

# The Response



*Dirt Under the Fingernails*  
Part Two

WHEREAS THE HEATHEN ARE PRONE TO SACRIFICE IN ORDER TO  
OBTAIN MERCY, BIBLICAL FAITH TEACHES THAT THE DIVINE MERCY  
PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR SACRIFICE AS THE FITTING RESPONSE.

(EVERETT F. HARRISON)

## The Train (a fable)

Three passengers enter, proceeding down the center aisle of the passenger car of a train.

MRS. SHIPLEY: Isn't this a beautiful train!

MISS NEWELPOST: Such lovely appointments!

MR. PERIWINKLE: So well made. Strong construction.

They take their seats.

MISS NEWELPOST: And a smooth ride.

MRS. SHIPLEY (*aghast*): But the service is pitiful! Why, last night there was no one to prepare my bed. I waited hours!

MISS NEWELPOST (*nodding her head in agreement*): And this morning my breakfast never came at all.

MR. PERIWINKLE: That's nothing. I had to carry my own bags onto the train—(*wincing*) and me with a bad back!

MRS. SHIPLEY: Obviously they don't think much of their passengers. We really should write a letter to the president of the line.

The conductor enters while they are speaking, passing down the aisle toward them.

MR. PERIWINKLE: They just don't have enough stewards to go around.

MISS NEWELPOST (*noticing the conductor*): There's the conductor! Maybe he can help.

MRS. SHIPLEY (*to MR. PERIWINKLE*): I'm so thirsty. Ask him to get us some tea.

MISS NEWELPOST: And something to eat!

MR. PERIWINKLE (*to the CONDUCTOR*): My good man, would you get us something to drink. Some tea would be nice, (*checking with his companions*) and maybe some breakfast. We are quite famished.

MISS NEWELPOST: Oh yes, please!

CONDUCTOR (*stopping; taken aback; a bit flustered*): My, my... I couldn't do that. No, that wouldn't be right at all.

MRS. SHIPLEY (*aghast*): See here! What do you mean? (*to her companions*) Such impertinence.

CONDUCTOR (*nervously looking around*): Dear, dear... this is unseemly. I thought it was stated clearly in the brochure. (*fumbles for a brochure from an inside pocket; reading*) "First-class passage... no charge for ticket... all necessities provided..." Yes, here it is: "Responsibility for all the above lies completely with the passengers themselves."

(*putting away the brochure; relieved*) Well, that's a relief!

For a minute there I thought we might have a lawsuit on our hands.

(*pause*) You see, you are the stewards. (*turning to go*)

Now, will there be anything else?

MR. PERIWINKLE: Now hold on! This is an outrage!

MRS. SHIPLEY: There must

be some mistake. I would never have agreed to such an arrangement.

MISS NEWELPOST (*with an air of disdain*): We are more accustomed to having people take care of us.

CONDUCTOR: Ah, but you see, you're on "The Train" now. Things are different. You're now a part of the family.

The passengers look at each other, confused, mouthing the word "family."

CONDUCTOR (*with pride*): The Father's train is different from others. It has the finest accommodations—everything the best. It also has the finest engineer and (*preening*) conductor. The engineer and the conductor keep the train rolling perfectly and on time. But the passengers on the train are expected to give of themselves. They have been left in charge of the rest of the family.

MR. PERIWINKLE (*blankly*): Really?

CONDUCTOR: It was on your ticket! (*he takes a ticket from MR. PERIWINKLE; after scanning to locate what he is looking for*) Yes, here it is: 1 Peter 4:10, "Each one has received a special gift; employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (*he returns the ticket*)

MRS. SHIPLEY: But, what can we do?

CONDUCTOR (*pulling out a small pad*): Let's see... Mrs. Shipley, isn't it? Oh yes, I see here that you are an excellent cook. (*she nods her head proudly*) Well then, you can be in charge of our Wednesday night dinners.

MRS. SHIPLEY (*considering, then graciously condescending*): Yes, I could do that once.

CONDUCTOR (*amused*): Once?! (*chuckling*) Why, no, my dear. We will need it every week.

MRS. SHIPLEY (*weakly*): Every week?

