

SO YOU WANT TO SERVE JESUS?

(John 12:20-26)

I. The request.

- a. "If any man serve me" carries the idea of a person requesting to serve Jesus.
- b. How many people do we know who would answer yes to the question: "Are you serving Jesus?"?
 - i. The number would be very high wouldn't it?
 - ii. Most people who have any idea of spiritual things have said they wanted to serve Jesus.
- c. So, in essence, this request has been made by most people.
- d. The reason for this is that many people give lip service to the desire to go to heaven.
 - i. There are few, if any, who say that they want to go to hell.
 - ii. So, people say they want to serve the Lord.
- e. The word "serve" here is not from the same Greek word found as servant in Philippians 2.
- f. This is from the word which we get our word "deacon".
- g. One Greek work says this of the word for "serve": "'*Diakonos* is especially a servant *in attendance*, at table or elsewhere; a *doulos* may serve at a distance".
 - i. The diakonos servant, serves up close to the one being served.
 - ii. A doulos may serve up close but can also serve out in the field away from his master.
- h. The idea is one who serves Jesus as a diakonos servant serves by the side of Jesus, is in close proximity to Him.
- i. One can be close to Jesus only by coming to Him in His way, not our own.
- j. Jesus invites us to come to Him (Matthew 11:28-30), but it has to be on His terms.
- k. When this request is made, we need to understand that for which we are asking.
- l. We are asking to be up close and personal with the Lord.
 - i. This is a life of service and sacrifice as we've noticed the last few weeks.
 - ii. It's a life of dedication to another and not to self.
- m. Most do not understand this aspect of service to the Lord.
 - i. At best, many want to be part time servants.
 - ii. Coming to worship when it is convenient, or coming to worship but doing nothing else.
- n. Jesus knew that and that is why He used an "if" to begin the statement.
- o. Jesus would then go to describe what it means to serve.

II. The requirement.

- a. Jesus said if you make the request you must follow me.
- b. That sounds simple doesn't it?

- ii. There is still self in there and people won't see Jesus.
- iii. This doesn't just happen with a request to serve Jesus.
- iv. It takes effort and work to remove self and replace it with Jesus.
- v. Just like playing basketball takes more than just shooting, serving Jesus takes much more than a willingness to go to worship.
- vi. It is a complete transformation (Romans 12:2).

III. The reward.

- a. Why meet this requirement?
 - i. The life we are being told to live is difficult.
 - ii. The words sacrifice, submission, obedience, are not words we generally like when being applied to ourselves.
- b. Jesus told those that make the request and are willing to meet the requirement that there is a reward.
- c. and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.
- d. The Father honored the Son by allowing Him to ascend back into heaven.
- e. This is what awaits the one who is willing to serve the Lord.
- f. We will be rewarded with a home in heaven.
- g. Something that must be noted about this is the tense in which the phrase "if any man serve" was written.
 - i. It's written in a tense that indicates continual action.
 - ii. This is not a one-time act of service.
 - iii. It is a lifetime of service until death.
 - iv. We don't ever stop serving the Lord.
 - v. We don't ever stop following the Lord.
- h. The reward is tremendous – giving us the glory that awaits us in heaven.

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