

“Deacons of Christ”

Exodus 18

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:10 “As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

Introduction:

The last day of school is really exciting for school kids and I must admit it still has charm for me as I watch them anticipate and with that first day sleep in and watch their excitement as they wake up.

Each summer as is usual our kids go to grandma and grandpa’s house. The first couple of times I was convinced how great that was for them to go and spend time with them.

But then reality set in. All those chores that they do... Now I had to do. Pick up sticks in the yard, which is a full time job, take out the trash, mow the grass weed eat and a hundred other things.

When the load is spread out its manageable. But it is impossible for any one person.

I would like to begin today with a list of service items that we must do around here on a continual basis for our work to get done.

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Education | 25. Transportation | 45. Encouragement |
| 2. Grounds | 26. VBS | 46. Nursery work |
| 3. Building maintenance | 27. Community Outreach | 47. Singles work |
| 4. Visitation | 28. Bible Camp | 48. Newel Post |
| 5. Worship arrangements | 29. Library | 49. Snow Shoveling |
| 6. Youth Rally’s | 30. Admin | 50. Class teachers |
| 7. Finance (Bookkeeper) | -Sexual abuse | 51. Preparing kids for Scripture reading |
| 8. Missions | -Insurance | 52. Wednesday scripture |
| 9. World Bible School | -Corporation | 53. Song leaders |
| 10. Leadership training | -Pay bills | 54. Table talks |
| 11. Van Maintenance | -Sort mail | 55. Shepherding |
| 12. Web Master | 31. Spiritual Growth | 56. Prayer leaders |
| 13. Sound and video | 32. Preaching | 57. Art work / bulletin board |
| 14. Fellowship | 33. Attendance | 58. Cooking for sick |
| 15. Sick & shut ins | 34. Women’s Ministry | 59. Shoulders to cry on |
| 16. Benevolence | 35. Hospital visits | 60. Locking up building |
| 17. Bulletin | 36. Taking out the trash | 61. Postal mailings |
| 18. Phone Tree | 37. Secretary work | 62. Resolving problems |
| 19. Printing | 38. Making unleavened Bread | 63. Funerals |
| 20. Directory | 39. Preparing Lord’s Supper | 64. Baptisms |
| 21. Janitorial / cleaning | 40. Sending flowers | 65. Weddings |
| 22. Taping Sermons | 41. Power Point Anouc. | 66. Small groups |
| 23. Orientation (New) | 42. Widow care | 67. Emptying dehumidifiers |
| 24. Involvement | 43. Elderly care | 68. |
| | 44. Evangelism | |

I am sure glad that we have many folks helping out with all these things,....
Can you imagine if only one or a few people were trying to get all these things done?

We actually have an example of this in the scripture.
In Exodus Chapter 18, Moses was trying to do it all and his father-in-law Jethro told him in verse 18 that this wasn't good for him or Israel.....both would wear out!

SLED ILLUSTRATION:

Have David 175# get into a plastic snow sled and have Caden who is two years old and probably 25# try to pull David in the sled down the isle. He can't do it.

Now have all the children come and use a longer rope and they can do it together.

-You've heard the adage that many hands make the work lighter.

-SO, WE MUST CONTINUE TO SHARE THE LOAD.

Transitional Statement: Church, If your not involved in service to the Lord and you would like to be come see me or one of the elders or a deacon after church and we will take your name and get you something to do, so you to can help share the load.

SERVICE IS THE KEY WORD THIS MORNING!

Lesson:

I. The word "servant" in (NT) is the Greek word Diakonos

A. It basically means: One who executes the commands of another, a servant, attendant, or even a minister:

1. It is mentioned 30 times in the New Testament

II. And Jesus makes service a primary example for His disciples.

A. John 13:1-15

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. 2 During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, 4 got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself. 5 Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?" 7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter." 8 Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, " If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." 10 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed

needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean." 12 So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you."

- B. During this supper with His disciples, reflecting on the fact that His time on earth was short....He was moved to teach His disciples perhaps the greatest lesson for the continuance of His work on earth after He was gone.
1. I can only guess what the disciples must have thought as He took off His garment and laid it aside, then seeing Him take up a towel and some kind of water pan or pot.
 2. Can you imagine the Son of God with a pan of water at your feet taking on the role of a servant.
 - a. It was too much for Peter to bear and he said No way !
 - 1) Why?
 - 2) Peter must have thought that position demands privilege.
 - a) Which turns out to be an arch nemesis of Christian work.

Matthew 23:1-12

"1 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, 2 saying: " The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; 3 therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them. 4 " They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. 5 "But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. 6 "They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7 and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men. 8 "But do not be

called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. 9 "Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 "Do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ. 11 "But the greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted."

3. So, Jesus responds to Peter with a certain, powerful directness, by saying if Peter didn't let Jesus serve him that Peter would have no part of Him.

