

Ephesians Chapter 6
Week 5, v. 7-9

Eph 6:7 With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men,

Eph 6:7 (NIV) Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men,

Eph 6:7 (TCNT) Give your service heartily and cheerfully, as working for the Master and not for men;

Giving service <doouleuo> involuntary or voluntarily being in the position of service to another. We are to do this with good will.

Good will <eunoia> kindness; euphemistically, conjugal duty:--benevolence, good will.

We are to serve with an attitude of kindness, compassion and generosity, without seeking personal profit but seeking only the profit of honoring God. The NIV translation says to serve wholeheartedly as if you are serving God. **How does this attitude make it easier to serve with the right heart?**

Family bible notes – kind and cheerful readiness

Adam Clarke's Commentary – do not take up your service as a cross, or bear it as a burden, but take it as coming in the order of God's providence, and a thing that is pleasing to Him.

When you serve others is your focus on God or on what others think or even on the accolades you might get? Do you view service as a burden or an opportunity to please your heavenly Father? Who orders the circumstances of your life? Remembering that God is in control, helps us to serve patiently and submissively even under situations that seem difficult. What types of things affect our serving one another?

Col 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men;

1Co 10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Eph 6:8 knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

What does it mean to know something? According to the Encarta English Dictionary it means to have information, to be certain about something, to believe firmly in the truth of something, to be aware of something, to have a thorough understanding of something through experience or study, to be familiar with something or someone. The example of 'knowing something backwards and forwards' is given in this definition.

Have you heard the saying "I know it like the back of my hand"? It means to be very familiar with something and is based on the idea that you know what your own hand is like very well.

Verse 8 goes back to our motivation for serving to the best of our ability. If our motivation is to receive rewards here on earth we will be sorely disappointed at one time or another. God sees all we do and asks us to trust that He will bless our efforts as we serve. **Do you know this? Do you believe this?**

Ro 2:6-7 [God] who WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;

Do you remember having awards ceremonies in school? Special recognition was handed out at various times either for academics or sports. Did you ever feel that you were overlooked or skipped over, perhaps unnoticed? If you have worked at a career, this also frequently happens – you do all the footwork and someone else gets the credit. Even in our church community many, many serve wholeheartedly spending countless hours of time and energy without formal recognition. **Is this okay?** Absolutely! Remember Whom we are serving and why. God sees all we do – good and bad – and will give to us what we rightly deserve. He will not overlook anything.

How is this truth an encouragement to all of us and even a comfort to those who may be discouraged? What gives you more pleasure – serving men for accolades and recognition in the present or serving God simply because you love Him? Where are you building treasure?

The phrase "whatsoever good thing" in Eph 6:8 carries the meaning of being a benefit. The word benefit means that there is an advantage to something or someone. This thought affects all areas of our lives. In other words, we can ask ourselves, **'Is what I am about to say or do going to benefit others?'** Think about

this: every action and thought should move my relationship with Christ forward and encourage others' relationship with Christ to move forward.

Notice that serving requires action. Look again at Ephesians chapter 4 and 5. These preceding chapters are full of action, challenging us to *walk* in a manner that is worthy of our connection to Christ, encouraging us to be active in our part as a body of believers. Our connection to a church family is vital in serving the way God wants us to serve – many parts making up one whole. **What's missing when someone says that their relationship with God is private and they don't have time or don't need to be connected to a body of believers?**

Whether we are a servant in the sense of being made to do something without a choice or whether we are free to choose to where we serve, all should be done with the same focus: serving the Lord and knowing that He sees all and will reward all. **How would this attitude promote Truth and influence others' towards the gospel?** Look back at last week's study – they would see a consistency and sincerity in our actions and service.

Do we seek to increase our currency in heaven or in the world?

Mat 5:12a "Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great,"

It is in this way that religion would make the evils of life tolerable, by teaching those who are oppressed to bear their trials in a patient spirit, and to look forward to the future world of reward, Albert Barnes' NT Commentary

Eph 6:9 And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

In verses 5-8 Paul challenged servants to have the right attitude. They were to be obedient, working with a heart that serves Christ. Not just so it looks good, but with sincerity knowing that it is God who will recognize our service towards Him. Now, in verse 9, Paul continues his thought and moves on to address the attitudes of those who are in authority over servants.

The word 'masters' designates someone who is in authority over another. We all have someone in authority over us. God is the ultimate supreme ruler and in control of everything. In the work force, there are people who are in charge of others, in a marriage, a husband is in charge of his family, as a parent, you have been given charge over your children. Even in volunteer work or ministry, there are people who

need to make decisions for others to follow. In government, we are to obey the laws set before us.

Those in authority are to rule with the same attitude as if they were serving Christ, remembering that God is their Master. Just as the servant was told to serve in obedience with a focus on God and for the sake of His love, someone who is in authority should rule with that same heart. **Have you been under the charge of someone who usurps their authority?** God does not distinguish between rank and neither should we. None of us has the right to treat another in a way that is threatening or demeaning.

