

Loris First Baptist Church
“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”

Doctrine #37 – The Church: Her Service and Stewardship

Note: Most information based on pages 247-256 of the book “Major Bible Themes” by Lewis Sperry Chaffer.

A. Her Service Toward God

1. Service is any work performed for the benefit of another. When this theme is traced through the Bible, a series of similarities and contrasts between the Old and New Testaments will be observed.
 - a. Almost every doctrine of the New Testament is anticipated in the Old, and almost every doctrine of the Old Testament is incomplete until perfected in the New.
 - b. The theme of service is no exception; its study will prove to be largely a recognition of the Old Testament type with the New Testament antitype.
2. Service which God appoints, whether of the Old or New Testament order, is committed primarily to a divinely fitted priesthood.
 - a. In the Old Testament order the priesthood was a hierarchy over the nation, and in their service they were under the authority of the high priest.
 - b. In the New Testament order every believer is a priest unto God.

1 Peter 2:5 “*you also, like living stones, ARE BEING BUILT INTO A SPIRITUAL HOUSE to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*”

Revelation 1:6 “*To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us TO BE A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS TO SERVE His God and Father—to Him be glory and power forever and ever!* Amen.”

- 1) The whole ministering company of New Testament priests is under the authority of Christ, who is the true High Priest, of whom all other high priests were but types.
 - 2) Therefore, according to the New Testament order, service is committed to all believers alike and on the ground of their priestly relation to God.
 - 3) In their priestly ministry, the priests of the New Testament, like the priests of the Old Testament, were appointed to serve both God and man.
- c. As there was no evangel to be preached to the nations of the earth, service in the period covered by the Old Testament consisted only of the performance by the priests of the divinely appointed ritual in the Tabernacle or Temple.

d. In contrast with this, the New Testament priestly ministry is much broader in its scope, including not only a service to God and fellow-believers, but to all men everywhere.

1) The service of sacrifice is strikingly similar in both the Old and New Testaments.

a) The Old Testament priest was sanctified or set apart both by the fact that he was born into the priestly family of Levi and by the fact that he, with due ceremony, was inducted into the priestly office, which appointment continued so long as he lived. Likewise, at the beginning of his ministry he was ceremonially cleansed by a once-for-all bathing.

Exodus 29:4 *"Then bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting AND WASH THEM WITH WATER."*

b) In fulfilling the antitype, the believer priest is wholly and once for all cleansed at the moment he is saved and, by virtue of his salvation, is set apart unto God.

Colossians 2:13 *"When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. HE FORGAVE US ALL OUR SINS..."*

Titus 3:5 *"He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us THROUGH THE WASHING OF REBIRTH and renewal by the Holy Spirit..."*

1)) So also, he is set apart by the new birth into the family of God.

2)) In addition to all this, it is peculiarly required of the New Testament priest that he "willingly" dedicate himself to God.

a)) Concerning his self-dedication we read:

Romans 12:1 *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that YOU PRESENT YOUR BODIES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

b)) The phrase, "the mercies of God," refers to the great facts of salvation which have been set forth in the preceding chapters of the Book of Romans, into which "mercies" every believer enters the moment he is saved; while the presentation of the body as a living sacrifice is the self-dedication to the will of God of all that the believer "is" and "has".

3)) That which is thus yielded God accepts and places where He wills in the field of service:

Ephesians 2:10 *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, WHICH GOD PREPARED IN ADVANCE FOR US TO DO."*

3. According to Scripture, this divine act of accepting and placing is “consecration”.

a. Therefore, the believer priest may *dedicate himself*, but never *consecrates* himself, to God.

1) In connection with the divine act of consecration, it should be observed that the present work of Christ as High Priest—receiving, directing, and administering the service of believers—fulfills what was typified by the ministry of the Old Testament priest in the consecration of the sons of Levi.

2) Having yielded to God and being no longer conformed to this world, the believer-priest will experience a transformed life by the power of the indwelling Spirit, and by that power he will make full proof of “what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom. 12:2).

b. According to the New Testament order, priestly service in sacrifice toward God is fourfold:

1) The dedication of “self” which is declared to be a “reasonable service”, or more literally, a “spiritual worship.” As Christ Himself was both the Sacrificer and the Sacrifice, so the believer may glorify God by the offering of his whole body as a living sacrifice to God;

Romans 12:1 “*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, TO OFFER YOUR BODIES AS LIVING SACRIFICES, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act OF WORSHIP.*”

2) The sacrifice of “the lips” which is the voice of praise and is to be offered continually.

