

LESSON 11

SERVING OTHERS

Scripture Texts: Romans 14:13; Galatians 6:1-2; Ephesians 4:2; Romans 12:10, 13, 20; 1 Timothy 5:16; 1 John 3:17



Serving others is natural to those who have the Spirit of Christ. The Christian life is a life of service, first, to God, then, to man; first to those of **the household of faith**, then, to the unsaved; first, spiritual service, then, material service. It brings peace and satisfaction both to those saved and to those who serve. It helps bring souls to Christ. The Bible has much to say about our duty to each other. The world can understand material aid and favors it highly. But it cannot relate to spiritual service that it cannot understand. Even though the world would attempt to lower our relationship one to another, the God-given relation still remains, with its obligations and privileges. Service to others includes supplying material needs, hospitality, and spiritual help.

MEMORY VERSE: *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

— Galatians 6:10

Judging Others

Romans 14:13. **Let us not . . . judge one another.** A vice most easy to fall into if we do not keep the love of God burning in our hearts. We cannot see our brother's heart to judge him rightly. Our judging should be focused on our own actions, that we put no **stumblingblock or an occasion to fall** in our **brother's way**. If all did this, think of the improved conditions in our congregations.

Galatians 6:1-2. **Overtaken in a fault.** From time to time, a brother or a sister may be overcome by temptation—do things he or she should not. Then what? **Ye which are spiritual**—are filled with the Holy Spirit and obey His leading—**restore such an one**. Lift that one up and do all possible to bring him back to a victorious life in Christ. To do this, one must go **in the spirit of meekness**. (We will be helped to be meek by considering that we ourselves, except for the grace of God, could be overtaken also.) Don't be tempted to judge a person bad and yourself good. In order to **fulfil the law of Christ** in John 15:12, we are to **bear . . . one another's burdens**. The burden of one's fault is heavy enough; he needs no one else to lay more upon him.

Gossip of what the brother or sister did or what you are doing will spoil it all. The love of God must fill and cover all. Read James 5:20. One might be faulty and not be a sinner. Many times one can be **overtaken** in a fault. The person feels bad about it. He is down and just about out. You are not to push him on down but lift him. The day may be coming when you will need a boost yourself.

Before attempting to restore a faltering brother, let us look at ourselves. Measure to the rules God has given for such work that we may be of the **spiritual** ones fitted to do it.

Honor Others

Ephesians 4:2. **With all lowliness.** All saints are joined together in one body. Read Ephesians 4:25. Our relationship, one to another, must be with **all lowliness and meekness**—in a humble way, with no pride, trying to understand the other

person. **With long-suffering**—standing irritations or wrongs without complaining or feeling much wronged. **Forbearing one another**—patiently enduring. **In love**—this is the secret—the love of God. When one member suffers, all the members suffer it.

Romans 12:10. **In honour preferring one another.** Service is the important part, but honor sometimes comes along as an outgrowth. Christian love causes us to prefer others to receive it rather than ourselves. Love rejoices at another's good.

Material Service

Romans 12:13. **Distributing to the necessity of saints.** We have been dealing with spiritual service to brethren. Now let us consider material service—giving food or clothing or whatever is needed, being aware of our brother's need and generous in helping him. Sometimes the money we give away brings us more joy than that which we spend. **Given to hospitality.** Many a person has been first interested in salvation because of the hospitality of some saint. Many a home has been blessed and the children led into paths of God's service because the parents gladly entertained ministers, missionaries, and other saints. The visitors were also blessed and helped on their way.

Romans 12:20. **If thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink.** We are also to serve those not saved. It may help to win them when nothing else will. The world is all for helping friends or good people; saints go beyond that. Love enables them to. Jesus showed His concern for the poor and needy and for His enemies. His people should have the same concern.

First Timothy 5:16. **If any . . . that believeth [saints] have widows [or needy ones in their own families], let them relieve them.** The family obligation is first. The church is thus freed to care for those who are **widows indeed**, or without family to provide for them.

Whom to Help

First John 3:17. **But whoso hath this world's good [has means to give], and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion [shuts his eyes and hardens his heart]. . . how dwelleth the love of God in him?** How can he claim to have the love of God? Salvation and withholding from the needy simply cannot go together. When God tells us to do good to all men, He does not mean we must give to all causes. No, we are to do good. Some causes are not good. Some people will not use it for good. We might rightly give to people who are not good, if our aid will really do them good. The Christian life is a life of service, first, to God, then, to man. First, spiritual service, then material service.

JUST A THOUGHT

**Instead of pointing a critical finger,
try holding out a helping hand.**

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