

TO LOVE AND TO SERVE

Can we serve without loving – or love without serving? Serving God is one of the most important principles of the Christian faith, we are expected to help the church with a joyful spirit. “Love one another.” “Care for one another.” “Pray for one another.” “Encourage one another.” “Help one another.” “Counsel one another.” “Support one another.” Many times, scripture tells us of our relationship to God and others is through service.

We must remember that serving others may not always be easy but we will be rewarded through God. Secondly, we must remember that nothing is too small that God will not use it. Nothing we do for God, in his name, is in vain.

In 1990 I was privileged to be involved in Hertfordshire Scouts’ Expedition to Kenya. There were two projects completed as part of the expedition, one was a rainwater harvester at Wundanyi in the south and the other, with which I was involved, was to complete a health clinic at Gitare about 30 miles north of Nairobi. We prepared a plaque to go on the clinic which used words derived from the Prayer of Generosity by St Ignatius.

“To labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing we do they will.”

It was an incredibly proud moment when we saw the plaque in place and summed up our experience living in the village for 4 weeks. It was very hard work, in an environment none of us were used to, living in conditions, which for us, were very basic. However, in the whole time we were out there no one in either part of the group complained or said why are we out there, the purpose and need was very clear to us all.

At a similar time to this was another important occasion in my life, which was our marriage. During the ceremony we were told the secret to a successful marriage was not how much give and take there should be but only be about giving. A recipe which has lasted so far and one that is as important now as ever in how we should all serve our society. Maybe a little less taking and more giving by some in our wider society could work wonders.

BIBLE PASSAGES

Mark 10: 45

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people.

John 12:26

Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. And my Father will honour anyone who serves me.

Romans 12: 9-13

Love must be completely sincere. Hate what is evil, hold on to what is good. Love one another warmly as Christians, and be eager to show respect for one another. Work hard and do not be lazy. Serve the Lord with a heart full of devotion. Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times. Share your belongings with your needy fellow Christians, and open your homes to strangers.

1 Peter 4:10

Every believer has received grace gifts, so use them to serve one another as faithful stewards of the many-coloured tapestry of God's grace.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, may Your life of love and service be our guide to love and serve the under privileged, abandoned and the needy amongst us.

In your call to love and serve, help us to respond Lord Jesus. May we extend our hearts with love and our hands and feet to serve.

May we learn to serve you as you deserve, to give and not count the cost, fight and not heed the wounds, to toil and not seek rest, to labour and not ask for reward.

Let your example be enabled in our hearts, minds and souls. As we come before you in love and service, we pray you will be blessed and exalted and we will do your will.

Amen