

*From Where I Sit . . .*

## **"THE JOY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE"**

Christianity must embody the principle of service for our Lord came to minister unto mankind: Matthew 20:28 *"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."* (Also see Luke 22:25-27). From the Household of Onesiphorus who ministered to Paul in Ephesus and Rome (2 Tim. 1:15-16, 18) to the Household of Stephanos who were addicted to "the ministry" or service of the saints (1 Cor 16:15) time and again, the New Testament is filled with the principle of service.

It's an honor to be called upon to serve God's people in any capacity: Psalms 84:10 *"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."*

Peter actually treats ministering (from diakoneo) and stewardship (from oikonomos -- steward, servant, manager for someone else) as a gift: 1 Peter 4:10-11 *"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."*

The word "gift" "charisma" refers to special abilities we have spiritually by the grace of God, whether of non-miraculous qualifications or of the miraculous faculty. The context here is non-miraculous as it is in Romans 12:6-8 *"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity (sincerity); he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."*

One of the characteristics which every Christian should cultivate is that of spontaneous participation in some phases of the services in the kingdom of God. There is great joy in serving others, and honor is bestowed on certain individuals in the Bible who were servants: Matthew 4:11, *"Ministering angels;"* Matthew 8:15, Peter's mother-in-law; Matthew 20:28 concerning our Lord's ministry; John 12:2 of Martha's serving supper; Acts 6:2 of the Apostles not leaving the Word of God to serve tables so special servants were appointed; 1 Timothy 4:6, Timothy was to be a good "minister" of Christ.

We all have different abilities, talents, gifts from God that should be channeled to helping others. We sing: *"Is your life a channel of blessing? Is the love of God flowing through you?"* and we end it with the chorus: *"Make me a channel of blessing today, Make me a channel of blessing, I pray. My life possessing; My service blessing; Make me a channel of blessing today."*

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