

Qualified Servants of the Lord

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求められている主の僕
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ゴットホルド・ベック

Malachi

3:10 "Bring the entire tithe into the storehouse that there may be food in my house. So put me to the test in this right now," says the Lord of the Heavenly Armies, "and see if I won't throw open the windows of heaven for you and pour out on you blessing without measure."

[International Standard Version]

Luke

11:9 "So I say to you: Keep asking, and it will be given you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened for you."

11:13 "So if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who keep on asking him!"

22:24 "Now an argument sprang up among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest.

22:25 But he told them, "The kings of the unbelievers Lord it over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called benefactors.

22:26 But you are not to do so. On the contrary, the greatest among you should become like the youngest, and the one who leads should become like the one who serves.

22:27 Because who is greater, the one who sits at the table, or the one who serves? It is the one at the table, isn't it? But I am among you as one who serves.

22:28 You are the ones who have always stood by me in my trials.

22:29 And I confer a kingdom on you, just as my Father has conferred a kingdom on me,

22:30 so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit down on thrones to govern the twelve tribes of Israel."

Today, I would like to discuss the secret of being used by the Lord. There is a sign at the entrance of the divine school in Aidlingen, Germany, which says, "We were saved to serve Him." We were not saved just to be saved, but we were saved in order to serve Him.

Paul wrote to his brothers and sisters in Thessalonica, "You turned away from idols to serve a living and true God." He added later that the Lord Jesus died for all people so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for the one who died and rose for them. What he was saying was that it was to serve him that we were saved; it was in order to become His servants.

In our previous meeting, we discussed what the rule behind serving the Lord, the rule we need to obey as we participate in the work of the Lord was. The rule in the service for the Lord is to accept and experience personally the death of Jesus and His resurrection. Unless we absorb this rule, all our services will be totally valueless and will never bear eternal fruit.

A man called Moses was indeed used by the Lord. He certainly had great innate ability and a good education. He was extremely enthusiastic and diligent. He was also very brave and had wonderful intelligence.

It is believed that the prophets called Isaiah and Jeremiah, were also well educated and had good social status and fame. As we all know, Paul had the best kind of education of his time. They all became vessels that were used by the Lord.

Nevertheless, the Lord does not intend to use innate abilities of humans. His intention is first, to lead the ones He chose to spiritual bankruptcy so that the Lord Himself may work through them. Isaiah must have cried out to the Lord when he confessed, "I am ruined. I am so unclean."

Being unclean refers to a state in which our own strength and the strength of the Holy Spirit are mixed up inside us. To be clean is to come under the complete control of the Holy Spirit. We have to realize that we cannot perform even the smallest service on our own accord.

We should always keep in mind that the Holy Spirit alone is the one who works within us, who makes it possible for us to serve the Lord and accomplish His purpose. The service we do on our own accord is temporal, and it would never fulfill the purpose of the Lord. It would not please the Lord's heart.

The most important thing as we engage in the service of the Lord God is where the strength we serve with comes from; where the source of the power is. What we actually do does not matter at all. What matters is with what power we do that service. Very often, we focus on what we do and what our purpose is as we serve Him, and we do not pay much attention to the way the goal will be attained.

Some people say that they would use any means to accomplish their goals and they actually work that way. Many believers of the Lord wish to participate in the service for Him, but, as long as they do so on their own accord, it would never please the Lord.

It is written in this famous verse of chapter 15 of the Gospel according to John:

John
15:5 "...because apart from me you can do nothing."

This is what Jesus has said. What Jesus has said is true. You may not want to admit this word somewhere in your heart.

We can read the Bible, we can pray and we can hold meetings all by ourselves, can't we? What He meant in this verse was that, if we do something without Jesus, its outcome is absolutely meaningless and it will bear no fruit at all.

Any service would be burnt down just like a chunk of wood or straw if it is not the work that Jesus performs inside us. These are the words the Lord Himself stated. We need to take them very seriously, don't we? We dare not to do anything on our own. There are a lot of things we can do, but we won't do anything unless it pleases the Lord.

We should totally rely on the Lord and take these words to our hearts. Total reliance on Him, faith, obedience, humbleness, and patience; these things will never be obtained by reading books or listening to preaching. These things will be yours through nothing but the pain and agony you endure.

The rule behind the service is to accept the death of Jesus and His resurrection and experience it personally. What is required in the service is not our innate ability or strength. The only power that helps us to serve the Lord and please Him is the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells in us.

What should the purpose of our service be? The purpose of all our service has to be pointed to Jesus alone. Let us look at what David confessed. He wrote, "There is nothing but you that I love on this ground." This is the very attitude we too should take, isn't it?

The purpose of our lives should not only be helping the Lord in saving souls or in building the kingdom, but we should consider primarily to lead the life that pleases Jesus. There is a huge difference between working for Jesus and living for Jesus.

We need nothing other than Jesus: this attitude has to be the foundation of our minds. In addition, we need to clearly distinguish the power of the Holy Spirit from our own abilities. The power of the Holy Spirit is the power of the Lord; this power is heavenly and spiritual. This is the power by which the true servants of God need to be led.

Contrarily, our own power is human, worldly and belongs to our flesh. Many so-called servants of God are driven by this power as they participate in the service for the Lord, aren't they? Many people want to know how they can tell whether they are truly being led by the Holy Spirit or not.

These people reflect too much on themselves, analyze themselves and are captivated by their own perspectives. When we look deep into ourselves, what we see in there are deceit, desperation, imbalance and doubt. No matter how hard we examine ourselves, we would never be able to understand ourselves.

However, it does not mean that all efforts to examine ourselves are meaningless. There are many cases, in which, while believing that we are serving the Lord, we are actually hindering the work of the Lord. Then, how will it be possible for us to learn about ourselves? There are three answers to this question.

Firstly, it is possible through the Word of the Lord. David, author of the Psalms confessed:

Psalms
36:9 "For with you is a fountain of life, and in your light we will see light."

When we walk in the light of the Lord, it will be possible for us to understand ourselves. Furthermore, we will understand the Lord according to the degree we examine ourselves. We cannot clean up our room if the room is dark, we need to turn on a light first. If we try to clean up the room without light, we will end up messing up the room further.

What do we do to see if there is any dirt on our faces? Will we rub the face with hands? No, we won't. We check a mirror. No matter how hard you rub your face, you will never know whether it is clean or dirty and it only leaves you feeling desperate, doubtful and anxious.

But, if you once look at a mirror, you can see everything clearly and all your anxieties dissolve away. David desperately wanted himself to be examined. Just like God who Himself is in the light, if we keep walking in the light, we will live in the fellowship with

each other and the blood of Jesus, His Son cleanses us from all sin.

David prayed wholeheartedly, "Examine me, God, and know my mind, test me, and know my thoughts." It is not until we embrace the Lord that we know good and evil and begin to understand the Lord Himself better. How does this light shine on us practically? In many cases, the light of the Lord is given through His Word in the Bible.

Psalms

119:130 The disclosure of your words illuminates, providing understanding to the simple.

By being exposed to the light of His Words, our faults are revealed, which we have never realized until then. We realize that we have been totally blind. The words of God bring light to us. And where there is a light, we can see everything.

Hebrews

4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul and spirit, joints and marrow, as it judges the thoughts and purposes of the heart.

This will happen in our real life. The word of the Lord brings all things to the light. How can we see the reality of ourselves? It is possible through the Word of the Lord.

Secondly, in some cases, the light is given through interaction with other believers. Sometimes, I meet some people and have strong feeling that Jesus is standing beside them. When we interact with such people, we are given new strength. It makes our doubts and anxieties dissolve away and makes it possible for us to serve the Lord being filled with joy and liberty. We want to live like someone all of whose words and deeds proclaim the presence of Jesus.

