



**SERVICE IN A "SERVE ME" WORLD**

Service or Serve Us – Part 1

Pastor Keith Stewart

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*...God raised him from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule. And not just for the time being, but forever. He is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. At the center of all this, Christ rules the church. - Ephesians 1.20-21 (The Message)*

*God does not exist to make a big deal out of us. We exist to make a big deal out of Him.*



## ***1. LIVING SOLELY FOR ONE'S SELF DOESN'T SATISFY.***

*For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. Matthew 16.25*

*The more we make our own happiness the focus and center of our life, the more happiness eludes us.*

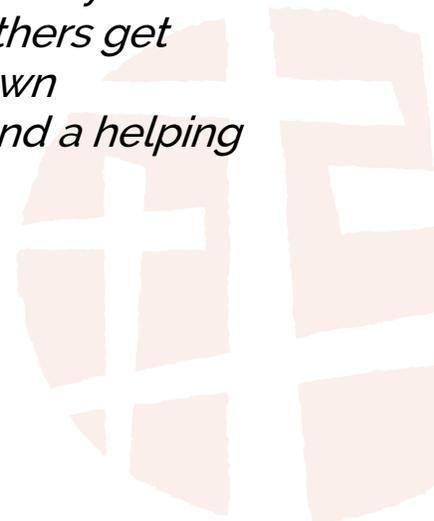
"The search for happiness is one of the chief sources of unhappiness." - Eric Hoffer

"Those who seek happiness too intensely will have little of it." - Calvin Miller

***Doing nothing for others is the undoing of one's self.***

*Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet talk your way to the top. 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. Philippians 2.3-4 (The Message Bible)*

***Self-seeking breeds isolation.***



"At this very moment you and I are either committing [selfishness], or about to commit it, or repenting it."  
- C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain

"Cure selfishness and you've just replanted the Garden of Eden." - R.C.H. Lenski

"Selfish people are by definition devoted to bringing themselves happiness. But as other people look at their lives, they see that they're not very successful at being happy. But those who work at bringing happiness to others are consistently viewed as being happy people."  
- Bernard Rimland

## ***2. THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RENDERING A SERVICE AND BEING A SERVANT.***

❑ Signs that something has gone wrong

- When I feel used and unappreciated

*Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people...* Ephesians 6.7



The number one way of knowing whether or not you have a servant's heart is by how you react when you're treated like one.

- When I feel possessive and overprotective

*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it... Psalm 24.1*

- When I feel disrespect and resentment

*The highest reward for our service is not what we get for it, but rather what we become by it.*

"The truly Christlike leader is known by the ease and spontaneity with which he or she does the little, annoying, messy things – the things which in the ancient world the slave would do, the things which in our world we always secretly hope someone else will do so we won't have to waste our time, to demean ourselves." – N.T. Wright

Serving like Jesus is the key to healthy, happy service.

- I'll serve without recognition.



*But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing....but, when you pray, go into your inner room, and pray to your Father who is in secret....but you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that you may not be seen fasting by men, but by your Father who is in secret.*

Matthew 6.3,6,17-18

“Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount that ...one of the greatest fallacies of our faith, and actually one of the greatest acts of unbelief, is the thought that our spiritual acts and virtues need to be advertised to be known... secrecy, rightly practiced enables us to place our public relations department entirely in the hands of God... we allow Him to decide when our deeds will be known and when our light will be noticed.” - Dallas Willard

- I'll serve without reluctance.

*Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power... John 13.3*

- I'll serve without reservation.

*The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. John 13.2*



- I'll serve without restriction.

*"Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." John 13.12b-14*

## Basin theology

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"I sensed many weren't happy about a rich American (to them all Americans are rich) being in a free, government-run sanitarium. (They didn't know I was just as broke as they were!)" - Doug Nichols, Operation Mobilization

"I don't like bad smells, and I didn't want to get involved, but I got out of bed and went over to him. When I touched his shoulder, his eyes opened wide with fear. I smiled, put my arms under him, and picked him up. He was very light due to old age and advanced TB. I carried him to the washroom, which was just a filthy, small room with a hole

in the floor. I stood behind him with my arms under his armpits as he took care of himself. After he finished, I picked him up, and carried him back to his bed. As I laid him down, he kissed me on the cheek, smiled, and said something I couldn't understand.”

- Doug Nichols, Operation Mobilization

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1.) Pastor Keith shared, how the more we make our own happiness the focus and center of our life, the more happiness eludes us. Discuss your own thoughts about this concept. How have you seen it play out in your life and that of others?

2.) Psychologist Bernard Rimland, at the Institute for Child Behavior Research in San Diego, published a simple test. He tells his students to...

“Make a list of ten people you know the best. After each name write either H (for happy) or N (for unhappy). Then go down the list again, this time writing S (for selfish) or U (for unselfish) after each name. Once you have completed your list, add up all the categories, Happy-selfish, Happy-unselfish, Unhappy-selfish, unhappy-unselfish.”

Try this experiment on your own or with your group. Discuss the results. Give examples.

3.) Pastor Keith shared the signs that something has gone wrong in regard to how we are serving or what is motivating us to serve. In particular, he highlighted three attitudes.

- When I feel used and unappreciated
- When I feel possessive and overprotective
- When I feel disrespect and resentment

Has any of these scenarios ever been something you had to face? If so, which one(s) and did you recognize it as problematic? How did you deal with it?

4.) One remedy Pastor Keith suggested for dealing with problem attitudes when it comes to serving is practicing the discipline of secrecy. Secrecy about the ways in which we are serving crucifies our need for self-importance. It keeps the focus on who we are doing this for – the Lord not people. Have you ever practiced the discipline of secrecy in regard to service? Share with the group your experience with that – both your struggles and your breakthroughs.

