

The Lord's Heart for Spiritual Service - Part 1

by Stephen Kaung

Stephen Kaung emphasizes the importance of knowing God and serving Him faithfully as an expression of our identity as His children and priests.

Duration: 1:12:54

Scripture: Exodus 25:40, Numbers 12:7-8, Matthew 6:33, John 12:26, Acts 9:1-6, Romans 12:1, Hebrews 3:5-6

Topics: "Spiritual Service", "Gods Will"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Moses and his journey of service to God. Moses initially tried to serve God using his own strength and abilities, but he failed. As a result, he spent 40 years in the wilderness shepherding sheep. At the age of 80, Moses encountered a burning bush that was not consumed, and God spoke to him from within it. God revealed His heart to Moses and instructed him to go to Egypt and deliver His people. The speaker emphasizes the importance of having a blueprint or pattern for service, evaluating our present service, and seeking recovery to align with God's will. The sermon also highlights the connection between service and worship, emphasizing that service to God involves an element of worship. The speaker references John 12:26, where Jesus instructs His followers to serve Him and follow Him. The sermon concludes by discussing the theme of the conference, which is spiritual service, and the importance of rethinking our service to align with God's will.

Transcript

Let's have a word of prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, as we gather together in the name of Thy Beloved Son, our Lord Jesus, our hearts are full of joy and gratitude. How we praise and thank Thee, Thou shalt love us so much, that Thou willing to come to this wretched world and die for our sins.

Lord, we are forever grateful to Thee. We praise and thank Thee that Thou has not only saved us, Thou has even called us to serve Thee. Who are we that we can serve our dear Lord? It is all Thy grace and mercy.

As we gather here this morning, oh Lord, teach us how to serve Thee in a way that will really satisfy Thy heart. We pray that our days on earth will really be counting that Thy will may be done on earth through us as it is in heaven. We commit this time into Thy loving hands.

We look to Thy Holy Spirit to open Thy word to us. We pray that Thy word, which is truth and life, will be an experience to every one of us. And we give Thee all the glory.

We ask in Thy precious name. Amen. Thank God for gathering us together this time.

Thank God that we began this conference with the Lord's Table. As we come to the Lord's Table, we come as God's children. We do praise and thank Thee that He has even given us life.

That we can come before His presence to remember His amazing love towards us and to express a little bit of our appreciation to Him. He is so much worthy, more than we can ever mention. But thank God that our Lord is willing to accept even our little gratitude.

But brothers and sisters, we all know that we are not only all God's children. When we think of God's children, we think of life. How He gave His life to us.

But thank God, after we become His children, He calls us to serve Him. You remember in Revelation 1, verses 5 and 6, to Him who loves us and has given and has redeemed our sins in His blood, and has made us a kingdom, priests unto God and Father. So you find that He has not only redeemed us by His precious blood, and has given us life.

He has also made us a kingdom, priests unto His God and Father. And when you turn to Revelation chapter 5, you find that the 24 elders and the four living creatures, and how they worship and praise our Lord Jesus, saying that, Lord, Thou art worthy because Thou hast been slain, and Thou hast redeemed by Thy blood a people, and has made them kings and priests unto God. So dear brothers and sisters, I think it is well known that every brother and sister should be very clear about this matter, that we are not only God's children, but we are priests unto our God and Father.

And we know our priest is a person who is completely devoted to serve God. A priest, the only thing that a priest does is to serve the Lord. And every redeemed child of God is a priest unto God.

And that is the reason that after we are saved, we all need to present our bodies as living sacrifice, because this is acceptable to God. And this is holy. And this is our intelligence service.

You know, brothers and sisters, sometimes we confuse this matter between work and service. Sometimes we think that work and service are one. If we do something for God, then we are serving Him.

But strictly speaking, there is a difference between work and service, because work is impersonal. Service is personal. The object of work is thing.

If we can accomplish a thing, then the work is done. But service is entirely different, because when you serve, you have a master. Therefore, the Bible puts service and worship together.

You know, in Romans 12, chapter 12, verse 1, when you say this is your reasonable service, there is another translation. And that is, this is your spiritual worship. Therefore, you find in service, especially in serving God, there is an element of worship there.

That's the reason why we need to come together and consider this matter of service. The theme of this conference is concerning spiritual service. But when you read the Chinese version, you find there is a little difference.

Because the literal translation of the Chinese is rethinking the service. Now, even though there seems to be a little bit difference, but the spirit is the same. Because service is spiritual.

