



# Light from the Word

## Serving Those Who Cannot Repay

*“But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest.”<sup>1</sup>*

The words of our Savior remind us how our lives should be: in service to others, patterned after the life of the Good Shepherd; who not only spoke the truth, but exemplified it by His life. He lived a life of self-denial, giving His life as a ransom for each one of us, who could not repay the debt of sin that we owed, so that we could live eternally with Him in Heaven. This “mark” helps us put into a perspective what it means to serve others who cannot repay.

The story of the Good Samaritan teaches us some critical aspects of serving others.

*“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.”<sup>2</sup>*

First, we read that the Samaritan was on a journey. It is a good reminder that each of us is also on a journey. Our purpose is not for ourselves or to seek our own will, but rather to serve others. This requires us to change our natural course, leave our normal path, and focus on the needs of others. We read in Matthew, *“And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.”<sup>3</sup>* Our lives cannot be so entangled with the affairs of this world that we would be oblivious to the gentle nudges of the Holy Spirit or blinded to those in need along the way. As we start each day, may our prayer be both *“not my will but thine be done”<sup>4</sup>* and as the apostle Paul said, *“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”<sup>5</sup>*

With a desire to do God's will, we must also be willing to put aside our own thoughts and biases, and be willing to help, with no respect of persons. Paul wrote in Corinthians, *“to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”<sup>6</sup>* Our willingness to submit our own thoughts, desires, and earthly wisdom to the Lord—so that we can be easily entreated, quick to hear, and open to trusting in God's wisdom—is a critical part of our ability to truly serve others.

Next, our ability to truly “come to others” is dependent upon our spiritual vision. The Good Samaritan saw the one in need. His vision was not to look at what was in it for himself, as we see often in the world. Jesus taught, *“And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.”<sup>7</sup>* Rather, our hearts must be as the Savior, who always saw those in need, whether they were little children, the sick, the halt, those in sin, or those of a different nationality. He saw them as scattered sheep in need of a Shepherd.

Experience teaches that it takes time and effort to get to know someone, to understand their situation, and to truly know how to help them. Having patience, as Christ did with us, is often necessary. Our ability to have the mind and heart of Christ, unclouded by “earthly scales,” will allow us to see the true need in others, enabling us to help them by God's grace.

Third, He had compassion on him and took care of him. We read in Romans, *“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. ....be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”<sup>8</sup>* It is clear throughout Scripture that God expects His people to help those in need. One aspect of compassion is to alleviate the suffering of

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the individual. As God reveals the needs of others, our feelings of compassion are translated into deeds of kindness, which are just reasonable service in light of what we have received.

As we serve others, we are reminded that we are being good stewards of the gifts God has given us. These are not our own, rather they have been given to us to occupy or use for His kingdom, until He comes again. Our measure is not as the world would take an accounting, e.g. the size of our “barns,” or other earthly fames that can come and go. Rather, the measure is “cups of cold water,” that will be reflective of a converted child of God. Since we realize that our reward is in heaven, we don’t focus on bringing focus to self, rather we “*let not thy left hand know what thy right hand*”<sup>9</sup> is doing. At the same time, we don’t gossip about those individuals in need, but speak the truth in love.

Fourth, our service is to be ongoing. It is a part of our daily life, not just an item on a “bucket list” that is marked off and forgotten. We read that the Samaritan made ongoing provision for the man in need: “*on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence... and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.*”<sup>10</sup> Our lives should be patterned after the Savior—who was always about His Father’s business, willing to give all He had, even His life for those in need—just as He has done and is doing for each one of us.

As we daily serve Him, we will learn more about the love of Christ, our hearts will be filled with the fullness of His Spirit and we will become more like Him, one day to be with Him in Heaven.

(Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Luke 6:35

<sup>2</sup> Luke 10:33-35

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 20:27-28

<sup>4</sup> Luke 22:42

<sup>5</sup> Acts 9:6

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. 9:22

<sup>7</sup> Luke 6:34

<sup>8</sup> Romans 12:20-21

<sup>9</sup> Matt. 6:3

<sup>10</sup> Luke 10:

## Child Sponsorship cont.

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### New Testaments and “101 Favorite Bible Stories”

After this initial step, the program was expanded to provide New Testament Bibles and the “101 Favorite Bible Stories” hard-



bound book to all third and fifth graders in our program in every country. Plus, each teacher in our schools receives a New Testament and Bible story book for their personal benefit and as a teaching aid.

In most cases, the child’s family does not own a Bible, let alone an illustrated translated Bible story book. You can imagine the joy on every face when they realize the significance of this gift. Even more satisfying, imagine the joy in Heaven when one of these souls is eventually moved by reading the Word or visualizing the miracles in the Bible to surrender to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.