

Are We Ready to Serve Christ?

August 20, 2023

WORSHIP

All Because of Jesus, King
Jesus, Firm Foundation (He
Won't), Yet Not I But Through
Christ in Me, Unending Love

WELCOME

How would you describe
a service done excellently
(a 5-star kind of service)?

WORD

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

(READ UNTIL VERSE 21 FOR
CONTEXT)

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² In this case, moreover it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

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."

Paul continues to address the divisions and quarrels in the church of Corinth in this 4th chapter by focusing on becoming servants of Christs. In order to do so, we must:

1. Serve with the Right Heart (vv 1-5)

First and foremost, Paul wanted the Corinthians to regard him and the other preachers such as Peter and Apollos as servants of Christs and not leaders of factions. As servants and also stewards, they are responsible for giving the gospel message of salvation. To us who are followers of Christ today, the question to us is – Are we faithful and sensible stewards of the mysteries of God to the people that He has put under our care? Serving with the right heart allows us to become this faithful steward. Serving with the right heart means serving to please God and not to gather the applause of others. It means spending enough time in God's word and in fellowship with other believers. It means surrendering things to God and asking Him to empower us. Paul also emphasizes that the right heart attitude is not to judge fellow servants or fellow workers in the Church as God is not finished with us yet and that He will judge each of us at the proper time. Serving with the right heart also means serving with the right motives because God knows what is in our hearts and He will expose our wrong motives eventually.

To check if we are indeed serving with the right heart, we must ask ourselves – Are we engaged in His service? Who do we need to minister to? Are we faithful in being stewards of the gospel? Are we seeking God's approval or trying to please others instead? Are we being critical of others? Are we concerned of what others will say when we serve?

2. Serve in Humility (vv 6-13)

Paul urges the Corinthians not to boast about being taught by a certain preacher because no one is better than the other. Humility is to recognize that God is the source of our blessings. Today we live in a very competitive world and it is difficult for us not to be proud and arrogant. But if we acknowledge that everything is a gift from God, even our salvation, even our abilities, even our intellect, we can serve with a humble and teachable heart. To borrow Pastor Joby's quote, he said "No matter how difficult life may get, how challenging people are, or how much brokenness God will allow us to experience, always choose to serve Christ with your all".

To check if we are indeed serving in humility, we must ask ourselves – have we been thankful for everything God has given us? Do we have the perspective that everything comes from God? Are we looking down on other church workers? What area of our life has pride seeped in? Have we become too comfortable that we no longer want to partake in the sufferings of Christ?

3. Serve to Build Up (vv 14-21)

Paul proceeds to give the Corinthians a stern warning because he wanted to admonish them, to build them up. Similar to parents who are naturally concerned with the long term welfare of their

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WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort for the residents of Lahaina (Maui, Hawaii) who lost family, homes, businesses in devastating wildfire; for thousands of residents of British Columbia, Canada who need to evacuate from life-threatening wildfires
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; conflict in African, East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

1 CORINTHIANS 4:1

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WORD

children and not just about their temporary happiness, we need to care and build up our flock as loving spiritual parents. We must not tolerate bad thinking and bad values. We should not be merely concerned with outward behaviors but be concerned with the heart, the attitude of our children/our flock. Paul exhorts them to be imitators of himself, to follow his example. In this regard, Paul raises the bar in discipleship and ministry. In serving to build up, we need to spend time and invest time to set the pattern for walking with Christ. In serving to build up, do we have the power of the Holy Spirit to lead changed lives? Paul was also building up the church by exercising discipline. In the church, we should not have arrogance but instead, willingness to change and to be corrected.

To check if we are indeed serving to build others up, we must ask ourselves - do we care enough to correct our children/our flock when we see something wrong? Do we discipline with an attitude of love and care? Do we follow through those we have previously brought to the faith and continue to care for them?

Bear in mind that to those who don't know Christ, we are the Bible to others and so how we live, how we speak, how we act should reflect our faith. We must set good examples to others and be good representatives of Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be a faithful and sensible steward of the mysteries of God and the resources the Master has put in my hands?
2. How can a person know that he or she is serving Christ with the right heart?
3. In what ways can people grow in the area of serving Christ in humility?
4. What can I do to build up the people that God has put in my care?