And because we are serving a living God. Therefore, we need to check ourselves again and again. I was assigned to speak on the blueprint of service.

And I would like to approach this matter from three directions. Now, first, the blueprint of service. We need to have a pattern for service.

We need to know what kind of service will be according to God's will. And then secondly, we would like to consider our present service. We want to look at our service today.

Whether it meets God's standard. And then finally, we would like to see the way to recovery. How can we be recovered to the service that will be according to God's heart.

Now, will you please turn to the gospel according to John. John chapter 12. We'll read verse 26.

John chapter 12, verse 26. Now, this is the word of our Lord Jesus. He said, If anyone serve me, let him follow me.

And where I am, there also shall be my servant. And if anyone serve me, him shall the Father honor. Dear brothers and sisters, before we are redeemed, were redeemed, did you know that you are also serving? But you were serving the world.

You were serving yourself. And you were serving even the enemy of God that is behind all things. But after we are redeemed, there must be a tremendous, drastic change of service.

Because no one can serve two masters. You either love the one or you hate the other. You either hold on to the one or despise the other.

Our Lord Jesus said in Matthew chapter 6, you cannot serve God and mammon. Now, mammon can represent the world. And it can represent even the enemy that is behind the world.

But thank God, He has delivered us out of the power of darkness. And He has translated us into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. Therefore, you will find as soon as you are saved, there is a complete change of service.

Formally, you serve the world and the enemy. But now, you serve the one true and living God. Because no one can serve two masters.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, you remember when God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt. He sent Moses to Pharaoh. And the word was, let my people go that they may serve me.

You know, the children of Israel, they were slaves in Egypt. They were serving Pharaoh. And Pharaoh put them into hard labor.

And even wouldn't allow them to live. But God's salvation came to the people of Israel. Let my people go that they may serve me.

So, brothers and sisters, we need to remember this, that we are saved to serve a living God. Do not think that we can be redeemed and yet live for ourselves. There is no such thing in the word of God.

As soon as you are redeemed, you are already put in the way of serving God. Therefore, we need to be occupied with our God's, our Father's business. Sometimes we have a wrong idea.

When we talk about the Conference on Service, we thought that it is for those who work full time for God. But brothers and sisters, may I ask a question? I believe that every redeemed child of God is a full time serving God. Now, if you are not full time serving God, whom are you serving? The Lord said, no one can serve two masters.

Then who are you serving? So, to me, I feel that every redeemed child of God is a full time serving God. You may have an avocation. You may be a medical doctor.

Or you may be an engineer. Or you may be a housewife. Or you may be a teacher.

Or you may even be a student. But that's your avocation. This is not your vocation.

Because our vocation is serving God. Now, think of Daniel. Daniel, he was the prime minister of the greatest empire in the world at that time.

He served Babylonian Empire. He served Middle Persian Empire. And yet, even the emperor recognized.

You know, because he served God, so people envied him. And he was put into the lion's den. But the emperor came to him and said, Daniel, the God whom you serve, can he deliver you? Praise God.

The God of Daniel is the God Almighty. We have no excuse. We cannot say, well, I'm too busy.

Well, I'm too busy to make a living. I'm too busy with my family. I'm too busy with this and too busy with that.

So I have no time to serve God. Now, can you compare with Daniel? He was the prime minister of the greatest empire in the world. And even the emperor, the king, recognized that he served God.

So no matter in what avocations you may be, remember, you are priests. You are separated for one thing and one thing only. You are separated to serve the living God.

Dear brothers and sisters, I don't know how to emphasize this point. I pray that the spirit of God will impress this thought into your very heart. I pray that the spirit of God will impress this thought into your very heart.

Because, brothers and sisters, this is most basic in our Christian service. Especially when we think that our Lord is coming soon. We do not know how many days we have.

And should the Lord come today, how can we face Him? Are we prudent and faithful? Or are we foolish and lazy? So, dear brothers and sisters, I think this time we are going to really be serious about this matter of serving God. Now, how can we serve God in the way that will really be according to His heart? Now, you know that the character of service is based upon the object of service. If you are serving man, then you have to know what is the character of the man whom you serve.

Now, if you know his character, then you can serve him and please him. But, brothers and sisters, we are not serving man. We are serving God.

Therefore, the first thing we need to understand we need to know Him. You know, if we do not know God, if we do not have a first-hand experience of our God, if we do not know His character, if we do not know what He wants and what He hates, if we do not know what He is really after, then how can we serve Him?