What is the response of others towards someone who rules with a demanding attitude? Is there a difference between forcing someone to do something and asking someone to do something? Which scenario are you more likely to respond positively?

Eph 6:9 says 'give up threatening'. Threatening <apeile> menacing. A menace is a nuisance – *a constant source of trouble and annoyance*, a threatening quality, feeling, or tone. This includes threatening acts, gestures or speech, i.e. to behave or speak in a way that threatens injury or harm.

Have you ever threatened someone to try to get them to do something? What is the motivation behind your threats? Does Christ rank us in order of importance?

In everything we do, whether it be cleaning a public restroom or the architect who designs a multi-million dollar building, we are all the same in one significant respect. Christ died for each of us, a sacrificial, painful, humiliating death. He doesn't desire one of us to be saved over another; He doesn't sorrow less for one who rejects Him over another.

Verse 9 tells us He shows no partiality. This means He has no favorites. **Is this a difficult concept for us to grasp? Why? Does the 'world' show partiality?**

Ro 2:11 For there is no partiality with God.

We cannot buy God's favor. **Why is this an important reminder? Can you earn your way up the ladder to heaven? How does this truth affect your thoughts and actions towards others?**

Do the same things; be governed by the same supreme regard to God which is inculcated on servants, and manifest the same kind, benevolent, and cheerful readiness to please God in your conduct towards them,

which they are required to manifest in their conduct towards you. Forbearing threatening; avoiding it, and seeking to win them to the love and service of God. They are your brethren, children of the same heavenly Father, redeemed by the same almighty Saviour, and you must stand with them before the same impartial Judge. Neither is there respect of persons with him; you will not be favored because you are masters., nor they less favored because they are servants. Your more elevated position increases your responsibility, and if you do not possess and manifest the spirit of Christ, will increase your condemnation. Masters are bound to be servants of Christ, doing his will from the heart, and manifesting towards their servants his spirit; doing to them in all things as, under a change of circumstances, they ought to wish their servants to do to them; knowing that Christ requires this, and that they are both to stand before him in judgment, and to receive for eternity, not according to their outward condition, but according to their character and conduct. Family Bible Notes

Think about the way you communicate towards others. **Is it with words that encourage confidence or words that are harsh? Do you use your position to oppress or to build-up?**

Jesus is our Master. He protects, He teaches, He guides, He even disciplines out of love. Jesus is also our greatest example of a Servant. He served His Father with obedience and humility; He loved us even though we were undeserving.

John 13:13-14 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for [so] I am. "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

Eph 6:9 gives those in charge a command to treat those they are over with the same attitude and service expected from them in Eph 6:5-7. **Why?** Because 1) their Master in heaven is the same and 2) God does not show preference to anyone because of their position.

Job 31:13-15 "If I have despised the claim of my male or female slaves When they filed a complaint against me, What then could I do when God arises, And when He calls me to account, what will I answer Him? "Did not He who made me in the womb make him, And the same one fashion us in the womb?

Luke 6:31 "And just as you want people to treat you, treat them in the same way. This verse and its cross reference in Matt 7:12 are commonly referred to as 'The Golden Rule'.

What do you expect of others? Act in the same way towards them. **Do you expect injustice?** If not, take heed that you are just. **How do you feel when people are unkind to you or show partiality?** Be careful to act with consideration towards others not being hurtful or showing favoritism. **In what situations can we easily fall into**

giving special treatment or advantages to others while discriminating towards someone else?

Application

Read Ephesians Chapter six in its entirety. Go back and read Ephesians 6:7-9 again.

Verse 7 says we are to offer our service with good will. What does this mean?

Who's profit are we to seek when we serve?

In what areas and whom do you serve – at home, at work, at church, in the community?

Do you see your service as an opportunity or as a burden?
What is reflected in your attitude?

Read Col 3:23 and 1Cor 10:31. What do these verses say?

What is the promise given to us in Eph 6:8?

Read Rom 2:6-7. What is your motivation for serving – rewards on earth or in heaven? Are you looking to benefit yourself or others?
How can your attitude while serving encourage those around you to serve with the right heart also?

Our area of service may not look the same as someone else. The important thing is that we are serving, putting others before ourselves, sacrificially giving of our time, efforts and resources to benefit the body of Christ. Read Mat 5:12a.

There is a warning in Eph 6:9 to those who are in charge. If you have others that you are leading – perhaps children, employees, even in ministry – you are to lead with an attitude of serving the Lord. With what attitude are you not to lead?

What does it mean to be threatening?

Read Rom 2:11. What does this verse say?

Think of how you communicate to others. Do you build-up or tear down? Do you encourage confidence in others' efforts? We've all been 'knocked-down' unfortunately. What does that do to your confidence in using your gifts to serve?

Look up and read John 13:13-14. Who's example are we to follow when serving?

Read Luke 6:31. What is your response to this verse?

Consider how God would have you respond to His truths in this section of scripture. Is there a change you need to make, something you need to be more aware of?

How will you specifically apply the truths in Ephesians 6:7-9?