

Episode 3

Service

Service to God. God's will for us is not only that we love Him and all his children, but also that we live a life of *service* to both God and our fellow man. The greatest offering we may bring to God is the consecration of our own free will to the majestic service of doing the divine will. Our high calling is to dedicate ourselves to being servants of God and working for the extension of his spiritual kingdom. Great rewards await us in heaven when we devote our lives to being servants of God.

Service to the human brotherhood. Brotherhood and service are the cornerstones of Jesus' gospel of the kingdom. Our love for others is nurtured by our service. The consciousness of being a child of God should quicken our entire life service to others. We may draw nearer our material minded brothers and sisters through our unselfish service. All service is sacred and exhilarating and loving service is a basic fruit of the spirit. When feelings of service for others arise, we should not stifle them. Even our self-respect is co-ordinate with our love and service of others. Service to one's fellows is the highest concept of the Jesus' brotherhood of kingdom believers.

Service in the economy and in the home. Service to others must eventually extend not only to individuals, but also to the social and economic realms. Purely

profit-motivated economics is doomed unless it can be augmented by service motives. The gain motive is a mighty civilizer *if* it is combined with the desire to serve. We are also called to serve in the home and family. It is God's will that men and women should find their highest service and consequent joy in the establishment of homes for the reception and training of children, in the creation of whom we become copartners with the Makers of heaven and earth.

It is more blessed to give than to receive. This is not an egocentric universe. The impulse of God's indwelling spirit is to be altruistic, thoughtful of others. Jesus taught, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35) and declared to his apostles, "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant." (Mt. 20:26) Service, more and more service, and increasingly divine and perfect service is the goal of the true follower of Jesus. The religion of Jesus is a religion of *love and service*.

The Birth of the Spirit

Be born of the spirit. To truly live as a son of God and actually enter into his kingdom requires that we be born of the spirit. This is necessary because we are predominately material beings. We are born into a material world and grow up in a material environment. Most of our thinking and activities are concerned with material things. But God is spirit. To live as a son or daughter of God requires that

we transcend this physical world and reorient ourselves to a higher world, the world of the spirit.

Show forth the fruit of the spirit. This transformation that is required to enter the spirit kingdom is known as “the birth of the spirit.” When we truly choose God’s will over our own, a change of orientation occurs in our minds. We become more receptive to spirit leadings; we are enabled to live more fully in the spirit world, and to discover God’s indwelling spirit presence. Living as a son of God means that I have achieved the “birth of the spirit” in my personal life. This spiritual rebirth will be immediately followed by an increasing tendency to show forth the fruit of the spirit in my daily life. Paul in his letter to the Galatians lists some of the fruit of the spirit as “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, [and] self-control.” (Gal 5:22) Other spiritual fruit include loving service, unselfish devotion, loyalty, fairness, honesty, hope, trust, tolerance, and forgiveness. Spirit fruit bearing is the *proof* that we have truly been born of the spirit. If we are *increasingly* and *spontaneously* showing forth the fruit of the spirit in our *daily* lives we have been born of the spirit and are living as children of God.

Faith

Live by faith. The birth of the spirit is a change of mind that occurs by *faith*. To choose the will of God first requires that we *believe* Jesus' gospel that God is our spiritual Father. Thus, we enter the Father's kingdom by simple childlike faith. However, our progress in the kingdom depends on the vigorous exercise of the robust and confident faith of an adult. We are encouraged in our faith by the covenant God made with Abraham. If we will believe God's promises and follow his instructions we may trust in Him for everything. We need to realize and trust in our Father's *omnipotent beneficence*. As we grow in faith we should increasingly learn to do God's will and *depend* on Him for *everything*.

Jesus' faith. Jesus lived an ideal human life here on earth. In his faith we may discover the ideal human faith, the greatest faith the world has ever known. As his followers we should learn from him and make Jesus the "author and finisher of our faith." Jesus *trusted* God and *depended* on Him as a small child trusts and depends on his earthly parent. His faith was childlike but never childish. Even in the face of apparent defeat and a cruel and unjust death he was unmoved in his faith. Faith was his spiritual anchorage throughout this final great test, as it was throughout the many other trials and tribulations of his earth life.

Jesus' example. Jesus demonstrated in his life a new and higher type of faith—a *living* faith in God. Jesus' life example is so valuable to us because *he lived his faith*. His faith was not based on tradition or dogma; it was not a mere

creed, doctrine, or belief that he espoused. It was a spiritual attitude that wholly dominated his thinking and feeling, his believing and praying, his teaching and preaching. He challenges us to achieve this faith, to believe not only *what* he believed, but also *as* he believed--*to trust in God as he trusted in God* and to believe in men as he believed in men. This is the full meaning of his one supreme requirement: "follow me." Jesus does not so much require his followers to believe *in* him, as he requires us to believe *with* him. He wants us to share his belief in the reality of the love of God, and in full confidence to accept our status and security as God's children on earth.