

Lesson 2

“Characteristics of a Christian Servant”

Introduction

- The Ministry as we saw last week is the Great Commission through the local church.
- The service is done by the Servants of the Lord who are Christians
- It is our spiritual duty to serve the Lord through the local church according to the will of God

Matthew 4:8-10 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

- The devil will always seek to distract us from serving the Lord. In this instance the Lord Jesus was offered everything in this world in order to distract Him from serving the right master. For us it could be money, fame, studies, friends, popularity, and sometimes even family (*Luke 14:26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*) The Lord is not calling us to hate our families nor is He asking us to neglect our families. Indeed, those who Christ most will love their families more. However, when it comes to a decision to following Christ and serving Him, the decision must be made to choose Christ above all, sometimes to the point of placing His will, work above that of our families. That is a difficult decision but that is a right decision.

1 Thess 1:9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

- When the Thessalonians people got saved, the Christians turned to God from their idols to serve only Christ.

What Are The Characteristics Of Servants Who Serve Christ?

John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be (there is the constant spiritual companionship with Christ and there will be the eternal companionship) : if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. (there will be the prospect of honour before the Lord)

1. HE IS ONE WHO FOLLOWS CHRIST

- Matt 4:19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.
- Matt 8:22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.
- Mt 9:9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.
- Mr 2:14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.
- Lu 5:27 And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.
- Lu 9:59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.
- Joh 1:43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.
- Joh 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:
- Joh 21:22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

Jesus calls men firstly to follow Him and then He will make us fishers of men.

⇒ Everyone who serves the Lord need to be follower of Christ. This is given in the bible and therefore in the ministry of Christ at Ambassador, we must be clearly a follower of Christ. But what is involved in following Christ?

- Mt 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
- Mt 19:21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.
- Mr 8:34 And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
- Mr 10:21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.
- Lu 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.
- Lu 18:22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.
- Joh 21:19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

Following involves a decision to follow Christ, denying what we selfishly want in our life and replacing it with what the Lord wants to do in our lives, to bear the cross of sacrifice and suffering for His cause and to be willing to be obedient until death. And then when all these are done, to follow and imitate the Lord Jesus in His ways, His words, His life, His ambitions and everything that is in Christ's life.

Mark 3:14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

Matt 4:19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

In these 2 verses, the Lord Jesus' priority therefore is for us to follow Him, before He make us fishers of men.

Therefore, when we serve the Lord in Ambassador, we need to be followers of Christ. We have made the decision to die to self and serve Christ, sacrificing if need be of time, money, personal ambitions and aiming to follow Christ to be like Him.

2. HE IS ONE WHO CONTINUES IN THE WORD OF GOD

John 8:31 – 32 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; / And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

A follower of Christ is one who continue in the word of God. The word continue in the Greek meno is also translated abide with in John 15:5. It means to stay with, to continue in the same road. Therefore, a servant of Christ is one who continues in the word of God and who stays in the word of God.

He will be reading the word of God daily, meditating on it, studying it, obeying it, teaching others and seeking to know more and more of God through the word of God.

1Timothy 4:12 – 16 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. / Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. / Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. / Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. / Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

As ministers, we are to be good examples to the flock we are leading, teaching. In what we say, in the way we live (conversation), in our unconditional love, in our attitudes being controlled by God, in our faith and the pure life we live. We are also to pay lots of attention to reading, to encouragement and to teaching. We are meditate upon it, and to commit and give ourselves totally to these teaching and the word and as we do that, we are to watch our own lives and ensure that the teaching will be clearly exemplified in our lives, and if we do this, we will firstly save ourselves and then save the people that will hear us.

Therefore, as a minister of Christ, we need to continue in the word of Christ and the standard given to us is very high.

Luke 4:1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

3. HE IS ONE WHO DEPENDS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

The verse above teaches that the Lord Jesus was under the control of the Holy Spirit when He went into the wilderness and when He returned to serve.

- This refers to the influence, control, dominion, reproof, admonishment and leading by the Holy Spirit to do the will of God in ministry
 - Romans 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.
 - Acts 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.
 - Acts 10:19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.
 - Acts 11:12 And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:
 - Acts 13:2-4 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.
 - Acts 16:6-7 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.
 - Acts 16:9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

These verses teach that the influence of the Holy Spirit over the ministry of the apostles. In fact the book of Acts is also known as the Acts of the Holy Spirit. It therefore follows that those who are filled with the Holy Spirit are actively doing actions consistent with the filling.

Luke 24:47-49 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of

these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

In Luke 24, we observe that the disciples were told not to go and tell others of Christ until we be endued with power from on high.

