

PREPARATION FOR SERVING THE LORD

A. Introductory Questions

1. How old do you have to be to serve the Lord? (1 Sam. 3:3-18).
2. How long did it take for Moses, the Lord Jesus, and the apostle Paul to prepare for their service for God? (Acts 7:29,30; Luke 3:23; Gal. 1:18).
3. What are some ways you can prepare to serve the Lord?
 - a. Help out at home (Gen. 24:16-20).
 - b. Be obedient to your parents (Eph. 6:1).
 - c. Read the Bible over and over (1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 3:15).
 - d. Pray (1 Sam. 23:2,4; Acts 9:6; 13:1-3).
 - e. Learn meekness and humility (Matt. 11:29; 2 Tim. 2:24,25).
 - f. Open your eyes, ears, and heart to the needs around you (Job 29:12-17; Jas. 1:27; 1 John 3:17).

B. Some Scriptures About Being a Servant (*Doulos*)

1. “The disciple is not above his master, nor the *servant* above his lord” (Matt. 10:24).
2. “Whoever commits sin is the *servant* of sin” (John 8:34).
3. “Lord, now let Thy *servant* [Simeon] depart in peace” (Luke 2:29).
4. “Paul [James, Simon Peter, Jude, John], a *servant* of Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:1; Tit. 1:1; Jas. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1, Jude 1, Rev. 1:1).
5. “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the *servant* of Christ” (Gal. 1:10).
6. “*Servants*, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling” (Eph. 6:5).
7. “But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a *servant*” (Phil. 2:7).
8. The meaning of “servant” (*doulos*) in these verses: Slave, bond-servant.

C. Some More Scriptures About Being a Servant (*Diakonos*)

1. “His mother said unto the *servants*, Whatever He says unto you, do it” (John 2:5,9).
2. “The higher powers [are] the *ministers* of God to you for good” (Rom. 13:1,4).
3. “Paul and Timotheus ... with the bishops and *deacons*” (Phil. 1:1).
4. “Likewise must the *deacons* be grave ... the husbands of one wife” (1 Tim. 3:8-13).
5. “I commend unto you Phebe our sister who is a *servant* of the church which is at Cenchrea” (Rom. 16:1).
6. The meaning of “servant” (*diakonos*) in these verses: One who executes the commands of another, one in the Church who cares for the poor and has charge of funds, one who attends to anything that may serve another’s interests.

D. Qualifications of a *Diakonos*: “Men of dignity, not deceitful, not addicted to much wine, not fond of selfish gain ... temperate, faithful ... husbands of one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households” (1 Tim. 3:8-12).

E. Spiritual Gifts

1. Examples: Word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, interpretation, apostles, teachers, helps, governments (1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28-30); ministry, exhortation, ruling, showing mercy (Rom. 12:6-8); evangelists, pastors (Eph. 4:11).
2. All of these are given by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4,11).
3. What is our role with respect to spiritual gifts? “What will You have me to do?” (Acts 9:7); “neglect not the gift that is in you” (1 Tim. 4:14); “stir up the gift of God” (2 Tim. 1:6); “if I have the gift ... and do not have love, I am nothing” (1 Cor. 13:2).
4. Potential dangers
 - a. Focus on natural talent (such as music, public speaking) rather than spiritual gift or other things the Lord wants you to do.
 - b. Focus on perceived gift to the exclusion of other forms of service.

F. Some Areas of Service in the Bible

1. Prophecy (1 Cor. 14:3).
2. Prayer, intercession (Dan. 9:1-19; Col. 4:12; John 17).
3. Physical and material helps (Gen. 6, Exod. 35:34; 1 Ki. 17:8-16; Acts 9:25,36-42).
4. Evangelism (Matt. 10:1-7).
5. Teaching the Word (2 Ki. 23; 2 Tim. 3:15).
6. Ministering comfort, encouragement, counsel, mediation (Num. 13:30).
7. Healing and working miracles (Acts 3:1-10).
8. Dedicating one’s child to the Lord, bearing the Messiah (1 Sam. 1:11; Luke 1,2).
9. Washing one another’s feet (John 13:1-6).

G. Become Used to Seeking, Knowing, and Doing the Lord’s Will

1. Realize that God wants us to know His will (Eph. 5:17; Col. 1:9; 4:12).
2. Know that God has a specific will for each of His children (Gen. 24:14-27; Josh. 6,7; 2 Sam. 5:17-25; Acts 8:26-38; Acts 16).
3. Know that God has certain criteria that we must satisfy before we can know His will (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 5:15-18; Psa. 40:8; 66:18; Matt. 6:22; Luke 22:42; John 5:30; 7:17).
4. Actively seek God’s will through prayer, dependence, and waiting upon God (Psa. 31:1-3; 139:23,24; Acts 9:6).

5. Quiet our soul and spirit and allow the Holy Spirit liberty to communicate His will to us (Exod. 14:13; 2 Chron. 20:17; 1 Ki. 19:11-13; Psa. 46:10; Isa. 30:7,15).
6. The Holy Spirit reveals God's will primarily by the Scriptures (1 Thess. 4:3), but also by impressions (Psa. 32:8), and by counsel (Prov. 11:14).

H. People Who Served the Lord Without Having Special Training or Aptitude

1. Joseph (Gen. 39-45).
2. Gideon (Judg. 6:14-16).
3. Samuel (1 Sam. 3).
4. Jeremiah (Jer. 1:5).
5. Amos (Amos 1:1), Peter, Andrew, James, John (Matt. 4:18-22); Matthew (Matt. 9:9), Apostle Simon (Luke 6:15).

I. Areas of "Secular" Training That May Help Us in Serving the Lord

1. High School: Be well-rounded, do well in *all* your classes, especially English, world history, foreign languages, speech, piano/guitar, learning to read music.
2. College or Correspondence Courses: History of Bible times, Biblical Greek and Hebrew.
3. Learn to follow the rules and submit to authority at home, school, work, on the ball field, and behind the steering wheel.
4. Find a spouse who is also interested in serving the Lord and living for Him.
5. Throw out (or greatly limit) TV, videos, computer games, texting, twitter, and other distractions from serving the Lord.

J. Summary

1. STOP what you are doing right now and ask whether it is what the Lord wants you to be doing.
2. LOOK around you and notice those who need help (with homework, housework, food, clothing, finances, encouragement, and salvation).
3. Pull out the ear buds and LISTEN to what the Lord is trying to tell you and for faint cries for help from people who are too shy and embarrassed to shout for help.

