

THE LAMPLIGHTER

January 2009

Jesus - The Servant of All (Matthew 20:28)

Introduction: Almost every emotional problem can be summed up in one particular bit of behavior: it's a person walking around screaming, "For God's sake, love me." . . .

On the other hand, healthy people are those who walk around looking for someone to love. And, if you see changes in the people who were screaming, "Love me, Love me," it's when they realize that if they give up this screaming and go to the other business of loving another human, they can get the love they've been screaming for all their lives. It's hard to learn, but it's good when you learn it.

Read Matthew 8:5-13 The Centurion (a military officer in charge of 100 soldiers) approaches Jesus and asks Him for help. It would probably be safe to conclude that all other avenues to help this servant had been exhausted. Doctors have been consulted in his behalf. Over the counter medications had been administered with no success. For this reason he becomes a servant to his servant by seeking out Jesus in his behalf. Imagine how important this servant must have been to his master. Sure, he could have said that he is only one servant among so many. What difference does it make if I lose just one servant? After all they are acquired for a dime a dozen. However the one who is used to being served now becomes the servant. He ventures out in search of the only one who could help. He seeks out Jesus!

How bad do things have to get before you reach out to serve your neighbor? Does it take a natural disaster such as a hurricane, flood, or tornado before one is moved to act in behalf of others? Or does it take a catastrophic event as 9-11 to move us from the comfort of our own homes and to respond with acts of kindness? And while action on behalf of others is so important in such extreme circumstances, isn't it equally as important to reach across the fences of our own backyards to serve a neighbor in need? Absolutely! Is it less important to reach out and serve the less fortunate in our communities? Absolutely not! Unfortunately we have become a culture who has turned our eyes inward. We look first and foremost to our own needs. We operate under the philosophy of taking care of self, because we think that if we do not take care of ourselves, then no one else will either. We even spiritualize this notion by stating that the Lord helps those who help themselves. In reality the Lord serves the helpless.

Read Romans 5:6 "You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly." Paul emphasizes that while we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. We were and still are powerless to do anything about our fallen nature. Jesus was not helping those who help themselves. He was helping and serving the helpless, the powerless. He was serving you and me. When Jesus calls us to a life of service, He is not asking us to do anything He has not done already.

Read Matthew 20:28 "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." The King of kings and Lord of lords, who would be worthy of our servanthood, did not come to be served but to serve. What an amazing life of service He offered! He gives his own life in our behalf. For He did not suffer for His sins. He was without sin. **Read Hebrews 4:14-15** "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin." He did not die to redeem His life from the pit of sin, death, and the power of the devil. He died to redeem us who were lost and condemned creatures. For this reason, let us serve one another in love!

Conclude with Prayer / The Lord's Prayer / Blessing

Sing: LW #404 "Take My Life and Let it Be"