CONDUCTOR: He gave you that gift! What have you been doing with it? (*turning to Miss Newelpost; finding her name on his pad*) Now, Miss Newelpost, you're a school teacher. Third grade, correct? (*she nods, pleased*) Perfect! The children on the train are always needing Sunday School teachers. (*Miss Newelpost looks slightly stunned*) It's so important. (*pause; looking further down the list*) Now Mr. Periwinkle. It says here that you are in sales, and that you—

MR. PERIWINKLE (*reaching for his card*): Why yes, we have the finest line of—

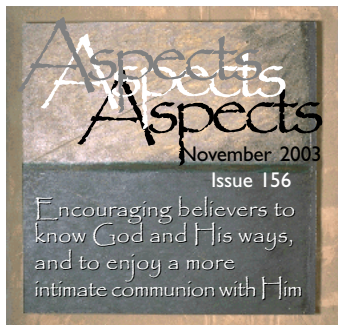
CONDUCTOR (*stopping him*): That's really not necessary. But we can certainly use your talents. You see, we have people in some of the other cars of the train who are brand new to the family. They just got onto the train and are really unsure of their next step. We need people who can go into those cars and speak with the newcomers—help guide them along, as it were. (*Mr. Periwinkle starts to object*) Also, we sometimes actually leave the train to invite others aboard. You'd be perfect!

MR. PERIWINKLE: I—I really wouldn't know what to say to them. I don't think I could.

CONDUCTOR (*incredulous*): You mean, you're refusing?

MR. PERIWINKLE (*indignantly*): I wasn't aware it was a requirement.

CONDUCTOR (*with sad resignation*): It's not. You may ride on the train even if you don't help. (*pause; begins to leave, then turns back; to all three*) But isn't it funny that you are all so eager for the free ride and all the extras that go along with it—but don't want to give



anything of yourselves. Nothing of the abilities that the Father has so freely given you. You didn't have to pay. *(pause)* Well, like I said, there's no obligation. You can stay on the train. *(as he turns to go; sadly)* But He'll be so disappointed.

MR. PERIWINKLE *(after some thought)*: W—wait a minute. Would I have to do it... alone?

CONDUCTOR *(brightening)*: Oh, my no! I'll be there beside you all the time. I'll tell you what to say.

MR. PERIWINKLE *(after a pause to think it over)*: Well, all right. I'll give it a go.

CONDUCTOR *(happily)*: Oh, He'll be so pleased! Come, come everyone. There are others waiting for you.

*All exit, trooping after the Conductor.*

**N**ineveh was a very large city, the capital of Assyria, and in a weakened state from the advancing northern tribes of Urartu. For reasons known only to Him, the Lord God chose to deal with their condition of sin by offering them hope and salvation through the ministry of His prophet, Jonah, son of Amittai.

To say Jonah was reluctant would be an understatement.

*The word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me." But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. Jonah 1:1-3*

God said to go east. Jonah went west.

The old familiar tale of Jonah being swallowed by a fish (not a whale) has been retold in Sunday Schools for centuries. But the real story of the book of Jonah is of a disobedient, petulant—even bigoted—prophet dramatically reluctant to answer God's call to service.

Jonah's reason for fleeing God's presence in the first place is not spelled out for us, but based on his later actions and words regarding the Ninevites, it would follow that because he had no great affection for the people of Nineveh, he therefore saw no good reason to evangelize them for the Lord. His attitude seems to have been: The Israelites already have theirs; let the Ninevites eat cake.

Whatever his motivation for flight, Jonah hopped the first boat heading in the *opposite* direction. But the Lord was having none of it. He threw a fierce storm at them that raged about the ship until every man of the crew was on his knees praying to the deity of his choice for his life.

Through all the turmoil Jonah, the real cause of it all, was down in the hold of the ship either asleep or passed out. The captain, anxious to enlist the aid of every god available, woke Jonah and insisted that he immediately get on his knees to pray to his god. Meanwhile, the crew cast lots to ascertain who among them was responsible for the calamity: whose god was angry at whom? Not surprisingly, the lot fell to Jonah. He was the man.