Hebrews 13:15 “*Through Jesus, therefore, LET US CONTINUALLY OFFER TO GOD A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE—the fruit of lips that confess His name.*”

3) The sacrifice of “substance”

Philippians 4:18 “*I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus THE GIFTS YOU SENT. They are a fragrant offering, AN ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE, pleasing to God.*”

4) The sacrifice of “good works”

Hebrews 13:16 “*And do not forget TO DO GOOD and to share with others, for with SUCH SACRIFICES God is pleased.*”

4. Referring to the cleansing of the priests, it should be noted again that the Old Testament priest upon entering his holy office was once-for-all cleansed by a *whole* bathing, which was administered by another (Exod. 29:4); afterward, however, though thus wholly bathed, he was required to be cleansed repeatedly by a *partial* bathing at the brazen laver, and this before undertaking any priestly service.

- a. In fulfilling the typical significance of this, the New Testament priest, though wholly cleansed and forgiven when saved, is at all times required to “confess” every known sin in order that he may be cleansed and qualified for fellowship with God.

1John 1:9 *“IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.”*

- b. As the appointment of the Old Testament priest was for life, so the New Testament priest is a priest unto God forever.
5. The service of “worship”, which will be presented at length in a later chapter, may here be considered as part of the service of every believer-priest in the present age, just as it was also a part of the worship and service of every priest in the Old Testament.
- a. As the furnishings of the holy place symbolized the worship of the priest in the Old Testament order, and every feature and furnishing of that place spoke of Christ, so the believer’s worship is by and through Christ alone.
 - b. Again, in service unto God, the believer’s worship may be the offering of oneself to God (Rom. 12:1), the ascribing of praise and thanksgiving to God from the heart (Heb. 13:15), or the sacrificial gifts that are offered to Him.
 - c. In connection with the worship of the Old Testament priests, there were two prohibitions recorded, and these also have typical meaning.
 - 1) No “strange” incense was to be borne - which speaks typically of “mere formality” in service toward God;

Exodus 30:9 *“You shall not offer STRANGE INCENSE on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering; nor shall you pour a drink offering on it.”*

- 2) And no “strange” fire was allowed which symbolizes the substitution of “fleshly emotions” in our service for “true devotion” to Christ by the Spirit, or the love of “lesser things” to the exclusion of the love “for Christ”.

Leviticus 10:1 *“And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered STRANGE FIRE before the LORD, which He commanded them not.”*

1Corinthians 1:11-13 *“My brothers, some from Chloe’s household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, ‘I follow Paul’; another, ‘I follow Apollos’; another, ‘I follow Cephas’; still another, ‘I follow Christ.’ IS CHRIST DIVIDED? Was Paul CRUCIFIED for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?”*

Colossians 2:8 *“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world RATHER THAN ON CHRIST.”*

Colossians 2:16-19 “Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. THESE ARE A SHADOW OF THINGS that were to come; the reality, however, IS FOUND IN CHRIST. Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. HE HAS LOST CONNECTION WITH THE HEAD, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.”

6. The service of intercession, also to be considered in a later chapter, is an important function of the believer-priest.
 - a. As the prophet is God’s representative to the people, so the priest is the people’s representative to God.
 - b. As the priesthood is a divine appointment, the necessary access to God is always provided; however, no priest of the old dispensation was permitted to enter the holy of holies other than the high priest, and he but once a year on the ground of sacrificial blood.

Hebrews 9:7 “*But only the high priest entered the inner room, AND THAT ONLY ONCE A YEAR, AND NEVER WITHOUT BLOOD, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.*”

- c. In this dispensation Christ as High Priest has through “His own blood” now entered into the heavenly sanctuary and is interceding for His own who are in the world.

