

Mt. Lebanon Church

Sermon

8.20.2023

Please look up and read all verses in their entirety. I have only written partial verses.

Make your own notes, write down other scriptures that you run across while studying, write down questions that you may have or comments as well. Below please find my sharable thoughts, so please allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you that he would have you to see through the study of God's word to share.

Our Willingness to Serve

1 Peter 5: 2 – 3

Have you ever been asked the question, why do you serve God. Sooner or later all Christians are faced with this question, and every Christian that is asked might have a different answer, because different people are motivated by different things. The word of God tells us that when our relationship is right with God, we will serve him, because in knowing Christ he has instilled within us the desire to serve him. It is Gods desire that we should be conformed to the image of his Son, and when we study the life of Christ, through his word, we will see that Christ was a servant, and we are to be Christlike.

Matthew 20: 28,....even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many....

Christ knew that he would be despised and rejected of men, and that he would be a man of sorrows. Christ also knew that as being the head of the church, the body of the church would be required to follow his example, and serve just as he served, which means experiencing the same type of suffering that he was to go through. Christ knew that those who would follow him would have to take up their cross daily and follow him.

Matthew 16: 24 – 25,....Jesus said unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me....for whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it....

If we are to become great in the likeness of Christ, it must come through the role of a humble servant in God. A true believer not only believes in Christ for salvation, but also trust in him, that by his resurrecting power, Christ broke the hold that sin had over our lives. Denying oneself does not mean giving up our life, it means giving up ourselves wholly and completely to God, to live for Christ, and to fully identify with every aspect of his righteousness.

Romans 12: 1,....I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service....

Obedience to the word of God means practically applying all the promises of God's word to our life, without murmuring, without complaining, and without questioning that which is Gods perfect plan, and will for our life. This is because we are saved entirely of Gods grace, and it is a free gift, which means that we can do nothing to repay him. So, in light of Gods eternal blessings and benefits, out of our love for him, which he has instilled within us, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, we offer ourselves in willing service unto him. This is a choice that we alone must make, for God wants our love and service to him to be given willingly, and with truthful desire, and we do so because we trust in him, and we trust in the joy of his salvation. So, what is our willingness to serve, why do we want to serve God, to find the answer we must look into the word of God.

1 Peter 5: 2 – 3,....feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind....neither as being Lords over Gods heritage, but being ensamples to the flock....

Genuine service to God, must come by the love of God, and it must be for the love of God, and it must be for the love of others.

Matthew 22: 37 – 40,....thou shalt love the Lord thy God....thou shalt love thy neighbor....

If Gods love is not in it, then we are not understanding it, and we are missing the whole point of it. Unless our service to God is rooted and grounded in his love, it is meaningless. We cannot serve God out of obligation, and we cannot serve just because we say it is our duty, but it must be a response for our gratitude of his saving grace, a response that is filled with love and compassion for the spiritual wellbeing, and salvation of others.

1 Timothy 1: 12 – 16,....I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry....who was before a blasphemer....but I obtained mercy....and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus....this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all exception, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners....howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that....Christ Jesus....might show forth....for a pattern to them which should humbly believe on him to life everlasting....

Our strength and power to become a faithful servant comes from God. We did not deserve it, nor did we earn it, but God enabled it within us, through our faith and our trust in him, and we thank God for it. Our life in Christ is a daily endeavor, it is not something that we pretend to put forth when in the presence of other believers, but it is an expression of God in our lives, an expression that is to be displayed daily, so that all of humanity may see the goodness of the saving grace of God in us at all times.

Philippians 2: 13,....for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure....

We must prove ourselves faithful unto God, and as we prove ourselves faithful, the Lord will make greater opportunities available unto us, opportunities in our service unto him. We can give only that which we have received form God, anything else would be of our own self-righteous actions. The more that we are aware of Gods love, the more of his love that we will experience in our lives, and the more prone we will be to serving him. The key to serving God is found in the magnitude of our relationship with him.

Hebrews 6: 10 – 11,....God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister....and we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end....

As Christians, are we growing in our faith, and maturing spiritually in our life in Christ, or maybe the question should be do we have the desire to do so. Sure, we all want to grow, but it takes a willingness to serve. To do so we must learn to walk in spirit and in truth, and we cannot walk in spirit and in truth if we do not truly understand how to do so. The word of God is our instruction on how to live godly lives, it is instruction of encouragement to pray, to study, to meditate, to seek wisdom and knowledge, and to seek God for understanding. God knows that there are times in our life in Christ that we need encouragement, and what a great encouragement it is to know that the Lord is aware of the actions of our heart and that these actions are for his eternal glory.

Ephesians 4: 13 – 16,....till we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God....that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro....but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things....from whom the whole body fitly joined together....according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love....

In order for the church to grow we must grow in Christ, in order for us to grow in Christ, the church must grow spiritually, and unity is the key. Unity depends upon our willingness and desire to serve. It is Christ that is the life within us, and the truth which we are to speak, therefore, it is through obedience to his word that causes each member in the body to grow in faith, to mature spiritually, and to build itself up in the love and respect of one another in the Lord.

Hebrews 12: 2,....looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God....

Our willingness to serve, means a willingness to pray, a willingness to study, a willingness to assemble together in the unity and the love of God, a willingness for obedience to do whatever God has purposed for us to do. We must be willing to do it every day, with a readiness to be an example of Gods saving grace to all who will hear. Remember, your willingness to serve may be someone's guidance to salvation.

Let us Pray.

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