

# You Were Made to Serve the Lord

## December 1, 2013

By C. Benjamin Dill

### Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Good morning, Lighthouse!

It is great to see each and every one of you this morning; I trust you had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday filled with true thankfulness to the Lord for all He does and is doing in your life.

Last week God reminded us of who we really are in Christ. Oh, I know we just scratched the surface of all the Bible has to say about this, but I hope it was enough to get you excited about who you really are and especially what your future is going to be like.

What will we be doing for the next 1,000 years? The same thing we are being taught and trained to do right now; we will be serving the Lord!

Over the years as I have learned and grown in The Word, a pattern of gratitude has begun to emerge. As I lead various groups such as our Lighthouse staff, our Elder board, our Praise Team, The Lighthouse Bible Class and various Home teams; many of you have heard my most consistent prayer as we begin each one, “Lord, thank you for the privilege of being a part of what You do.”

This is not a cliché nor some repetition that has developed over time; I mean it with all my heart every time I say it and even when I don't say it. Oh, how I wish that each of us could somehow see the value of this amazing privilege the Lord has set before us here at Lighthouse Baptist Church!

When we do see this value for what it is, two things happen: we no longer neglect our part in it and we do not allow anything to take priority over it!

Most of us, because of our culture here in America, have a skewed attitude of what it means to be a servant. To most Americans being a servant is low, bad and undesirable.

From the perspective of Scripture it is just the opposite.

### **Matthew 20:25-27**

**25** But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, **Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles**

exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

**26** But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

**27** And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

In God's program it is not the biggest, strongest, and smartest who exercise mastery over the rest who are glorified; but rather the servant.

Just look at God's description of the glory that shall be revealed:

**Isaiah 40:5** And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see *it* together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

**Romans 8:18** For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

**1Peter 4:13** But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

**1Peter 5:1** The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

Today I want to challenge you to ask God for something special; call it an early Christmas gift from the Lord. Just pray this simple 7 word prayer from the heart: "Lord, teach me to be a servant."

Because of who you now are in Christ, you now actually can be one for the Lord.

### **Romans 6:12-22**

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, **as those that are alive from the dead**, [that's who you are, if you are saved] and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, **ye became the servants of righteousness.**

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things *is* death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Sometimes because of preconceived ideas and because of certain rules in various Churches, we get the idea that only after we get our lives really cleaned up and overcome all our sin issues; then, just maybe, we can begin to serve the Lord.

That is a sad idea; reason number one is because serving the Lord is the only thing that will get your life cleaned up! Sin has to be replaced with practicing righteousness and it doesn't leave any other way.

This is no doubt one of the least understood Biblical principles of our time.

The fact is, as usual, the Lord has already made provision for you to be all He created you to be; beginning with:

First:

## I. Your Preparation for Service.

*A. You have already been gifted with everything you need to serve the Lord.*

### 1. Ephesians 4:7-8

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

### Ephesians 4:11-16

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every

joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

2. Our gifts as a Church are many; rarely does a member possess just one.

### **Romans 12:5-15**

5 So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,...

3. We don't need to covet someone else's gifts; we have our own.

...whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, *let us wait* on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 *Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

3. This gift list includes the gifts of: preaching, ministry (deacons), teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, mercy, love, affection (huggers), business administration, passion for service, optimism, endurance, prayer.

4. This is by no means an exhaustive list; we have believers gifted in computer and internet skills, sound technicians, music, art work and design, book keeping and accounting skills that far exceed the business requirements of Paul's day. Building and maintenance skills, landscaping and grounds care and dozens of other specific areas of service that all add up to making this Church the best it can be for the Lord's glory.

*B. Neither your gifts nor your calling to use them is ever going to go away.*

1. **Romans 11:29** For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

2. There was a time I thought (again from what I heard others preach) that I was through; that I had messed up my life and my opportunity so bad that God was just through with me.

3. I could not have been more wrong!



4. As a matter of fact, God used those seven years I was gone from the ministry to adjust my priorities and add new gifts of compassion and understanding; and now I can accomplish things I could have never achieved before.

5. Lisa and I are both living proof that if you are saved and still breathing, God is not done with you!

Next we see:

## **II. Your Place of Service.**

*A. God chooses your place of service.*

1. Describing the Church, which is the Body of Christ, the Bible says this:

**1Corinthians 12:18** But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

2. The very idea that we the servants, not the Master, would choose where and how we shall serve is pretty outrageous, don't you think?

3. You need to quit shopping for a Church and let God plant you where He wants you to be.

4. By the way; if the Church you are considering already has everything going well and everything in place like you would want it; why would God need you there?

