

QUALITY  
OF  
LIFE  
BIBLE  
STUDY



*Service*®

COMPILED BY  
S.MCRAE

## **“SERVICE”** Quality of Life Series

### **LEADER: QUOTE #1**

Source ~ <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/service.htm>

“Most people wish to serve God -- but in an advisory capacity only. “ - Quoted in Sunday Express, London.

### **READER: “Doing the Word”**

Source ~ <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon5/doingtheword.htm>

Chuck Swindoll says, in his book, *Improving Your Serve*:

“To make the value of obedience just as practical as possible, let’s play ‘Let’s Pretend.’ Let’s pretend that you work for me. In fact, you are my executive assistant in a company that is growing rapidly. I’m the owner and I’m interested in expanding overseas. To pull this off, I make plans to travel abroad and stay there until a new branch office gets established. I make all the arrangements to take my family and move to Europe for six to eight months. And I leave you in charge of the busy stateside organization. I tell you that I will write you regularly and give you directions and instructions. I leave and you stay.

Months pass. A flow of letters are mailed from Europe and received by you at the national headquarters. I spell out all my expectations.

Finally, I return. Soon after my arrival, I drive down to the office and I am stunned. Grass and weeds have grown up high. A few windows along the street are broken. I walk into the Receptionist’s room. She is doing her nails, chewing gum and listening to her favorite disco station. I look around and notice the wastebaskets are overflowing. The carpet hasn’t been vacuumed for weeks, and nobody seems concerned that the owner has returned. I asked about your whereabouts and someone in the crowded lounge area points down the hall and yells, “I think he’s down there.” Disturbed, I move in that direction and bump into you as you are finishing a chess game with our sales manager. I ask you to step into my office, which has been temporarily turned into a television room for watching afternoon soap operas.

“What in the world is going on, man?”

“What do you mean, Chuck?”

“Well, look at this place! Didn’t you get any of my letters?”

“Letters? Oh yes! Sure! I got every one of them. As a matter of fact, Chuck, we have had a letter study every Friday night since you left. We have even divided the personnel into small groups to discuss many of the things you wrote. Some of the things were really interesting. You will be pleased to know that a few of us have actually committed to memory some of your sentences and paragraphs. One or two memorized an entire letter or two - Great stuff in those letters.”

“OK. You got my letters. You studied them and meditated on them; discussed and even memorized them. But what did you do about them?”

“Do? We didn’t do anything about them.”

### **LEADER: WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT THE LETTER GOD LEFT US?**

What are some of the most important points of his word to us?

### **READER: Matthew 22:36-39**

*“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And He said to him, “ ‘ YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ “This is the great and foremost commandment. “The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’*

**READER: Matthew 35:19-20**

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

**READER: Psalm 100:2a**

*Serve the LORD with gladness;*

**LEADER: If we observe the greatest commandments then serving Him and serving others should come easy.**

**READER: Matthew 20:20-28**

*Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him. And He said to her, “What do you wish?” She said to Him, “Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left.” But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” They said to Him, “We are able.” He said to them, “My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father.” And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers. 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.”*

**READER: “Life is Meant to Be Lived”** By Steve Goodier

Source ~ [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon4/life\\_is\\_meant\\_to\\_be\\_lived.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon4/life_is_meant_to_be_lived.htm)

Life is to be lived. No excuses. No reservations. No holding back.

An enchanting story about violinist Fritz Kreisler tells how he once came across a beautiful instrument he wanted to acquire. When he finally raised the money for the violin, he returned to buy it and learned that it had already been sold to a collector.

He went to the new owner's home in order to try to persuade him to sell the violin. But the collector said it was one of his prized possessions and he could not let it go. The disappointed Kreisler turned to leave, but then asked a favor. “May I play the instrument once more before it is consigned to silence?”

Permission was granted and the great musician began to play. The violin sang out a quality of music so beautiful that the collector himself could only listen in wonderment. “I have no right to keep that to myself,” he said after the musician finished. “The violin is yours, Mr. Kreisler. Take it into world, and let people hear it.”

William Arthur Ward said, “If you believe in prayer, pray; if you believe in serving, serve; if you believe in giving, give.” For you and I are exquisite violins -- our music is meant to be heard.

I want to live my life that way -- to take it into the world and live it fully. I'd rather burn out than rust out. I'd rather be used up than die not having done whatever I could...wherever I would.

I'm not talking about wearing ourselves out on over-activity. Happiness is never found in excessive busyness. But it is found in investing our lives in others. Saying YES when asked for a hand. Volunteering some time for a worthwhile organization. Spending an hour with a lonely relative.

In the end, I know that my happiness will not have been about by my ability or my inability. It will have been about my availability. My life is meant to be lived.

**READER: “Greatest Is He Who Serves”** Our Daily Bread

Source ~ <http://www.gospelcom.net/rbc/odb/odb-04-08-01.shtml>

*Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.* Matthew 20:26

A noncommissioned officer was directing the repairs of a military building during the American Revolution. He was barking orders to the soldiers under his command, trying to get them to raise a heavy wooden beam.

As the men struggled in vain to lift the beam into place, a man who was passing by stopped to ask the one in charge why he wasn't helping the men. With all the pomp of an emperor, the soldier responded, "Sir, I am a corporal!"