They descended on the hapless prophet, demanding that he explain himself.

*He said to them, "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land." Then the men became extremely frightened and they said to him, "How*

*could you do this?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. So they said to him, "What should we do to you that the sea may become calm for us?"—for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy. He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will become calm for you, for I know that on account of me this great storm has come upon you."*

*Jonah 1:9-12*

### A Light Arm-twisting

What is truly remarkable about our God is that even in the midst of His discipline, He still shows mercy. The sailors took Jonah's advice. They picked him up and threw him into the sea. In his own poetic words, Jonah describes what happened next.

*"For You had cast me into the deep,  
Into the heart of the seas,  
And the current engulfed me.  
All Your breakers and billows passed over me.  
Water encompassed me to the point of death.  
The great deep engulfed me,  
Weeds were wrapped around my head.  
I descended to the roots of the mountains.  
The earth with its bars was around me forever,  
But You have brought up my life from the pit,  
O Lord my God." Jonah 2:3,5-6*

Before he could drown, God provided a great fish to save Jonah from the watery depths and, eventually, deliver him to dry land.

Not one to be told twice, Jonah rose from the beach, wrung out his clothes, and made a bee line straight for the city of Nineveh—and what a time of evangelism there was! The thousands of people living there were eager to hear the message. As soon as Jonah told them that unless they repented God would destroy their city, they wasted no time. Young and old, rich and poor alike put on sackcloth and began a fast of repentance and grief over their sins. Even the king rose from his throne and exchanged his fine robes for sackcloth and went outside to sit in ashes. He proclaimed a city-wide fast, calling for every man and beast to repent and turn to the Lord.

And a gracious God heard their cry.

*When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it. Jonah 3:10*



Witnessing God's forgiveness of the people of Nineveh, Jonah was horrified that God would be so quickly generous with lowly gentiles. Sounding very much like one of his predecessors, Elijah, Jonah plopped himself down in the dust and pouted,

*"Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life." Jonah 4:3*



All the way around, Jonah made a poor showing of himself. First he ran away from God's commission. Then, after he reluctantly obeyed and delivered the message to the people of Nineveh, he got angry at God for showing grace toward the repentant people. He was a Jew, one of God's chosen people, and a prophet of the Lord. But when given the opportunity, Jonah showed no enthusiasm for service. *He* had God's salvation, and that was all that mattered.

### God's Tally Sheet

With some of us there is a feeling that since we have accepted Christ as Lord—since we have taken that necessary step to ensure

our eternal salvation—we can now just lean back, rest comfortably in the arms of God's grace, and cast a blind eye to any responsibility in His kingdom. All around us there are souls needing to be introduced to Him, there are jobs to be filled, talents and gifts to be expended in His name—there is so much work to be done within and without the kingdom, but we let it all parade by, as if we've already fulfilled the totality of our responsibilities.

Some of us have become so fearful of the concept of "works" (placing it all too conveniently in a category in opposition to "salvation by grace") that we run screaming from anyone suggesting that we might have such an obligation.

It is true that when we come to Christ there is no bargain struck, no *quid pro quo*. When we repent of our sins in all candor and honesty, the deed is done. That's it. Nothing more is required from us. God does not keep a ledger in which there is a pre-ordained total at the bottom of our personal column; our works are never tallied against that total to see if we will eventually qualify for a place in His eternity.

But just because there is no works-goal that we *must* reach, that is not to say there are not to be works. And that is not to say God keeps no ledger.

*Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.*

*1 Corinthians 3:8-9*

The Lord certainly does tally up our works, and there will come a day when those works will be judged.

*Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 1 Corinthians 3:12-15*

God has gone out of His way to invest Himself in our lives. He literally soiled His hands to create human life in the first place, and He shed His own blood on the cross so that human life might know eternity with Him. Might it be only fitting and proper, then, for each of us to invest something of ourselves in *His* life?