Hebrews 4:14-16 “*Therefore, since we have A GREAT HIGH PRIEST who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*”

Hebrews 9:24 “*For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; HE ENTERED HEAVEN ITSELF, now to appear for us in God’s presence.*”

Hebrews 10:19-22 “*Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS, a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*”

Romans 8:34 “*Who is he that condemns? CHRIST JESUS, WHO DIED—more than that, who was raised to life—IS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD and is also interceding for us.”*

Hebrews 7:25 “*Therefore He is able to save completely those WHO COME TO GOD THROUGH HIM, because He always lives to intercede for them.*”

- 1) When Christ died, the veil of the temple was rent—which signifies that the way into the holiest is now open, not to the world, but to all who come unto God on the ground of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10:19-22 *“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS, a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.”*

- 2) Having unhindered access to God because of the blood of Christ, the New Testament priest is thus privileged to minister in intercession.

Romans 8:26-27 *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but THE SPIRIT HIMSELF INTERCEDES FOR US with groans that words cannot express. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOD’S WILL.”*

1Timothy 2:1 *“I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, INTERCESSION and thanksgiving be made for everyone...”*

Colossians 4:12 *“Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. HE IS ALWAYS WRESTLING IN PRAYER FOR YOU, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.”*

B. Service Toward Man

1. There is a divine arrangement in the order of the truth as found in Romans 12:1-8.
 - a. Here, as in all Scripture, Christian service is not mentioned until the great issues of dedication and consecration are presented.
 - b. Immediately following the message concerning these fundamental issues, the subject of divinely bestowed gifts for service is introduced, and in this connection it is important to observe the wide difference between the biblical use of the word “gift” and that meaning given to it in common everyday speech.
 - 1) A “gift” is generally understood to refer to some native ability, received by birth, enabling one to do special things.
 - 2) According to the “scriptural” use of the word, a gift is a ministry of the indwelling Spirit.
 - a) It is the Spirit performing a service and using the believer as an instrument.
 - b) In no sense is it something which is wrought by the believer alone, or even by the believer when assisted by the Spirit.

- c. Christian “service” is said to be a “manifestation of the Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:7), just as Christian “character” is a “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22-23).

1Corinthians 12:7 “Now to each one THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT is given for the common good.”

Galatians 5:22-23 “But THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

- 1) Though every believer possesses some divinely bestowed gift, there is a diversity of gifts.

1Corinthians 12:7 “Now TO EACH ONE the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”

Ephesians 4:7-8 “But TO EACH ONE OF US grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: ‘When He ascended on high, He led captives in his train and GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.’”

Romans 12:6 “WE HAVE DIFFERENT GIFTS, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.”

1Corinthians 12:4-11 “There are DIFFERENT KINDS OF GIFTS, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, BUT THE SAME GOD WORKS ALL OF THEM IN ALL MEN. Now TO EACH ONE the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and HE GIVES THEM TO EACH ONE JUST AS HE DETERMINES.”

Ephesians 4:11 “It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers...”

- a) Christians are not all appointed to do the same thing.

NOTE: In this there is a contrast with the “priestly office” of all believers in which *all* believers sacrifice, worship, and intercede.

- b) Though certain representative gifts which are general are named in Scripture (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-11; Eph. 4:11) and though some of these have evidently ceased (1 Cor. 13:8), it is probable that the ministry of the Spirit through the believers is as varied as the circumstances in which they are called to serve.

1Corinthians 13:8 “Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, THEY WILL CEASE; where there are tongues, THEY WILL BE STILLED; where there is knowledge, IT WILL PASS AWAY.”

- 2) Gifts are bestowed that the servant of God may be “profitable” (1 Cor. 12:7), and it is therefore implied that service which is wrought in the energy of the flesh is not profitable.
 - a) The Spirit’s manifestation in the exercise of a gift is as “rivers of living water” (John 7:37-39) and is the realization of those “good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10).
 - b) Without being urged, Spirit-filled believers are constantly active in the exercise of their gifts.
2. Carnal believers, though possessing a gift, are not active in its exercise, nor do they respond to human exhortations.
 - a. However, when they become adjusted to God by confession of sin, yieldedness of life, and a walk in dependence on the indwelling Spirit, “immediately” they are Spirit-filled and as a result they *desire* to do the will of God and by His sufficient power working in them become profitable in that service to which they have been before ordained of God.
 - b. Christians are NOT Spirit-filled “because” they are active in service; they are active in service “because” they are Spirit-filled.
3. Likewise, it is sometimes the will of God that all activity cease and that the weary servant rest.

Mark 14:41 “*And He cometh the third time, and said unto them, ‘SLEEP ON NOW, and TAKE YOUR REST: it is enough...’*”

C. Her Stewardship

1. The Christian’s responsibility in stewardship may be considered under three phases:
 - a) Earning money,
 - b) Possessing money,
 - c) Giving money.
2. Since money earned by toil is human life in concrete form, and since money however gained is a vital factor in both spiritual and material progress, the child of God must face his responsibility as a steward for which he will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ.

Romans 14:10-12 “*You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? FOR WE WILL ALL STAND BEFORE GOD’S JUDGMENT SEAT. It is written: ‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.’ So then, EACH ONE OF US WILL GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF TO GOD.”*

3. Too often money is acquired, held, or given by the child of God without due recognition of that fundamental relationship which he sustains to God.

4. A more detailed breakdown of a Christian's responsibility in reference to the three phases of "financial" stewardship includes:

a. The "earning of money" for a Christian must be in a manner worthy of a Christian's relationship to God.

1) As the command admonishes us, "whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31), it is divinely arranged that all shall engage in "meaningful work" and the Christian is not excepted.

Genesis 3:19 "BY THE SWEAT OF YOUR BROW YOU WILL EAT YOUR FOOD until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

2 Thessalonians 3:10 "For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: 'IF A MAN WILL NOT WORK, HE SHALL NOT EAT.'"

2) However, to the spiritual, instructed believer, labor is more than merely earning a living; it is doing the will of God.

a) Every employment, be it ever so menial, should be accepted by the child of God as a specific appointment from God, and to be done *for* Him, else not done at all.

b) The incidental fact that God is pleased to give His child food and raiment through daily labor should not obscure the greater truth that God in infinite love is committed to the care of His children, and this without reference to their earning power.

Philippians 4:19 "And my God WILL MEET ALL OF YOUR NEEDS according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

Hebrews 13:5 "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, Never will I leave you; NEVER WILL I FORSAKE YOU."

c) The saying "God provides for those only who cannot provide for themselves" is untrue. He cares for His own at all times, since all that they have is from Him.

1 Samuel 2:7 "THE LORD SENDS POVERTY AND HEALTH; He humbles and He exalts."

3) In relationships among men there are agreements and salaries to be recognized, for "the laborer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7); but in relation to his Father, the Christian's highest ideal concerning his toil is that whatever he does, he does at the appointment of his Father, for His sake, and as an expression of devotion to Him.

Colossians 3:22-24 "Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart AND REVERANCE FOR THE LORD. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, AS WORKING FOR THE LORD, NOT FOR MEN, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

- a) Likewise, whatever is received is not *earned*, but is rather the expression of the Father's loving care.
 - b) Such an attitude is not sentimental or impractical; it is the only basis upon which the believer can sanctify all his toil by doing it for the glory of God, or be able to "rejoice evermore" (1 Thess. 5:16) in the midst of the burdens of life.
- b. The "possessing" of money becomes a great responsibility for any sincere Christian.
- 1) In view of the appalling need on every hand and the unmeasured good that money may accomplish, every spiritual Christian must face the practical question relative to retaining property in his own possession.
 - a) It is doubtless often the will of God that property shall be kept in store; but the yielded Christian will not *assume* this.
 - b) His property should be held only as God directs, and it should be subject to His control.
 - 2) The motives which actuate men both rich and poor—the desire to be rich, the desire to provide against a day of need, and the desire to provide for others—are commendable only as they fulfill the specifically revealed will of God in each individual's life.

