

Women & More

In His Majesty's Service

Lesson 4: **September 24, 2015**—*authority*

Who was more in the service of His Majesty than Jesus? Who devoted to and petitioned to and submitted to His Majesty more than Christ? Alone and with people—on a mountain, in the garden, on a sea, in a desert, and in the temple—who was more zealous in His Majesty's service? We've only to look at Christ's service to see a notable thing: Jesus in John 7:38 says, "*For I have come down from heaven **not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.***" Jesus came down from heaven to do His Majesty's will—giving up his own will—to be in service. In service, it is *Who* we are in service to that will make all the difference!

In fulfilling His Majesty's Service, Jesus girded the "towel of service" to wash his disciples' feet, in preparation to receive the serviceable "loin cloth" tied around him, and die...for us. Jesus completed his service to His Majesty as Acts 4:27-28 records ("your" and "you" refer to His Majesty): "*Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against **your** holy servant Jesus, whom **you** anointed. 28They did what **your** power and will had decided beforehand should happen.*" And in Revelation 1:13 John sees Jesus with the "golden sash" of royalty wrapped around His chest: His Majesty—Jesus Christ! We ask the Father to help us **serve** Him in Acts 4:29-30 "*Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable **your** servants (us) to speak **your** word with great boldness. 30Stretch out **your** hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders **through the name of your** holy servant Jesus.*"

Servants of the Living God! We who have signed up under His superintendence and rule, we come and we go at His summons and command. And the length and breadth of our service will be at His divine discretion and direction. ***Servants under the awesome authority of the Almighty:*** That is what we are! His Majesty has the authority to command our service! *Who Will Alter Course?*

"After years of distinguished service, a Navy Captain was given his own ship. How proud he was! It was a life-long dream come true!

"One stormy night, the Captain was on duty as the ship plowed through the seas. Off the port side he spotted a strange light closing rapidly. Immediately he ordered the message flashed to the unidentified craft: 'Alter your course 10 degrees to the south.' Just as quick the reply came, 'Alter your course 10 degrees to the north.'

"Determined that HIS ship would be second to no other, the Captain snapped out the order: 'Alter the course 10 degrees—I am the CAPTAIN!' The response beamed back, 'Alter your course—I am Seaman Third Class Jones.'

“Infuriated, the Captain grabbed the signal light and fired off, ‘Alter course, I am a battleship.’ The reply came back, ‘Alter your course, I am a lighthouse.’”

Jesus is our Light and our Lighthouse! We speak of receiving Jesus Christ as Savior **and Lord**—what does that mean? Aren't they the same? The answer is yes, because in the moment that we repent and receive Christ's atoning sacrificial service to His Majesty for us, we submit to His cleansing and claim Him as the one who rules: Lord, Master and the Authority in our lives. Our call to salvation included our call to service! And *Women & More* is about identifying our 'call'—service—to Him and carrying it out through our 'walk.'

As women of God, our service of love and devotion to His Majesty will extend throughout eternity. But a particular call and service to Him on this earth may end at God's direction, because he is the author of the length and breadth of our service. Charles Spurgeon affirms Scripture's counsel to us **not to abandon the 'call'**: “Continue thy service under all changes...It is when we are in His work that we may reckon upon His smile....let our walk and actions be consistent with our high dignity.” Romans 11:29 “...For God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.” So, even though we are not to abandon our 'call,' God may have a plan to move us on in ways we cannot possibly foresee.

♥On Saturday evening, July 10, 2010, a faithful member of our choir, and one who regularly attended the Encouragers Sunday school class, went for a ride on the back of a friend's motorcycle and died abruptly as a result of an out-of-control bike and a helmet-less fall on the pavement in Jay, Oklahoma. Her service to her God on this earth had ended that day. Talk about unexpected; talk about tragic, but talk about where Dorothy is today!

♥The very next morning, Sunday, July 11, struggling with decreasing attendance and a general lack of desire for most to just get up and come to Sunday school, I had already prayed many prayers to God about what to do to effectively teach the Jr. and Sr. girls' class—knowing well that I was not to abdicate the 'call' that God had given me three years earlier.

After a sermon on James 1:5 about asking God for wisdom in the midst of a situation, I knelt at the altar and asked for wisdom to know how to reach these girls anew and build the class again. Directly after the service, one of our men in leadership asked to speak with me: He said they would find another teacher for the girls—because of a conflict one had with me over a rebuke. Talk about surprise; talk about hurt, but please talk about an answer from the Lord! Wow!

There are times when wisdom forces us to swallow our pride—we shouldn't have had anyway—and submit to something grander and some *One* more powerful than ourselves. We're to be women serving under God's authority...that's what our faith demands. Paul's counsel in a few verses:

1 Corinthians 7:17 "...each one should retain the place in life that **the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him**. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches."

A warning in Galatians 1:10 "Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ."

And in Philippians 2:13 "...it is **God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose**."

We are placed on this earth for special assignment—saved to serve God and others! Rick Warren in *The Purpose Driven Life* says, "God has a ministry for you in his church and a mission for you in the world. Maturity (discipleship/fellowship...mine.) is for ministry. We grow up in order to give out. And what you are able to do, God wants you to do." Warren outlines a concept he calls SHAPE and forms an acrostic to define with what we are to serve:

S — Spiritual gifts
H — heart for God (our passion for God)
A — abilities (natural talents)
P — personality
E —experience

Webster's *New American Dictionary* defines **serve** 1 : to work as a servant 2 : **to render obedience and worship to God**. It goes on to describe **serve** as:

3: to comply with the commands or demands of
 4: to work through or perform a term of service 5: put in
 6: to be of use 7: benefit 8: to prove adequate or satisfactory for
 9: to make ready and pass out 10: to furnish or supply with something
 11: to wait on 12: to treat or act toward in a specified way

Service is defined as 1: the occupation of a servant 2: help, benefit 3: **a meeting for worship**—Yes! And **serviceable** means prepared for service!

