

# Served or Serving

#0060

Study Given by W. D. Frazee

There is a picture I want you to think about. Suppose we are involved in a food service program. We announce to the public that if they come at a certain time, we'll provide them with a nice meal. And so we all come to participate in serving the food, but lo and behold, when the time comes we find that half of the people who came to help serve are so weak that it looks like they're going to have to eat first before they are strong enough to help serve the food. I want you to think about that a little and I'll come back to it.

Here's another picture that I want you to imagine. Suppose we have a hospital here, and we're in the business of nursing sick people. The time comes for the new shift to come on duty, and all the nurses come in. But when they come in, half of them say they feel sick, and they have to have treatments themselves. Would it be difficult to run a hospital like that? To say the least, it would cut down on the number of people we could serve.

It's the same with this food service program we were imagining. Now, you can be thinking about what I'm thinking about. I'm not thinking about serving people with sandwiches or salad, and I'm not thinking about giving treatments to people's backs or stomachs. I'm thinking about this very practical matter of a successful, victorious Christian experience.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” Romans 5:1–2.

In the first verse, we have peace. In the second verse, we rejoice. Who is it that has peace, and who is it that rejoices? The one who is justified. What does that mean? That means his sins are forgiven, that means he's accepted. When do we get peace? When we are justified.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”  
1 John 1:9.

Have you confessed your sins? Are they forgiven? Are you sure? Well, if you know that by faith, then you have peace with God.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” Romans 8:1.

When? Now. Is there a change that comes when a man surrenders himself to Christ and gives his heart to the Lord, and his sins are forgiven? Yes, we pass from death unto life, from burden and condemnation to peace and rest.

Now I come to the question that I want to ask you tonight; this is all preliminary. Why do you come to meetings? Or is that a fair question? Why do you come to meetings? Back to our foodservice illustration: Do you come to serve, or do you come to be fed? And on to our hospital illustration: Do you come because you are sick and need treatment, or do you come to help nurse and give treatments? Or does it make any difference?

There are privileges that, as yet, some of you have only entered into a little way. I invite you to come along further with God. It's your privilege.

Why do you come to meetings? Well, you say, "Of course, everyone comes to meetings to get a blessing." Is that right?

I will let you in on a little secret. Here Paul is talking to the church elders at Ephesus:

"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" Acts 20:35.

Did you come for a blessing? How is the way to get the greatest blessing? To give. That's right. Did you come to this meeting planning to give anybody anything? I'm not talking about the offering; we've just had that. The Lord appreciates all we place in the offering basket. But that isn't what I am thinking about tonight. Do you know, dear friend, there is a blessing that you can have by *giving* that you can never get by *receiving*? Now it's true you have to receive before you can give. There's no use running around the wards with trays of full of empty glasses. You'd better stop and get some water in them if that's what the patients need. Right? Yes. And so, if Jesus has not blessed your heart, then you have nothing to give to others. The point is, if He *has* blessed your heart, you have something to share. Is that right?

Did you ever feel a little weak or sick and come into contact with someone that was really sick, and suddenly you got stronger? At least you've forgotten about your headache or toe ache or something, and you got so interested in that person that was so much sicker and weaker. Have you ever had that experience?

The thing that makes us forget our weakness and weariness sometimes is ministering to others who need help far more than we do. We cannot impart that which we have not received. But if we have received, we can impart.

Suppose I have a pipe here. I pour some water into it, but this end is closed? How much will it hold? It'll hold a pipe full. How much more? That's all unless I do what? Open the closed end. Then how much will it hold? As long as I keep the end of the pipe open, it can just keep flowing night and day.

At the Chesapeake camp meeting a few days ago, I had the privilege one afternoon of walking across the valley and up the mountainside to the Appalachian Trail. And there was a spring. It was a lovely spring. Nice, cold water flowing out of the pipes so big and just flowing, flowing, flowing. Do you know why it was flowing all the time? Well, it's open at both ends, that's all, and there's a supply back in the mountain.

Are there plenty of blessings in our Heavenly Father? Does He delight to give forgiveness, comfort, courage, victory? Do you believe it? Did He ever give you any? What did you do with it? The capacity to receive is preserved only as we impart.

I'd like to suggest that the first thought when a person comes to a meeting like this should be, "Dear Lord, fill me fully before I ever go there, and help me to find some way to pour out to others what You've given me." That's right. And, of course, if you don't know the Lord, we're so glad that you're here to get acquainted with Him. But if you know the Lord, friend, there is a privilege for you.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive" Acts 20:35.

Someone says, "Brother Frazee, I'd like to, but I feel so unworthy."

Is that so? Well, if God would do anything for you, you would have a message of comfort to give to someone else who might be unworthy, wouldn't you? But if you have the idea that the only way you can be a witness is to get worthy, then the only people you will be able to witness to are worthy people, and that won't help much. People who need help are what? *Unworthy*. That's right. That happens to be all of us in case you don't know. Any of you here tonight that's *worthy* of the blessings of the Lord? Nobody. All of us are unworthy.

I hear people say, "Lord, make us worthy of Thy blessings." Just how would you get that way? Don't pray a prayer like that. Stop and think a minute. Our hope is not in our worthiness; it's in Who's worthiness? It's in Jesus' worthiness. John heard folks up in Heaven singing, "Worthy is the *Lamb* that was slain." Oh, I'm so glad tonight, friends, that my worthiness is in Jesus. What do you say? Is that where your worthiness is? Well, then you've got a message of comfort for unworthy folks.

I read a statement here:

"At home is the place to find Jesus; then take Him with you to the meeting, and how precious will be the hours you spend there" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 164.