"You are, are you?" replied the passerby, "I was not aware of that." Then, taking off his hat and bowing, he said, "I ask your pardon, Corporal." Then the stranger walked over and strained with the soldiers to lift the heavy beam. After the job was finished, he turned and said, "Mr. Corporal, when you have another such job, and have not enough men, send for your Commander in Chief, and I will come and help you a second time." The corporal was thunderstruck. The person speaking to him was General Washington!

God measures greatness by service. The Lord Jesus has set an example, for though He was God and worthy of all honor, He *"did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"* (Matthew 20:28).

To be great in God's sight, we must serve! —(HGB)

Go, labor on; spend, and be spent,  
Thy joy to do the Father's will;  
It is the way the Master went,  
Should not the servant tread it still? —Bonar

True greatness is not attained by giving orders, but by serving.

**READER: QUOTE #2**

Source ~ [http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat\\_service.html](http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_service.html)

"Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile." Albert Einstein, 1879-1955, physicist and humanitarian

**READER: 2 Corinthians 9:7**

*Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

**READER: "Happy to Help Out"** Knofel Stanton, Heaven Bound Living, Standard

Source ~ <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/service.htm>

It had been a long day on Capitol Hill for Senator John Stennis. He was looking forward to a bit of relaxation when he got home. After parking the car, he began to walk toward his front door. Then it happened. Two people came out of the darkness, robbed him, and shot him twice. News of the shooting of Senator Stennis, the chairman of the powerful Armed Forces Committee, shocked Washington and the nation. For nearly seven hours, Senator Stennis was on the operating table at Walter Reed Hospital. Less than two hours later, another politician was driving home when he heard about the shooting. He turned his car around and drove directly to the hospital. In the hospital, he noticed that the staff was swamped and could not keep up with the incoming calls about the Senator's condition. He spotted an unattended switchboard, sat down, and voluntarily went to work. He continued taking calls until daylight. Sometime during that next day, he stood up, stretched, put on his overcoat, and just before leaving, he introduced himself quietly to the other operator, "I'm Mark Hatfield. Happy to help out." Then Senator Mark Hatfield unobtrusively walked out. The press could hardly handle that story. There seemed to be no way for a conservative Republican to give a liberal Democrat a tip of the hat, let alone spend hours doing a menial task and be "happy to help out."

**READER: Joshua 24:15**

*But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD ."*

**READER: "The Discipline of Service"** By Richard Foster

Source ~ <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/service.htm>

- Self-righteous service comes through human effort.  
True service comes from a relationship with the divine Other deep inside.
- Self-righteous service is impressed with the "big deal."  
True service finds it almost impossible to distinguish the small from the large service.
- Self-righteous service requires external rewards.

- True service rests contented in hiddenness.
- Self-righteous service is highly concerned about results.  
True service is free of the need to calculate results.
- Self-righteous service picks and chooses whom to serve.  
True service is indiscriminate in its ministry.
- Self-righteous service is affected by moods and whims.  
True service ministers simply and faithfully because there is a need.
- Self-righteous service is temporary.  
True service is a life-style.
- Self-righteous service is without sensitivity. It insists on meeting the need even when to do so would be destructive.  
True service can withhold the service as freely as perform it.
- Self-righteous service fractures community.  
True service, on the other hand, builds community.

**READER: 1 Chronicles 28:9**

*“And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.*

**READER: “I Will Serve Him”**

Source ~ <http://www.cfdevotionals.org/devpages/de971015.htm>

Why and how do we serve the Lord? Do we serve Him because we have to? Do we serve Him because we want to? Is it an obligation or a pleasure? Are we serving out of love or duty? Am I, perhaps, doing the things I do out of a sense of guilt - a need to make up for the wrongs I have done? Is it a half-hearted obedience? Or is it with all the gusto I can bring out of a heart of full of love and devotion for my God?

God wants us to serve Him with a perfect heart and a willing mind. Service brought on by a desire to show Him just how much I want to obey His calling, not because I have to, but because I want to.

**READER: “I Will Serve You” by Bill Gather**

Source ~ <http://www.cfdevotionals.org/devpages/de971015.htm>

I will serve You  
Because I love You  
You have given life to me.

I was nothing until You find me,  
You have given life to me.

Heartaches, broken people,  
Ruined lives are why you died on Calvary.  
Your touch was what I longed for,  
You have given life to me.

**READER: Galatians 5:13**

*For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

**LEADER: “Service - Not an Option” By Jan (Excerpt)**

Source ~ <http://www.cfdevotionals.org/devpages/de970821.htm>

God expects us to use the gifts and abilities that He has given us He gives those gifts for a reason -- for service, to build up the body of Christ.

And there can be a bonus to serving others, too. This should not be our motive, but often when we use our gifts and abilities, and serve God and others, we find that it helps us take the focus off us, off our problems and worries. We find ourselves feeling better, more fulfilled.

**READER: QUOTE #3**

Source ~ [http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat\\_service.html](http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_service.html)

“Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others, cannot keep it from themselves.” - James M. Barrie, 1860 - 1937, Scottish dramatist & novelist

**READER: QUOTE #4**

Source ~ [http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat\\_service.html](http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_service.html)

“We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee.” - Marian Wright Edelman, 1939-, Social Activist, Founder of Children’s Defense Fund

**READER: QUOTE #5**

Source ~ [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_service.html](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_service.html)

“The charity that is a trifle to us can be precious to others.” - Homer, few hundred years after Christ, Greek, Wrote The Iliad and The Odessy

**READER: “Enrico Caruso” by Dick Innes, Daily Encounter**

Source ~ [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2/enrico\\_caruso.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2/enrico_caruso.htm)

The story is told how, as a boy, he worked long hours in a factory in Naples. He longed to be a singer. When ten years old, he took his first lesson in voice. ‘You can’t sing. You haven’t any voice at all. Your voice sounds like the wind in the shutters,’ said his teacher.

The boy’s mother, however, had visions of greatness for her son. She believed that he had a talent to sing. She was very poor. Putting her arms around him she encouragingly said, ‘My boy, I am going to make every sacrifice to pay for your voice lessons.’

Her confidence in him and constant encouragement paid off! That boy became one of the worlds greatest singers -- Enrico Caruso!

Not many will become as famous as Caruso, but every one of us is given an opportunity to make something worthwhile out of our life and be equally rewarded. The important thing is not what we have or don’t have, but what we do with what we have. As the poet expressed it:

“Isn’t it strange that princes and kings  
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings,  
And common folks like you and me  
All are builders for eternity.

“To each is given a book of rules,  
A block of stone and a bag of tools;  
And each must shape ‘ere time has flown,  
A stumbling block or a stepping stone.”

With God’s help and using the gifts he has given to each of us -- whether they be great or small -- we, too can make something worthwhile out of our life. And when we do and come to the end of life’s journey, it will be worth it all when we hear the Saviour say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord.”

**READER: “Hopkins” Discipleship Journal**

Source ~ <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/service.htm>

Franklin Roosevelt’s closest adviser during much of his presidency was a man named Harry Hopkins. During World War II, when his influence with Roosevelt was at its peak, Hopkins held no official Cabinet position. Moreover, Hopkins’s closeness to Roosevelt caused many to regard him as a shadowy, sinister figure. As a result he was a major political liability to the President. A political foe once asked Roosevelt, “Why do you keep Hopkins so close to you? You surely realize that people distrust him and resent his influence.” Roosevelt replied, “Someday you may well be sitting here where I am now as President of the United States. And when you are, you’ll be looking at that door over there and knowing that practically everybody who walks through it wants something out of you. You’ll learn what a lonely job this is, and you’ll discover the need for

somebody like Harry Hopkins, who asks for nothing except to serve you.” Winston Churchill rated Hopkins as one of the half-dozen most powerful men in the world in the early 1940s. And the sole source of Hopkins’s power was his willingness to serve.

**READER: “Two Graduates”** Today in the Word

Source ~ <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/service.htm>

In the spring of 1883 two young men graduated from medical school. The two differed from one another in both appearance and ambition. Ben was short and stocky. Will was tall and thin. Ben dreamed of practicing medicine on the East Coast. Will wanted to work in a rural community. Ben begged his friend to go to New York where they could both make a fortune. Will refused. His friend called him foolish for wanting to practice medicine in the Midwest. “But,” Will said, “I want first of all to be a great surgeon...the very best, if I have the ability.” Years later the wealthy and powerful came from around the world to be treated by Will at his clinic... the Mayo Clinic.

**READER: James 4:17**

*Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

**READER: “Rocking the Boat”** From: In the Grip of Grace Max Lucado

Source ~ [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon6/rocking\\_the\\_boat.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon6/rocking_the_boat.htm) (Excerpt)

God has enlisted us in his navy and placed us on his ship. The boat has one purpose-to carry us safely to the other shore.

This is no cruise ship; it’s a battleship. We aren’t called to a life of leisure; we are called to a life of service. Each of us has a different task. Some, concerned with those who are drowning, are snatching people from the water. Others are occupied with the enemy, so they man the cannons of prayer and worship. Still others devote themselves to the crew, feeding and training the crew members.

Though different, we are the same. Each can tell of a personal encounter with the captain, for each has received a personal call. He found us among the shanties of the seaport and invited us to follow him. Our faith was born at the sight of his fondness, and so we went.

Some believe you volunteer for service; others believe you were destined for the service before the ship was even built.

**READER: QUOTE #6**

Source ~ [http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat\\_service.html](http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_service.html)

“Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.” - Martin Luther King, 1929-1968

**READER: “A Humble Attitude”** By Peter Kennedy

Source ~ [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon7/humble\\_attitude.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon7/humble_attitude.htm)

*“Although I am less than the least of all God’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ”* - Ephesians 3:8

Gladys Aylward was born in London in 1904. She worked for several years as a parlor maid, and then attended a revival meeting at which the preacher spoke of dedicating one’s life to the service of God. Gladys responded to the message, and soon after became convinced that she was called to preach the Gospel in China.

At the age of 26, she became a probationer at the China Inland Mission Center in London, but was failed to pass the examinations. Then she heard of a 73-year-old missionary, Mrs. Jeannie Lawson, who was looking for a younger woman to carry on her work. Gladys wrote to Mrs. Lawson and was accepted if she could get to China.

She did not have enough money for the ship fare, but did have enough for the train fare, and so in October of 1930 she set out from London with her passport, her Bible, her tickets, and two pounds nine pence, to travel to China by the Trans-Siberian Railway, despite the fact that China and the Soviet Union were engaged in an undeclared war.

Gladys Aylward, parlor maid from England, became one of the most famous missionaries of the twentieth century, a woman that has been called “the most noted single woman missionary in modern history.” A popular biography about her was made into a movie and she dined with Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. But the most notable thing about Gladys was her brokenness, her humility, and her willingness to be available to God.

She once said, “I wasn’t God’s first choice for what I’ve done for China. There was somebody else ... I don’t know who it was? God’s first choice. I don’t know what happened. Perhaps he died. Perhaps he wasn’t willing ... And God looked down. . . and saw Gladys Aylward.”

