

Being a Minister
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[Hope Bible Church of Tampa](http://HopeBibleChurchofTampa.org)
ChristKingdom.org

When a person becomes a Christian, then many good and wonderful things happen to him at that time. He's born again; he's justified, he becomes perfectly righteous in the sight of God; he is redeemed; and he is forgiven of all his sins. He is adopted into God's family; God becomes his spiritual Father; he receives eternal life; and he's given hope, a guarantee of a perfect and eternal future. And there are many more things besides this.

One of these is becoming a servant of God. Now a person who's a servant has a master, and so too a Christian has a master, and that's Jesus Christ, His Lord. And Jesus Christ became our Master because He died for us and redeemed us. He served us by buying us out of spiritual slavery, and so we're no longer a slave to sin and a slave of the devil, but we're a slave of Jesus Christ. Col. 1:13-14

- And so Jesus owns us, He possesses us. A true Christian isn't off by himself doing his own thing; he knows Jesus Christ is His Lord and Master and he's serving Him. And being a slave of Christ isn't a 9 to 5 job, it's 24-7. It means serving Christ all the time, all week long, for our entire lives, and forever and ever.

Now Christians are greatly loved by God and they need to know and experience His love. Ps. 86:12-13, 1 John 4:16. And God's love for us should motivate us to love and serve Him. And so being a servant, a slave of Christ, should never be something we feel we have to do, but something we want to do.

Now all godly people talked about in the Bible were servants of God.

- Exodus 14:31 – *“They believed in the Lord, and in His servant Moses.”*
- 1 Samuel 25:41 ó *“Abigail arose and bowed with her face to the ground and said, ‘Behold, your maidservant is a maid to wash the feet of my lord’s servants.’”*
- Psalm 89:20 ó *“I have David, my servant; with My holy oil I have anointed him.”*
- Luke 22:27 ó Jesus said, *“I am among you as the One who serves.”*
- Phil. 1:1 ó *“Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus.”*
- James 1:1 ó *“James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- 2 Peter 1:1 ó *“Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.”*
- Rom. 16:1 ó *“I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church.”*
- Col. 4:7 ó Paul said, *“As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information.”*

Now what is the character of a servant?

1. A servant is humble in that he sees himself as one who is subordinate to, as one who is ranked under his master, that is, Jesus Christ, and therefore he serves Him.
2. A servant loves his master. His duty and allegiance to his master is based on his love for his master. It isn't just a cold duty or responsibility to Christ, but one where there's warmth, affection, and heartfelt devotion. Abigail ó David, Timothy ó Paul - Ph. 2:19-22 - And with Jesus Christ, our love is based on, is an outgrowth of the fact that He loved us first. 1 John 4:19
3. A servant is faithful to His master. He is devoted, committed, and consistent. Day after day and year after year, he is loyal and faithful to Jesus Christ. Heb. 3:5
4. A servant obeys his master - he does what his master wants him to do. Lk. 17:7-10. So too, we're to do everything Christ wants us to do. Ps. 119:5-6
5. A servant sacrifices his life. First and foremost, Christ sacrificed His life for His Father. Jesus loved His Father, and He loved us and, therefore, He served us by sacrificing His life for us. Eph. 5:1-2, Phil. 2:17
6. A servant humbles himself before others. A servant is not selfish but sees the interests of others as being more important than his own. Phil. 2:3-4, 5-8

It's very important that you see yourself as a servant, as one who is ministering and devoted to God, Jesus Christ, the church, and the people God puts in your life. Having this mindset, that you're a servant, that you're not living for yourself, but for God and others helps define your life, your purpose, and all that you are to do.

Now here are some more things you need to understand about being a servant.

1. God called you to be a servant. It was not your desire and plan, but His desire and plan for you. Being a servant of God, a servant of Jesus Christ is His will, His purpose for your life. Eph. 3:1-8
2. It's by the grace of God that you can be a servant. It's not by your power, by your effort, but what God does in and through you. Jn. 15:5; 1 Cor. 3:6, 15:10
3. It's for God's purposes and plans that you're His servant. He has specific things He wants you to do. *"What is Apollos, what is Paul? Only servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord has assigned to each His task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow."* 1 Cor. 3:5
- Be thankful and encouraged that God chose you to be saved, and chose you to carry out His plans, and that He gave you the grace to do what He wants you to do.

