

Christian Stewardship
Living Life as a Good Steward of Jesus Christ
November 16, 2008

Called to Serve Others

Matthew 9:36; I Timothy 1:11; Mark 16:15; Luke 2:49; 19:22, 26; Acts 3:8; John 4:34; 2 Timothy 4:7-8

We live in a day and age where there are far too many saints who claim to be standing on the promises, who in reality are merely sitting on the premises. Too many of our churches are filled with people who are satisfied being saved without the “soul-seeking” mindset to see the salvation of society. There are even more “church-goers” who claim to be Christians, that are content to show up on Sunday morning soak up all the good singing, praying, praising, prophesying, and proclaiming, and leave without any plans to participate or practice what was preached. None of us were called out of the darkness simply to sit on the padded pews of our antiseptic sanctuaries. We were all called out of darkness into the marvelous light to go back and serve those who still remain in darkness.

In the sport of tennis, the players who win the majority of the championships do so because of the effectiveness of their service game. Their victories rise and fall on the proficiency of their serve. The better the serve is the better the chances of victory. The same can be said in the ecclesiastical arena. The better our serve is the greater our chances of being successful in ushering the world at large into the kingdom of God. So an excellent, yet challenging question would be this: “How good is your service game?”

1. Christian stewardship refutes the idea of self-enrichment.

You are fearfully and wonderfully made. God formed you, before you were in your mother’s womb, in His image and in his likeness. He produced you with purposes. He designed you with desires and dreams, divinely placed inside you, to achieve and accomplish all your God-given goals. He granted you with gifts, talents and traits, so you would be a blessing to the body of Christ. God would not have wasted eternal time or energy on you if you were not a vital, important, and intricate part of His divine will and plan. His plan is to get a good return on the investment He has placed in you. But you must understand even with all God has given you, please believe me when I tell you, It’s not about you! It’s bigger than you are. It’s more important than you are. As important as the plan and ministry of God’s kingdom is, and as important as you are to the completion of His will, it can and will be done without you, if necessary.

You have the potential to disqualify yourself from the service of the Savior with low, levels of inactivity, especially in regards to Christian Service. God made you to be used by God. He blessed you first and foremost so that you can be a blessing to others. Because we have the spirit of God living inside of us it should upgrade our spiritual sensitivity, as well as affect our physical senses. Of all the attributes that should be heightened, after we are born again, is our sense of compassion. Compassion is the selfless act of putting yourself in another’s shoes. It allows us to move from apathy to empathy and from selfishness to sympathy. That’s what God did when He came in the person of Jesus Christ. He placed himself in a position to feel what we feel and see

what we see. In turn, now that we are His body, through the power of His spirit we should feel what He feels and see what He sees in others, so we can be of greater service to the greater community at large, but especially to the household of faith.

2. God gives us gifts to meet the needs of others in ministry.

I Peter 4:10 tells us that we have each received a gift to be used to serve one another as good stewards of God's grace. In other words, you were not given your gifts simply to show others how gifted you are. You were not blessed with gifts to use at your own discretion. You most definitely were not blessed to solely serve yourself. Whatever you were blessed to receive of God is to be used for the ministries of God and His church. You and your gifts have a particular purpose not only in the church you attend, but also in your spiritual walk in life. So everything you've been taught, every single spiritual or physical blessing has been heavenly issued for divine purposes in the earthly realm for humanity.

In the early New Testament church Peter was blessed with spiritual gifts of preaching and healing. His preaching ministry was so great and renowned that the first two sermons we read about in Acts chapters three and four, eight thousand sinners were saved. The healing ministry of Peter was so popular, that people had the expectation to be healed whenever Peter showed up. The man at the gate called beautiful expected something from Peter and John. People would travel from nearby towns just to lay their sick companions in the street so that maybe Peter's shadow would fall upon them (Acts 5:15) and they would be healed. That would be a wonderful testimony of any ministry that people would show up with the anticipation to have their needs met

3. Helping others opens the way to minister to them about their need of God.

There are a couple of age-old sayings that remain true today. The first one made famous by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was, "You can be so heavenly minded that you are no earthly good." Sometimes in our zealous quests to win people to Christ we gloss over their very apparent needs. James alludes to this in the fifth chapter and fifteenth verse paraphrased, "What good does it do just to tell someone who is hungry and needing adequate clothing, "Go in peace. I hope you get warm and find something to eat." He continued in verse seventeen to say, "Faith without works is dead." We can know all the scriptures, ordinances, by-laws of the church, but unless it is used to help those outside the four walls of your church, your knowledge of God and His way has been learned in vain. This leads directly into the second saying, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." More times than not you will win the opportunity or earn the right to share the gospel of those you minister to, by meeting their needs first. The word minister here is referring to the natural or physical needs of the individual person. Then after seeing your concern for their whole person, not just their soul, they will be more welcoming to hearing the reason behind your good deeds. There is an old song of the church that says it like this:

"If I can help someone as I travel along, If I can cheer somebody with a word or song, If I can show someone right that maybe traveling wrong, then my living will not be in vain."