The Lord is not looking for ability, He is looking for availability. He desires a humble heart that says: “Here I am Lord, send me!” Today in prayer, thank Christ for His love for you and desire to serve Him with a humble attitude.

“Give me humility, in which alone is rest, and deliver me from pride, which is the heaviest of burdens.” - Thomas Merton

God’s Word: *“Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’”* - 1 Peter 5:5

### **READER: Philippians 2:5-11**

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

### **READER: QUOTE #7**

Source ~ <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon5/doingtheword.htm>

Watchman Nee, a Chinese Christian writer. He said God will bless:

- what He initiates
- what depends on Him for its success
- what is done according to His Word
- what is done for His glory

### **READER: QUOTE #8**

Source ~ <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/service.htm>

Years ago, the Salvation Army was holding an international convention and their founder, Gen. William Booth, could not attend because of physical weakness. He cabled his convention message to them. It was one word: “OTHERS.”

### **READER: Colossians 3:23-24**

*Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.*

### **READER: QUOTE #9**

Source ~ [http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat\\_service.html](http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_service.html)

“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.” - Edmund Burke, 1729-1797, British statesman and philosopher

**READER: “For Whom”** From: A.T. Pierson, The Truth.

Source ~ <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/service.htm>

Whatever is done for God, without respect of its comparative character as related to other acts, is service, and only that is service. Service is, comprehensively speaking, doing the will of God. He is the object. All is

for Him, for His sake, as unto the Lord, not as unto man. Hence, even the humblest act of humblest disciple acquires a certain divine quality by its being done with reference to Him.

The supreme test of service is this: 'For whom am I doing this?' Much that we call service to Christ is not such at all....If we are doing this for Christ, we shall not care for human reward or even recognition. Our work must again be tested by three propositions: Is it work from God, as given us to do from Him; for God, as finding in Him its secret of power; and with God, as only a part of His work in which we engage as co-workers with Him."

**READER: Ephesians 2:10**

*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

**READER: "Service, Pledged In Gratitude"** A. B. Earle, From: "Incidents Used ... In His Meetings,"  
Source ~ <http://www.elbourne.org/sermons/index.mv?illustration+2079>

During a terrible storm at sea that threatened every moment to carry the ship to the bottom, one of the ship's crew was doing something on the deck when a great sea struck the ship and went fairly over the deck, striking this man with great force, disabling him and carrying him into the mad waters.

Although he was a good swimmer, he was so disabled that he could only keep above water. They saw him lifting up his imploring hands through the white foam, signifying his desire for help. But the Captain said, "Don't lower a boat, for no small boat can live in this sea, in this terrific storm. We cannot save the man. The most we can do is to save the ship."

The vessel was bearing farther and farther from the helpless man. Once more they saw his imploring hands come up among the white caps further off, which moved all hearts that witnessed it. Still the Captain said a small boat must not be lowered, as it could not live a moment among these wild billows.

But one man who was an expert swimmer, was so moved by the imploring signals of the drowning man, that he threw off his loose garments, saying:

"I will save that man, or die with him."

So plunging into the surging deep, he struggled so bravely with the mad waters, that he reached the poor man just as his strength had gone; he had given up and was filling with water, and sinking down unconscious. He grasped him, and strange to tell, he brought him so near the ship that a small boat was lowered, and both men were taken up and laid down upon the deck. The one that had been swept overboard, entirely unconscious and his deliverer nearly so. Appliances were used and both were brought to consciousness.

As soon as the rescued man opened his eyes and found he was not in the ocean, his first words were:

"Who saved me?"

He was pointed to his deliverer still lying on the deck in his wet clothes. He crept to his deliverer, and putting his arms around his feet, and in the most tender and heart moving tone of voice cried out:

"I'm your servant, I'm your servant."

He felt that he could never do enough for him.

Let me ask all who read this incident, would you not put your arms about the bleeding feet of your great Deliverer and say from a full heart:

"Jesus, I'm your servant, I'm your servant. Ask anything of me, Jesus, and I will do it the best I can."

**READER: "The Chosen Vessel"**

Source ~ [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2/chosen\\_vessel.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2/chosen_vessel.htm)

The Master was searching for a vessel to use;  
On the shelf there were many - which one would He choose?  
Take me, cried the gold one, I'm shiny and bright,  
I'm of great value and I do things just right.

My beauty and lustre will outshine the rest  
And for someone like You, Master, gold would be the best!  
The Master passed on with no word at all;  
He looked at a silver urn, narrow and tall;

I'll serve You, dear Master, I'll pour out Your wine  
And I'll be at Your table whenever You dine,  
My lines are so graceful, my carvings so true,  
And my silver will always compliment You.

Unheeding the Master passed on to the brass,  
It was wide mouthed and shallow, and polished like glass.  
Here! Here! cried the vessel, I know I will do,  
Place me on Your table for all men to view.

Look at me, called the goblet of crystal so clear,  
My transparency shows my contents so dear,  
Though fragile am I, I will serve You with pride,  
And I'm sure I'll be happy Your house to abide.

The Master came next to a vessel of wood,  
Polished and carved, it solidly stood.  
You may use me, dear Master, the wooden bowl said,  
But I'd rather You used me for fruit, not for bread!

Then the Master looked down and saw a vessel of clay.  
Empty and broken it helplessly lay.  
No hope had the vessel that the Master might choose,  
To cleanse and make whole, to fill and to use.

