

TO SERVE OR BE SERVED

The motto of Lutheran Women's Missionary League-Canada is "Called to Serve" from Deuteronomy 10:12.

- What does the word "serve" mean to you?
- Would you rather serve or be served? Why?
- Why do some people find it easier to serve than to be served?

Keeping your answers in mind take a closer look at a familiar episode recorded in Scripture.

Turn to **2 Kings chapter 5**.

v.1. What do we learn about Naaman in this verse? Was this a man who served or one who was served?

vs. 2-3: We have no idea as to the age of the "little girl from the land of Israel" but obviously she was taken from Israel as a conquest of war. She became a servant to Naaman's wife. How does she express her sympathy for Naaman's leprous condition? Naaman was the enemy—consider the little girl's attitude in light of **Proverbs 25:21-22**. Indirectly, what does the compassionate attitude expressed by the servant girl tell you about Naaman and his wife as masters? What example regarding service, even to our enemy, do we learn from the little girl, from Naaman and his wife?

vs. 4-5: What is the response of the king of Syria to Naaman's statement? Again, what does this tell you about Naaman's status that the King of Syria would send such a lavish, extravagant gift to the king of Israel?

vs. 6-7: What is the king of Israel's response when he is called upon to serve the commander of the enemy's army? What is our response when we are called upon to serve in a situation that is seemingly impossible or not in the least bit attractive to us? We can understand the king of Israel's response. How do we reply when we are nominated to serve as an officer within our LWMLC society, or district, or national? Why do we reply in the positive? Why do we reply in the negative?

vs. 8-10: Elisha becomes the servant and intervenes on behalf of the king of Israel. What strange

command does he give Naaman? What was the promise Elisha made?

vs. 11-12: Naaman is not pleased with Elisha's directions. How do we respond when we are called upon to serve in a manner not to our liking or, in our opinion, less than dignified? How do we respond when people endeavour to serve us or offer suggestions not to our liking? Why do we respond in the manner we do?

v. 13: What love do Naaman's servants show to Naaman? What does this tell you about the servants?

According to **v. 14**, Naaman followed the advice of his servants, with what result? Who was really serving whom? The Jordan River did not seem very attractive to Naaman and yet he obeyed at the request of his servants. What does Jesus say about even the most menial acts of service? See **Matthew 25:35-36, 40**.

Service is a two-way street. One serves and the other receives the benefit of the service. What advice does Paul give regarding this two-way service, **Ephesians 6:5-9**?

We do not serve to garner favour with God—Christ's innocent suffering, death and resurrection have already made us right with God. We are forgiven children of God; we are motivated to serve because of God's great love for us. Consider our LWMLC motto once again (**Deuteronomy 10:12**). Consider also **Psalms 100:2a; Galatians 5:13-14; Colossians 3:17**. How do these thoughts influence us as we serve and as we are being served?

We serve because we want to; not because we have to.

Closing Hymn: "Lord, Help Us Walk Your Servant Way" (LSB #857).

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