

SERVE ONE ANOTHER (Galatians 5:13)

1.The definition.

- a.This word translated serve is different than the word translated Matthew 4:10, where it literally means to worship.
- b.It's also different than the word translated serve found in Acts 6:2, where it means to serve but it is from the Greek word from which we get deacon.
- c.The word found in Galatians 5:13 is the same word found in Romans 6:6.
 - i.It comes from the word Paul used often to describe himself.
 - ii.Romans 1:1; Titus 1:1.
- d.It is the word Paul was inspired to use to describe Epaphras in Colossians 4:12.
- e.It is the word that means bondservant or slave.
 - i.A form of this word is found over 150 times in the New Testament.
 - ii.Every usage of it, in every form, has to do with being a slave.
 - iii.Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament says, "All the words in this [doulos] group serve either to describe the status of a slave or an attitude corresponding to that of a slave ... The meaning is so unequivocal and self-contained that it is superfluous to give examples of the individual terms or to trace the history of the group. Distinction from synonymous words and groups ... is made possible by the fact that the emphasis here is always on "serving as a slave.".
- f.The KJV never, ever translates this word as slave.
- g.Very few Bible translations do use the word slave, and we can understand the reasoning why they do not.
 - i.When one chairman of a major translation was asked about the choice of "servant" instead of "slave" for doulos, he said that it was shameful and difficult because of the history of slavery in America.
 - ii.Surely we can appreciate that, but what it has done is lessen the force of this word in our minds.
- h.Paul is telling us that we are to be slaves to one another.
 - i.This was an offensive word back in Paul's day.
 - ii.It is an offensive word in our day.
 - iii.It is supposed to be an offensive word to our pride to help us rid ourselves of pride.
- i.This does not mean that we are to be demeaned as some think of slaves.
- j.Rather, we are to be looking after one another's welfare to the best of our abilities is the idea that Paul was teaching.
- k.So the definition of our word serve is be a slave to the brethren.

2.The demand.

- a.Paul, again by inspiration, says that we are to be slaves to one another.
- b.However, he is not the only one to demand this level of service to others.
- c.Jesus demanded it as well (Matthew 20:27).
 - i.If we want to be chief, we must be a slave.
 - ii.We must be slaves to our brethren.
- d.Paul's words in Galatians 5:13 are not in the form of a request.
- e.This is something that is demanded of everyone who wears the name

Christian.

3.The demonstration.

- a.Paul was not demanding something that he wasn't willing to do.
 - i.We know that he considered himself a slave of God.
 - ii.He also considered himself a slave of others (1 Corinthians 9:19).
- b.Paul gave of himself in many ways.
 - i.He labored in great ways to preach the gospel.
 - ii.He endured hardship so as not to be a burden to the Corinthians and others.
 - iii.He truly was a slave to his brethren and to the lost in order to win them to Christ.
- c.As great as Paul was, there is a greater demonstration of being a slave and that is our Lord, Jesus the Christ.
 - i.Notice Philippians 2:7.
 - ii.The word "servant" is a form of our word translated serve.
 - iii.Jesus took upon Himself the form of a slave Paul says.
 - iv.When we live as slaves, we are imitating Jesus.
- d.Jesus was not demanding of us something that He wasn't willing to do Himself.
- e.No greater demonstration of this could be given than that of Jesus.
 - i.Think how He lived His life in service to others.
 - ii.He never sought anything for Himself.
 - iii.He was a slave to mankind, constantly doing things for others to show God's love.
- f.Our Lord, throughout His life, demonstrated for us the life of a slave to God first and then to others.
- g.Practically, how do we show that we are slaves to one another?
 - i.We can pray for one another (James 5:16).
 - (1)This is something we can do without others knowing.
 - (2)However, it is of great comfort to our brethren to let them know that we are laboring for them in prayer.
 - ii.Treat all of the brethren the same.
 - (1)This is difficult I know because we naturally are attracted to certain people more than others.
 - (2)However, we are all brethren and all deserving of the same treatment.
 - (3)When Jesus set the example of washing the apostles feet, do you think it was as easy for Him to wash Judas's feet as it was John's?
 - (4)Jesus did it any way.
 - iii.Be present for those in difficult situations.
 - (1)Ecclesiastes 3:7.
 - (2)Not all times are times for talking.
 - (3)There are times when just our presence is what our brethren need.
 - iv.We can encourage our brethren.
 - v.We can give of our time and our energy to our brethren.
 - vi.We can do the things we know need to be done.

h. The best way to be a slave to our brethren is fulfill Galatians 6:10.

4. The drive.

a. What motivates us to do this?

b. After all, being someone's slave is not a thing we would normally want to be.

c. Paul tells us what the drive is and it is something we have mentioned in each of these sermons thus far: love.

i. Love motivates us to enslave ourselves to our brethren.

ii. We want what is best for them and realize that we are the ones who can help bring what is best to them.

d. Our Lord enslaved Himself to mankind because He loves us.

e. He set the example and we must follow it because that is demanded of us.