

Daily Devotional, June 3, 2021 Here am I to Worship, Here I am to Serve

“Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’? Won’t he rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’? Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’”
Luke 17:7-10 (NIV)

When we think about worship, most times what we visualize is a place where we gather together, hear God’s Word proclaimed, sing songs, and share in times of prayer, confession, and the sacraments. Some of our more dedicated members would also consider any time spent reading and studying the bible to be worship as well. And I also like to believe that singing along to that praise CD in your car is a form of worship, as well. Quite honestly, worship takes on many different forms. However, the form of worship that Jesus speaks of most often in scripture, is the worship that takes on the form of service.

In fact, one of the Hebrew words that is often translated worship, the word *avodah*, can also mean to serve, work, labor, or toil. Jesus, as we know, could be called a servant leader. He was a leader, for us, the greatest leader we could ever know, but not in the sense of worldly leadership. Jesus was also a servant, yet he was followed by many, and many more wanted to work for him. Jesus is our Lord, and those who follow him today, are striving to learn from the humility of love, service and care that Jesus has implanted in us by His grace.

In Luke 17, Jesus talks to his disciples about stumbling. Within the framework of a few verses, he teaches them about sin, forgiveness in faith, and about the duty everyone has to both forgive and to serve. At the end of this lesson, he tells them the above parable.

Now, the disciples, apart from possibly Matthew, the tax collector, were probably not men who would have been prominent enough to have servants. Most often, we associate Jesus’ followers with the poor and the outcast. However, many of Jesus’ followers could have been servants. They would have understood Jesus’ reference from having to work under such conditions. Yet, what Jesus teaches is something that we perhaps should really pay attention to in our current generation. Jesus tells these disciples that a servant is someone who does for others; not for thanks, not for reward, not for recognition, but because they are a servant. A servant simply does what is asked, what is expected, what is pleasing to the one they serve.

That probably doesn’t sound very appealing to most of us, or some may think it is beneath us, because we all like to be recognized, we all like to hear the “thank you,” we want everyone to appreciate what we have done for them. Yet, the humility that comes from true servanthood understands that we are recognized, if not by human eyes and hearts, but by God, who will one day say to us, “well done good and faithful servant, come in and rest.” When we get to that point in our faith, what we find is that the more we can do for others, the closer we feel to God, and the more we find that worship is more about serving out of love for God and neighbor, than it ever was about gathering and singing.

I know we look forward to the gathering and singing part, and we will work towards that in the coming weeks and months, but in the meantime, perhaps as we are able, we must think of those whom God places in front of us to serve, so that we might worship God in our service to others.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, I desire to learn how to worship You as You deserve. Help me Lord, to grow into the sort of worshipper that You are seeking, one who worships You in spirit and truth. I pray that my life may be one that honors You in all I say and all I do, in all the circumstances of life. Lord, I pray that I may learn to walk in all of Your ways, to serve You and to serve others with all of my being. Teach me Lord, how to worship You in the beauty of holiness of humble service, so that I may be one that bows my heart before You in spirit and truth, to Your honor and glory. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.