



Light from the Word

The Faithful Church: Serves Others

“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)

In the midst of a self-serving world, true believers have an opportunity to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ by serving others. It is too easy to get caught up by the whirlwind of activities that surround us nearly every day as we fulfill our earthly pursuits. Although we need to provide for our families, it is not necessary for God's children to get caught in the web of materialism and entertainment. There is no end to the fleshly desire for more of the “good” things that the world has to offer.

One of the ways we can escape the trap of materialism is by serving others. We only have a fixed number of hours in a day and in our lifetime. If we spend too much time on self interests, there may not be enough time to serve others.

The fourth pillar in the Mission Statement of our church is “To offer loving, humble deeds of service to fellow believers and all mankind in the name of Christ”. As we look to the Bible for instruction to fulfill this mission, we find ample instruction from Jesus about serving others.

When asked by a lawyer what he should do to inherit eternal life, Jesus confirmed to him, and to us, that the two great commandments are to “...love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” (Luke 10:27) Trying to justify himself, the lawyer asked “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus pointed out very clearly that the true neighbor was the one who served in time of need. (Luke 10:30-37). Mercy was shown by lovingly serving the injured traveler.

To learn true service, we must look to Jesus' example. If we carefully consider what Jesus said and did, we can learn how to apply the two greatest commandments. Although He was the Master, He was here to serve. “I

am among you as he that serveth.” (Luke 22:27). The Son of God, who truly is our Lord and Master, and had the authority to require others to serve Him “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” (Phil. 2:7). He taught us that if we think we “...have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.” (Luke 17:10).

As Lord and master, He was willing to humble himself. On the way to the cross He still modeled to all His love for and submission to the Heavenly Father, even though He knew one of His disciples would betray him, one would deny that he even knew Him, and all would for a time desert Him. (John 13:4-5). He still looked into the hearts of His disciples and loved them with deep compassion as He continued to teach truth and to lay the foundation for Holy Communion. Jesus went beyond providing for the needs of this life. He fulfilled the ultimate act of service for each of us by giving His life on the cross and shedding His blood for our sins.

As believers in Christ, we want to follow His example by serving Him and His children. How can we serve Him when He is not on earth? We can worship, honor and praise Him, and glorify His name by following His commandments. A natural response from those who love and serve Him is to perform loving deeds of kindness to His people and to all who are in need. When we serve His people, we serve Him. Jesus told of those who could not remember when they had fed, clothed, visited and given him drink. He said “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” (Matt. 25:40).

We know that individually we cannot help everyone. Where do we start? Jesus often reminded us to serve the poor: “...call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed because they cannot recompense thee.”

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(Luke 14:13-14). There does not seem to be a down side to helping the very poor. The poorest of the poor will not complain that our help was not good enough.

There are many organizations not of our denomination that do very good work and are worthy of support. However, we are blessed to have a very sound structure in our brotherhood that enables us to reach many who are in dire straits with minimal administrative costs. Through our brotherhood it is possible to give and “...let not your left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.” (Matt. 4:3-4).

We may think that by serving others we are giving more than we receive, but we receive many blessings by serving others. Service to others allows us to glorify God by letting our “...light so shine before men, that they can see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:16).

We are blessed by encouraging others to serve as we show “a pattern of good works” (Titus 2:7) and by considering “...one another to provoke unto love and good works.” (Heb. 10:24). Service to others also

provides evidence of faith. James wrote “...faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” (James 2:17). Service will enrich our lives. “*That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*” (1 Tim. 6:18).

We may be concerned that we cannot do enough, and what we do is so small that it is not of any value. The parable of the talents helps us understand that God only expects from us what He has given us. He does, however, expect us to use wisely what we have. (Matt. 25:15-28). Even very small deeds of service are not forgotten by God. “*For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.*” (Mark 9:41). The poor widow only gave two mites, but her “give all” servant attitude is still remembered nearly 2000 years later.

Our service must be done willingly and with a godly attitude. When we do so we find that “*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*” (Acts 20:35). This is made clear in a hymn we sing:

*“Seeds of goodness we are sowing,
In the hearts of men today.
Bless it Lord that it many prosper,
And bear fruit for harvest day.
Hasten gladly to the labor,
Consecrate to God your heart.
Say this day unto your Savior,
Lord, I’ll gladly do my part.”*
Hymns of Zion, #46, verse 1.

Into Subjection

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Lord. To be in subjection is a sign of strength and self-control, it is not a sign of weakness.

Referring again to 1 Peter 5:5, it is written, “*Yea, all of you be subject one to another.*” This would seem to exhort us to invite others to admonish us, and to make suggestions as to how we can follow the Bible more closely, and more faithfully serve Christ. I invite you to admonish me and I appreciate your concern for me. But, please admonish with love. Do we all welcome admonition given in love? The Bible says we are to bring our bodies into subjection.

— by Willis Ehnlé

*“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,
Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.”* Eph. 3:20-21

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” Jude 24-25