We cannot serve Him out of our own mind. We think that this is the way that God should be pleased.

And maybe at the end it will be a great surprise. You remember in the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew chapter 7, the Lord said, some will come to Him and said, Lord, we prophesy in Your Name. We cast out demons in Your Name.

We do wonders and signs in Your Name. And yet the Lord said, I do not know you, you wicked people. Brothers and sisters, that is to say that if we want to serve our Lord, the first and primary thing we have to know Him.

We have to know His character. We have to know His heart. We have to know His purpose, His will.

And unless we do, our service will be rejected. But dear brothers and sisters, our God is the greatest mystery in the whole world. Can you think of any mystery greater than God? Who is able to know Him? Who is able to know His mind? He is so immense, so transcendent.

He is so big. How can we know Him? How can we understand Him? Think of a little ant. Can the little ant understand you? Can the little bird understand you? I remember once when I was in my room.

A bird flew in and that room was filled with glasses and when that bird got in, he realized that he was in the wrong place. So he tried to find a way out and he hit himself on the glasses again and again. I said, little bird, I want to save you.

Just allow me to lay hold of you and lead you out. But the bird does not understand me. He will hit himself until he drops down.

And then I can pick him up and bring him out. Brothers and sisters, with God it is even millions and millions of times more than that. How can we know Him? This is the biggest problem in the universe.

But thank God our God is one who reveals Himself. Now if our God should hide Himself, who will know Him? Who is able to serve Him? Who can please Him? Nobody can. But thank God our God is one who reveals Himself.

You remember Paul said he pleases God to reveal His Son in me. We thank God because He speaks. In the old days He speaks to our fathers through the prophets.

But it is in bits and pieces. But in the last days He speaks to us in His beloved Son. Full revelation has been given.

And He has given us the Holy Spirit. And by the Holy Spirit the Spirit of Truth we are able to know God. We are able to know His heart.

We are able to know what is His delight. We are able to know what is His way. So that we can serve Him in a way that will be satisfying to Him.

Our God is the Living God. Therefore whoever serves Him must serve Him in life. You cannot serve Him by theory.

You cannot serve Him by doctrine. You have to serve Him with life. Our God is Spirit.

Therefore whoever serves Him must serve Him in Spirit. In other words you cannot serve Him just with your mind. No matter how noble thoughts you have He cannot be reached.

You cannot serve Him with your body. Even if you prostrate on the floor thinking that you are worshipping and serving Him. God is not served.

You have to serve Him in Spirit. Our God is Truth. Therefore we must serve Him in Truth.

God's Word is the Truth. We cannot serve Him outside of God's Truth. Our God is Heavenly.

We cannot use earthly ways to serve Him. We can use the way of the world to temporarily seem to be successful. But that is only a work.

Maybe a religious work. But God is not served. So dear brothers and sisters I think we need to have a very fundamental change in our thought.

We have to serve God by knowing Him. The more you know Him the more you serve Him. Thank God when we read the Word of God.

The Bible is the revelation of our God. It is the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a living book.

In this Word of God we are able to know what is His heart. We are able to know what He is really after. Therefore it is most important brothers and sisters that we have to meditate study the Word of God.

We have to depend on the Holy Spirit to reveal the Word to us. We have to read the Word of God to the extent that we begin to see Christ. Because this is the only way to serve God.

But our God is living. So when we are trying to find the blueprint of service we find that often times He would illustrate that blueprint through living people. The Bible is full of biographies because God is a living person.

So He often times puts His thought into the lives of living people that through them we may have a glimpse of God's thought that we may know how to serve God that will please Him. Now you know when you read the Old Testament there is a person that stands out as the servant of God. I think everybody knows that's Moses.

God said Moses my servant. You remember in Numbers Chapter 12 when Moses' sister and brother Aaron they began to speak against Moses. They said well does God speak to Moses alone? Does He not speak to us also? And you remember how God came to their midst.

He called Moses, Aaron and Miriam to Him. And God said if there is a prophet I will reveal Myself in a vision. I will speak to him in a dream.

But not My servant Moses. He is faithful in all My house. I speak to him mouth to mouth openly.

And not with riddles. And he has even seen My form. So brothers and sisters in the Old Testament you find Moses is a living example of God's blueprint of service.

If we want to learn how to serve we have to learn from the life of Moses. We know Moses was born under the sentence of death. Because Pharaoh gave order all the male child must be drowned.

