

SERVING GOD WITH KNOWLEDGE, ZEAL AND POWER

Background

The Great Commandment is to **love God** with all our heart, soul and mind (Mt 22:34-40). We are also expected to spiritually grow and mature, which means becoming **more like Jesus Christ** (Eph 4:13, 15; Rm 8:29).

QUESTION: How do we express love towards God? How do we become more like Jesus Christ?

ANSWER: A major way we express our love to God, and also become more like Jesus Christ, is through:

1) Learning the Word of God

AND

2) Obeying (applying) what we learn

(Scriptural support: Jn 14:15,21; I Jn 5:3)

Learning and applying the Word also leads to spiritual success and blessings (Joshua 1:7-8; Jm 1:22-25; Lk 6:46-49; Lk 8:19-21, 11:28; Mk 4:3-20). We need to remember that we are God's dearly loved children, and that He gave us His Word for our benefit (Jn 1:12, 3:16; Rm 8:14-17; Gal 3:26, 4:4-7; Eph 1:3-5, 2:4; I Jn 3:1-2, 16).

Our obedience (or service) should be total, not partial; sincere, not hypocritical; and done with pure heart motives, not for external appearances. Obeying the Word is a major way that we serve Him.

SERVING GOD

Our service to the Lord should be:

- 1) Based on Knowledge
- 2) Completed with Zeal
- 3) Accomplished with Power

1. KNOWLEDGE

It is important that we serve God based on knowledge (ie, the truth). We need knowledge of God and knowledge of God's Word.

Knowledge of God is important because:

- Knowledge of God is priceless (Rm 11:33).
- We are encouraged to increase our knowledge of God (2 Pet 3:18).
- A worthy life for the Lord includes growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ (Col 1:9-10).
- The better we know God, the more we will love and serve Him with zeal (Phil 3:8-11).

How do we increase our knowledge of God? Through: His Word, His Works, Prayer, Meditation, Worship, Others that know Him, etc.

Knowledge of the Word is important because:

- Without knowledge, zeal can be misdirected. We need zeal based on knowledge, and it is not good to have zeal without knowledge (Rm 10:1-2; Pv 19:2).
- We need knowledge of the truth, and truth comes from God's Word (Jn 17:17).
- Knowledge of the truth should lead to godliness (Titus 1:1), and knowledge of the truth sets us free (Jn 8:31-32).
- Knowledge is a treasure, and ultimately comes from God (Col 2:3).

How do we increase our knowledge of the Word? By spending time reading and studying it! To help learn the Word, it is good to regularly attend Sunday School class, Worship Services, and small group studies. But, it is also important to be personally in the Word on a daily basis. Just like physical food, we need spiritual food every day, not just on Sunday.

2. ZEAL

We should be serving the Lord with zeal (zeal = earnestly, with enthusiasm, fervently, "on fire"). Zeal for the Lord should be evidenced in our day-to-day lives, and should be evidenced in our corporate worship meetings. Following are some scriptural principles:

ZEAL (Cont.)

- We are told to "never be lacking in zeal, but to keep our spiritual fervor, serving the Lord" (Rm 12: 11).
- We are encouraged to excel in knowledge and zeal (2 Cor 8:7). The Apostle Paul and Apollos (Acts 18:24-28) are biblical examples of men who had great knowledge and great zeal.
- We do need zeal based on knowledge (Rm 10: 1-2; Pv 19:2), but we do not have to wait for a large amount of knowledge before we serve the Lord with zeal; also, we can serve with zeal even if we have a bad background (e.g., Samaritan woman at well, Jn 4:1-42).
- God has zeal (2 Kings 19:31; Is 9:7, 37:32; Ez 5:13).
- We should have zeal to help others, and zeal is contagious (2 Cor 9:2).
- Praying with zeal (earnestly) brings tremendous results (Jm 5:16-18).
- Our zeal should be focused on glorifying God (I Cor 10:31), loving God and people (Mt 22:34-40), and making disciples (Mt 28:19-20).

How can we consistently have zeal? By constantly "feeding the fire" of the Holy Spirit through prayer, faith, Word, worship, good works, keeping an eternal perspective, etc. Also, we need to avoid "pouring water on the fire" of the Holy Spirit via unconfessed, willful habitual sin (I Thes 5:19; Ps 66:18-20).

3. POWER

Our service should be accompanied by supernatural power. Following are some scriptural teachings:

- Jesus has ALL authority on heaven and earth (Mt 28:18); Christ is the head over EVERY power and authority (Col 2:10); and Jesus can delegate His power and authority to help our service be effective (Lk 9:1).
- Holy Spirit has been given to us as a tremendous source of power (Acts 1:8).
- God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline (2 Tim 1:7).

POWER (Cont.)

- The spiritual weapons we fight with are not weapons of this world, BUT have divine power to accomplish great spiritual results (2 Cor 10:4-5).
- Kingdom of God is not a matter of talk, but of POWER!! (I Cor 4:20). The gates of hell can not stand against the work of the church!! (Mt 16:18). We are to continue Jesus work of destroying the works of Satan and taking away his territory; Satan is a defeated foe! (Col 2:15; Lk 10:17-19; Jn 16:11; I Jn 3:8; Rev 20:10).
- We can do ALL things through Jesus who strengthens us !! (Phil 4:13).
- We are instructed to be strong in the Lord and in HIS mighty power (Eph 6:10).
- God's power working through us can accomplish more than we can ask or think (Eph 3:20).
- God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him (2 Pet 1:3).

How can we increase the power of God working in our lives and in our church?

- *Obsession with **GOD** and heavenly/eternal things, not things of the world (Col 3:1-3; Lk 14:15-20; I Jn 2:15-17; Ps 37:4)*
- *Prayer (Phil 4:6-7; Jm 5:16-18; 1 Thes 5:17)*
- *Holy Spirit (Eph 3:16, 5:18)*
- *Word (Col 3:16)*
- *Love (Jn 13:34-35; I Cor 13; I Jn 4)*
- *Faith (Heb 11)*
- *Armor of God (Eph 6:10-17)*
- *Unity (Jn 17:20-23)*

Note: How can we develop improved relationships and unity in the body? Study and put into practice Col 3:12-17; Eph 4:29-5:2 and Romans 12.