Ah! This is the vessel I've been hoping to find,  
I will mend and use it and make it all Mine.  
I need not the vessel with pride of its self;  
Nor the one who is narrow to sit on the shelf;

Nor the one who is bigmouthed and shallow and loud;  
Nor one who displays his contents so proud;  
Not the one who thinks he can do all things just right;  
But this plain earthy vessel filled with My power and might.

Then gently He lifted the vessel of clay.  
Mended and cleansed it and filled it that day.  
Spoke to it kindly. There's work you must do,  
Just pour out to others as I pour into you.

**READER: Mark 10:44-45**

*and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

**LEADER: "Servanthood, not Drudgery" (Excerpt)**

Source ~ <http://www.cfdevotionals.org/devpg98/de980710.htm>

It's true that we are to be "slaves," according to verse 44. But that word is not "slave" as in the kind of slave we think of. It's not a service of drudgery. It was a willing servanthood. According to Strong's Lexicon, the word it is "'metaph', one who gives himself up to another's will those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing His cause among men. God doesn't want resentful servants." The key to me here, is "gives himself up to another's will." Not someone forced to serve, manipulated to serve, not there

begrudgingly. God is Omnipotent. He could accomplish everything without our help. But He allows us the privilege of serving in His kingdom, participating in His plan. It is meant to be fulfilling, not draining.

**READER: Romans 12:6-9**

*Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.*

**LEADER: “Servanthood, not Drudgery” Cont:**

Source ~ <http://www.cfdevotionals.org/devpg98/de980710.htm>

But we can't manufacture a cheerful heart. Only God can change our feelings. But we can change our attitudes. We can pray for God to change our feelings, to either help us enjoy what we are doing for the Kingdom or else guide us into other areas. Sometimes we are burnt out because what we are doing doesn't match our gifts. If there is a good match, the service should GIVE you energy, not take it away. Or consider the possibility of taking a break. Sometimes that's all that is needed. Sometimes we come back refreshed after a few weeks off. But sometimes it's time for a change altogether.

Remember, if the burden feels overwhelming, it's not from Him.

**READER: QUOTE #10**

Source ~ [http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat\\_service.html](http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_service.html)

“I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.” - Albert Schweitzer, 1875-1965 humanitarian, theologian, missionary, medical doctor

**LEADER: Ruth Stafford Peale, founder and publisher of Guideposts** leaves us with this thought, “Find a need and fill it.”

Source ~ [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_service.html](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_service.html)

**COMMENTS IF TIME:**

**SCHEDULE TEN MINUTES BEFORE CLOSING FOR PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES:**

**COPY AND DISTRIBUTE THE FOLLOWING PAGES TO YOUR READERS:**

# READERS

## “Doing the Word”

Chuck Swindoll says, in his book, *Improving Your Serve*:

“To make the value of obedience just as practical as possible, let’s play ‘Let’s Pretend.’ Let’s pretend that you work for me. In fact, you are my executive assistant in a company that is growing rapidly. I’m the owner and I’m interested in expanding overseas. To pull this off, I make plans to travel abroad and stay there until a new branch office gets established. I make all the arrangements to take my family and move to Europe for six to eight months. And I leave you in charge of the busy stateside organization. I tell you that I will write you regularly and give you directions and instructions. I leave and you stay.

Months pass. A flow of letters are mailed from Europe and received by you at the national headquarters. I spell out all my expectations.

Finally, I return. Soon after my arrival, I drive down to the office and I am stunned. Grass and weeds have grown up high. A few windows along the street are broken. I walk into the Receptionist’s room. She is doing her nails, chewing gum and listening to her favorite disco station. I look around and notice the wastebaskets are overflowing. The carpet hasn’t been vacuumed for weeks, and nobody seems concerned that the owner has returned. I asked about your whereabouts and someone in the crowded lounge area points down the hall and yells, “I think he’s down there.” Disturbed, I move in that direction and bump into you as you are finishing a chess game with our sales manager. I ask you to step into my office, which has been temporarily turned into a television room for watching afternoon soap operas.

“What in the world is going on, man?”

“What do you mean, Chuck?”

“Well, look at this place! Didn’t you get any of my letters?”

“Letters? Oh yes! Sure! I got every one of them. As a matter of fact, Chuck, we have had a letter study every Friday night since you left. We have even divided the personnel into small groups to discuss many of the things you wrote. Some of the things were really interesting. You will be pleased to know that a few of us have actually committed to memory some of your sentences and paragraphs. One or two memorized an entire letter or two - Great stuff in those letters.”

“OK. You got my letters. You studied them and meditated on them; discussed and even memorized them. But what did you do about them?”

“Do? We didn’t do anything about them.”

**Matthew 22:36-39**

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**Matthew 35:19-20**

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**Psalms 100:2a**

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**Matthew 20:20-28**

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## “Life is Meant to Be Lived”

Life is to be lived. No excuses. No reservations. No holding back.

An enchanting story about violinist Fritz Kreisler tells how he once came across a beautiful instrument he wanted to acquire. When he finally raised the money for the violin, he returned to buy it and learned that it had already been sold to a collector.

He went to the new owner’s home in order to try to persuade him to sell the violin. But the collector said it was one of his prized possessions and he could not let it go. The disappointed Kreisler turned to leave, but then asked a favor. “May I play the instrument once more before it is consigned to silence?”