But when the Holy Spirit came in Acts 2, the church then and NOW has been empowered by the Holy Spirit to go forth and preach, teach, baptise and make disciples of the nations for Him.

John 15: 1 – 8

Question

How do demonstrate that we are depending on the Holy Spirit?

John 8:31 / John 15:5

The Servant of Christ is Abiding in Christ

Galatians 5:16-17

The Servant of Christ is Obedient.

Ephesians 6:18

The Servant of Christ prays earnestly

Daniel 11:32 / John 14:12

The serving of Christ advances for Christ.

4. HE IS A SEPARATED / SURRENDERED MAN

Romans 12:1 – 6

The believers is one who is separated to God

The believers is one who is separated from the world

Col 4:14 / 2 Tim 4:10 (Demas) / 1 John 2:15 – 17 / Phil 3:17 - 20

5. HE DEALS WITH SIN IN HIS OWN LIFE THAT HE MIGHT KEEP HIMSELF FIT FOR THE MASTER'S USE

2 Timothy 2:19 – 21 / 1 Cor 15:34

- Sin-purging Man -
- Sin of Commission Numbers 15:30-36 But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him. And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.

In this passage, the man was merely picking up sticks, but the Lord said that this man will be put to death. Sounds harsh, but when we realise that sin is the breaking of the Holy commandments given by God, we realise that the only solution is only Jesus. A servant of Christ who knows the heart of the master will be very careful about sin and will strive to avoid it at all costs.

- Sin of Omission James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. When we know what is right to do, and we do not do it, we commit the sin of omission. This is quite a serious sin for many believers today.
- When we know we need to forgive someone, but we won't.
- When we know we need to tell the truth but then we lie.
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6. HE IS AN OBEDIENT AND DUTIFUL MAN Luke 17:1 – 10

A servant does what he needs to do without asking for anything else in return and He will do it just because it is right. He may be tired, frustrated, and may have many reasons why he will not do it, but because He was an obedient and dutiful, he will do it because it is duty.

7. A SERVANT IS A FAITHFUL MAN WHO FAITHFULLY DISCHARGES THE AFFAIRS OF THE LORD JESUS

Luke 12:42-44 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of

meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

A servant is a man is faithful in the duties of the given to him and he will faithfully discharge them. And as a servant he will occupy himself, busy himself till his Lord comes home.

8. A SERVANT IS A MATURING MAN

2 Timothy 3:16 – 17 / Heb 5:11-14

- Willing to be taught by the word
- Willing to be reprov'd by the word
- Willing to be corrected by the word
- Willing to stay in the word

9. ONE WHO IS WILLING TO DIE / SUFFER AND GIVE UP ALL THAT LIFE MAY COME FORTH

John 12:24 – 26 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. / He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal / If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

A seed has life. In order for a new plant to spring up, the seed must die. When it dies, decomposes, it then nourishes the new seedling who is growing.

In the same way, as ministers of Christ, we cannot bear fruit in our ministries unless we are willing to sacrifice, and die to ourselves in time, in money, in service to others and until we are willing, we will abide alone.

Col 1:21 – 26 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled / In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: / If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; / Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions

of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: / Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

This suffering is seen in what Paul mentions in Col 1:21 – 26 whereby we are to fill up what is behind in the sufferings of Christ for the church of Christ. Literally in order to fulfil the work of Christ in discipling growth in the local church, Paul was happy that he can suffered for their sakes, so that the Christians can grow.

John 12:20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

John 12:21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

John 12:22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

John 12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

John 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

- The Gentiles are coming but the Lord did not answer the Greeks
- The urgency of time
- The Lord Jesus teaches the great paradox that life can only come through dying. ***The spiritual principle for life can only spring forth when the bearer is willing to die.***

“A key to bearing much fruit is the willingness to die to self. Here, Jesus clearly is looking forward to His impending death and resurrection.”

- If we treasure this life, then we will lose it. But if we hate this life we will preserve it unto eternal life”
- If anyone wants to serve, or the idea is if someone is to keep on serving (attending to) Christ, he / she need to follow Christ (be in union with Christ) – and where I am there shall my servant be, both here and in Heaven later. If we serve Christ, the servant will be honoured by my Father.

“God is not looking for better methods – He is looking for a better man. “
EM Bounds

“What the Church needs to-day is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use -- men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men -- men of prayer.” EM Bound

“The men who have done the most for God in this world have been early on their knees. He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunity and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God will make poor headway seeking him the rest of the day.”

“God wants elect men--men out of whom self and the world have gone by a severe crucifixion, by a bankruptcy which has so totally ruined self and the world that there is neither hope nor desire of recovery; men who by this insolvency and crucifixion have turned toward God perfect hearts.”

End of lesson 2