



Service

week 9





Introduction

What is service? Who are we called to serve? To what level or extent are we meant to serve? These are all valid questions to ask as a Christian, and the Bible has a lot to say about service.

Service is generally defined as “the action of helping or doing work for someone”. However the Bible helps shed light into who we are to serve and points us to the ultimate example of service in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Christians are called to serve God as our master and others out of love. In the gospel of Matthew chapter 6, Jesus puts it plain and simple, that no-one can serve two masters, you must choose to either serve God or not. Once we recognise that our service is to God, it should change how we relate to others as well. Christian service begins in the heart, reflecting the love of Christ towards others in need. We are called to serve God and others with a joyful spirit.

The Bible does not command us to serve God and others and leaves it there, but rather the Bible provides us a detailed account of someone whose whole life was to serve, even to the point of giving his life as a ransom for many. Jesus Christ’s words and actions demonstrate the ultimate service that we Christians should take seriously.

In conclusion, Christian service is a call to worship God out of love, humility and selflessness. It involves using our gifts and abilities to glorify God and help others. We are able to look to Jesus as the one who came not to be served, but to serve.



Devotion 1: Deuteronomy 10:12-13

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 is part of Moses' sermon to the Israelites, shortly after the Ten Commandments were given to the Israelites. In the previous few chapters, Moses urges Israelites to follow God's commands, to walk in obedience, to Love the LORD your God, and to not forget the LORD. In this passage, Moses goes on to speak about fearing the LORD and serving him. Moses is constantly reminding the Israelites of the covenant with God as they prepare to enter the Promised Land.

Serving the Lord, as described in this passage, is not just a list of rituals or religious duties, even though in today's context it can be seen that serving means you are doing something. But rather, serving the LORD implies engaging your whole, entire being. "Serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul". Our lives should reflect the love for God in every aspect of our lives.

God cares about your heart and soul when serving. Your service to God should come from a desire within our hearts to honor God selflessly. When serving becomes about yourself then we have missed the point of serving God.

Devotion 1:

Deuteronomy 10:12-13

Questions:

1. Why does God care so much about serving with all your heart and all your soul?
2. In what ways can someone serve God with their heart and soul?
3. In what ways may someone serve God selfishly?

Prayer:

Father, I am sorry for the times when I have served you out of selfish desires and not put my whole heart and soul into serving you. Help me to serve you faithfully in every aspect of my life and align my life with your will.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

Deuteronomy 10:12-13

12 And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to observe the LORD's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

Devotion 2: Mark 10:42-45

The Bible doesn't just command Christians to be serving the LORD our God, but also provides us an insight into the life of Jesus Christ, and His profound teaching about true greatness in His Kingdom. In the previous few verses, James and John are requesting positions in Heaven, particularly sitting on Jesus' right and left in glory. They are focused on their future position of greatness that is to come by being close to Jesus. However they have missed the true reason why Jesus had come to Earth.

This passage turns the worldly concepts of greatness on their head. In Jesus' kingdom, greatness is not about power, authority, or even position, but about service. Jesus himself, the Son of Man, came not to be served but to serve, setting the ultimate example of selfless service by giving His life as a ransom for many.

Jesus isn't saying we are to also give our life as a ransom to save people, but rather to take seriously the example he has set for greatness and service. We can reflect the selfless love and humility that Jesus demonstrated. Remember service isn't just about the big gestures; it is often the small acts of kindness done consistently that have the biggest impact on others. As we serve others, we serve the LORD and become more like Jesus, the ultimate servant.

Devotion 2: Mark 10:42-45

Questions:

1. What does it mean to be a servant?
2. How does Jesus' teaching in this passage challenge the world's view of greatness?
3. What are some practical ways you can serve others in your daily life?

Prayer:

Father, I give you great thanks for the ultimate example of service shown through Jesus Christ, His death on the cross as a ransom for many. Please help me to adopt a humble mindset when it comes to serving, that I am not seeking greatness, but rather being a servant to those around me.

In Jesus' name,
Amen

Mark 10:42-45

42 Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many.'



Devotion 3: 1 Peter 4:9-10

Not only have Christians been given the command to serve and the ultimate example of service through Jesus, the Bible sheds light on examples on how we can be serving others around us. This passage from 1 Peter 4:9-10 is written by Peter who is encouraging believers to live righteously and for God's glory amidst the suffering of the world. Peter urges his readers to use their God-given gifts to serve others and glorify God.

The passage begins with a call to hospitality. What is hospitality? Well it's extending a welcome to visitors or strangers, and offering a home away from home. In the Christian context, it may look like opening one's home to fellow believers, providing food, shelter, and necessities to those in need, and even participating in fellowship with others. This service to others should be given willingly and joyfully, not out of obligation or with complaint.

The second verse speaks of the diversity of gifts which has been given to all believers. These gifts are not for personal gain; but rather to serve one another in helping and uplifting others. We have been given these gifts and we are to be faithful stewards, displaying God's love and mercy to those around us.

Devotion 3: 1 Peter 4:9-10

Questions:

1. How does the world today view hospitality? Is this different to how Christians view hospitality?
2. What are some gifts that God has given you, and how are you using them to serve others?
3. What is one specific action you can take to use your gifts to serve others this week?

Prayer:

Father, help me to offer hospitality to one another without grumbling, and to use the gifts you have given me to serve those around me. I thank you that you have entrusted us with the gospel to share through words and actions. Please help me to serve you and others humbly.

In Jesus' name

Amen

1 Peter 4:9-10

9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

Family Discussion Point

We hear a lot in church when adults talk about serving, in the music team, or teaching kids, or setting up chairs. But we do not have servants in today's society, so what does it mean to serve? The dictionary definition of the word "service" is "the action of helping or doing work for someone." Why do Christians have to serve? Why is it important? Who do we need to serve?

God called us to serve him "with all our heart and with all our soul" (Deuteronomy 10:12), so serving is not just a duty or doing something with our hands, but doing it out of our heart, it is not our work that God sees, but our heart.

Read Mark 10:42-45.

42 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

On their way to Jerusalem, James and John made a request to Jesus, asking for the positions of highest honour in Jesus' kingdom (Mark 10:35-41), so Jesus gave his disciples a lesson on servanthood. Jesus explained that he himself didn't come for others to serve him, but to serve and help others. He is the example of service, giving his life as a ransom for many, that means to pay the price, to set us free from our sins. The focus of service is on "others", not on ourselves.

Questions:

1. According to Jesus' teaching, what does it mean to be a servant?
2. Why do we have to serve?
3. What are some practical ways you can serve others in your daily life?

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you that Jesus showed me what it means to serve, giving up his own life for me. Please help me to know how to serve others around me. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

