

October 16th, 2022

I Am A Servant

(Week 3)- “Gotta Serve Somebody”

A long time ago, in a galaxy far far away... Actually, let me start over, back when I was in college... (it only feels like a long time ago in a galaxy far far away). A long time ago, 43 years ago, a song by the title “Gotta serve Somebody” played over and over again on the radio, and throughout the dorms.

You’re going to have to serve somebody
Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord
But you’re going to have to serve somebody

Anyone recognize the singer / songwriter? (Bob Dylan)

This song marked a significant shift in Dylan’s life when he turned toward Christianity.

“Gotta Serve Somebody” won the **Grammy Award for Best Rock Male Vocal Performance** that year. Dylan!? Best voice!? Really!? That’s ironic!

The Christian worldview of the album alienated many of Dylan’s fans, including John Lennon. He wrote a mocking rebuttal song called “Serve Yourself”.

This isn’t just a debate between Dylan and Lennon.

QUESTION: What is meaningful life all about?
Is it about serving God or is it about serving ourselves?
Which way of living is truly freeing and satisfying?

Adam and Eve got it wrong and the world has been divided ever since.

Spirituality is at the center of this controversy, and the concepts are quite deep. For a short message like this one, the only way I know how to explain this is to dive into the deep end of the pool. Let’s dive in.

I. There are two MASTERS in this WORLD

In this series we’ve been talking about “serving”. When we are talking about serving, in our culture, the thoughts are vastly different than when the Apostles talked about

serving. They talked about serving from the standpoint of Kings, and subjects, Masters and slaves.

There are two spiritual kingdoms in this world. One is an evil and dark spiritual kingdom. It, like its master, is in rebellion. There is also God's Kingdom on this earth. At first it was a nation to reveal himself, and introduce his Son. Then it was no longer national, but a global Kingdom of heaven, Jesus established when he came, bringing the first picture, to a greater spiritual fulfillment. Jesus is the King of kings, and the rightful Master. The dark master is an interloper, a usurper.

This is my worldview and you may not believe it. But I hope you will hear me out because I hold this worldview because it was Jesus' worldview. Jesus taught and believed this and changed the world. He has a greater following than any other human being that ever lived. So, don't just throw this out without thinking it through.

Jesus didn't just teach about the kingdoms. He predicted his own death, explained why he was going to die the way he did, and he predicted his resurrection. He did all this to rescue us from a life of rebellion that refuses to live a life that is all about serving God.

Here is another summary statement about this rebellion, and our rescue.

Ephesians 2:1–3 (NIV) As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

Do you see the rebel ruler here?

the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

Do you see the way he rules?

- He rules in *the “disobedient”* (2:2) whether they know it or not.
- **The devil is at work in us while we are disobedient.**
- It is the way he reigns over the kingdom of darkness.
- **How does he do this? Paul, tells us.**

All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

The devil uses our own desires against us!

- **This is SURPRISING to most people.**

- Most people don't realize that they should NOT fully trust their desires as a guide to life.
- The world says, let your desires guide you. That is terrible advice.

We learn this from Jesus' teaching and his life!

- Jesus had desires, however, his desires were never sinful.
- Nevertheless.... even JESUS, refused to trust even his untainted desires as life's guide. (let that sink in).
- Jesus looked to the will of his father as his reliable guide, and so he always prayed to seek his father's desires, and prayed
- ***Holy and Sinless Jesus prayed: "not my will but your will be done."***

So, how does Satan work our desires against us? Perhaps an illustration, a mini parable will help explain this.

The kingdom of darkness is like A PLEASURE CRUISE SHIP!

The Captain of the ship presents his domain as if it is this big and beautiful party boat. He surprises his guests with an inviting smile, "*Yah, on this boat you can do whatever you want. Eat, drink, and be merry! Help yourself at the bar; it's all free! If you want to play soccer in the dining room, go for it! If you break the lamps don't worry about it! Have fun!*

What the passengers don't know is something the Captain of that ship DOES know and he's NOT telling. He knows that he is the **captain of a sinking ship [picture]**. He is a liar! He only sounds like he's a really nice guy, but don't be fooled. He doesn't care what you do on his ship because everything in his domain is going down to the depths. **He's not nice. He is hateful, and angry.** He's angry because he's going down. So, he wants to get back at God by taking as many of us down with him as he can! And in taking us down, we take others down. It's how his power and pleasure grows even while it is short lived!