Permission was granted and the great musician began to play. The violin sang out a quality of music so beautiful that the collector himself could only listen in wonderment. “I have no right to keep that to myself,” he said after the musician finished. “The violin is yours, Mr. Kreisler. Take it into world, and let people hear it.”

William Arthur Ward said, “If you believe in prayer, pray; if you believe in serving, serve; if you believe in giving, give.” For you and I are exquisite violins -- our music is meant to be heard.

I want to live my life that way -- to take it into the world and live it fully. I’d rather burn out than rust out. I’d rather be used up than die not having done whatever I could...wherever I would.

I’m not talking about wearing ourselves out on over-activity. Happiness is never found in excessive busyness. But it is found in investing our lives in others. Saying YES when asked for a hand. Volunteering some time for a worthwhile organization. Spending an hour with a lonely relative.

In the end, I know that my happiness will not have been about by my ability or my inability. It will have been about my availability. My life is meant to be lived.



## “Greatest Is He Who Serves”

*Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.*          Matthew 20:26

A noncommissioned officer was directing the repairs of a military building during the American Revolution. He was barking orders to the soldiers under his command, trying to get them to raise a heavy wooden beam.

As the men struggled in vain to lift the beam into place, a man who was passing by stopped to ask the one in charge why he wasn’t helping the men. With all the pomp of an emperor, the soldier responded, “Sir, I am a corporal!”

“You are, are you?” replied the passerby, “I was not aware of that.” Then, taking off his hat and bowing, he said, “I ask your pardon, Corporal.” Then the stranger walked over and strained with the soldiers to lift the heavy beam. After the job was finished, he turned and said, “Mr. Corporal, when you have another such job, and have not enough men, send for your Commander in Chief, and I will come and help you a second time.” The corporal was thunderstruck. The person speaking to him was General Washington!

God measures greatness by service. The Lord Jesus has set an example, for though He was God and worthy of all honor, He “*did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many*” (Matthew 20:28).

To be great in God’s sight, we must serve! —(HGB)

Go, labor on; spend, and be spent,  
Thy joy to do the Father’s will;  
It is the way the Master went,  
Should not the servant tread it still? —Bonar

True greatness is not attained by giving orders, but by serving.



## QUOTE #2

“Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.” Albert Einstein, 1879-1955, physicist and humanitarian

## 2 Corinthians 9:7



### “Happy to Help Out”

It had been a long day on Capitol Hill for Senator John Stennis. He was looking forward to a bit of relaxation when he got home. After parking the car, he began to walk toward his front door. Then it happened. Two people came out of the darkness, robbed him, and shot him twice. News of the shooting of Senator Stennis, the chairman of the powerful Armed Forces Committee, shocked Washington and the nation. For nearly seven hours, Senator Stennis was on the operating table at Walter Reed Hospital. Less than two hours later, another politician was driving home when he heard about the shooting. He turned his car around and drove directly to the hospital. In the hospital, he noticed that the staff was swamped and could not keep up with the incoming calls about the Senator’s condition. He spotted an unattended switchboard, sat down, and voluntarily went to work. He continued taking calls until daylight. Sometime during that next day, he stood up, stretched, put on his overcoat, and just before leaving, he introduced himself quietly to the other operator, “I’m Mark Hatfield. Happy to help out.” Then Senator Mark Hatfield unobtrusively walked out. The press could hardly handle that story. There seemed to be no way for a conservative Republican to give a liberal Democrat a tip of the hat, let alone spend hours doing a menial task and be “happy to help out.”



## Joshua 24:15



### “The Discipline of Service”

- Self-righteous service comes through human effort.  
True service comes from a relationship with the divine Other deep inside.
- Self-righteous service is impressed with the “big deal.”  
True service finds it almost impossible to distinguish the small from the large service.
- Self-righteous service requires external rewards.  
True service rests contented in hiddenness.
- Self-righteous service is highly concerned about results.  
True service is free of the need to calculate results.
- Self-righteous service picks and chooses whom to serve.  
True service is indiscriminate in its ministry.
- Self-righteous service is affected by moods and whims.  
True service ministers simply and faithfully because there is a need.
- Self-righteous service is temporary.  
True service is a life-style.
- Self-righteous service is without sensitivity. It insists on meeting the need even when to do so would be destructive.  
True service can withhold the service as freely as perform it.
- Self-righteous service fractures community.  
True service, on the other hand, builds community.



## 1 Chronicles 28:9



### “I Will Serve Him”

Why and how do we serve the Lord? Do we serve Him because we have to? Do we serve Him because we want to? Is it an obligation or a pleasure? Are we serving out of love or duty? Am I, perhaps, doing the things I do out of a sense of guilt - a need to make up for the wrongs I have done? Is it a half-hearted obedience? Or is it with all the gusto I can bring out of a heart of full of love and devotion for my God?

God wants us to serve Him with a perfect heart and a willing mind. Service brought on by a desire to show Him just how much I want to obey His calling, not because I have to, but because I want to.



**“I Will Serve You”** by Bill Gather

I will serve You  
Because I love You  
You have given life to me.

I was nothing until You find me,  
You have given life to me.

Heartaches, broken people,  
Ruined lives are why you died on Calvary.  
Your touch was what I longed for,  
You have given life to me.

