

## Heb.6:9-12 “Ministering to the Saints”

**For the Children:** It can be very disappointing to help someone, and then find that they don't seem to have noticed. Perhaps they don't even say “Thank you!” That's when we might think to ourselves, “That's the last time I do anything for them!” People who serve in the church – as elders or deacons, or Cadet/GEMS leaders, on the Committee of Administration, or musicians, or on the sound desk or in the garden – they, too, may feel as if it's not appreciated. We should encourage those who serve: it benefits us all. But even if we get no thanks from men, we are serving God as we do these things. He does not forget. Not that we deserve any thanks from Him. But He chooses to reward us for Christ's sake. **Questions:** Why does Jesus' work for us lead to a reward for our service in the church? What kind of things might prevent us from serving? How are we encouraged to be busy and patient in serving others in the church?

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### Introduction:

#### First Point: To Avoid Being Sluggish

- 1) The Previous Admonition: In 5:11-6:8, the Hebrews were admonished not to remain spiritual infants, stuck on “milk,” but to have their senses trained to discern good and evil. Then the writer warns against falling away. In the first case, the bearing of good fruit is stunted by immaturity; in the second, it is totally absent.
- 2) The Contrasting Encouragement: The writer then goes on to encourage them. They can do better. He is convinced of “better things” for them, things that “accompany salvation” – the ability to display good fruit in serving/ministering to the saints – as they have been doing.
- 3) A “Deaconing” Ministry: The word “ministering” means “deaconing, serving.” It applies to those serving in the office of deacon as well as those who serve others simply as members. The writer wants “each one” to show diligence in this. We should all be eager to demonstrate love of the Lord (v.10) and of His people. When we are busy doing so, this provides good opportunity for growing in the knowledge of the Word, by application.

#### Second Point: To Imitate Those Who Inherit the Promise

- 1) Encouragement from the Promises: When we imitate those who served God and His people, who later inherited the promises of God, we are encouraged to serve with diligence. Abraham is cited as an example in v.13ff. Such people served the Lord, often at great cost; they had to wait patiently to receive the promises. But they trusted that God would eventually cause them to experience the fulfillment of these promises.
- 2) The Better Example: Human examples are always flawed. The true value of these Biblical examples is that they show that despite their weakness, Christ was working in them. His trust and patience means that sinful servants can have our work made acceptable to God. It also means that He enables us to persevere in it, as we wait for the promises to be fulfilled. Service often requires a great deal of patience (Gal. 6:9), so we need that help. We need God's help also to overcome our fears and reluctance. Hence the emphasis here on patience (v.12) and on diligence versus sluggishness (vss.11-12).

#### Third Point: To Receive a Gracious Reward

- 1) God Is Not Unjust: Encouragement to service is given by the reminder that God will not “forget” your service. He is not unjust. His justice does not require Him to reward our flawed service; in fact, even if we served perfectly it would still be nothing more than what our duty requires (Lk. 17:10). But our just God does recognize the merit of His Son's work for us, in which our service is made acceptable. For Christ's sake, God graciously rewards our service to Him.
- 2) The Full Assurance of Hope: Because this reward is in Christ, we have a full assurance of hope (vss.11-12) that we will eventually enjoy the fullness of the promises. Even if others around us do not notice our service for them, the Lord does. And we are assured that He will one day reward it for Christ's sake.

### Conclusion:

