

The Tanner St Church of Christ meets each Lord's Day beginning with Bible classes at **9:30 AM**. We continue with our worship at **10:20 AM** and again at **5:00 PM**. We also meet each Wednesday evening at **7:00 PM** for Bible study and worship. Our meeting place is located about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from I30 at 1512 Tanner St in Malvern, AR.

If you have questions about what we believe and teach, please visit our website, **TannerSt.com** to listen to sermons or read past articles from our bulletin. Or you can contact us and we will be glad to find a convenient time to study with you.

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God is noticeable to those who are not involved themselves.

Our obligations to God are individual in nature. Even our work together, as a church, is first an individual obligation. We should never let a lacking in another keep us from fulfilling our own responsibilities. Certainly we are encouraged in our work when we see our fellow workers diligently serving beside us, but we cannot let their absence keep us from doing the work our Lord has required.

Also notice the article properly places JOY after service. True joy comes from obediently serving the Lord. Looking for joy without putting in the effort to serve is like trying to satisfy hunger without eating any food. It is an empty and fruitless pursuit.

Serve the Lord. Encourage others to serve. You and those with you will certainly benefit. (DLH)

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God takes care of our living when we take care of his business

# *Seeking His Righteousness*

"...seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.." Matthew 6:33

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## Being Of Service To The Lord

Edwin Whittlesey

Each of us has hobbies or activities that we enjoy, and because we enjoy them they tend to take precedence over other activities of lesser significance. Likewise, we all possess a drive or determination to do those things that are most important and enjoyable to us. You might recall one such activity or hobby in your own life such as hunting, sewing, fishing, gardening, singing, reading, cooking, or spending precious time with family and friends. Other activities we enjoy, from a spiritual perspective, may include Bible reading, praying, praising God in song, teaching, giving, and serving. Do we spend more time or focus on any one of these activities than another? As with our hobbies and other activities, serving the Lord requires motivation and determination. It requires initiative and effort. It is a never ending commitment. Let us consider the idea of Joyful service to Jesus, others, and you least of all.

Notice in **Joshua 22:5** the instruction to serve the Lord wholeheartedly: *"But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul."* An option or alternative to serving Jesus is not given, however we are aware of the consequences of not doing so, (**1Chronicles 28:9; Psalm 9:17**). Our service to the Lord

should take precedence over all other activities in our lives. We should desire to joyfully serve the Lord and that desire should supersede our interest or involvement in extra-curricular activities and hobbies. The Lord desires His children to serve Him. In **Exodus** chapters **8-10** He speaks to Pharaoh through Moses saying "...*Let My people go, that they may serve Me.*" Serving the Lord whenever we feel like it or on our own time is unacceptable, wouldn't you agree? If we are serving the Lord with all our heart and all our soul as **Joshua 22:5** suggests, then we are constantly serving Him and doing so joyfully. The psalmist says in **Psalm 37:5** to "*Commit your way to the Lord...*" so when we commit to something we carry it into action or follow through with it. Never with our hobbies or activities of interest do we settle for mediocrity. The same should be true of our attitude toward serving God Almighty.

On the premise that serving the Lord in our lives is foremost, we will become inclined to the idea of serving others. Once we are committed to serving the Lord, serving and helping others becomes more natural and innate. While our society views serving fellow mankind as a burden, true Christians realize it's just another way of serving and glorifying Christ. Just as there is sacrifice and commitment involved with serving Jesus, there is sacrifice and commitment involved with serving others. In **Romans 12:3-8**, Paul alludes to the fact that each of us is given different "measures of faith," different "talents," or different "gifts." The point Paul makes is we are to use whatever gift(s) God has graciously given us to serve Him. Yes, perhaps we are serving others with our gifts or talents, but in serving others we are ultimately serving Jesus. Paul adds another dimension to our duty of service in **Galatians 5:13**, that we "...*through*

*love serve one another.*" Are we joyfully practicing what Paul has commanded? Have we prioritized our lives in such a way that our service to God supersedes all else? To fail in this regard is to miss out on the privilege and blessing of serving Jesus and others, but more so to jeopardize our spiritual relationship with Him.

We serve ourselves best when our service to the Lord and to others precedes our own hobbies and activities. It is not wrong to have hobbies and activities of interest, as long as those things do not interfere with our service to Jesus and to others. This becomes more challenging especially when those of the world would have us to think otherwise - where the focus is more on self and me as opposed to Jesus. We must keep our priorities and activities in check and not be overtaken with more than we can handle, whether it be a hobby, extra-curricular activity or work. I recall a cliché which my father stressed through my adolescent years, "Jesus first, Others second, and Yourself last." My hope and prayer is for each of us to serve in that manner. Only then will we know the true meaning of JOY.

Abundant Life, Vol. 38, Nov. and Dec. 2003.

(There are so many different ways each of us can be distracted. One thing not mentioned in the article above is letting the inaction of others distract us from our own responsibilities. When we fail to see our fellow Christians working for the Lord we sometimes begin to think we are the only one working. Of course this attitude does not take into consideration the many ways that one may serve the Lord that are not obvious. Also, we might see more of the work our brethren are actively doing if we were more involved in the work ourselves. Not everything we do in our service to