AS LONG AS THERE IS BREATH IN OUR BODIES, LET US SERVE CHRIST. AS LONG AS WE CAN THINK, AS LONG AS WE CAN SPEAK, AS LONG AS WE CAN WORK, LET US SERVE HIM. LET US EVEN SERVE HIM WITH OUR LAST GASP. AND, IF IT BE POSSIBLE, LET US TRY TO SET SOME WORK GOING THAT WILL GLORIFY HIM WHEN WE ARE DEAD AND GONE. LET US SCATTER SOME SEED THAT MAY SPRING UP WHEN WE ARE SLEEPING BENEATH THE HILLOCK IN THE CEMETERY. (CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON)

There was no greater shame for the ancient Hebrew woman than to have failed to give birth. A married woman without children was disgraced in her community, and the recipient of much derision: she was considered cursed of God. A woman with a barren womb had but one prayer on her lips: “O Lord, give me a child!”

At times the shame of barrenness would be compounded by the woman having to live in a home that included a second wife for the husband—one who could and did bear children for him. This was the humiliation borne by Sarai, after Abram had a son by her maid, Hagar. Living in the same household was now a woman who had not only slept with her husband, but who had given him the child she had been unable to provide.

This also was the life for Hannah, wife of Elkanah, from the hill country of Ephraim.

*He had two wives: the name of one was Hannah and the name of the other Peninnah; and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.*

*1 Samuel 1:2*

Year after year Hannah suffered the ridicule of the younger wife.

*Her rival, however, would provoke her bitterly to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb. It happened year after year, as often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she would provoke her; so she wept and would not eat.*

*1 Samuel 1:6-7*

Hannah at least had the love of a good man. Elkanah did his best to compensate for his first wife’s emptiness by doting on her, declaring his devotion to her—even supplying her with double portions when the family would go to the sanctuary for the annual sacrifices. But to no avail; Hannah was still miserable.

One year, while the family worshipped at the temple in Shiloh, Hannah, sick of soul over the Lord’s decision to close her womb, cried out to Him in the privacy of her heart.

*She made a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your*

*maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.” 1 Samuel 1:11*

### A Vow Kept

WHEN I HAVE LEARNT TO LOVE GOD BETTER THAN MY EARTHLY DEAREST, I SHALL LOVE MY EARTHLY DEAREST BETTER THAN I DO NOW. IN SO FAR AS I LEARN TO LOVE MY EARTHLY DEAREST AT THE EXPENSE OF GOD AND INSTEAD OF GOD, I SHALL BE MOVING TOWARDS THE STATE IN WHICH I SHALL NOT LOVE MY EARTHLY DEAREST AT ALL. WHEN FIRST THINGS ARE PUT FIRST, SECOND THINGS ARE NOT SUPPRESSED BUT INCREASED.

(C. S. LEWIS)

### Hannah’s Song of Thanksgiving

*Then Hannah prayed and said,  
“My heart exults in the Lord;  
My horn is exalted in the Lord,  
My mouth speaks boldly against my enemies,  
Because I rejoice in Your salvation.  
There is no one holy like the Lord,  
Indeed, there is no one besides You,  
Nor is there any rock like our God.  
Boast no more so very proudly,  
Do not let arrogance come out of your mouth;  
For the Lord is a God of knowledge,  
And with Him actions are weighed.  
The bows of the mighty are shattered,  
But the feeble gird on strength.  
Those who were full hire themselves out for bread,  
But those who were hungry cease to hunger.  
Even the barren gives birth to seven,  
But she who has many children languishes.  
The Lord kills and makes alive;  
He brings down to Sheol and raises up.  
The Lord makes poor and rich;  
He brings low, He also exalts.  
He raises the poor from the dust,  
He lifts the needy from the ash heap  
To make them sit with nobles,  
And inherit a seat of honor;  
For the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s,  
And He set the world on them.  
He keeps the feet of His godly ones,  
But the wicked ones are silenced in darkness;  
For not by might shall a man prevail.  
Those who contend with the Lord will be shattered;  
Against them He will thunder in the heavens,  
The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;  
And He will give strength to His king,  
And will exalt the horn of His anointed.”*

*1 Samuel 2:1-10*

Vows are easily spoken—especially when one is mired in the depths of despair. Promises are easily made—especially to an invisible God.

