



That they may teach the  
young women ...

# A Servant's Role

Rachel Weaver

What is a servant's heart? This question can best be answered by a look at our Master's life. Jesus came to earth, leaving the glories of Heaven and life with the Father to *serve* us. He lived it out every day in a very practical way, perhaps just so that you and I can understand and see the reality in the call to serve. First, He obeyed the Father. "*I must do the will of Him that sent me.*" Jesus implicitly carried out every order in loving obedience. He could never have done this without communion with His Father. We follow Him as He spent time alone in prayer and meditation after especially busy and trying times. Why? So that He could know the will of His Father which was in Heaven. Then, filled with the fullness of the Spirit, He would go out and serve some more, just pouring Himself out for others. He could never have served so untiringly if He had not been in touch with God. Finally, He returned all the glory and praise to the Father which sent Him.

As I think of the calling that you and I have, what could be more apt than the word "servant"? We are called "*by love to serve one another.*" We wash, cook, clean, nurse, teach, sew, and more. We are servants in our home, servants of the Most High God. Does that title shed a new light or glory into your calling? Indeed it ought to!

Sometimes I think that we lose sight of the respectability and the nobility of our position. We forget that it is a very important calling. Motherhood is a calling of love—to our Father and to those around us. Too often we see it as drudgery and thankless work. It is not. It is a privilege we have received, a service to our Master, an overflow of our love. Modern Christianity and the feminist movement have made light of the role of a servant. It is no longer popular to serve another, but instead, self-glorification and self-serving are lifted up. Motherhood is put down, and a career is flaunted as the only way to have purpose and satisfaction in one's life. Women are placed on an equal level with men, and husband and wife loyalty—and servanthood that goes along with it—has long been out of style.

We have been insidiously influenced. We have been taken unawares with the doctrines of equal rights and sharing household chores and parenting. We are deluded and blinded and frustrated and we do not know why? Sometimes we find ourselves resenting being tied down all day, every day, with a never-ending string of duties and expectations. Why? We have lost sight of true servanthood, true love, and the joy of our calling.

“So often the busyness of the moment, the tyranny of the urgent, pressures us into forgetting the reality of Christ .... It is not God who loads us until we bend or crack with an ulcer, nervous breakdown, heart attack, or a stroke. These come from our inner compulsions coupled with our pressure of circumstances .... If the Christian [mother] is too busy to stop and take spiritual inventory and receive his [her] assignments from God, he [she] becomes a slave to the tyranny of the urgent. He [She] may work night and day to achieve much that seems significant to himself [herself] and others, but will not finish the work that God has for him [her] to do.”<sup>1</sup> Often we are so busy “serving the Lord” in our families that we do not take time to put Him first anymore. No wonder we feel drained! We are depending on our own strength instead of His.

One writer has said that as believers become increasingly skilled and active in the work of the Lord, many actually begin to spend less time alone with God. As a result, their ministry becomes a product of the flesh and is shallow and ineffective. The solution to this problem is to take time to restore our intimacy with Christ, not only for our sakes, but also for the sake of our ministry. This time does not need to come from hours alone, though that is wonderful, but from close communion with God as we live out our day.

Sisters, our good service is first to live completely for Christ, then to serve our husbands and our families. I have seen this very problem of activity reproduced in myself and in many other sisters’ lives. In the name of order, organization, and homeschooling, we tend to spend less and less time communing with God, excusing ourselves because we are busy servants. This produces a frustrated servant that cannot impart peace and joy to her family. Without the continual fountain of the life of Jesus bubbling up within us, our water stagnates and our fountain dries up.

Oswald Chambers says, “Spiritual exhaustion comes through service, and whether or not you are exhausted will depend on where you get your supplies .... You have to be nourishment for other souls until they learn how to feed on God. Be careful that you take the time to get your own

<sup>1</sup> Hummel, Charles E. *The Tyranny of the Urgent*, Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1967. pp. 11-12

supply, or before long you will be utterly exhausted. Has the way in which you have been serving betrayed you into exhaustion? If so, then rally your affections .... Continually go back to the foundation of your affections and recollect where the source of power is. Your supply comes from the God that saved and sanctified you. All my fresh springs shall be in thee.” *“The everlasting God fainteth not neither is weary.”* Is. 40:28

As I read this I was really challenged. It is our responsibility to feed our sheep (our children) until they can begin to feed themselves. It does exhaust our own supply unless we take time to drink deeply from the ever-springing fountain of the Word. A true servant is supplied and ready to meet the demands that come to his life. *“My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”* Php. 4:19

Meeting the needs of our growing families requires the heart of a servant; otherwise we will become bogged down with the many, many petty things that the daily routine requires. These things, although mundane, must be done, and a servant’s heart will see them as an opportunity to bless and fulfill the needs of others.