And Moses was born at that time. So he was born with the sentence of death over him. But thank God he was delivered as it were out of water.

That is the name of Moses. So Moses was one who was delivered out of death. Because God has a purpose on his life.

And Moses became the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He lived in the palace. The Bible tells us that he learned all the learnings of Egypt.

He was great in work and in words. But thank God his mother when his mother was feeding him somehow put into his little heart that God has a purpose on his life. So he felt that he had the mission from God to deliver the children of Israel.

And he had the heart to serve God's purpose. And he had the heart to serve God's purpose. So when he was 40 years old he went out to visit his own brother.

And you remember how he saw an Egyptian was beating in Israel. So he looked here and there there was nobody there so with his might he beat that Egyptian to death. And the next day he went out again to see his brother.

And he saw two Hebrews they were struggling with each other. And he was mighty in speech. So he said you are brothers why do you fight each other? He thought that his brother will understand.

But he the one pushed him aside and said who make you our judge? You want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian like yesterday? So the thing was known to Pharaoh. So Moses had to flee for his life. Brothers and sisters you see here is a person who has the heart to serve God.

He tried to use his own might tried to use his own eloquence to save his people. And he was a complete failure. God did not accept that kind of service.

So he fled and for forty years he was in the wilderness and shepherding some sheep. When he was eighty years old he was shepherding the flock and he saw a thorn bush burning. Now in the wilderness a thorn bush will catch fire very easily.

Because it is so dry. It is so hot. So the thorn bush would burn by itself.

And after it was burned it was so consumed. But he saw a thorn bush was burning but it was not consumed. Now that's a miracle.

So he went forward to look at it. And a voice came out of the burning bush. This is holy ground.

Take off your shoes. God was in that burning bush. And God revealed his heart to Moses.

Go to Egypt and deliver my people. Brothers and sisters here you find Moses. Forty years ago he had a heart to serve God.

And he used his might he used his eloquence to serve. All he had learned from Egypt to serve. You cannot serve God that way.

He was completely rejected. He was a total failure. Thank God for that.

What if he should succeed? It took another forty years to unlearn everything he learned in Egypt. He lost his might he lost his eloquence. Where will be his eloquence speaking to a few dumb sheep? He lost his eloquence.

He said, I cannot speak. That's true. Who am I to go and save the people? I'm a total failure.

Brothers and sisters but God gave him a vision. It's the vision of the burning bush. Moses you are not a cedar tree.

You are just a bush. Not only a bush but it's burning. You're destined to be destroyed.

You're completely useless. But I'm with you. I'm refining you and I'm able to use you because I'm with you not by might nor by power but by my spirit says the Lord.

And Moses went back and brothers and sisters when he delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt he was 80 years old. Moses wrote Psalm 90. He said if a man can live to 70 years if he's strong he can live to 80 years old.

It means that 80 years is the end of that life. But at the end of his life God began. This is the way that God will work with each and every one of us.

And thank God Moses was faithful in all God's house. In what way? You know God ordered Moses to build a tabernacle. God said build me a sanctuary there I may dwell in.

Now Moses was a great architect. To build a tabernacle that's nothing. He could build a pyramid and yet God told him in minute detail everything has to be done according to the pattern on the mountain.

God did not give Moses any liberty and Moses was faithful. He did everything according to God's command. That's faithfulness.

So this is Moses. Brothers and sisters if we want to serve God we have to walk in the way of Moses. Then if we turn to the New Testament brothers and sisters in the New Testament you'll find among God's servants there is one that really stands out and I think everybody knows that must be Paul.

Now who was this man? This man was a most unusual young man. He was born with perfect credentials. He was a pure Israelite.

With most young people they will go out to the world seeking advance in the world. But this man was different. Somehow he had a sense of destiny.

He was not seeking all the riches pleasure of this world like most young people. He was seeking to know God. So therefore you'll find when he was very young probably after he had his Bar Mitzvah he went to Jerusalem and sat at the feet of Gamaliel.

And Gamaliel at that time was the greatest rabbi in Israel. And this man young man learned from Gamaliel. He became a Pharisee.

Now today we have very poor idea about a Pharisee. But you know Pharisee in the strictest sense. Pharisees are those who not only study the Bible they also keep every letter of the Word.

And more than that they keep all the traditions of the Father. All the interpretations of the Father. And interpretation upon interpretation.