How is it that we're to have precious experience at the meeting? Find Jesus where? At home. Now someone is going to do this. Someone that came here tonight, hungry, thirsty, weary, heavy laden, weak, worn out and thinking, "Oh my, if I can manage to crawl into the vesper service, I think I can be revived."

And bless your heart, you will. There's a blessing for you here tonight. You can go these doors triumphant and happy in the Lord. But listen: I hope you don't have to do that again next week. I want you to have an experience so you can come here tonight that far along and be ready to go farther. Now I want you to come next Friday night prepared to *serve* food, not just to eat it. I want you to come next Friday night prepared to nurse sick people, not just to come dragging in, hoping that someone will give you a treatment. Do you see what I mean? All right. "At home is the place to find Jesus." Will you read that with me?

"At home is the place to find Jesus; then take Him with you to the meeting, and how precious will be the hours you spend there. But how can you expect to feel the presence of the Lord and see His power displayed when the individual work of preparation for that time is neglected?" *Ibid.*

Would you like to know how you can get a blessing at home before you ever come here on Friday night, so you'll be at the *beginning* of the meeting where some of you get at the *end* of the meeting?

"The Lord speaks; enter into your closet, and in silence commune with your own heart" *Ibid.*, page 163.

What's a closet? Well, it's a secret place of prayer. It might be kneeling down by your bedside; it might be out under a pine tree. Anywhere where you can be alone with God, the Lord speaks.

"Enter into your closet, and in silence commune with your own heart; listen to the voice of truth and conscience. Nothing will give such clear views of self as secret prayer" *Ibid.*

Did you ever come to a meeting, and sometime during the meeting, God convicted you of something in your life that needed changing? Did any of you ever have that experience? Well, you can have that experience at home. Kneeling down, waiting on God with the open Bible, and pleading with God to show you anything in your heart that needs changing. I read on:

"Nothing will give such clear views of self as secret prayer. He who seeth in secret and knoweth all things will enlighten your understanding and answer your petitions. Plain, simple duties that must not be neglected will open before you" *Ibid.*

Isn't that a wonderful promise? Yes. And the next page says:

"At home is the place to find Jesus; then take Him with you to the meeting, and how precious will be the hours you spend there." *Ibid.*, page 164.

Tell me, friend. Will you do that? If you do that, then when you come to the meeting, you're looking for a chance to feed someone. You're watching before the meeting, you're thinking about it during the meeting, you're watching to see a chance for you to witness. You're watching after the meeting to see if there's a blessing you can share with someone else.

If you don't know the Lord or feel you don't know Him very well, one of the greatest opportunities you have isn't just listening to a sermon. It's talking with someone after the meeting who will pray with you and help you get hold of God. There are dozens of people who are ready and willing to pray with you, talk with you and help you get fed. If you're sick spiritually, they're ready to help you to get a good treatment that'll make you feel so much better. That's right.

But I come back to our study. Are you going to be a patient or a nurse? Which are you going to be?

You say, "Oh, I'm so sick."

Well, you'd better be a patient then. But how long do you think you need to be a patient? Do you think you need to come every Friday night, month in and month out, year in and year out, always getting treatments? Why not learn how to give the treatments. Why not learn how to help others. You can do it.

Now, let me make it very simple for you, friends. That which will be most effectual is the testimony of your own experience. Whenever you have an opportunity to share something the Lord has done for you, do it in public or private because your witness is just what someone needs. It isn't just a matter of standing up and saying, "I'm thankful for what the Lord has done for me." Someone might wonder what He did for you. Tell what He did. If I say to you, "Oh, I'm so glad for the birthday present someone gave me," and I tell you that again and again. "I'm so thankful for the birthday present someone gave me" and tell you that again and again. Some of you'd get curious to know what? What it was I got. Wouldn't you? Sure. Especially if there was a chance you'd get something like that too. Let's rejoice in our privilege to be simple and practical in our witness. What do you say?

What has the Lord done for us? In the first place, He's given us His Word to tell us of His love. Are you thankful for that? In this book, He has revealed to us the Dear Jesus, His Son, who came here and lived for us and died for us. Is that a wonderful thing to know? Are you glad about that? Can you tell that to someone else? Some people don't know it. And can you tell that you have given your sins to Him and He has forgiven them, or dare you do that? What did we read in our text?

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" Romans 5:1-2.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"  
1 John 1:9.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” Romans 8:1.

Oh, I want all of you, sooner or later, to get into nursing others instead of just being nursed. I’m talking spiritually, you understand. But remember, there’s no need to pretend it. If I’m sick, I need a treatment—no need to pretend it. If I’m lost, I need to be saved. And I won’t be saved by pretending. Oh, no. I need to come like any other sinner and confess my sin and ask Jesus to forgive me. Will He do it?

Someone says, “But I did that, and now I feel sinful again.”

Well, friend, at home is the place to get that all settled before you ever get here on Friday night. Do you see what I’m getting at? Home is the place to find Jesus, and then bring Him with you to the meeting. You’ve been fed and you can bring some sandwiches to help feed other people. You’ve had a good treatment and you just feel like someone who’s just had fomentations and cold mitten friction, and you’re just walking on air, and you can come in and help some people that haven’t learned the way. Do you see what I mean?

You say, “How will I know who to help”?

The Holy Spirit is in the business if you will listen to His promptings.

I want you to, the glory of God, say you know that Jesus has forgiven your sins and given you peace, and I want you to come up and tell us. I’m not opening the way now for some long experience, but just a few brief testimonies, right to the point, on the point of what we’re studying here tonight. You’ve sought the Lord, and He has helped and blessed you, and forgiven your sins, and you know He’s your Savior. Come quickly now and tell us to the glory of His name.

[Testimony service]

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