

“You will be rewarded for serving me.”

John 12:20-36

Is Serving Good for Me?

I find myself having to answer the “serving vs. selfish” question pretty often. Today’s Bible passage reminds me I am called to a servant life-style.

A. Serving creates a harvest of souls.

John 12:20-24, Some Greeks who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration ²¹ paid a visit to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee. They said, “Sir, we want to meet Jesus.” ²² Philip told Andrew about it, and they went together to ask Jesus. ²³ Jesus replied, “Now the time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory. ²⁴ I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives.

- Servants help people meet Jesus!
- Servants plant seeds of hope for eternity ... with “plentiful” harvest.

B. Serving puts us in a place of honor.

John 12:25-26, Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity. ²⁶ Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me.

- You get to pick what you love, care about, follow, and spend time with.
- What you love, care about, follow, and spend time with will honor you.

C. Serving is confirmed by God’s Word.

John 12:27-30, “Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But this is the very reason I came! ²⁸ Father, bring glory to your name.” Then a voice spoke from heaven, saying, “I have already brought glory to my name, and I will do so again.” ²⁹ When the crowd heard the voice, some thought it was thunder, while others declared an angel had spoken to him. ³⁰ Then Jesus told them, “The voice was for your benefit, not mine.”

- Serving can create deep distress ... which is answered by seeking God's glory.
- God will confirm your service through His Word ... spoken if necessary.

D. Servants have lots of questions.

John 12:31-34, The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out. ³² And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." ³³ He said this to indicate how he was going to die. ³⁴ The crowd responded, "We understood from Scripture that the Messiah would live forever. How can you say the Son of Man will die? Just who is this Son of Man, anyway?"

- The Cross was and continues to be provocative.
- Questions are an allowable part of serving.

E. Servants serve here and now.

John 12:35-36, Jesus replied, "My light will shine for you just a little longer. Walk in the light while you can, so the darkness will not overtake you. Those who walk in the darkness cannot see where they are going. ³⁶ Put your trust in the light while there is still time; then you will become children of the light." After saying these things, Jesus went away and was hidden from them.

- The alternative to serving is called "darkness."
- Bottom Line: Serving requires trusting Jesus as your personal light-giver.

MAIN POINT: God will honor your service to Him.

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, we submit ourselves as to You as servants of the light-giver, Jesus. We choose to love You, care about You, follow You, spend time with You, and seek glory for You alone. In Jesus' name, amen."