



Week 48 - Service: The Imitation of Christ

Service: the Imitation of Christ

“You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.” (John 15:16)

As God’s chosen people, we need to keep our hand to the plow: In Ephesians 2:10, Paul says we are God’s workmanship (his “poetry”), created for good works. Through our great salvation, we are called to serve and give our lives away. Our works and opportunities are before us every day. Real faith is active. What we believe in our hearts is shown in our attitudes and words, and in the degree to which we serve the Lord. The Scripture puts it this way:

“Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. But someone may well say, ‘You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.’ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?” (James 2:17-20)

God has appointed a variety of ways through which we are to serve Him.

Thus, faith is not only a dedication to holiness, but also a rolling up of our sleeves to complete God’s work in the earth until He returns.

As Christians, we have a totally different approach to work and service than we had before we knew our Lord. Outside Christ, in what the Bible calls “the world,” man seeks glory for himself and the satiation of sinful desires:

“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.” (1 John 2:16)

In all the areas of service God calls us to, whether our family, work, church or society, we are to serve with a new heart – a heart that goes low and lifts others up, rather than seeks to promote oneself.

Working with a heart for serving does not exclude us from prominent positions.

Indeed, God will exalt those who are humble. From Christ’s perspective, you can be a president of nations and still be a servant.

Approaching all opportunities with a heart for serving others places us in good company, even that of our savior: “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.” (Matthew 20:28) As we do God’s business His way, He’ll take care of ours. Andrew Carnegie, Henry Ford, Sam Walton, and Bill Gates all served many by providing innovative goods and services at affordable prices. Although these men may or may not have been Christians, they grasped the wisdom of what Jesus said about providing the most service to many. Each became the richest man on earth in his day.

Review

1. How can we imitate Christ?
2. How can we serve God and others in the various arenas of life?
3. When God calls us to areas of service, what should be our heart attitude?

I view my relationship with Jesus in feudal terms. The King conscripted me into His service -- and there is no greater honor on earth.

Today’s bureaucrats hold meetings. Ancient kings held feasts. Jesus summons me to dine from His Table, and thereby become part of His Body. He issues me His uniform, a robe of His righteousness, so that I can represent Him everywhere I go.

Jesus assigns me noble quests to pursue. When we meet, He debriefs me, and acts on the information I provide Him. He recalibrates me, encourages me, and sends me out on my next assignment.

His feasts are raucous, exuberant, events, where the company of the called, companions of the quest, compare notes and encourage each other. Blessed are those who are invited.

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