How many soldiers under fire have pledged frantic vows to a God who would save their life? How many pilots have uttered vows of devotion, if only a merciful God would help their plummeting plane land safely? How many people have promised generous offerings or commitments of time and resources, if God would only answer in the affirmative their desperate prayer?

And how many people, once God has answered their prayer, and delivered them to a place of safety, have quickly forgotten the pledge?

Hannah kept her vow to the Lord. God answered her prayer, and in due time she gave birth to a son and named him Samuel, which means “heard of God.” As soon as the boy was weaned (two to three years later), Hannah traveled to Shiloh and brought her son to Eli the priest.

*She said, “Oh, my lord! As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the Lord. For this boy I prayed, and the Lord has given me my petition which I asked of Him. So I have also dedicated him to the Lord; as long as he lives he is dedicated to the Lord.” And he worshiped the Lord there.*

*1 Samuel 1:26-28*

Surely there was no possession more precious to Hannah than her

first, long-awaited son, Samuel. All her married life she had prayed for the Lord to permit her to have children of her own. And who would have blamed her if, after all that, she had then held onto her first born.

Yet after all those years of waiting—after all those years of ridicule and shame—her love and devotion for the Lord prevailed, and she gladly gave him back, as a sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise. Under no other compulsion, she offered back to God the very best she had.

## Uncommon Devotion

This kind of selfless devotion and service is not commonplace—but where does it say that the Christian should settle for being common? The very reason for our faith—the unique and selfless death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—demands of us uncommon devotion.

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.*

*2 Corinthians 8:9*

Far too often there is a blandness, a sterility about people's faith. Where holy and eternal God happily digs His hands down into the soil of our lives, getting dirt under His fingernails, far too many of us go out of our way to keep our hands perfectly clean and manicured in His service.

God works through people, and when we serve Him we do so to other people. When we worship Him, we are inevitably drawn closer to those doing the same, and when we serve Him, we do it by serving those who share His name.

This is the essence of the Christian life: Not to receive, but to give.

*But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

*Matthew 20:25-28*

Many people think of the Christian life as a vast warehouse of riches. They think that when they come to Christ and accept that He is the Son of God and their Savior, they are handed over the key to the warehouse where He keeps His wealth. They imagine that once they have inserted the key in the door and entered, they are privileged to a life of unending ease and riches. So long as they remain on earth they may have to deal with the temporal irritations that come their way, but they give little concern to much else, secure in the knowledge that in their pocket they hold the key to the door.

In truth, the Christian life is more like an *apprenticeship*. When a person comes to Christ and accepts Him as Lord of his life, he is given, not a key, but a relationship. The relationship is not one of ease and wealth, but of learning.



Under the tutelage of Christ, we learn of His ways, His methods, His personality, His intentions and purity of heart. We learn that we are to think more highly of others than ourselves; we learn that earthly rewards are fleeting, but heavenly rewards are permanent; and we learn that there is no higher calling than to give of ourselves in His name.

Under Christ's instruction and patient discipline, we slowly—ever so slowly—come to behave like Him, to think like Him, and to look like Him. Words spill from our lips that sound like Him rather than our old selves, and others begin to associate us with Him without being told.

And by living every day with Jesus, we slowly learn His most valuable lesson, that to live the Christian life is to live like *Him*—and to live like Him, is to live with a servant's heart—getting dirt under *our* fingernails.

*...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Hebrews 12:2-3*



## Oswald Chambers on Our Response

WORSHIP IS GIVING GOD THE BEST THAT HE HAS GIVEN YOU. BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU DO WITH THE BEST YOU HAVE. WHENEVER YOU GET A BLESSING FROM GOD, GIVE IT BACK TO HIM AS A LOVE-GIFT. TAKE TIME TO MEDITATE BEFORE GOD AND OFFER THE BLESSING BACK TO HIM IN A DELIBERATE ACT OF WORSHIP. IF YOU HOARD IT FOR YOURSELF, IT WILL TURN INTO SPIRITUAL DRY ROT, AS THE MANNA DID WHEN IT WAS HOARDED. GOD WILL NEVER ALLOW YOU TO KEEP A SPIRITUAL BLESSING COMPLETELY FOR YOURSELF. IT MUST BE GIVEN BACK TO HIM SO THAT HE CAN MAKE IT A BLESSING TO OTHERS.