1Timothy 6:8-9 *"But if we have food and clothing, WE WILL BE CONTENT WITH THAT. People who WANT TO GET RICH FALL INTO TEMPTATION AND INTO A TRAP and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men INTO RUIN AND DESTRUCTION."*

1Timothy 6:17-18 *"Command those who are rich in this present world NOT TO BE ARROGANT NOR PUT THEIR HOPE IN WEALTH, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, AND TO BE GENEROUS AND WILLING TO SHARE."*

James 1:11 *"For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, THE RICH MAN WILL FADE AWAY even while he goes about his business."*

Hebrews 13:5 *"KEEP YOUR LIVES FREE FROM THE LOVE AND MONEY and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'"*

Philippians 4:11 *"I am not saying this because I am in need, FOR I HAVE LEARNED TO BE CONTENT WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES."*

Matthew 6:25-34 *"Therefore I tell you, DO NOT WORRY ABOUT YOUR LIFE, WHAT YOU WILL EAT OR DRINK; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. BUT SEEK FIRST His kingdom and His righteousness, AND ALL THESE THINGS WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU AS WELL. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."*

c. The “giving” of money which a Christian has earned becomes an important aspect of any believer’s service for God.

1) Self and money are alike the roots of much evil, and in the dispensing of money, as in its acquisition and possession, the Christian is expected to stand upon a grace relationship to God.

a) This relationship presupposes that he has first given himself to God in unqualified dedication; and a true dedication of self to God includes all that one is and has—his life, his time, his strength, his ability, his ideals, and his property.

2 Corinthians 8:5 “*And they did not do as we expected, BUT THEY GAVE THEMSELVES FIRST TO THE LORD and then to us in keeping with God’s will.”*

1 Corinthians 6:20 “*you were bought at a price. THEREFORE HONOR GOD WITH YOUR BODY.”*

1 Corinthians 7:23 “*You were bought at a price; DO NOT BECOME SLAVES OF MEN.”*

1 Peter 1:18-19 “*For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold THAT YOU WERE REDEEMED FROM THE EMPTY WAY OF LIFE HANDED DOWN TO YOU FROM YOUR FOREFATHERS, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”*

b) In matters pertaining to the giving of money, the “grace principle” involves the believer’s recognition of God’s sovereign authority over all that the Christian is and has, and contrasts with the Old Testament legal system of “tithing” which was in force as a part of the law until the law was done away with.

John 1:16-17 “*From the fullness of HIS GRACE we have all received one blessing after another. For THE LAW was given through Moses; GRACE AND TRUTH CAME THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.”*

Romans 6:14 “*For sin shall not be your master, BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE.”*

Romans 7:1-6 “*Do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to men who know the law—that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, SHE IS RELEASED FROM THAT LAW and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man. So, my brothers, YOU ALSO DIED TO THE LAW through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. But now, by dying to what once bound us, WE HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM THE LAW so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, AND NOT IN THE OLD WAY OF THE WRITTEN CODE.”*

Galatians 3:19-25 *“What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one. Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge **TO LEAD US TO CHRIST** that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, WE ARE NO LONGER UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE LAW.”*

Galatians 5:18 *“But if you are led by the Spirit, YOU ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW.”*

Ephesians 2:15 *“...by ABOLISHING IN HIS FLESH THE LAW with its commandments and regulations...”*

Colossians 2:13-14 *“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, HAVING CANCELED THE WRITTEN CODE, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; HE TOOK IT AWAY, NAILING IT TO THE CROSS.”*

- 1)) Though certain principles of the law were carried forward and restated under grace, “tithing”, like sabbath observance, is NEVER IMPOSED on the believer in this dispensation.
 - 2)) Since the Lord’s Day superseded the legal sabbath and is adapted to the principles of “grace” as the sabbath COULD NOT BE, so “tithing” has been superseded by a new system of giving which is adapted to the teachings of “grace” as tithing COULD NOT BE.
- 2) Christian giving under grace, as illustrated in the experience of the saints at Corinth, is summarized in 2 Corinthians 8:1—9:15. In this passage we discover:
- a) Christ was their pattern. The Lord’s giving of Himself (2 Cor. 8:9) is the pattern of all giving under grace. He did not give “a tenth”; HE GAVE ALL.
 - b) Their giving was even out of great poverty.
 - 1)) A striking combination of phrases is employed to describe what the Corinthians experienced in their giving (2 Cor. 8:2): “in a great trial of affliction,” “the abundance of their joy,” “their deep poverty abounded,” “the riches of their liberality.”
 - 2)) Likewise, concerning liberality in spite of great poverty, it should be remembered that “the widow’s mite” (Luke 21:1-4), which drew the commendation of the Lord Jesus, was not a part, but “all that she had.”

c) Their giving was not by commandment, nor of necessity.