5. You were made to serve the Lord, not just to come and be served!

*B. Since you are here and listening to this message; that is evidence to some degree that God may just want you in this one.*

1. Lighthouse is not for everyone, but it is for anyone.

2. Let me explain: Some Christians are probably just too good for Lighthouse.

3. Here at Lighthouse, we are going to receive you just like Jesus did; sin and all.

4. If you are truly saved, you realized that you were conquered by sin and powerless to do anything about it.

5. It was in that condition that you placed your trust in Jesus to do what you could not do or even help do; you trusted Jesus to save you from your sin and He did just that!

6. Jesus saved your spirit; the real you, but not your flesh. That means all that baggage from the world is still there and has to be unpacked one dirty piece of laundry at a time.

7. Pretending that this is any different only makes you a hypocrite.

*C. What will a Church that wins souls and does what Jesus told them to do be like?*

1. For one, it will be filled with lots of genuinely saved people serving the Lord who are in various stages of unpacking their dirty worldly laundry.
2. We may not appear very holy.
3. Here at Lighthouse you will find people serving the Lord who would barely be let in other Churches.
4. I have been on board from the very beginning of the Lord setting this Church here in Dickinson and I know why God put us here in the midst of all these other Baptist Churches; God put us here to fill two specific needs:
  - a. He put us here to make the gospel clear.
  - b. He put us here to be the home of another second chance for anyone willing to trust Jesus!
5. We do not condone sin and we will help you overcome it; that said, we do not care what you've done or what you've been; Our Lord has made a place for you here at Lighthouse Baptist Church.

Next see:

### **III. The Performance of Your Service.**

*A. There is an age old problem found in Churches.*

1. **Luke 22:24** And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

2. We took a vote and we have decided that Jesus is the greatest!

3. Now that that is settled; I don't have to put my name and my picture on the sign or on the wall and I don't have to set up and maintain 'Charles Dill Ministries'; I can just be a servant.

4. If you come long enough, you will figure out who is the pastor; it is a big job but it's not a big deal; I'm just a servant, like you.

*B. There is a principle upon which all service for the Lord is to be based.*

1. **Philippians 2:3** *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

2. Ladies and gentlemen, what goes on in this place is about Jesus; it is not about us.

3. Speaking of Jesus, the Apostle writes:

**Colossians 1:14-18**

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even the forgiveness of sins:*

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

4. If you are looking for a Church that is all about you and what you want and your kids and what they want; this Church is probably not the one for you.

5. Thankfully Jesus loves kids and He loves you and because of Him all our needs get met; but make no mistake; Here, Jesus comes first no matter what.

*C. God has a plan that governs our service to Him.*

1. His plan is not about a bunch of rules and laws, although some rules are necessary; His is a plan of grace.

## 2. **Romans 14:17-18**

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

3. There are two sides to each of these three requirements:

a. **The inside**; our new man; our saved, born again spirit possesses the righteousness of God, we are at peace with God and we rejoice continually in the Lord.

b. **The outside**; where we live out what God placed on the inside because that is who we are.

4. We are going to **do what is right** according to the scriptures; if it is not scriptural, it is not righteousness. This must govern all we do.

5. We are going to **be at peace** no matter what.

#### 6. **Ephesians 4:1-3**

1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the **bond of peace**.

7. Being at peace is even more important than being right; if you stay at peace with one another you can work it out and get it right.
8. Last week Brother Wes and I got crosswise with each other at Praise Team practice. (It was all his fault, you understand.)
9. I was tired and grumpy and he was tired and grumpy and words escalated and what could have been the end of serving for some was no more than a bump in the road for us because we have a bond of peace; no matter what.
10. We went right back to serving the Lord together like it was nothing because that is exactly what it was; nothing!
11. Why do you think there is so much in the Bible about forbearance and longsuffering and forgiveness and kindness; things happen but peace must prevail.
12. God wants you to **serve with joy!** God wants his servants happy!
  - a. **1John 1:4** And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.
  - b. **Philippians 4:4** Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice.
13. Serving the Lord is not something we've got to do; it is something we get to do!

14. It is the greatest privilege you will ever get on this side of heaven!

**In Conclusion:**

**Are you ready to start living out who God created you to be?**

**Do you have courage enough to ask God that seven word prayer from your heart this morning, 'Lord, teach me to be a servant.'**

**The best life has to offer is not found in what you can gain or what you can accomplish for yourself or even necessarily for others.**

**The best of life is found is serving the Lord; His way, simply as a servant.**