11. **As every man hath received the gift, even so minister . . .** The gift determines the work. And the gift—or grace—received from God is to be used. If we use the gift in God's strength and plan and choosing, we are using it rightly. We are counted as good stewards. If we fall back to our own strength and choosing, we are wasting the gift, **the manifold grace of God**. If we exercise the gift, looking to Him to guide, then God is glorified in our service. A good employee uses the proper tools and obeys his employer's orders.

There is a shortage of pastors, teachers, and Gospel workers. Why? Did God fail to call and place enough? God never fails, so there must be another reason. Some means of employment are against the principles of God's will and teachings. Except for these, God places saints in secular labor, and they are in the will of God.

God places truck drivers, factory workers, farmers, secretaries, school teachers, and many other positions that are necessary. Read Ephesians 4:28.

Faithful Service From the Heart

Colossians 3:22-25. **Servants, obey in all things your masters.** Several principles are evident here. (1) A servant or employee owes obedient, careful, and honest service to the one he works for. (2) Our service is primarily to God, secondarily to man. (3) We are responsible to God for our service. We will be judged and rewarded or punished according to it, **and there is no respect of persons**.

How do we put these principles into practice? Give good service—even to a bad master. Not **eyeservice**—honest all through. **Singleness of heart**—one aim, no deceitful motive. Put your heart into your work. Every act of a saint is service to Christ. Teaching a Sunday school class, scrubbing a floor, cooking or serving a meal, giving a drink of cold water, caring for daily needs—these serve God if done wholeheartedly unto God. This is another way to preach the Gospel. A saint is a SERVANT. To serve God is our daily DUTY. But this is not all. Jesus said, "Henceforth I call you not servants . . . but I have called you friends;" and "if you love me, keep my commandments" (John 15:15; 14:15).

Romans 14:17-18. **For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness . . .** To serve God is to do His will from the heart. The will to do His will is essential. Outward compliance alone is not serving Him. When the heart is yielded to God and the Holy Spirit lives there, then the **righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost** reign there. These things are the root of all service to God. They control outward actions, so they also please God. Watch the reactions of your heart. Is your first love still hot? Watch to grow in grace.

JUST A THOUGHT

You will never relive today.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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