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**Serving Jesus**

John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be (see John 14:2-3): if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

According to this text, we must serve Jesus. This is the only way we will be with Jesus in the hereafter, the only way we will be honored by God, thus the only way we will be saved by God.

Illustration: Jesus is the “King of Kings, and Lord and Lords” (Rev 19:16). You can believe a king exists, but serving that king is another matter. In 1776 the 13 colonies believed the King of England existed, but they didn’t want to serve him.

**What does it mean to serve Jesus?**

And according to the text, the way we serve Jesus, is by following Him. But we can't follow him around literally from place to place like his apostles did, so we follow him by following his teachings, obeying His word.

Let’s talk about some aspects of serving Jesus …

we are commanded to serve God and Him only - Matt 4:10 - ... Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou **serve**.

we have to put Jesus before money/anything - Matt 6:24 - No man can **serve** two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot **serve** God and mammon.

we serve God with fastings and prayers - Luke 2:37 - And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but **served** God with fastings and prayers night and day.

the greatest Christian is the one who serves the most – Matt 23:11 - But he that is greatest among you shall be your **servant**.

we should serve one another - Gal 5:13 - For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love **serve** one another.

we must quit serving sin - Rom 6:6 - Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not **serve** sin.

**Can we be saved without serving Jesus?**

No, John 12:26 teaches only those who serve Jesus will be in heaven with Jesus, only those who serve Jesus will the Father honor. A lot of preachers say all you have to do is believe in Jesus to be saved, but passages like John 12:26 prove you also have to serve him.

Both belief and obedience are required.

* Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ...

Some don’t take sin serious enough …

A lot of people try to excuse their sin by saying “well everybody sins,” as if that makes it okay.

* Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.
* Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Many say “it doesn’t matter so much if you obey God; all that matters is if you love Jesus.”

* John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.
* John 15:14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Some seem to think God will forgive them even if they don’t repent of (change from) their sin.

* Luke 13:3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

The Old Testament taught the Israelites to serve God:

* Deut 10:12-13 And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to **serve** the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?
* Deut 11:13 … if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you … to love the Lord your God, and to **serve** him with all your heart and with all your soul,
* Deut 13:4 Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall **serve** him, and cleave unto him.
* Josh 22:5 But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law … to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to **serve** him with all your heart and with all your soul.

We should serve the Lord in sincerity and truth.

* Josh 24:14 Now therefore fear the Lord, and **serve** him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood … and serve ye the Lord.

Serving God is a Choice.

* Josh 24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will **serve**; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, … but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

A lot of preachers teach Once Saved Always Saved, but John 12:26 shows that only servants of Jesus will be saved – so if you quit serving Him, then you won’t be saved.

Only those who abide in Jesus' teaching have God, that is, will be saved.

* II John 9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

The very point of doing this lesson is to encourage one another to **SERVE** Jesus - Mal 3:18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. Matt 16:24 … If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.