

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

From Oswald Chambers, My Utmost For His Highest, Aug. 30

“Beware of the people who make usefulness their ground of appeal. If you make usefulness the test, then Jesus Christ was the greatest failure that ever lived.”

I was raised in a truly Christian home, with good, strong Christian values. We went regularly to a {Southern Baptist} Church that my grandfather had been instrumental in founding. It was there I first learned about Christian ‘service’. Sunday school was a big part of our lives. Sunday school teachers were in Christian service. So were choir members and deacons. Of course the pastor was at the top of the list because he was in ‘full – time Christian service’. Witnessing was a very large part of our teaching. This was preached about and we had many training courses on witnessing, though the most I ever observed or did was inviting someone to Church. I was no longer a young man before I realized that inviting someone to Church was NOT witnessing. Still, in my mind the hallmark and essence of Christian service was ‘Church Work’.

Oswald chambers’ comment then becomes a startling pronouncement. If Jesus’ life is judged by His ‘usefulness’, He is a great failure. Of course chambers does NOT view Jesus as a failure any more than you or I, so what is he saying? I think he is saying that from a human viewpoint, Jesus gathered a very few followers, preached an unpopular message, alienated the religious leaders, inflamed the people, lost all of His followers, and got Himself killed. Not many of us have failed so spectacularly! Was Jesus in God’s service? Yep – full time service. Perhaps we need to re-think what Christian service really is. It is not serving the Church and I submit that it is not serving Christ. I propose that Christian service is for us to so trust Christ, to so yield ourselves to Him, that Christ can serve us. It is, “Christ in us, our hope of glory” not us in Christ His hope of glory.

Who did Christ serve? Father! What was His mission? “I always do only the will of My Father”. His mission was to reveal Father and build the Kingdom of God. One way, perhaps the only way, for Jesus to build the Kingdom of God was for Him to build the Kingdom of God in each of Father’s born again children. Jesus clearly states that the Kingdom of God is not ‘earthly’. It is unseen by mortal eyes yet stronger than steel {even stronger than boron composite laminates}. What is Christian service? It is unseen, yielded obedience to the will of God working in your spirit. It is saying “Yes, Lord”, whether the task is simple or complex, easy or seemingly impossible. Christian service is allowing the nature and character of Christ be formed in you by daily walking and talking with Him. The world may not see. The world may not know what it sees. That is just fine. God is not building the world through you. No! He is building you through the world.