4. As a servant of Christ, you're part of His body, a member of the church. 1 Cor. 12. *"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body... The body is not made up one part but of many."*

Now what do we learn from this?

- That there are many parts in the body and you're but one of the parts, and that means one of the parts here in this church and, in fact, a special part of Hope Bible Church.

Now even though we are equally important in the eyes of God, you need to treat others as being more important. This is being humble, and it results in you having a servant's attitude toward others. Phil. 2:3-7

Since we're one body, since we're a unit, then you need to work with others.

You're not to work independently of others, you're not to be a lone ranger Christian, you need to work with others as a team. Basketball ó team player

- This means there needs to be unity, and for there to be unity, you need to interact and communicate with others. You need to spiritually be of one mind. 1 Cor. 1:10.

And you need to be loving, to be patient, forgiving, and gentle, etc. 1 Cor. 13.

And you need to work together with others so as to fulfil the same overall purpose.

- 1 Cor. 3:8 ó *"The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose."*

Matt. 28:19-20, Eph. 2:19-22, Eph. 4:16

Eph. 1:4-5. God chose the members of this church long before this world was ever made. And God and Christ are building the church exactly according to their design, the way They planned it long ago.

- 1 Cor. 12:18. The NIV says, *"In fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them to be."*

- So God puts the church together. That means the universal church, the church all over the world, the church He's been building since that first day, the day of Pentecost. And Christ is building each individual church, which means this one right here, Hope Bible Church. Christ's promise is given to us in Matt 16:18.

So Christ oversees and directs the work of the local church, and it's the Holy Spirit who is actually working in and through the members of the church and carrying out the work of Christ. And the work, the ministry of any church, must be in accordance with the truths, commands, and purposes that God has laid out in His Word.

- This means that the work you do as God's servant must be in accordance with these truths, commands, and purposes too. Eph. 4:12

Now as I just said, God specifically arranges the parts of the body just as He wants them to be. And the uniqueness of a church body is most often seen in the spiritual gifts, and the diversity of the spiritual gift(s) that they possess.

- Now every Christian is blessed by God through the Holy Spirit with a spiritual gift that is useful and necessary in helping to build up the church. 1 Peter 4:10.

And an individual's effectiveness in a local church is often seen in the use of his or her spiritual gift. And your maximum effectiveness as God's servant means you're actively using the spiritual gift that God has given you.

The purpose and strength of a local church is seen when the members are individually using their spiritual gifts and thereby collectively doing the work God has given them. God has work for each church to do, and that primarily happens when the members serve God by using their spiritual gifts.

- Now no two churches look alike - each church is different. And what a church looks like most always reflects the spiritual giftedness and ministries of that church.

And a strong church is one in which the members are doing the work of God by using their spiritual gift. Football team - 5 people playing, won't win.

Now spiritual gifts can be divided into 2 general categories, serving gifts and speaking gifts. And the specific spiritual gifts are listed in various passages in the New Testament, primarily in Rom. 12, 1 Cor. 12, Eph. 4, and 1 Pet. 4.

- Now church ministry can be both organized and spontaneous, and a church's ministries are one of the primary means by which the purposes of the church, exaltation, edification, and evangelism, are carried out.
- Eph. 4:12. The leaders of a church are to equip the members so they can use their gift. As members use their gift than other members are ministered too, and then the church will be strong, encouraged, and able to fulfill God's purposes. Rom. 1:11-12

But how does a Christian know what his gift is and how and when to use his gift? As he asks God, as he desires to please and serve the Lord, as he is involved in the church, as he is in fellowship, and as he's being equipped to do the work of service.

- As he does this, then God will use him and his spiritual gifts to minister to others.

And serving and ministering to others can take place spontaneously, or as a believer is involved in a particular ministry.

Now here at Hope Bible Church, we have a number of ministries a believer can be involved in. There are two handouts for you to look at.

- First, there is one that describes some of the spiritual gifts.
- Second, there is one that talks about the ministries we have here in the church.
- And whether you are presently involved in the church or not, I would suggest that you read this. And if you are not involved ask God to lead you as to how He would want you to be involved in the church. 1 Peter 4:10-11

