**Faith and Service**

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*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.* *If you serve Christ with this attitude, you will please God, and others will approve of you, too.*Romans 14:17-18.

I live in a military town, where first hand we get to witness the lives of those who serve our nation. It isn’t easy. On them, or on their family members. But they enlisted for duty, and mostly follow it through. A few weeks ago, I talked with a young sailor. She was not happy in her service. She still had several years to go before she finished her contract. She misses her home state and her family. She doesn’t really enjoy her work (as a cook) so she is miserable. My heart goes out to her, and I tried to encourage her to change her perspective. She, also, is very young in her faith. The good news is she agreed to meet with one of our great mentors in our church and learn His ways. I told her, you can’t change your contract or your job, all you can change is your attitude towards it. Ask the Lord to help you. He can do it. Have you ever felt that way? Stuck serving others? Maybe your family? Your employers? Or even your involvement in ministry?

Bob Dylan wrote and performed a song called “Gotta Serve Somebody”. “*You’re gonna have to serve somebody* *Well it may be the devil or it may be the Lord But you’re gonna have to serve somebody”*This is the truth. The only thing we choose is the “who”. And a marvelous “who” we can choose to serve is, of course, our Savior. Serving Jesus means we serve his family. Which can sometimes be challenging, but when we do it unto the Lord, it is always worth it. Like my sailor friend, often it is a matter of changing our perspective and attitude. Not easy.

Paul reminds the Galatians: *for you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.* *For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: “love your neighbor as yourself”. Galatians 5: 13-14.* Service is the action of helping or doing work for someone. Many times, it means we put aside our wants and choose to do what someone else needs doing. Often, service is not convenient, or necessarily comfortable. In the Navy, my sailor friend earns her pay and can rise in rank as she serves. In Christ’s Kingdom, service can bring joy, gladness of heart and also the pain of suffering alongside Jesus. Romans 12:1 states it clearly: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.* We choose to serve. No one makes us. We do it by the mercies of God. Even when it may seem unreasonable, it isn’t it. It is the logical outcome of presenting our entire selves to the Lord. We become his servants. I have learned this is a wonderful thing. Have you?

We practice serving our husbands, wives and our children. We practice loving our friends and our neighbors. As we listen to his small voice, open our hearts he will show us how best to serve him and his kingdom. It is our choice if we are a attentive server, or a reluctant server. The best blessing comes from being a cheerful one!

*Father, I ask that you continue to show us how to serve you. How to become trusted servants that will touch the lives of others. Let us walk in humility, grace, mercy towards others. Forgive us when we forget it is our reasonable service to you. Especially when we remember what you went through for us. We are so grateful. Thank you. In Jesus’ Name, amen.*