

Responsive Serving

Long Beach Alliance Church • January 11th, 2009 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**WHATEVER YOU DO, DO YOUR WORK
HEARTILY, AS FOR THE LORD RATHER
THAN FOR MEN, KNOWING THAT FROM
THE LORD YOU WILL RECEIVE THE
REWARD OF THE INHERITANCE. IT IS
THE LORD CHRIST WHOM YOU SERVE.
~COLOSSIANS 3:23-24 (NASB)**

1) Mercy, Transformation, Unity...

- A) The beginning of a relationship with God comes by responding to the great gift of grace (undeserved mercy) which is provided through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9).

- B) God's desire is for all men to be saved through faith (content, trust, perseverance) in Jesus Christ (1st Timothy 2:4). God's people should show a submission and relationship to God through devotion to reading, studying, and personal transformation through His Word (the Bible).

- C) The Word of God purifies God's people to live in a manner which glorifies God and brings unity and love to Christ's church (John 17:13-21).

- D) This unity should "mark" the life of every Christian, but especially Christ's church (John 13:34-35, 17:12-17). We should seek relationship which builds His local and global church through groups and personal relationships.

- E) Note that the Christian life is initiated by God, but requires a response on our part. Biblical discipleship is **ALWAYS** initiated by God, and responded to by His disciples:
- i) We respond to God's mercy by "receiving" Jesus Christ in our lives.
 - ii) We respond to our relationship with Jesus Christ by living according to His Word, the Bible.
 - iii) We respond to God's love for us by loving others, especially brothers & sisters (family) within His church.

2) Responsive Service

- A) On the night Jesus was betrayed, before dinner, Jesus washed His disciples' feet (John 13:5-11). As Jesus explained the significance of the foot washing, he also called His disciples to follow His example of service (13:12-17).
- B) In the midst of teaching about submission to authority (1st Peter 2:13-20), and submission to God's order for marriage and family (3:1-9), there is a profound call to respond to the work of Christ by serving one another (2:21-25).
- C) Jesus, using a rural livestock metaphor of sheep and goats, describes the final judgment of all mankind (Matthew 25:31-46). As He speaks, Jesus reveals a critical insight into the object of our Christ-centered service.
- D) This is the true secret of service in God's Kingdom! When we are serving others, especially those who are in a weaker position/station in life -- we are serving Jesus Christ (25:40)!
- E) Serving Jesus Christ requires actual time and investment! It means pouring out your life into the lives of others. As God has given us every rich and wonderful gift, we are called to use all He has given to serve one another (1st Peter 4:10).