Thirdly, it is necessary for us to walk in the light.

1 John

1:5 This is the message that we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light, and in him there is no darkness—none at all!

1:7 But if we keep living in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

It is written that the Lord is the light and we have to keep living in this light: we need to stay with the Lord all the time. By nature, light comes into anywhere it is

accepted.

When we open our hearts and accept the light of the Lord, all doubts and fear will dissolve away. When we are walking in this light of the Lord, who is Himself the light, we are walking the most precious and valuable steps in this world. Those who walk in this light are able to discern between good and evil; they know the will of the Lord and obey it.

Psalms

43:3 "Send forth your light and your truth so they may guide me. Let them bring me to your holy mountain and to your dwelling places."

We want to have the same attitude as David had when he wrote this Psalm. "Lord, I am prepared to change myself. Please show me all my faults and wrong doings." Where God says, "let there be light," the light comes in at that very moment, liberates us from all fears and dread and makes it possible for us to begin serving the Lord. What is light? The answer can be found in Ephesians, chapter 5:

Ephesians

5:13 "But everything that is exposed to the light becomes visible,
5:14 for the light is making everything visible."

Because Jesus Himself is the light, when we walk in the light, we will begin to understand the Lord's intention and will be able to serve Him in the way that pleases Him. Now, what is our purpose in serving Him? Do we truly seek Jesus alone? Are we seeking only what comes from above?

Matthew

6:20 "But keep on storing up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal,
6:21 because where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Is our heart and treasure in heaven? Can we say just like David, "I desire nothing on this earth but you?" Do the eyes of our heart look straight into Jesus alone? King Solomon wrote:

Songs

1:15 "Look at you! You are beautiful, my darling. Look at you! You are so beautiful. Your eyes are doves."

They say that doves can only see one thing at a time. In this verse, the Lord is calling all who belong to Him, to churches and to all His brides, "Look at you! You are

so beautiful. Your eyes are doves.”

Let us look at second Chronicles, chapter 16, verse 9, which is one of the most important verses from the Old Testament for me:

2 Chronicles

16:9 “The Lord’s eyes keep on roaming throughout the earth, looking for those whose hearts completely belong to him, so that he may strongly support them.”

Where the eyes of our hearts are pointed to is where our hearts and treasures reside. We ought to say wholeheartedly, “Lord, I never seek anything for myself. All my hope, all my desire is nowhere but inside you.”

Matthew

6:24 “No one can serve two masters, because either he will hate one and love the other, or be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and riches!”

This is what Jesus clearly stated. Are we truly serving the Lord? Or, are we serving this world that our eyes can see? Do we seek the things from above? Or, are we looking for something in this world? We cannot serve both these things at the same time. It will displease the Lord if we treat these two the same way.

As we can see in the Old Testament, a man called Lot chose the way that disappointed the Lord. Although he was certainly a believer of the Lord, he sought worldly things, pursued a life of ease and pleasure and chose to go the way of his own. He did not discern the right and the wrong: he went to the city of Sodom, compromised with the world and committed a sin, which made him dismayed. Contrarily, Abraham was a man who never stopped looking up to the Lord, but kept walking toward Him. Consequently, although he never had wealth, he lived like a king in his heart and he walked in the abundant blessings of the Lord throughout his life.

Genesis

18:17 “Should I hide from Abraham what I’m about to do,” the Lord asked.

Doesn’t it sound a little strange? These are the words that God Almighty, who know all things spoke to an insignificant human. Here, the Lord gave Abraham the light and revealed all His plans. It is an interesting contrast—Lot and Abraham, isn’t it?

Who do we look like? Do we always keep in our mind the Lord’s will as we continue to move forward? We

want to exclaim like David, “there is nothing I seek for myself. You are the only one I love on this ground. I do not want anything for myself. Lord, may you alone be revealed outwardly.” Just like the Lord Himself is the light, if we can walk in the light and bear eternal fruit, it will be a wonderful blessing.

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