

Serve Others

II Corinthians 4:5

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“For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake” (II Corinthians 4:5).

Once I heard a statement that went like this: “No man is remembered for what he received, but for what he gave.” I'm not sure that's the exact quote, or who said it, but it struck me as having a ring of truth. Think about that. If you read of a person who inherited a lot of money you don't say, “What a great accomplishment.” But if you hear of a person who, in an effort to serve his fellow man, sacrificed something of his life and possessions, you are impressed.

We remember Dr. David Livingston who left his home in Scotland, where he could have had a life of ease as a physician, and went to Africa and gave all he had including his life. Visitors to Scotland still go to his birthplace and see the house where he was reared, to try to become better acquainted with him through the information and displays that are there. As I walked through those rooms I was struck with the greatness of this man. He was a true servant.

In this verse the Apostle tells us two things that he doesn't do. First: he doesn't talk about himself. Now I've got to admit that there are some people who I try to get to talk about themselves. There are some people who are so interesting that I am eager to find out what makes them tick. I like to hear where they have been, what they've done and what they've learned. I always feel I can learn something from that will help me in my own life. Then there are others whom I try to avoid. They preach themselves. They brag. They have a way of making themselves look big and you look small. Paul said he didn't do that. He preached Christ.

The second thing he didn't do was serve himself. He didn't live for himself. His life was not consumed with himself. His needs, comforts, likes and dislikes did not occupy a central place in his mind. If not, what did? Simple. He thought of ways he could serve others. He was consumed with their spiritual needs and eternal destinies. Again, his motive was not to make himself look good, but to do it for the sake of Christ Jesus His Lord. Therefore, Paul is not remembered for what he received, but for what he gave. He gave himself to the service of Christ, knowing that in this life if we would serve Christ we must serve others.

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