For some, service may include dying a martyr's death! But certainly for all of us to be "*a living sacrifice...is our reasonable service.*" *His Majesty* is the authority in our lives if we have made him Lord, and he will exercise his authority for kingdom results and benefits, and for glory to Himself. Psalm 8:1 and 9 both say, "**O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!** You have set your glory above the heavens." V 9: "**O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!**" Let us make no mistake: We are under heaven's rule and authority!

The following are references in Scripture to being His Majesty's—God's—**servant** (we won't have room or time to examine **servants** plural):

- 1 Samuel 3:10 "Speak, for **your servant** is listening"
- Job 1:8 "Have you considered **my servant** Job?"
- Psalm 19:11 "By them is **your servant** warned"
- Psalm 19:13 "Keep **your servant** from willful sins"
- Psalm 31:16 "Let your face shine on **your servant**"
- Psalm 89:3 "I have sworn to David **my servant**"
- Isaiah 41:8 "But you, O Israel, **my servant**"
- Isaiah 49:3 "He said to me, 'You are **my servant**'"
- Zechariah 3:8 (of Jesus) "going to bring **my servant**, the Branch"
- Matthew 20:26 "great among you must be **your servant**"
- Matthew 24:45 "who then is the **faithful and wise servant**?"

Answer in verse 46: *"It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns."*

- Matthew 25:21 "Well done, **good and faithful servant!**"
- Luke 1:38** "I am the **Lord's servant**, Mary answered."
- John 12:26 "...and where I am, **my servant** also will be."
- Romans 1:1 "**a servant** of Christ Jesus, called"
- Romans 13:4 "For he (one in authority) is **God's servant** to do you good"
- Philippians 2:7 (of Jesus) "taking the very **nature of a servant**"

All of God's people are known in Revelation as **His servants** described that way at least 11 times (e.g. 2:20; 7:3; 22:3)—and it is a beautiful title of honor for God's people. Is there any question left about whether each believer is called to be a servant in His Majesty's Service? Let's venture to another place in servant-hood, and thrill to look at a couple of literal servants in God's word:

→ 2 Kings 5 recounts a **young Jewish captive servant girl** in the home of the Aramean General Naaman, who served the King at Aram and was afflicted with the dreaded leprosy. This unnamed young servant girl (v 2) tells her master's wife about a prophet who can heal the leprosy. We know the story but for a recap: Naaman is skeptical, but he goes for the healing. He is disappointed all the way around, though, in the manner in which the healing will occur. The prophet Elisha did not even come out of his dwelling and furthermore did not pronounce the healing, but rather told Naaman to go and immerse himself seven times in the dirtiest of rivers—Jordan. He did and he was healed; but the first miracle was that he listened to the direction of the young servant girl at all: God was more gracious to Naaman than he deserved—as God is to us all—allowing him to respond positively. God put His authority on this servant girl's words!

→ In Acts 12 we find Peter in prison waiting for we-know-not-what, because Herod has just had James, the brother of John, put to death by sword, and this event had pleased the Jews. Peter was probably to be the encore! In the home of John Mark's mother, Mary, there was a prayer meeting going on: intense and fervent prayer for Peter's release. Amazingly, though predictably—because God often has the answer to our prayer on its way before the prayer is prayed—Peter has just made his way, by way of God's delivering angel, through chains, sentries, locked doors, and dark of night all the way to Mary's door.

Acts 12:13 says, *“Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door.”* Rhoda was so overjoyed that she left him standing outside and ran in to tell the good news that Peter was free and at the door. In verse 15 Scripture says, *“‘You're out of your mind,’ they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, ‘It must be his angel.’”*

The end of the story goes like this: they went to the door and found Peter there just as Rhoda, the servant girl, had said. Back at the prison the next morning, verses 18-19 record: *“In the morning, there was no small commotion among the soldiers as to what had become of Peter. 19After Herod had a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the guards and ordered that they be executed.”* I wanted us to hear the end to understand how perilous the situation was for Peter and the church gathered at Mary's house. About **Rhoda: Isn't God good to use a servant as His Majesty's servant in His service!**

God's plan is to use all who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as His emissaries and evangelists, as His missionaries and ambassadors, as His hands, His feet and His touch—servants in the extreme service of His Majesty. **Romans 8:28—all believers are called!** *“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”*

I don't want to leave this lesson without examining another young girl who was called to serve His Majesty in an amazing manner. In their book, *Women of the Bible*, Ann Spangler and Jean Syswerda artfully and passionately introduce us to the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ: *“She was a virgin from a poor family in an obscure village in Galilee. Her response to Gabriel reveals a young woman of unusual faith and humility. Her unqualified yes to God's plan for her life entailed great personal risk and suffering. She must have endured seasons of confusion, fear, and darkness as the events of her life unfolded. She is honored, not only as the mother of Jesus...but as his first disciple.”*

♥Have we received Jesus Christ as Savior—Redeemer—and have we truly made him Lord, by regarding His authority to use us in His Service? We cannot call Him Lord, and say No—our response must always be **Yes, Lord!**