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**Galatians 5:13**

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**QUOTE #3**

“Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others, cannot keep it from themselves.” - James M. Barrie, 1860 - 1937, Scottish dramatist & novelist

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**QUOTE #4**

“We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee.” - Marian Wright Edelman, 1939-, Social Activist, Founder of Children’s Defense Fund

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**QUOTE #5**

“The charity that is a trifle to us can be precious to others.” - Homer, few hundred years after Christ, Greek, Wrote The Iliad and The Odyssey

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## **“Enrico Caruso”**

The story is told how, as a boy, he worked long hours in a factory in Naples. He longed to be a singer. When ten years old, he took his first lesson in voice. ‘You can’t sing. You haven’t any voice at all. Your voice sounds like the wind in the shutters,’ said his teacher.

The boy’s mother, however, had visions of greatness for her son. She believed that he had a talent to sing. She was very poor. Putting her arms around him she encouragingly said, ‘My boy, I am going to make every sacrifice to pay for your voice lessons.’

Her confidence in him and constant encouragement paid off! That boy became one of the worlds greatest singers -- Enrico Caruso!

Not many will become as famous as Caruso, but every one of us is given an opportunity to make something worthwhile out of our life and be equally rewarded. The important thing is not what we have or don’t have, but what we do with what we have. As the poet expressed it:

“Isn’t it strange that princes and kings  
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings,  
And common folks like you and me  
All are builders for eternity.

“To each is given a book of rules,  
A block of stone and a bag of tools;  
And each must shape ‘ere time has flown,  
A stumbling block or a stepping stone.”

With God’s help and using the gifts he has given to each of us -- whether they be great or small -- we, too can make something worthwhile out of our life. And when we do and come to the end of life’s journey, it will be worth it all when we hear the Saviour say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord.”

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## **“Hopkins” Discipleship Journal**

Franklin Roosevelt’s closest adviser during much of his presidency was a man named Harry Hopkins. During World War II, when his influence with Roosevelt was at its peak, Hopkins held no official Cabinet position. Moreover, Hopkins’s closeness to Roosevelt caused many to regard him as a shadowy, sinister figure. As a result he was a major political liability to the President. A political foe once asked Roosevelt, “Why do you keep Hopkins so close to you? You surely realize that people distrust him and resent his influence.” Roosevelt replied, “Someday you may well be sitting here where I am now as President of the United States. And when you are, you’ll be looking at that door over there and knowing that practically everybody who walks through it wants something out of you. You’ll learn what a lonely job this is, and you’ll discover the need for somebody like Harry Hopkins, who asks for nothing except to serve you.” Winston Churchill rated Hopkins as one of the half-dozen most powerful men in the world in the early 1940s. And the sole source of Hopkins’s power was his willingness to serve.

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## **“Two Graduates”**

In the spring of 1883 two young men graduated from medical school. The two differed from one another in both appearance and ambition. Ben was short and stocky. Will was tall and thin. Ben dreamed of practicing medicine on the East Coast. Will wanted to work in a rural community. Ben begged his friend to go to New York where they could both make a fortune. Will refused. His friend called him foolish for wanting to practice medicine in the Midwest. “But,” will said, “I want first of all to be a great surgeon...the very best, if I have the ability.” Years later the wealthy and powerful came from around the world to be treated by Will at his clinic... the Mayo Clinic.

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## **James 4:17**

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## “Rocking the Boat”

God has enlisted us in his navy and placed us on his ship. The boat has one purpose—to carry us safely to the other shore.

This is no cruise ship; it’s a battleship. We aren’t called to a life of leisure; we are called to a life of service. Each of us has a different task. Some, concerned with those who are drowning, are snatching people from the water. Others are occupied with the enemy, so they man the cannons of prayer and worship. Still others devote themselves to the crew, feeding and training the crew members.

Though different, we are the same. Each can tell of a personal encounter with the captain, for each has received a personal call. He found us among the shanties of the seaport and invited us to follow him. Our faith was born at the sight of his fondness, and so we went.

Some believe you volunteer for service; others believe you were destined for the service before the ship was even built.



## QUOTE #6

“Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.” - Martin Luther King, 1929-1968



## “A Humble Attitude”

*“Although I am less than the least of all God’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ”* - Ephesians 3:8

Gladys Aylward was born in London in 1904. She worked for several years as a parlor maid, and then attended a revival meeting at which the preacher spoke of dedicating one’s life to the service of God. Gladys responded to the message, and soon after became convinced that she was called to preach the Gospel in China.

At the age of 26, she became a probationer at the China Inland Mission Center in London, but was failed to pass the examinations. Then she heard of a 73-year-old missionary, Mrs. Jeannie Lawson, who was looking for a younger woman to carry on her work. Gladys wrote to Mrs. Lawson and was accepted if she could get to China.

She did not have enough money for the ship fare, but did have enough for the train fare, and so in October of 1930 she set out from London with her passport, her Bible, her tickets, and two pounds nine pence, to travel to China by the Trans-Siberian Railway, despite the fact that China and the Soviet Union were engaged in an undeclared war.

Gladys Aylward, parlor maid from England, became one of the most famous missionaries of the twentieth century, a woman that has been called “the most noted single woman missionary in modern history.” A popular biography about her was made into a movie and she dined with Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. But the most notable thing about Gladys was her brokenness, her humility, and her willingness to be available to God.

She once said, “I wasn’t God’s first choice for what I’ve done for China. There was somebody else ... I don’t know who it was? God’s first choice. I don’t know what happened. Perhaps he died. Perhaps he wasn’t willing ... And God looked down. . . and saw Gladys Aylward.”

The Lord is not looking for ability, He is looking for availability. He desires a humble heart that says: “Here I am Lord, send me!” Today in prayer, thank Christ for His love for you and desire to serve Him with a humble attitude.

