

Serving Jesus

As we began the year going through our Growing in grace Discipleship course, in the very first teaching on “The New You” I was struck by the following words “the Spirit of God leads us in three principle ways: to accept Christ, to alter our behavior, and to enter Christian service.”

If we are born again then we have been led by God to accept Christ. If we walk daily with God – read his Word, Pray, listen to the prompts of the Holy Spirit, Fellowship with other believers both inside and outside the Church then we learn God ways, our behavior is altered. Christian service or Servanthood should be a natural outflowing of our relationship with God, to enter into Christian service- to make ourselves available for God to use us inside and outside the Church.

Let us have a look of how we can apply servanthood in Christian Heritage.

A Living Sacrifice to God

Romans 12:1-¹⁸ NLT

12 And so, dear brothers and sisters,^[a] I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.^[b] ² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God

transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.³ Because of the privilege and authority^[c] God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.^[d] ⁴ Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, ⁵ so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.⁶ In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. ⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.⁹ Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other with genuine affection,^[e] and take delight in honoring each other. ¹¹ Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.^[f] ¹² Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. ¹³ When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. ¹⁵ Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!¹⁷ Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in

such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. ¹⁸ Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

Each person has a part to play in the Kingdom of God, no one person is capable of doing everything. It takes a team of willing workers to accomplish God's will for each generation and season. Our heavenly Father sent Jesus as an ultimate sacrifice of love and we too should demonstrate that love. Jesus was humble, remember how He left heaven to come to earth, living the life of mere man, at the last supper when He washed His disciples feet. He came here to serve and that should be our heart as well.

Character of the New Man

Colossians 3:12-13

¹² Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. ¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. ¹⁵ And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Let us put on love from the very core of your being, be tender, merciful, humble, patient and forgiving in all relationships. None of us are perfect so even when someone is serving and they do things wrong our response should always be in love. We should always be encouraging each other, building up and not breaking down.

How are we able to do this?

Romans 15:5-7

⁵ Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus,
⁶ that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We need to be united, like-minded that all that we do may glorify God and build in His kingdom. Are we doing this? Are we doing everything to glorify God?

Ephesians 3:-7-10

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

In Ephesians 3:10 We read that we are God's workmanship and he has prepared good works for us beforehand to do. That means that every Christian has work to do. We should be looking for opportunities to become involved. We need to realise that good character produces good works, not good works producing good character

3. When do you serve Jesus?

Colossians 3:23-24

²³ And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for^[a] you serve the Lord Christ.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatever your hands find to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

Whenever there is an opportunity to do something good we should rise up, and do it and not wait for someone else to do it, very often the Lord will show us something then we should get up and do it! Let us not be passive Christians but rather passionate servants of Christ. We have seen many new people who have come into the Church and get involved immediately, this is a great blessing to Christian heritage as these people have caught the vision and are running with it.

The Outworking of Love

Matthew 25:34-40

¹⁶ By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

¹⁷ But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?¹⁸ My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. ¹⁹ And by this we

[d]know that we are of the truth, and shall [e]assure our hearts before Him. ²⁰ For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. ²² And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³ And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave [f]us commandment. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I *was* naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*? ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.'

We need to reach out to those in need. Both those who have physical and spiritual needs. This is the body of Christ's responsibility, remember the Angels who came to visit Abraham and how he treated these "strangers" and then they pronounced the imminent birth of Isaac. Perhaps God may send Angels into our midst to test us, we would not want to fail.

Serving for God's Glory

1 Peter 4:7-11

⁷ But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. ⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." ⁹ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, let him speak as the ^[c]oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the ^[d]dominion forever and ever. Amen.

As each one has a gift we need to use it to glorify God, you may ask in what way could I use my gift? Maybe you think how can God use me, I'm full of faults surely one has to be perfect to minister my gift. This is truly a lie from the devil, because he does not want you to fulfill God's plan of impacting others for Christ both inside and outside the Church.

1 Corinthians 12:20-27

²⁰ But now indeed *there are* many members, yet one body. ²¹ And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. ²³ And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable *parts* have greater modesty, ²⁴ but our presentable *parts* have no need.

But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that *part* which lacks it, ²⁵ that there should be no [h]schism in the body, but *that* the members should have the same care for one another. ²⁶ And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it*; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with *it*.²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually

As a body of Christ, we are interdependent on each other. We need to have the mindset that I cannot do it alone, we need each other.

4. Practical ways to serve

I want to share some practical ways that you can help in the Church.

We have our annual Bible Club in the June School holidays, from 17-21 June. We are needing help as we plan for 200 children this year. We need people to help with working with the children, helping with the crafts and setting up the games. Perhaps working with children is not really your cup of tea, but there are many other ways that you could help. We make snacks for the children and then serve lunch before they go, perhaps you would like to help with this.

The Good Shepherd ministry is also a place where we need help, we give food and clothes to the people in need. We are in need of someone who can take charge of this ministry. As we receive donations of clothing these need to be sorted so that we know what we have. Then the food also needs to be distributed to those in need.

We also need help on the LCD board, you need to be computer literate but its not complicated to use.

These are only 3 areas that I have mentioned but there are many places that you can help. If the Lord has spoken to you this morning or confirmed something please speak to us.

If you are interested in helping, there is a sign up board at the reception desk please indicate where you would like to help.

Let us rise up and be faithful stewards of the gifts that God has given us to do.

Conclusion

I have shared a lot of Scripture this morning. The Bible is clear that we need to serve. Jesus is an amazing example to us , let us follow that example.

- 1. We need to be living sacrifices to God**
- 2. Are we reflecting the character of the New Man and showing love to both inside and outside the Church?**
- 3. We need to do the good works prepared beforehand so that the body of Christ functions properly.**
- 4. All of our serving needs to be for God's glory.**