

**Title:** A Life of Faith, A Life of Service

**Passage:** 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

**Introduction:**

*Deacon*

Deacon = “deaconos” = waiter

Acts 6:2

And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.

Philippians 1:1

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

- Two words:
  - deacons = “deaconos” = waiter
  - overseers = “dulas” = bonds slave

*Bonds slave*

Romans 1:1

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

Deuteronomy 15:16-17

But if he says to you, ‘I will not go out from you,’ because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you, then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same.

- a slave who was allowed to go free but instead chooses to be a “bonds slave” to forever serve the master
- voluntary relationship of service, reflecting the person’s love for the master.

1 Timothy 3 (Qualifications of a deacon)

Matthew 20:26-28 (Jesus’ example)

It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

*Key point: the calling of deacon is for every believer*

Romans 12:10-13

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

- we are each called to a life of service

**Passage:** 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

## **Principles from Passage**

### **1. *We come to a place of understanding of our spiritual uniqueness***

*“For the body does not consist of one member but of many.”*

1 Peter 4:10

*As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:*

- we need each other as part of the body of Christ, the church.

Psalms 139:13-16

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

- the wonder and diversity of God's creation is very real, including you and others.

Matthew 20:26-28 (Jesus' example)

It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

- God called us to serve Him and serve one another.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- Christ is glorified when we use our gifts to serve one another.
- Ministry is not just an opportunity of a lifetime but an opportunity for beyond a lifetime (leaving a godly legacy for His glory)

***God is sovereign over our lives and our gifts.***

*“But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.”*

- you are formed and shaped by God to serve Him.

Isaiah 64:8

But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

- analogy of a potter and we are clay reflects absolute truth that God is sovereign and we are created to serve Him.

Philippians 2:5-8 (attitude of humility)

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

***The blessing to serve God is greater than anything the world can provide***

*“On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor”*

Psalms 84:10

For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

- comparison: house of God vs. tent of wickedness
- Question: What are your “tents” of influence and doubt that keep us from serving the house of God?
  - Feelings of inadequacy (see Moses saying “Who am I?”)
  - Feelings of guilt (see David, Psalm 32)
  - Perception of too young or too old

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

Acts 13:36

For David, *after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation*, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption,

- Also see: Parable of Great Banquet - Matthew 22:1-14 (excuses of excluding one self from service of God)
- Question: what are your excuses to not serve?
- Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

Matthew 25:40

And the King will answer them, Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

CT Studd: "Only one life, twill soon be past , only what's done for Christ will last."

Jim Elliott: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."