*For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Romans 14:7-8*

HOW MANY OF US ARE WILLING TO SPEND EVERY BIT OF OUR NERVOUS, MENTAL, MORAL, AND SPIRITUAL ENERGY FOR JESUS CHRIST? THAT IS WHAT GOD MEANS WHEN HE USES THE WORD WITNESS. BUT IT TAKES TIME, SO BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF.

WHY HAS GOD LEFT US ON THIS EARTH? IS IT SIMPLY TO BE SAVED AND SANCTIFIED? NO, IT IS TO BE AT WORK IN SERVICE TO HIM. AM I WILLING TO BE BROKEN BREAD AND POURED-OUT WINE FOR HIM? AM I WILLING TO BE OF NO VALUE TO THIS AGE OR THIS LIFE EXCEPT FOR ONE PURPOSE AND ONE ALONE—TO BE USED TO DISCIPLE MEN AND WOMEN TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST?

MY LIFE OF SERVICE TO THE LORD IS THE WAY I SAY "THANK YOU" TO HIM FOR HIS INEXPRESSIBLY WONDERFUL SALVATION."

*Here for this third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you; for children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? 2 Corinthians 12:14-15*

NATURAL HUMAN LOVE EXPECTS SOMETHING IN RETURN. BUT PAUL IS SAYING, "IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER TO ME WHETHER YOU LOVE ME OR NOT. I AM WILLING TO BE COMPLETELY DESTITUTE ANYWAY; WILLING TO BE POVERTY-STRICKEN, NOT JUST FOR YOUR SAKES, BUT ALSO THAT I MAY BE ABLE TO GET YOU TO GOD." PAUL'S IDEA OF SERVICE WAS THE SAME AS OUR

LORD'S. HE DID NOT CARE HOW HIGH THE COST WAS TO HIMSELF—HE WOULD GLADLY PAY IT. IT WAS A JOYFUL THING TO PAUL.

THE INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH'S IDEA OF A SERVANT OF GOD IS NOT AT ALL LIKE JESUS CHRIST'S IDEA. HIS IDEA IS THAT WE SERVE HIM BY BEING THE SERVANTS OF OTHERS. JESUS...SAID THAT IN HIS KINGDOM THE GREATEST ONE WOULD BE THE SERVANT OF ALL (MATTHEW 23:11). THE REAL TEST OF A SAINT IS NOT ONE'S WILLINGNESS TO PREACH THE GOSPEL, BUT ONE'S WILLINGNESS TO DO SOMETHING LIKE WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET—THAT IS, BEING WILLING TO DO THOSE THINGS THAT SEEM UNIMPORTANT IN HUMAN ESTIMATION BUT COUNT AS EVERYTHING TO GOD. IT WAS PAUL'S DELIGHT TO SPEND HIS LIFE FOR GOD'S INTERESTS IN OTHER PEOPLE, AND HE DID NOT CARE WHAT IT COST. BUT BEFORE WE WILL SERVE, WE STOP TO PONDER OUR PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL CONCERNS—"WHAT IF GOD WANTS ME TO GO OVER THERE? AND WHAT ABOUT MY SALARY? WHAT IS THE CLIMATE LIKE THERE? WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF ME? A PERSON MUST CONSIDER THESE THINGS?"

ALL THAT IS AN INDICATION THAT WE HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT SERVING GOD. BUT THE APOSTLE PAUL HAD NO CONDITIONS OR RESERVATIONS. PAUL FOCUSED HIS LIFE ON JESUS CHRIST'S IDEA OF A NEW TESTAMENT SAINT; THAT IS, NOT ONE WHO MERELY PROCLAIMS THE GOSPEL, BUT ONE WHO BECOMES BROKEN BREAD AND POURED-OUT WINE IN THE HANDS OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.