- 1)) Under the law, a tenth was *commanded* and its payment was a *necessity*; under grace, God is not seeking the gift, but an expression of devotion from the giver.
- 2)) Under grace no law is imposed, and no proportion to be given is stipulated; and, while it is true that God works in the yielded heart both to will and to do His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13), He finds pleasure only in that gift which is given cheerfully, or more literally, “hilariously”.

2 Corinthians 9:7 “*Each man should give WHAT HE HAS DECIDED IN HIS HEART TO GIVE, not reluctantly or under compulsion, FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER.*”

- a)) If a law existed “stipulating” the amount to be given, there are those, doubtless, who would seek to fulfill it, *even against their own wishes*.
 - b)) Thus their gift would be made “grudgingly” and “of necessity.”
 - c)) If it be said that to support the work of the Gospel we must have money whether given hilariously or not, it may also be said that it is not *the amount* which is given, but rather the divine blessing upon the gift that accomplishes the desired end.
- 3)) Christ fed five thousand from five loaves and two fishes.
- a)) There is abundant evidence to prove that wherever the children of God have fulfilled their privilege in giving under grace (i.e. “their entire lunch”), God does miraculous things to reward that type of “freedom” giving (i.e. “not based on forced laws”).
 - b)) This type of liberality in giving can trust in God’s promise to provide abundantly, not only for our needs, but also for our ability to accomplish everything His will desires for us.

2 Corinthians 9:8 “*And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*”

d) The early Christians, first of all, “gave themselves”.

- 1)) Acceptable giving is preceded by a complete giving of oneself (2 Cor. 8:5).
- 2)) This suggests the important truth that giving under grace, like giving under the law, is limited to a certain class of people.
 - a)) Tithing was never imposed by God on any other than the nation Israel.
 - b)) So, Christian giving is limited to believers and is most acceptable when given by believers who have yielded their lives to God.

e) Christians in the early church also gave systematically.

1)) Like tithing, there is suggested systematic regularity in giving under grace.

1 Corinthians 16:2 *“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.”*

2)) This injunction is addressed to “every man” (every Christian man), and thus excuses none; and giving is to be from that which is already “in store.”

f) God sustains the giver.

1)) God will sustain grace-giving with limitless temporal resources.

2 Corinthians 9:8-10 *“And GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE ALL GRACE ABOUND TO YOU, so that in all things at all times, HAVING ALL THAT YOU NEED, you will abound IN EVERY GOOD WORK. As it is written: ‘He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.’ Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food WILL ALSO SUPPLY AND INCREASE your store of seed and WILL ENLARGE the harvest of your righteousness.”*

Luke 6:38 *“GIVE, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN YOU. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, IT WILL BE MEASURED TO YOU.”*

a)) In this connection it may be seen that those who give as much as a tenth are usually prospered in temporal things; but since the believer can have no relation to the law (see Galatians 5:1), it is evident that this prosperity is the fulfillment of the promise under “grace”, rather than the fulfillment of promises under the law.

b)) No blessings are thus dependent on the exact tithing.

2)) The blessings are bestowed because a heart has expressed itself through a gift.

a)) It is manifest that no gift will be made to God from the heart which He will not graciously acknowledge.

b)) There is no opportunity here for designing people to become rich.

c)) The giving must be from the *heart*, and God’s response will be according to His perfect will for His child.

d)) He may respond by bestowing spiritual riches, or in temporal blessings as He divinely shall choose.

g) True riches are from God.

1)) The Corinthian Christians were made rich with heavenly riches.

a)) There is such a thing as being rich in this world's goods and yet not rich toward God.

Luke 12:21 *"This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself BUT IS NOT RICH TOWARD GOD."*

b)) All such are invited to buy of Him that gold which is tried in the fire.

Revelation 3:18 *"I counsel you TO BUY FROM ME GOLD REFINED BY THE FIRE, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see."*

2)) Through the absolute poverty of Christ in His death, all may be made rich.

