

Woman's Bible Study
1Peter 4:11b&c, April 26th, 2023
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1Peter 4:11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

A few weeks ago, we began looking at this verse and concentrated on the Apostle's admonition to be careful of the content of our words, *Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God*. No matter what particular gifts we may use to serve one another, our speech needs to represent the Word correctly. We are to be mindful of sharing words of encouragement, words of compassion, and words of Truth.

In the next section of verse 11, Peter now expands on serving – how we are to serve, and why we are to serve. ***Whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies;***

What often happens when we seek to serve in our own strength?

The serving mentioned here is that of attending to another's needs as a friend, or in ministry in specific roles in the church. Serving takes time, commitment, and energy; it often affects our personal life, finances, and requires decisions to put aside our wants and schedules to meet the needs of others. If you are involved in serving, you recognize that a large part of your life is spent in ministry – preparing, praying, and encouraging others. My own opinion is if you are bored, you're not serving enough. Pull out a piece of paper and write an encouraging note; pick up your phone and share encouraging words. If you are lonely, you are not looking for opportunities to serve. If you become discouraged, disappointed, or depressed, serve more – get involved in people's lives for the sake of encouraging others. When we are consumed with serving to benefit others, we will not have the time to concentrate on ourselves, our feelings, etc.

How do we serve?

By the strength which God supplies. God blesses each of His children with gifts to be used for Him. Our talents, abilities, strength, compassion, etc., are not given to us to make us feel good about ourselves, instead we use these things to encourage others in the faith. All we are and have, is for God's glory.

Romans 12:6-8 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who

exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

God uses us; however we must be careful to remember **He** is the author of all good things. Anytime we are able to help, encourage, or serve, it is not to be for personal accolades. It is for His praise alone.

“[Of the ability which God giveth] Perhaps the ministering here may refer to the care of the poor, and the ability is the quantum of means which God may have placed in their hands; and they are to minister this as coming immediately from God, and lead the minds of the poor to consider Him as their benefactor, that He in all things may be glorified through Christ Jesus. This is implied in the essence of any charitable act: the actor is not the author, God is the author; and the poor man should be taught to consider Him as his immediate benefactor. Those who give any thing as from themselves, rob God; for to Him the praise for all good, and the dominion over all men and things, belong for ever and ever. Adam Clarke’s Commentary

***We should serve in humility, knowing it is God’s work through us;
we should serve diligently, knowing it is God’s desire for us.***

Matthew Poole’s Commentary says, *“Let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; i.e. not remissly and coldly, but diligently and strenuously, and with his might, as far as God enables him; this being to do it faithfully, which is especially required in a steward, 1Corinthians 4:2 In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy”*.

Consider. We serve in God’s strength, using the gifts He has given to each of us. We are to be found trustworthy in being good stewards of the abilities we have. Therefore, we do not hide our talents in the closet but rather, we need to be sensitive to the areas where we can be helpful. In this way, the truths of the Gospel are manifest in our lives as a witness to those around us.

Why do you serve? What is your motivation?

There are some who are not believers, who serve others. But they get their rewards in full here on earth by men. The motivation is to do something good yet, invariably they gain something. A special interest they have gets attention, their financial donations offer a tax benefit, or perhaps they get support from a foundation they choose to help. Something or someone other than God is elevated.

Matthew 6:1-2 *“Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.*

There's lots of reasons people serve in the church. We need to be careful even when serving in the church body because our motivation may be for self. Some give of their time, energy, and resources because it is expected, and others may be watching. Some serve because it gives them a sense of belonging. Unfortunately, recognition, titles, popularity, and importance can be motivators in serving in a church body. But what if no one encouraged you; what if no one recognized your hard work; what if you felt unsupported and were even discouraged by others' lack of response – would you keep serving? **Do you serve when it means sacrificing your time, or when it gets difficult?**

As a side note, we should try to show our appreciation for those who work hard to serve us so this is not a license to ignore those who serve diligently; but appreciation should never be expected. You should squelch those feelings of hurt when your efforts go unnoticed.

Consider what Christ did for us. He came to serve – not for His own benefit, but for the glory of His Father. He was ignored; He was not appreciated. He never belonged, in fact he had nowhere to even lay His head. *Matthew 8:20 Jesus *said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head. "He was of lowly birth (Luke 2:7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn). His ministry was challenged, certainly not supported (Mark 11:27-33); He was threatened, and ridiculed, beaten, and crucified. Yet, even while dying on the cross, He served – asking forgiveness for those who sinned and proclaiming salvation to one of the criminals crucified with Him.*

Are you self-serving or serving God? Do your thoughts center more on how you feel or what you can do to encourage others? If you are serving self, you are likely to receive earthly benefits; serving for God's glory will prove your eternal birth right.

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

We serve ***so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.***

Remember the account written for us in Mark, of James and John asking who would sit on Jesus' right and left in glory. They were all about themselves, seeking their own benefit. Jesus' reply to them is recorded in *Mark 10:42-45.*

Calling them to Himself, Jesus *said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. "But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Whatever you do is to be done for God's glory. The last part of 1Peter 4:11 reads, ***Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.***

Revelation 5:12-13 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."

Ephesians 3:20-21 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Romans 11:36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Jude 1:25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Hebrews 13:20-21 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Think of the words associated with Christ – glory and dominion. There is none other who can rightly claim honor, praise, and worship. There is none other who has power and strength over all creation.

Amen. Literally, this is a trustworthy statement.

***Speak His Truths,
serve in His strength,
all for His glory.***