And this young man so far as the letter of the law was concerned he was perfect. He was more advanced than his contemporaries. And he was so zealous for the tradition of the Father.

Then he became a chief enemy of the disciples of our Lord Jesus. All the time he was thinking he was serving God. Why? Because he was in darkness.

His mind was darkened by the traditions of the Fathers. He served God without vision without revelation from above. What a disservice he did to God.

The God of wrong is hot. God knew his heart was true. So God allowed him to go just as far.

When he was on his way to Damascus to seize upon those people of the way to bring them to Jerusalem and to condemn them suddenly a light brighter than the noon they saw suddenly that light shone upon him he was smitten by that light and he heard a voice Saul Why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the good. It was not a condemning voice not an angry voice it was a voice full of sympathy and tenderness. Saul Why don't you do that? You are hurting yourself.

And Saul said Lord, who are you? He did not know him. He thought Jesus of Nazareth is a rebel and needs to be persecuted and wiped out. He did not realize that Jesus of Nazareth is the King of Kings and the Lord of all.

But he completely surrendered. And after he completely surrendered himself the Lord began to raise him up and use him mightily. His name formerly was Saul short for now he changed his name to Paul little nothing brothers and sisters he was entrusted with the mysteries of God through the centuries.

He was entrusted with the mystery of God. The mystery of God he said is Christ. If you want to know God you must know Christ.

Because all that is of God is in Christ. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily. And we are completing Him.

He was entrusted with the mystery of the Christ. And that is the church the body of Christ. He was entrusted with the mystery of the gospel.

The mystery of the gospel is that God Christ dwells in you the hope of glory. And how God used him and how faithful he was. So brothers and sisters to serve a living God is by a living person.

A living person that knows Christ is able to serve the living God. But the real blueprint of spiritual service the perfect blueprint is neither Moses nor Paul. It is Christ Jesus.

Our Lord Jesus is the perfect servant of God. You know in Philippians chapter 2 He that is our Lord Jesus is equal with God. And this is not something to be grasped at.

In other words our Lord Jesus is one with God. He is God. He is equal with God.

Share all the riches and glory of God. He is the beloved son of the Father. And yet he emptied himself.

Brothers and sisters how much riches in you and me there can be emptied? Very little or nothing. But our Lord Jesus all the fullness of the good of God dwells in him. And yet he emptied himself.

Of course he cannot empty himself of his deity because he is God. He is forever God. But all the glory and honour he poured out.

Now why did he do that? He did it because unless he did it he cannot be the servant of God. He was equal with God. But for the sake of God's eternal purpose for the sake of God's love towards mankind he was willing to empty himself of all the glory and honour attached to Godhead.

He came into this world to take the form of a bond slave. A bond slave brothers and sisters. A slave that is bonded for life.

Whose slave he was? God. He was willing to take a lower place and submit himself completely to God the Father. He was obedient even unto death and that the death of the cross.

Brothers and sisters this is the typical servant. This is the blueprint of servanthood. Before our Lord Jesus was crucified he came to Jerusalem for the last time.

People welcomed him. People thought that King of Israel had come. Not only the Jewish people flocked to him even some Greeks wanted to see him.

So they came to Philip. They said we want to see Jesus. So Philip and Angel came to the Lord telling our Lord now even the Greeks want to see you.

Now this is the time of your glory and you know what our Lord Jesus said. Verily verily I say unto you unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground and die it abides alone. If he dies he produces much fruit.

He that loves his life shall lose it and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. The life here is our soul life. If we are willing to lay down ourselves we will gain it to eternity.

That is the way that our Lord shows us. If anyone saw me the Lord said let him follow me. So brothers and sisters I think the way is very clear.

If we really want to serve God the Lord said follow me. Wherever I go you go. Thank God that in the last days there will be a people who will follow the lamb wherever he goes.

Most people will follow the lamb to a certain extent. If the way is smooth if the way is proper follow if it means death to yourself it is too hard. Who can hear it? But thank God there will be a people who are being constrained by the love of Christ that they are willing to follow the lamb wherever he goes.

And brothers and sisters these are the people who really serve God. And the Lord said my father will honor them. So may the Lord help us.

Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father we are ever grateful to thee that thou hast not only saved us but thou are even willing to allow us to serve you. What an honor what a glory but Lord we confess we are all unprofitable servants have mercy upon us.

We pray that in these days thou will open heaven to us reveal thy beloved son to us in such a way that we may follow him. We ask in thy precious name.

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