2 Corinthians 8:9 *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes HE BECAME POOR, so that you THROUGH HIS POVERTY MAY BECOME RICH."*

3)) It is possible to be rich in faith (James 2:5) and rich in good works (1 Tim. 6:18); but in Christ Jesus the believer receives "the riches of his grace", and "the riches of his glory".

Ephesians 1:7 *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with THE RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE..."*

Ephesians 3:16 *"I pray that OUT OF HIS GLORIOUS RICHES He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being..."*

Loris First Baptist Church
“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”

Doctrine # 37 - “The Church: Her Service and Stewardship”

1. Read Pages 1-15 from the Doctrine#37 Study Guide.
2. Answer the following Questions about “The Church” as you read:

a. Her Service Toward God

- 1) What is a good definition of “service”? (page 1, top)

- 2) “Service” that God appoints, whether of the Old or New Testament order, is committed primarily to what?
(page 1, top)

- 3) True or False. Every believer in the New Testament order is a “priest” unto God.
(page 1, middle; 1Peter 2:5; Revelation 1:6)

- 4) The whole company of New Testament priests is under the authority of “who” as their High Priest?
(page 1, bottom)

- 5) In our priestly ministry, as priests of the New Testament, who are we appointed to serve? (page 1, bttm)

- 6) According to Exodus 29:4, what were O.T. priests “cleansed with” at the beginning of their ministry?

- 7) According to Titus 3:5, what are N.T. priests “cleansed with” at the beginning of their ministry?

- 8) What is something that is “peculiarly” required of a New Testament priest? (page 2, middle; Rom 12:1)

- 9) According to Romans 12:1, what is a N.T. believer’s “reasonable service”?

- 10) According to Scripture, God accepts and places His “yielded” N.T. priests where He pleases. This divine act of accepting and placing is called “what”? (page 3, top)

- 11) True or False. A New Testament believer can “consecrate” himself to God and/or “be consecrated” to God by other believers within his church. (page 3, top)

- 12) According to the New Testament order, priestly service is what fourfold “sacrifice” toward God? (page 3, middle-bottom; Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:15-16; Philippians 4:18)

- 13) What must a faithful N.T. priest do on a regular basis to keep himself “cleansed” and “qualified” for fellowship and service to God? (page 4, top; 1John 1:9)

- 14) In connection with the worship of the O.T. priests, there are two (2) prohibitions recorded which also apply “typically” to N.T. priests. What are these two and how do they apply today? (page 4, middle-bottom; Exodus 30:9; Leviticus 10:1; 1Cor 1:11-13; Colossians 2:8, 16-19)

- 15) In this dispensation, Christ as our High Priest has entered into the “heavenly sanctuary” and is “interceding” for His own who are in the world by “what” means? (page 5, middle; Hebrews 10:19-22)

16) When Christ died, the veil of the temple was “rent” (i.e. “torn in two from top to bottom”). What does this signify to us believers living today? (page 6, top; Hebrews 10:19-22)

17) Having “unhindered” access to God because of the blood of Christ, what does the New Testament priest have the privilege to participate in as a minister to others? (page 6, top; 1Timothy 2:1; Colossians 4:12)

B. Service Toward Man

1) What is a “gift” in references to how that word is used in Scripture such as Romans 12:1?
(page 6, bottom)

2) True or False. A church performs “best” when they can find “gifted” people who are intelligent, hard working, and experienced in accomplishing great things (outside of the church) who can use their special natural abilities to work for God with the assistance of prayer and the Holy Spirit. (page 6, bottom)

3) According to 1Corinthians 12:7, true Christian “service” is said to be “what”?

4) True or False. There are many different “spiritual gifts” and “every” believer has been given at least “one” spiritual gift to be used in service for the common good of God’s church.
(page 7, top; 1Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:7-8; Romans 12:6; 1Corinthians 12:4-11)

5) True or False. According to 1Corinthians 13:8, some of the original “spiritual gifts” that were manifested in the early church (i.e. “prophesying”, “tongues”, etc.) were “ceased”.