- a. It's pretty easy to understand that service is not an optional measure with Jesus.
- b. Not only is it not optional, but Jesus slams one of the greatest of all excuses not to serve....for Jesus served even the dirty rotten scoundrel that He knew was going to betray Him.

- 1). I've made a lot of excuses for different things in my life, but in view of our Lord on His hands and knees washing Judas' feet....I realize with all certainty that God doesn't except excuses for lack of service.

- 2) Remember how God even got angry with Moses for trying to excuse himself from going to Egypt to help deliver God's people out of slavery. Ex 4:14

C. So Jesus by example commands His position of humble service to all those who would be a part of Him.

1. The word humble here draws us to a very important thought.

- a. Sometimes willing service to others can have the wrong motivation.

- 1) Like putting on a show for others
- 2) Or doing it grudgingly because we feel we must.
- 3) Or because I think I can get something out of the deal.

2. But the Apostle Paul reminds us of one of the greatest truths about service.

- a. Galatians 5:13

13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

b. Love is found to be the root of service.

1) And yes Jesus washed Judas' feet with love in His heart.

D. Jesus' love wasn't just words...it was action or service

III. The truth is, Some folks just Want to be Served

A. With a "what can I get out of this" mentality

1. Or a sense of entitlement.

B. The mother of the sons of Zebedee wanted to elevate her sons to greatness with Jesus.

1. Matthew 20:20-28

"Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him. 21 And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left." 22 But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They said to Him, "We are able." 23 He said to them, "My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father.

2. Notice that her sons are there with her while she asks. This is not just a crazy thought of a mother who wants her children to make something of themselves, but they are desirous of their mothers request

a. They want a place of importance and authority

b. They are wanting a position to look down on others.

3. When the other disciples heard this they were upset,why? because the sons of Zebedee had a spiritual heart problem that needed corrected? No....because they had not thought of it themselves. Luke 22:24 records a dispute among the disciples all about which one of them was the greatest.

C. But here under the craziest of circumstances Jesus lays out the truth plain and simple for all to see.

1. Verses 24-28 says:

" 24 And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great

men exercise authority over them. 26 "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

2. Here, Jesus equates Greatness to service
3. To be first, Jesus says, you must become a slave
 - a. Can you hear the words of Jesus? "The first will be last and the last will be first" Matt 19:30

D. At the heart of being like Christ is the desire to serve.

1. You know the song we sing.... "Lord make me a servant...make me like you"

IV. God has made Divisions of Service

A. In our list we mentioned earlier, how do we figure out who does what

1. There are scriptural divisions of work given to us in scripture.
 - a. Some things are general in nature and anyone of us can do
 - b. Some things require shepherding and spiritual oversight and God has given those things for the elders to do.
 - c. And then there is the work of Deacons
 - 1) What do the Deacons do?.....
 - 2) What does the bible teach us about deacons?
2. Well lets go Back to the word Diakonos which we said earlier was mentioned 30 times in NT and means servant.
 - a. On two occasions Diakonos (servant) is translated Deacon
 - 1) Philippians 1:1 & 1 Timothy 3
 - 2) Why?

B. For the answer we are going to go to: Acts 6:1-6

"Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews

against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. 2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. 3 "Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. 4 "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 5 The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. 6 And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them."

1. Here we see a specific service of physical needs within the church and a group of men called out to perform the service.
 - a. Here the concept in scripture of the deacon is born. Deacons are merely servants like everyone of us should be, with the exception that they are given authority and even qualifications (1 Timothy 3) and recognized as leaders in the church.
2. Responsibilities of these men included:
 - a. Leading others in the physical work of the church.
 - b. Authority to spend church funds
 - c. Spiritual ability to solve problems, sometimes in a:
 - 1) public setting.
 - d. Physical labor
3. This is what Deacons are....Servants in positions of leadership
 - a. Set forth here by God in the same manner as other leaders of the church, by:
 - 1) Specific work is given
 - 2) Qualification are given
 - 3) An appointment is made

V. Currently we have four Deacons

- A. Ron BurkEducation
- B. Russ Dabney.....Building
- C. Edwin Eisle.....Treasure
- D. Jamie Sledd.....Special events.

1. These men are appointed to take the leadership responsibility in these areas.
2. They can use all the volunteers they can get ...because they can't do it alone.
3. These men do a great job and we thank each and every one of you

Conclusion:

-We are a growing church, working hard for the Lord and with that comes many areas of service for which we need additional deacons.

-The Elders are going to ask us here in the next week or so to select men who we believe are qualified to serve as Deacons.

-Church lets be praying about these selection

-With Service in mind, have you been hooked up in working for the Lord.....is Is your heart like the masters heart....SERVANT?

-Lets all be mindful that each of our areas of service are important and work at them with all our hearts.

-John 12:26 "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."