GIVE OF YOUR BEST TO THE MASTER;  
GIVE OF THE STRENGTH OF YOUR YOUTH;  
THROW YOUR SOUL'S FRESH, GLOWING ARDOR  
INTO THE BATTLE FOR TRUTH.  
JESUS HAS SET THE EXAMPLE;  
DAUNTLESS WAS HE, YOUNG AND BRAVE;  
GIVE HIM YOUR LOYAL DEVOTION,  
GIVE HIM THE BEST THAT YOU HAVE.

GIVE OF YOUR BEST TO THE MASTER;  
GIVE HIM FIRST PLACE IN YOUR HEART;  
GIVE HIM FIRST PLACE IN YOUR SERVICE,  
CONSECRATE EVERY PART.  
GIVE, AND TO YOU SHALL BE GIVEN;  
GOD HIS BELOVED SON GAVE;  
GRATEFULLY SEEKING TO SERVE HIM,  
GIVE HIM THE BEST THAT YOU HAVE.

GIVE OF YOUR BEST TO THE MASTER;  
NAUGHT ELSE IS WORTHY HIS LOVE;  
HE GAVE HIMSELF FOR YOUR RANSOM,  
GAVE UP HIS GLORY ABOVE:  
LAID DOWN HIS LIFE WITHOUT MURMUR,  
YOU FROM SIN'S RUIN TO SAVE;  
GIVE HIM YOUR HEART'S ADORATION,  
GIVE HIM THE BEST THAT YOU HAVE.  
(HOWARD B. GROSE)

# The Response

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Aspects is distributed free-of-charge. If you wish to contribute financially toward this ministry, then we want you to know that your contribution will be an encouragement to us, and will be applied toward the expenses of postage and materials. To select your Thank-you Gift, visit our web site contribution page at [HTTP://DLAMPEL.COM/CONTRIB.PHP](http://DLAMPEL.COM/CONTRIB.PHP).

Meanwhile, you are cordially invited to discover the many Christian resources available at our Internet site.

At [HTTP://DLAMPEL.COM/](http://DLAMPEL.COM/) you will find periodicals, e-mail list subscriptions, dramatic resources and completed projects. You may also review all of our His Company scripts, or download them for immediate use. All resources and publications are made available free of charge.

## Periodicals

Aspects is our monthly devotional journal. This multi-page publication has been published since 1990—via the Internet since 1994.

Frequency: Monthly

Editions: Print, Pdf, Ascii

*Seeds of Encouragement* is published every Monday and Friday mornings as a brief, simple reminder of God's presence in our lives.

Frequency: Twice-weekly

Editions: HTML (e-mail only)

*Reflections by the Pond* offers thoughtful considerations of life, nature, and the world in which we live from a Spiritual perspective. It is published every Wednesday.

Frequency: Weekly

Editions: HTML (e-mail only)

## Dramatic Resources

At the His Company web site visitors will find a complete catalogue of dramatic and musical resources that both illustrate Scripture and proclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

All scripts and worship resources are included in their entirety, ready for immediate download.

Editions: Ascii, Pdf

## Download Center

Our Download Center is a one-stop location for archives of all of our publications: *Reflections* booklets, the *In Unison* series, *His Company* scripts—and back issues of *Aspects*. The Download Center can be accessed from our main page—[HTTP://DLAMPEL.COM/](http://DLAMPEL.COM/)—or you can go directly there by entering the following URL in your web browser: [HTTP://DLAMPEL.COM/PAFILEDB3/PAFILEDB.PHP](http://DLAMPEL.COM/PAFILEDB3/PAFILEDB.PHP). Optionally, for year 2002 back issues, go directly to [HTTP://DLAMPEL.COM/PAFILEDB3/PAFILEDB.PHP?ACTION=CATEGORY&ID=10](http://DLAMPEL.COM/PAFILEDB3/PAFILEDB.PHP?ACTION=CATEGORY&ID=10); for year 2001 back issues, go to [HTTP://DLAMPEL.COM/PAFILEDB3/PAFILEDB.PHP?ACTION=CATEGORY&ID=11](http://DLAMPEL.COM/PAFILEDB3/PAFILEDB.PHP?ACTION=CATEGORY&ID=11). We continue to add earlier years, so check back often. And, of course, browse through all categories at our Download Center for more of our resources.

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