



Life Groups in Central Telford Parish
Autumn 2016 "Live Like You Mean It"
Week beginning 30th October 2016

Be an obedient (hard working) servant

- **Welcome**

What does being a servant mean to you? Would it be like working in Downton Abbey?
Do you know any who is paid to be a servant? What do they do?

- **Worship**

Read Psalm 96
Hymn - Tell out my soul

- **Word**

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-11.

Verses 1-4. David is taken into Saul's court. This is perhaps a double edged honour. He is honoured by Saul for his military victory and to help in future occasions. But also this allowed Saul to keep a close eye on him, thus would Saul be alerted for any possible revolt. Jonathan's reaction to David is interesting. The word used in verse one, indicates something other than friendship, it signifies some sort of political liaison. This is further indicated by Jonathon handing over his clothes and armour to David, here he was symbolically transferring his right of succession to David. Jonathon in effect made David the heir apparent to Saul. This in turn made Saul angry, suspicious and jealous.

Verses 5-9. Whatever dangerous mission Saul sent David on, he returned victorious. This only aggravated Saul and his relationship with David turned into one of hatred and respect. The song in verse 7 indicates that the people were almost putting David on the same level as Saul and this helped the relationship to deteriorate even further. Why do you think this is? Where does Saul's self-worth come from? Where does David's come from?

Can you think of any occasions when people displayed jealousy and anger towards another person when they were successful or promoted at work? Why do you think that they reacted in that way?

Verses 10-11

What do you think prompted Saul to attack David?

What motivated David to continue to work for Saul when faced with Saul's actions?

- **Walk**

What does being a servant mean to you? Why?

Read John 13:12-17

What sort of example is Jesus showing here?

It may be very difficult for people to receive service, why do you think that is?

In what ways do you provide service to others?

Servant living stands opposed to the primary concerns we see today where the focus of our culture and society is more on our own personal happiness and comfort.

The preoccupation with self today is readily seen in slogans like, “be all you can be” or “experience your potential” and in the titles and subtitles of books like *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life*; *The Total Woman*; *Joy in Sex*, *More Joy in Sex*, and the list goes on and on. While many of these books may contain biblical truth or genuine help in dealing with certain problems people face as human beings, the message, whether explicit or implicit, suggests the prime goal we should be pursuing is our own comfort and the experience of some form of self-expression rather than growth in the character and quality of the life of the Saviour. Simply put, our modern day society, is focused on making satisfaction its goal, indeed, its religion. There is much more concern for self-fulfilment than for pleasing God and truly serving Him and others as seen in the life of Jesus.

Typical of today is the enormous number of how-to-books not just for the secular world, but for the Christian community. These are aimed at directing us to more successful relationships, becoming more of a person, realizing one’s potential, whipping ourselves into shape, improving our diet, managing our money, and on it goes. While many of these things are important and have their place, it does take the focus off what is truly the heart of Christianity—knowing and loving God, and out of that resource and relationship, living as servants in the power of the Spirit according to the example of Christ.

J. Hampton Keathley III on the site Bible.org published in 2004 says: Servanthood is the state, condition, or quality of one who lives as a servant. Further, a servant is first of all one who is under submission to another. For Christians, this means submission to God first, and then submission to one another. Then, as one in submission, a servant is one who seeks to meet the real needs of others or of the person he is serving. To put it another way, servanthood is the condition or state of being a servant to others, of ministry to others rather than the service of self. It means willingly giving of oneself to minister for and to others and to do whatever it takes to accomplish what is best for another.

However, when serving others and their needs, if the underlying motive and goal is some form of self-love, like the praise of others for the service rendered, then one’s service is in reality hypocritical. This type of service is really aimed at serving selfish ends—usually in the futile pursuit of personal significance through something like praise, power, or status.

Christ’s plan and that which produces maximum blessing to the world and the church is servanthood. Just think, if He had come to be served, our redemption could and would never have taken place.

- **Next Time ...**

Go right through the pain barrier 1 Samuel 27. David lives in the land of the Philistines.