We will stop looking longingly out of our windows and wishing that we could be serving God in another capacity. We will find ourselves increasingly contented and fulfilled as we see the fruit of our labor: happy husband and contented children. What if we have never arrived at this point, or if we have slipped away into frustration and exhaustion, and our husbands are just as haggard and weary as we are; and our children are bickering and discontented? Surely there is an answer to this dilemma in the Word of God? I find it here: *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”* Mt. 6:33

Stop a bit and come aside for a short time, longer if you can, and confess your neediness and your lack of contact and communication with Jesus. Oh, He knows it already, but tell Him anyway! Then finding forgiveness and freedom in your spirit, rise and soak yourself in the Word. Obtain a precious promise and hold fast to it throughout the day. If your mind and body are tired, too tired to even concentrate on your reading and meditation, then you need to stop and



rest physically. This is often difficult for a busy mother of little ones. Start by taking a nap while the little ones sleep. Let the dishes, the floor, and the laundry go for a bit, and go refresh yourself physically. This pays big dividends. Go to bed when the babies go, for a few nights, until you catch up. My husband often says that it is hard to feel spiritual when your body is run into the ground. When you have regained a measure of physical rest, your mind will be clearer and the truths that you read will stick better. Look for ways that you can impart them to those you serve. In this way the Word will not only live for you, it will become alive for your children as well.

As you seek God first, into your heart will flow rivers of living water. And when His water fills you, you are full. When you are full, it will splash out. You will smile more, sing more, and bless the Lord more. Your face will shine with the contentment and peace of His blessing on your life. As you still your heart daily before God, He will give you wisdom to deal with some of the frustrations that you face in your mothering. You will find more patience to deal with interruptions, grace available to smile when you are tired, and consistency to correct and train as you go through the day.

These character qualities will grow and be refined in you as you walk in Him, and you will be amazed to discover that as you come in line with the Word and the Master Servant, your family will begin to walk more circumspectly. God has called us to be servants in our homes. We are to reverence our husbands calling him “Lord,” just as Sara revered Abraham. If we only use the right words and our spirit is wrong, we are not faithful servants. We must, by our whole life and actions, respectfully serve our husbands.

How do we do this in a very practical way? First, our desire must be to meet the needs of our husbands in every way that God has planned for us. We need to seek God about this. When we are so tired and tense that our hearts and our desire are not for our husband, we cannot support or satisfy him as God has planned for us to do. We find ourselves wishing not to have to reach out and meet his needs. We excuse ourselves. We are mothers of many chil-

dren. We serve all day long. We think, “What about me? Do I have any rights?” God has spoken much to me along this line as I have gone through my busy years of mothering. If we are to be “*heirs together of the grace of Christ that our prayers be not hindered,*” then we must share ourselves totally with our husbands, laying down every right. It is in and through this committed sharing of body, mind, and heart that we can really become co-laborers.

Then we must lay down all the expectations that we have for our husbands. Lay them at the Master’s feet and turn our hearts up to him for examination. Let Him do His perfect work in and through us. We cannot change our husbands, nor are we accountable to God for our husbands’ needs. You and I will need to give an account for what we think and do. Often as we truly release our husbands, a sweetness comes into our lives that was not there before.

And to our surprise, we discover that we are beginning to receive the desires of our heart. Perhaps God is just waiting for us to get out of the way so that He can do His perfect work. This servanthood is not the docile, mindless service that feminists portray it to be, but rather a joyful desire to meet our husband’s needs and to be a partner with him in all that he has to do.

What a difference this would make if we always went out of our way to meet our partner’s needs! The wise king knew this as he penned the words, “*As in the water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.*” (Prov. 27:19) He was not referring to the husband and wife relationship, but it fits there! Take an interest in your husband’s business or his work projects. Support him in what he is doing if at all possible. He needs it. He labors long and hard to meet the needs of the family, no matter how simply. Bless

him for this. Notice when he works with the children and be thankful.

Women tend to get in the rut of wishing that their husbands would do more, and in so doing they become so unthankful that they do not even see the good that their husbands do accomplish. Purpose in your heart to bless your husband for the good that he does. Our husbands need the water of praise



**Our husbands need the water of praise to keep their heads up, just like a flower needs water.**



to keep their heads up, just like a flower needs water. And, as you start looking for positive things, you may be surprised to find that he really does much more than you ever guessed. Your thankful heart will gender a grateful spirit in your husband and it will return again to bless you. One translation of Proverbs 12:25 says, “*A word of encouragement does wonders.*” It really does!

God then calls you to serve your children by constantly pointing them to Jesus. He says, “*For of such is the kingdom of heaven.*” Mothers, this is kingdom work! But it can only be done properly as you joyfully respond to the situations around you. You may feel that you have no role model. Your mother always yelled at you, and your friends struggle with the same problems that you have.

Dear friend, do not forget the role model that you have been given. Jesus Christ is our example, and through His Word and the Spirit He will guide you into all truth. So often we tend to make excuses for ourselves and fail to really seek God. Hidden in the Word are all the exhortations that we need to maintain a Spirit-filled servanthood. But we must come there to eat regularly. Jesus must be our friend, our teacher.

Serve your children by teaching them to put God first. Teach them by your own consistent example to take time daily to read the Word and pray. Teach them to pray for others, and not just for their own needs. Teach them to praise and be joyful. If you are a mother of a large family and swallowed up in the daily round of duties, this may need to be done in a conscious way. One older mother blessed me as she shared that she sets her kitchen timer to remember to stop and praise God during their school day.

Try it! Stop in the middle of your day amidst the frustrations and bless the Lord with your children. As you include them in your time of blessing, you will set a framework and a foundation for future blessing in their lives! Teach them to serve others joyfully. Do this by being a joyful, relaxed hostess and sharing together as a family to get the meals and the house ready for guests. Do not hurry and scurry around until you are all frustrated and in bad spirits. Begin early and have fun working together. Make simple meals, but teach your children how to arrange

them neatly and serve them attractively. Children love to help roll the napkins and arrange the fruit on the platter. As they get older they begin to add to your own ideas, and you serve together in a special way.

Find books in the library that give you lots of colorful ideas about how to serve simple things attractively, even on a limited budget. Serve your children by teaching them to appreciate nature and all that God has made. You need to enjoy this yourself, or you won't be able to transfer the same appreciation to them. I have special memories of my dad taking us on nature walks and turning over the rocks to look at bugs and other critters. We hiked over rocks and sat by bubbling streams. I had my own pressed flower collection and a large collection of beautiful moths and butterflies.

We have shared this love with our children. Even when they were very tiny I would take them by the hand and we would wander out into the woods and pick up leaves or tiny bouquets of flowers. We would stop and listen to the birds and try to see them. When they were older, we took longer excursions and began to climb rocks and collect things. Sometimes we would have a museum, and sometimes we would make miniature dishes out of acorn caps and cups. What a fun way to serve your child. He will never, never forget it!

Teach them the proper use and appreciation of music and art. Sing with them. Color with them. Learn to draw with them and make cards and scrapbooks for sick family and friends. The older children have many memories of going into old folks' homes when they were age 10 and under and singing at the bedsides. Both they and the elderly enjoyed it. I have to confess that I do not do this as much as I once did. These things cultivate a servant's heart and are lots of fun!

Serve them by teaching them to work! You and they will never regret it. They will work for you and they will learn a discipline they will appreciate for the rest of their lives. Play games and sing as you work together. Talk and share hearts as you work together. You have a chance to learn a lot about your child's innermost thoughts as you work side by side in a non-threatening situation. Some of the best talks our children have had with me are when I am working with



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them. This is why I choose to work with my children instead of just giving them jobs to do.

Sometimes when I see mothers that spend lots of time on the road, the phone, the computer, or their projects, I wonder if they have really cultivated a servant's heart. I wonder if they know that their children would probably work so much better if they would just take the time to set the example that they want the children to follow. I wonder if they know that they are missing the good talks, the fun times, and a child who is developing a servant's heart.

Once again, more is caught than taught. Serve them by creating memories for them. Teach them how to have good times, even at the expense of normal, daily routine. You see, in large families the workload is so big that we could always find work to do. It is never done. So if you want to have a special time, you may have to let some cleaning or something go for a day or two.

