

Willing Service

TEXT: Acts 26:1-20

KEY VERSE: If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. — Isaiah 1:19

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: John 21:15-17

Paul, even though having been in prison for a long time, was not hesitant to do service for God by giving his testimony. As he stood before King Agrippa, the account of his conversion and how he answered God's call gives us a beautiful example of a complete change, total dedication and sacrifice. We are called by the same Christ to the same Gospel. Willing service for the salvation of souls in every phase of the Lord's work brings eternal reward.

1. Paul told King Agrippa that at an earlier time in his life, his ambition had been to put the followers of Jesus into prison, see them persecuted and even put to death. His attitude had been one of anger toward the followers of Jesus. Explain what brought about the change in his attitude, and tell why you think Paul was so willing to give his testimony before the King. Refer to Acts 9.

2. The word *surrender* means "to give up claim, or to yield to another." How do you think this word relates to service for God?

3. There are some important principles established in Scripture concerning the call of God. Read Romans 11:29 and 1 Corinthians 9:16-17, and note what points you find in these verses.

4. Reading verse 16 in our text, we find part of Paul's call was to "witness." What spiritual experience will help us fulfill this part of our call? See Acts 1:8.

5. When Jesus sent His disciples into the cities, they were told that the conditions they would face might not always be pleasant. They were sent as lambs among wolves. They were to carry no provisions. They were not guaranteed a welcome. Why were they sent? How did things turn out for them? What was their attitude upon their return to Jesus? See Luke 10:1,17 and 22:35.

6. Willing service to God is more an attitude than an obligation. If the question is posed, "Are you willing?" what is your response? If the response is, "If I have to . . ." or "I guess I can . . .," the attitude is saying, "I really don't want to." In today's society we are told not to commit or box ourselves in because life is too short. But this is a trick of the devil to keep us from serving the Lord. Psalm 40:8 contains a key word which reflects a certain attitude that we should maintain as we serve the Lord. Note the word, and describe how you think it applies to our Christian service. Then briefly describe how an opposite attitude might affect our service.

7. The magnitude of needs in the spreading of the Gospel, may sometimes seem almost overwhelming. We need to be aware that our duty is not universal, but rather personal and individual. God does not command us to "Go and do everything," but He marks out a special path for each of us. Once we have committed ourselves fully to Christ and have told Him we are willing to do whatever He gives us to do, how can we know just what that service should be? Proverbs 3:5-6 will give you some direction in noting your answer.

8. In today's society we often find that those in lesser circumstances are in a position of serving those who are more affluent. Matthew 23:11 establishes a Biblical perspective which is somewhat different. In your own words, elaborate on true greatness as brought out in this Scripture.