JESUS, HOWEVER, presents his kingdom as a completely different kind of SHIP! If you'll excuse the pun, he presents us with **The "FellowSHIP" . . .of Followers!** Followers follow him. Jesus SERVED by humble obedience even to death! His followers are to follow his example. We deny ourselves, our dangerous desires and follow him!

His "FellowSHIP" is a "Rescue Ship"--Always has been, always will be. That is what the church is; a "FellowSHIP of Followers" and we all have SERVING jobs prepared in advance for us to do so that his church, the body of Christ, is effective on HIS ongoing rescue mission!!

***Colossians 1:13 (NIV)** For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,*

Here's the Good News in one short sentence.

2 Corinthians 5:15 (NIV) And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

We no longer live for ourselves.

We don't live to serve ourselves.

We do what OUR MASTER wants!

Make no mistakes about it.

I. There are two MASTERS in this WORLD

II. ONLY ONE is worth SERVING

Jesus Christ is not only King of kings, he is the Good Shepherd who gave his life as a ransom for us, to rescue us, and others who are on the sinking ship!

QUESTION:

Do you want to be a servant or do you want to be a servant?

"That's your only option."

You might think, *"That's no option at all"*.

"Actually it is the greatest option available to you, and here's why. Your only option is to be a SLAVE to SIN and darkness, and that master is a tyrant bent on destroying you, OR become a servant of the King of kings, our savior who is the GOOD SHEPHERD! There is no middle ground.

Romans 6:16 (NIV) Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Romans 6:17 (NIV) But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

PLAY AGAIN "Gotta Serve Somebody" !

You will be slaves to whatever and whoever you offer yourselves to serve.

I. There are two MASTERS in this WORLD

II. ONLY ONE is worth SERVING

III. Servants OBEY

OBEDIENCE is our primary objective! OBEDIENCE is what servants do! We were designed for this! Loving, and Serving God! Serving is how we honor our Lord and Savior!

- You gotta serve somebody, who have you been serving? What's your next step?

- What have you offered yourself to in disobedience? **Whether you knew it or not your disobedience was serving the wrong master!**
- The King commands repentance, and it is a saving COMMAND.

My Lord Jesus Christ,
I humble myself and bow my knee before you. I worship and serve you as my Lord and Savior. I am your servant. I offer myself to you. I will serve, honor, and obey you.
“Here am I, send me.” Amen!

Talk It Over

I AM A SERVANT
(Week 3)

“Gotta Serve Somebody”

SMALL TALK

1. What was one of the best gifts you received as a child? What made it so special for you?

VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Ephesians 2:1-10.** What does it mean to be “dead in sin” (2:1) and “objects of wrath” (2:3)? What caused this (2:2-3)?
3. Who is the “ruler of the kingdom of the air” (2:2; see also 6:12; and John. 8:44; 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). How can Paul say we “followed” him if we didn’t even believe in him at the time?
4. What methods does this dark rebel prince use to accomplish his purposes? (see Genesis 3:1-15; 1 John 3:8)
5. **READ Colossians 1:13 and 2 Corinthians 5:15.** In what ways are these good summary statements for Ephesians 2:1-10.

GETTING PERSONAL

6. Spiritually, did you feel more “dead” (Ephesians 2:1) or “alive” (Ephesians 2:5) this past week? Why?
7. What has God prepared for you to do? (Ephesians 2:10)

MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)

8. VVCC's 5 core statements are listed below. How does # 4 come from # 1?

1. Love God Wholeheartedly
2. Do First Things First
3. Don't Do Life Alone
4. Saved People Serve People
5. Followers Say, Follow Me!