“Give me humility, in which alone is rest, and deliver me from pride, which is the heaviest of burdens.” - Thomas Merton

God’s Word: *“Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’”* - 1 Peter 5:5



**Philippians 2:5-11**

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**QUOTE #7**

Watchman Nee, a Chinese Christian writer. He said God will bless:

- what He initiates
- what depends on Him for its success
- what is done according to His Word
- what is done for His glory

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**QUOTE #8**

Years ago, the Salvation Army was holding an international convention and their founder, Gen. William Booth, could not attend because of physical weakness. He cabled his convention message to them. It was one word: "OTHERS."

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**Colossians 3:23-24**

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**QUOTE #9**

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little." - Edmund Burke, 1729-1797, British statesman and philosopher

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**"For Whom"**

Whatever is done for God, without respect of its comparative character as related to other acts, is service, and only that is service. Service is, comprehensively speaking, doing the will of God. He is the object. All is for Him, for His sake, as unto the Lord, not as unto man. Hence, even the humblest act of humblest disciple acquires a certain divine quality by its being done with reference to Him.

The supreme test of service is this: 'For whom am I doing this?' Much that we call service to Christ is not such at all....If we are doing this for Christ, we shall not care for human reward or even recognition. Our work must again be tested by three propositions: Is it work from God, as given us to do from Him; for God, as finding in Him its secret of power; and with God, as only a part of His work in which we engage as co-workers with Him."

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**Ephesians 2:10**

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### **“Service, Pledged In Gratitude”**

During a terrible storm at sea that threatened every moment to carry the ship to the bottom, one of the ship’s crew was doing something on the deck when a great sea struck the ship and went fairly over the deck, striking this man with great force, disabling him and carrying him into the mad waters.

Although he was a good swimmer, he was so disabled that he could only keep above water. They saw him lifting up his imploring hands through the white foam, signifying his desire for help. But the Captain said, “Don’t lower a boat, for no small boat can live in this sea, in this terrific storm. We cannot save the man. The most we can do is to save the ship.”

The vessel was bearing farther and farther from the helpless man. Once more they saw his imploring hands come up among the white caps further off, which moved all hearts that witnessed it. Still the Captain said a small boat must not be lowered, as it could not live a moment among these wild billows.

But one man who was an expert swimmer, was so moved by the imploring signals of the drowning man, that he threw off his loose garments, saying:

“I will save that man, or die with him.”

So plunging into the surging deep, he struggled so bravely with the mad waters, that he reached the poor man just as his strength had gone; he had given up and was filling with water, and sinking down unconscious. He grasped him, and strange to tell, he brought him so near the ship that a small boat was lowered, and both men were taken up and laid down upon the deck. The one that had been swept overboard, entirely unconscious and his deliverer nearly so. Appliances were used and both were brought to consciousness.

As soon as the rescued man opened his eyes and found he was not in the ocean, his first words were:

“Who saved me?”

He was pointed to his deliverer still lying on the deck in his wet clothes. He crept to his deliverer, and putting his arms around his feet, and in the most tender and heart moving tone of voice cried out:

“I’m your servant, I’m your servant.”

He felt that he could never do enough for him.

Let me ask all who read this incident, would you not put your arms about the bleeding feet of your great Deliverer and say from a full heart:

“Jesus, I’m your servant, I’m your servant. Ask anything of me, Jesus, and I will do it the best I can.”

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## “The Chosen Vessel”

The Master was searching for a vessel to use;  
On the shelf there were many - which one would He choose?  
Take me, cried the gold one, I'm shiny and bright,  
I'm of great value and I do things just right.

My beauty and lustre will outshine the rest  
And for someone like You, Master, gold would be the best!  
The Master passed on with no word at all;  
He looked at a silver urn, narrow and tall;

I'll serve You, dear Master, I'll pour out Your wine  
And I'll be at Your table whenever You dine,  
My lines are so graceful, my carvings so true,  
And my silver will always compliment You.

Unheeding the Master passed on to the brass,  
It was wide mouthed and shallow, and polished like glass.  
Here! Here! cried the vessel, I know I will do,  
Place me on Your table for all men to view.

Look at me, called the goblet of crystal so clear,  
My transparency shows my contents so dear,  
Though fragile am I, I will serve You with pride,  
And I'm sure I'll be happy Your house to abide.

The Master came next to a vessel of wood,  
Polished and carved, it solidly stood.  
You may use me, dear Master, the wooden bowl said,  
But I'd rather You used me for fruit, not for bread!

Then the Master looked down and saw a vessel of clay.  
Empty and broken it helplessly lay.  
No hope had the vessel that the Master might choose,  
To cleanse and make whole, to fill and to use.

Ah! This is the vessel I've been hoping to find,  
I will mend and use it and make it all Mine.  
I need not the vessel with pride of its self;  
Nor the one who is narrow to sit on the shelf;

Nor the one who is bigmouthed and shallow and loud;  
Nor one who displays his contents so proud;  
Not the one who thinks he can do all things just right;  
But this plain earthy vessel filled with My power and might.

Then gently He lifted the vessel of clay.  
Mended and cleansed it and filled it that day.  
Spoke to it kindly. There's work you must do,  
Just pour out to others as I pour into you.

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**Mark 10:44-45**

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**Romans 12:6-9**

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## QUOTE #10

“I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.” - Albert Schweitzer, 1875-1965 humanitarian, theologian, missionary, medical doctor