6) Christians are NOT Spirit-filled “because” they are active in service, they are active in service “because” of why? (page 8, middle)

7) True or False. The only “rest” from their priestly ministry that N.T. priests should seek is when they “die” and get to “rest” in heaven. (page 8, middle; Mark 14:41)

c. Her Stewardship

1) What are the three phases of the Christian’s responsibility in financial “stewardship”? (page 8, bottom)

2) According to Romans 14:10-12, the child of God will be judged according to his faithful financial stewardship “where”? (see also 2Corinthians 5:9-10)

3) In accordance with 1Corinthians 10:31 and 2Thessalonians 3:10, what is something all Christians should be engaged in as an important part of their financial “stewardship”? (see also page 9, top)

4) Every employment for the child of God, be it ever so menial, should be accepted as a specific appointment from God and to be done for “whom”? (page 9, middle; see also Colossians 3:22-24)

5) Whatever a “believer” receives in financial compensation from the employment they are engaged in should NOT be considered “deserved” or “earned”, but rather as an expression of “what”?
(page 10, top)

6) How should ALL money and property be “held” by a “believer” in Jesus Christ? (page 10, top)

- 7) According to 1Timothy 6:8-9, what happens to people who “want to get rich”?

- 8) According to 1Timothy 6:17-18, pastors are told by Paul to “command” those who are *“rich in this present world”* NOT *“to be arrogant nor put their hope in wealth”*. Instead, what did Paul want pastors to “command” those that are rich TO DO?

- 9) According to Hebrews 13:5, why are we told to *“keep our lives free from the love of money and to be CONTENT with what we have”* ?

- 10) Self and money are alike the roots of much evil, and in the dispensing of money, as in its acquisition and possession, the Christian is expected to do “what”? (page 11, top)

- 11) Before a Christian decides what amount of money he is going to “give” to God, what should he decide to “give” first? (page 11, top; 2Corinthians 8:5; 1Corinthians 6:20)

- 12) According to Romans 6:14, even when it comes to “giving of money”, believers are NOT under “the Law”, but under “what”? (see also Galatians 5:18)

- 13) True or False. Though certain principles of the law were carried forward and restated under grace, “tithing”, like Sabbath observance, is NEVER IMPOSED on the New Testament believer who is under “grace”. (page 12, middle; Ephesians 2:15; Col 2:13-14)

- 14) The Lord’s giving of Himself is the pattern of all giving under grace (see 2Corinthians 8:9). Jesus Christ did not give a “tenth”, He gave “what”? (page 12, bottom; see 2Corinthians 8:2; Luke 21:1-4)

- 15) Under the law, a tenth was commanded and its payment a necessity; but under “grace”, God is not seeking the “gift”, but “what” from the giver? (page 13, top)
- 16) True or False. Under the N.T. principle of “grace giving”, every believer should give a “tenth” of all income he receives in keeping with the O.T. law of “tithing”.
(page 13, top; 2Corinthians 9:7)
- 17) According to 2Corinthians 9:7, HOW MUCH should “each believer” give to the Lord?
- 18) According to 2Corinthians 9:7, what type of “giver” does the Lord “love”?
- 19) When someone gives money to the church based on what they think is “stipulated” by a “law”, there are those who, doubtless, would seek to fulfill it “how”? (page 13, top-middle; 2Corinthians 9:7)
- 20) If it is said that to support the work of the Gospel we must have money (regardless of giving willingly or not), it may also be said that it is NOT the “amount” which is given, but rather “what” accomplishes the desired end if anything “meaningful” is going to be accomplished for God? (page 13, middle)
- 21) There is abundant evidence to prove that wherever children of God have fulfilled their “privilege” in giving “under grace”, God does “what”? (page 13, middle; 2Corinthians 9:8)
- 22) Acceptable “giving” to God must be “preceded” by what? (2Corinthians 8:5)

- 23) True or False. "Tithing" was never imposed by God on any other nation than Israel. (page 13, btm)
- 24) According to 2Corinthians 9:8-10 and Luke 6:38, God will sustain the "grace" giver with "what"?
- 25) True or False. There is such a thing as being "rich" in this world's goods and yet NOT rich toward God. (page 15, top; see also Luke 12:21)
- 26) It is possible to be rich "in faith" and rich in "good works", but in Christ Jesus the believer receives "what"? (Ephesians 1:7, 3:16)