

## Commitment

In the light of what you have learned in this lesson, please answer the following questions:

1. Do you really want your life to bring glory to God?  
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2. Can you think of some things you could do that might bring glory to God?  
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3. Are you willing to accept the idea of being a servant to God and to others?  
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4. Go back over the section in the lesson about gifts, and write down what gifts you think you have that God could use. Do not forget that you may have gifts that you have not discovered yet. Ask God to help you discover the gifts He wants to give you.  
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5. After reviewing the section on the correct attitudes of God's servants, compare your attitudes on the subject.. Make a note of what you may need to work on.  
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6. Is your heart open for a special call to Christian ministry? Pray about it and keep your heart open to the guidance of the Spirit. Write down your feelings about it.  
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## Lesson Seven Serving God

### The Purpose of Life

Most of our discipleship lessons have focused on what God wants to do for us. In this lesson we want to talk about what we can do for God.

When we begin talking about serving God, we are opening the question of the purpose of life. It goes all the way back to why the human race was created. The purpose of human life is to serve God, and bring glory to Him. He has a plan for every life, and wants to use every person in a special way to help build His Kingdom. It is important for every Christian to discover and fulfill God's will. Understanding the purpose of life gives dignity and meaning to it and leads to fulfillment.

### The Call to Servanthood

One of the most difficult lessons that Jesus had to teach His disciples was that He had not called them to a position of prestige and privilege, but to be servants. On the last night He was with them before His crucifixion, He focused on this problem. He washed their feet, a task normally reserved for servants. Then He said to 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. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (Jn. 13:13-15).

The great Apostle Paul repeatedly described himself as a servant. He said, "...for I, Paul, have become a servant" (Col. 1:23, and similar statements in numerous other places).

Most amazing, Jesus himself became a servant: "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a *servant*, being made in human likeness" (Phil 2:6-7). He also said, "... the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve ..." (Mt. 20:28).

Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mk. 9:35). That applies to all of us. In God's Kingdom, we are all servants.

The road to greatness in God's kingdom is through servanthood.

## What Kind of Service?

There are many different kinds of service to God. The Bible teaches that God prepares us for where He wants us to serve by giving us gifts (abilities or capacities). He can use absolutely anybody at some place in His Church. Nobody is without a gift of some kind. We all have a contribution to make. It is important that each one discover the gifts God has given him/her and then develop them and use them for His glory.

## What Are God's Gifts for Service?

Here are some of the gifts mentioned in the Bible:

Prophesying (preaching), serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to the needs of others, leadership, showing mercy (Rom. 12:4-8).

The message of wisdom, the message of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, different tongues (languages), the interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 12:4-11).

To the above lists are added helping others and administration (1 Cor. 12:28).

There is no reason to believe that the above lists of gifts are exhaustive. There are no doubt many other gifts that the Spirit gives where they are needed. Maybe your church needs a good treasurer, or a secretary, or someone to decorate the building, or someone that knows how to keep it clean. They are all important to the well-being of the church. Nobody is insignificant in God's church! It is only as we all use our gifts that the church functions well. (See 1 Cor. 12: 12-27.)

## What Should Be the Attitudes of God's Servants?

1. **Wholeheartedness:** "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men ..." (Col. 3:23).
2. **Faithfulness:** "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness'" (Mt. 25:21).
3. **Fervor and zeal:** "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord" (Rom. 12:11).
4. **Discipline:** "No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer. Similarly, if

anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules" (2 Tim. 2:4-5).

5. **Right Priorities:** "But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" ( Mt. 6:33).
6. **Joyfulness:** "Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God" (Rom. 15:17).

## Rewards for Faithful Servants

God has promised to reward faithful service. Paul said, "... you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does..." (Eph. 6:8). Jesus said, "My Father will honor the one who serves me" (Jn. 12:26b). "And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward" (Mt. 10:42). "Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Jesus requires our faithfulness, but He is also faithful to keep what He has promised. God will richly repay His servants. "However, as it is written: No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived, what God has prepared for those that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

Our service to God should be motivated primarily by love for Him, but you may be sure that it pays to serve Jesus, especially in the long run.

## A Special Call to Ministry

While it is true that we are all "called" to serve God, sometimes God calls certain persons to a special ministry as pastors, evangelists, or missionaries.

The Apostle Paul sensed this special call of God upon his life. He used the following phrases among others to describe it:

*"Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God"* (Rom. 1:1).

*"Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God"* (1 Cor. 1:1).

*"For this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle..."* (2 Tim. 1:11).

Special direction will be given in another lesson for those who feel this special call. At this point we simply want to make you aware that this is an option to consider when you are seeking God's will for your life.