Take the time to have a celebration of family togetherness and love. You can do this with a special meal, a treasure hunt, or a game night. Often our good times consist of simply sitting together in the evening from 6:45 to 7:30 and reading a good book out loud.

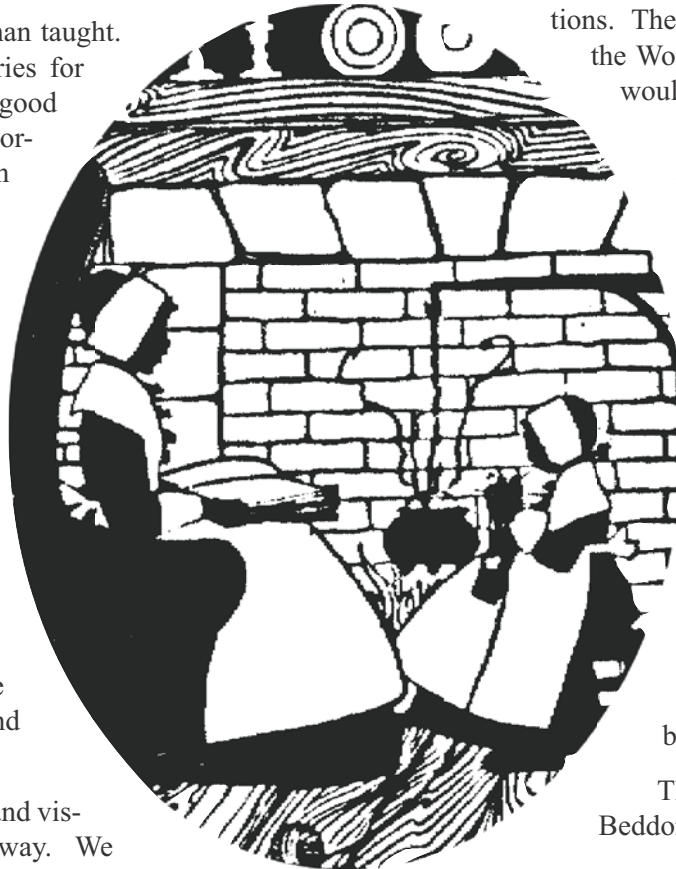
We have read so many books and visited so many countries in this way. We have met missionaries and other famous people. We have gone places we could never hope to go as a family. We have been in floods, smuggled Bibles, and visited concentration camps. It is one of our favorite things to do. It is a way I serve my family.

Time to sit and chat is special too. And it does take time. It is a service that you cannot measure in this life. It is the bridge of communication that builds trust and inspires confidences. It is the door to opportunities to instill precious values and teach truths that could otherwise not be imparted. It is probably one of the simplest, yet most difficult ways, to meet your young person where he is.

Why? Because it is best done in the quiet and alone from the rush and bustle of the day, and that ideal time seems to be when the little ones are tucked in for the night. It seems that it is just as important as rocking your teething baby to sleep.

Indeed, it provides much of the same security to a youth who is struggling to set his values and understand what his place is. Here the heart of a servant lays down the right to sleep. What fellowship! What a blessing! What friendships are strengthened and what bridges are built!

There are countless more ways to serve, to share yourself with your family, and build in them the life of Jesus so that they may serve Him better. Lest you become over-anxious and feel like you can never attain, remember this: A servant only follows his master's directions. Therefore you must seek and find in the Word and before the Lord what He would have you to do for your family.



He would not have you worried, hurried, and harried, trying to follow something I have laid out. He would have you "*seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.*"

You will serve your family best if you are happy and peaceful. You may not ever do all of the things that I have mentioned here. They are not all necessary, but it is necessary to have a happy, joyful heart of love that flows from being in touch with the Master.

The song below, by Benjamin Beddome, says it so well:

### ***Love is the Fountain Whence***

*Love is the fountain whence all true obedience flows;  
The Christian serves the God He loves and loves the God  
He knows.  
He treads the heavenly road and neither faints nor tires;  
That generous love which warms his breast with fortitude  
inspires.  
No burden seems so great, no task so hard appears,  
But this he cheerfully performs and that he meekly bears.  
May love—that shining grace—o'er all my powers preside,  
Direct my thoughts, suggest my words, and every action  
guide. ~*