

# A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT



## The HEART OF A SERVANT June 2008

How precious to God is the heart of a servant. We by choice are following His Son. Ephesians 2:10 NIV says, *“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”* Much of those good works involve serving. God’s blessing and approval are on servant hood. In a selfish world of “me first, me best, me always” we are chosen to reveal what real life is all about – shown first in His Son, and now in and through us. What a privilege!

Women of God – we are servants! We serve our families – spouses and children, we serve our church, we serve at our workplace, our friends, and our community. Being a servant is a beautiful thing. As with everything in our walk with the Lord, we need to consider and think about why and what we do and how we do it – in other words – the heart of a servant, the heart of the matter.

It all starts with loving the Lord. The first, greatest and most important commandment in the law said Jesus is *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”* To this He added, and the second is like it: *“Love your neighbor as yourself.”* (Matthew 22:37-39 NIV) In Matthew 4:10 NIV, Jesus said, *“Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.”* In John 12:26 NIV Jesus said, *“Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also shall be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.”* There is a pattern: love, serve, and follow. Loving Him we will serve and we will follow Him.

The servant’s heart is a loving heart. Jesus in His great love for His Father served saying, *“I am among you as one who serves.”* (Luke 22:27 NIV) Philippians 2:5-8 reveals Jesus who *“made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”* His life was a life of obedience to His Father – a humility, yieldedness and surrender to His Father’s will. Therein was His joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment. He was willing, obedient and available.

A servant’s heart makes a daily choice. In Joshua 24:15 NIV God’s people were given that choice. *“Choose you this day whom you will serve...”* and ending with *“As for me and my household we will serve the Lord.”* Good choice! A life of service can be passed on by example to our children.

A servant’s heart is a single heart – focused only on the Lord – and receiving the very presence of the Lord in return. In John 8:29 NIV Jesus said, *“The one who sent me is with me, he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.”*

The servant’s heart is a pure heart – with the right attitude, motives, desires and ambitions. The word says, *“Serve the Lord with gladness.”* (Psalm 100:2) We can put as much (or as little) into our serving as we want. We can be half-hearted or whole-hearted. The more you put into something, the more you get out of it. There are many opportunities to live “beyond ourselves” and that is where the blessing is – that’s where the joy is – that’s where the satisfaction is!

Galatians 6:9 NIV says, *“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”* There are rewards for what we do. Since we all are to become like Jesus (Romans 8:29 LB) (for this is the Father’s desire) we can look at His attitude, motives, desire and ambitions and see what all of them were to do His Father’s will and bring Him great Glory!

The heart of a servant is a humble heart. Our example is again, Jesus and again we will look at Philippians 2:7,8 NLT. He took the humble position of a slave (the form of a slave) and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross.” He gave up his divine privileges – in the Greek – he emptied himself. Humility consists of lowliness of mind, and submission to the divine will. Jesus in his invitation to come to Him when we are burdened and heavy-laden said this in Matthew 11:29 NIV – *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”* Philippians 2:5 AMP says *“Let this same attitude and purpose and (humble) mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus: let Him be your example in humility.”* Philippians 2:4,5 NIV says, *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”* In the Message the same Scripture says, *“Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don’t be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourself long enough to lend a helping hand.”* We will serve as Jesus did – and whatever we do – *“do it heartily as to the Lord and not men”* (Colossians 3:23). We do not ever need to compare ourselves to anyone else, or strive or struggle – to do what we do (whether noticed or not) for Him. We can all serve in special unique ways with great grace upon us and we don’t need to be like anyone else.

A servant’s heart is a connected heart – to the Body of Christ. *“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”* (Romans 12:5 KJV) In the Living Bible it says, *“... so we belong to each other, and each needs all the others.”* We all have a common purpose, and can use our gifts, talents and abilities to *“serve one another by and through love.”* (see Galatians 5:13 AMP) For further study see 1 Peter 4:10,11 AMP, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Romans 12:3-8 and Ephesians 4:11-16.

A servant’s heart is an open heart – open to any and all. Whatever the need – Jesus heart was a heart of compassion, mercy and truth to draw men to God. There was generosity of heart – all that He was, and all that He had to bring others was freely given as He ministered love, care, and concern for people. God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with strength and ability and power (Acts 10:38) He went about doing good and healing all those who were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him. We need to pray for open eyes, ears, and hearts so that we will know the needs around us. We need to pray for sensitivity and then do what we can do.

As servants, we can bring the goodness of God to others just by helping, meeting needs, and doing for others what they are unable to do themselves. The Lord will help us and be with us, just as He was with Jesus. Our responsibility will become our privilege! People will come to know Him, we will grow, and those around us will grow. We will have more and more of Jesus to give (an unending supply) and the Lord will be glorified!

Serving With You –

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