

# The Lord's Heart for Spiritual Service - Part 2

by Stephen Kaung

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*Stephen Kaung emphasizes the importance of understanding Christ as the blueprint for spiritual service and the necessity of self-examination in our service to God.*

**Duration:** 1:18:36

**Scripture:** Haggai 1:5, John 12:26, Philippians 3:10

**Topics:** "Spiritual Service", "Gods Will"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of examining our service to God. He highlights four areas that need to be considered: the nature of our service, the presence of vision, alignment with the heavenly vision, and the outcome of our service. The speaker emphasizes that our service should be rooted in the life of Jesus and not just a mere work. He also emphasizes the need for vision in our service, as it gives purpose, direction, and endurance. The speaker encourages listeners to align their service with the heavenly vision and not just follow traditions. Finally, the speaker emphasizes the importance of considering the outcome of our service and ensuring that it aligns with God's will.

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## Transcript

Will you please turn to the book of Haggai. Haggai, chapter one, verse six. Consider your ways.

Ye have so much, and bring in little. Ye eat, but are not satisfied. Ye drink, but are not filled with drink.

Ye close yourself, but there is none warm. And he that earneth wages, earneth wages for a bag with holes. Ye have so much, and bring in little.

Ye eat, but are not satisfied. Ye drink, but are not filled with drink. Ye close yourself, but there is none warm.

And he that earneth wages, earneth wages for a bag with holes. Verse seven. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, Consider your ways.

Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, Consider your ways. Verse eight. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build a house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith Jehovah.

You will go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build a house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, Let's have a little prayer. Dear Lord, we do want to thank Thee for bringing us into the new

year. Do constrain us by Thy love that we may present our bodies a living sacrifice to Thee.

Thou hast redeemed us for Thyself. We have no right to live for ourselves. We want to offer ourselves wholly to Yourself.

Not only that we may live for Thee, but Thou may live in us. Pray that our daily life will live in Thy presence. That we may know Thy will and do Thy will.

Teach us how to serve Thee in a way that will be pleasing to Thyself. That the days before us may count before Thee. And when we shall see Thee face to face, we shall not be put to shame.

We want to give Thee all the glory and praise. In the name of our dear Lord Jesus Christ. By the grace of God, we are all called to serve.

Formerly we served Pharaoh, the world. But thank God, He has delivered us out of the power of darkness. And has translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

Therefore we have changed our masters. No longer we serve mammon. We serve our living God.

Because the one whom we serve is the living God. Therefore we need to know how we can serve Him that will satisfy His heart. It is not just a matter of doing something for God.

We have to do things according to His will. Therefore this is an urgent question. Is there a blueprint for spiritual service? How do we know that our service is spiritual? How do we know that our service satisfies His heart? So this becomes a very urgent question.

Probably when we were first saved, we did have a heart to serve Him, earning our zeal for Him. We just tried to do everything that we thought it would please Him. But then gradually God began to reveal His heart to us.

He began to transform our service, enabling us to serve Him in a way that would really please Him. The secret is to know the blueprint of service. Brothers and sisters, when we talk about blueprint, probably in our mind we think of something that is technical.

Because when you are going to build a building, you engage an architect. And he will draw up a blueprint. There are lots of lines and circles.

Everything is technical. Everything is mechanical. Everything is impersonal.

Now brothers and sisters, this is not the way to serve God. Because our God is a living God. Therefore the blueprint that He shows us is something that is living.

It is not something technical. It is not something impersonal. It is highly spiritual.

And it is living. So brothers and sisters, when we try to find the blueprint of service, we have to understand this principle. For instance, when people think of building the church, we find that there are people who call themselves church planters.

Now how do you plant churches? Where is the pattern, the blueprint? You find that lots of people try to find the blueprint from history. Reading the history and to see how the church develops through the centuries. And then you try to find the blueprint for it.

Some other people may know better. They say you cannot find the blueprint in history. You have to find the blueprint in the Word of God.

So they try to find in the Word of God the blueprint. Where can they find it? They find it in the Book of Acts. Because the Book of Acts gives us the early history of the church.

How was the church formed? And then they try to find it in the Book of Acts and find the technical way of forming the church. You have to gather God's people together and you have to have some elders and some deacons. And then you organize a church.

You have the Book of Acts as your blueprint. It is very scriptural. And we know that many people are trying that.

And to their surprise that it doesn't work. So where is the blueprint for the church? Brothers and sisters, the same way is the blueprint for service. You cannot find the blueprint in service in a technical way.

Even if it is correct, scripturally correct, but it is dead. So what is the blueprint for service? Yesterday morning we mentioned that the blueprint for spiritual service is a living person. It is none other than Christ Jesus our Lord.

Since He is the one whom we serve, therefore He is our pattern. So our Lord Jesus said, if anyone wants to serve Me, he must follow Me. Where I am, there he must be.

So dear brothers and sisters, thank God He has given us a perfect blueprint. And it is His beloved Son, our Lord Jesus. It is therefore very, very important that we need to know our Lord Jesus.

Not just knowing it mentally, knowing it in our spirit. And the more you know Him, the more you follow Him, the more is the spiritual service. Thank God He shows us that the first thing concerning spiritual service is that it must be Son-servant.

It is not slave-servant. So here you find the best example of service is the service of the only begotten Son of our God. Because we are not hirees.

We are not just doing a work. We are not just fulfilling a duty. You find that the Son-servant, there is a love relationship there.

The Son serves His Father out of love. Therefore you find our Lord Jesus, who is equal with God. He shares with God all the honor and glory.

And yet because of service, He emptied Himself. He takes a lower place. The Bible says He even takes the form of a bond-slave.

And our brother mentioned last night that the bond-slave is not just an ordinary slave. An ordinary slave is bought with a price. And when that kind of slave-serving, it is a slavish kind of service.

It is a compulsory service. So you find such service will be just before your face, not behind your back. It is not real.

It is not out of love. Out of duty. But thank God, He shows us that to serve God, the first principle is you must be a son.

You must have His life in you. And there must be a love relationship between you and the Lord. And thank God He has done it.

You know, God does not, and is not served by ordinary people. He can only be served by those who have His life. Because service is a matter of life.

Service is a matter of love. There must be a son-father relationship. So thank God that He has given us this quality.

Therefore, when we are serving Him, never take it as a matter of duty, as a matter of obligation, as something forced upon us. But because we are constrained by His love, we want to show our love to our God. So this is the first principle.

And then you find in the life of our Lord Jesus, He came into this world for one purpose, to be occupied with His Father's business. When He was twelve years old, there was a time when a Jewish boy will become a member of the synagogue. When he was twelve years old, his parents took him to Jerusalem.

I wonder if this was the time when he received his Bar Mitzvah. And when his parents worshiped God, they began to return home. They usually traveled in groups.

So his parents thought that Jesus must be with the other children. But after a whole day's journey, they discovered that Jesus was not there. And with sorrow and anxiety, they returned to Jerusalem.

Tried to find the child Jesus. And on the third day, they found Him in the temple. They found He was sitting before these rabbis.

He was asking questions and also answering questions. Because as a grown-up, He had the duty and He has the privilege of doing such. His mother said, Child, why do you do this to us? And our Lord Jesus said, Don't you know that I must be occupied with my father's business? So here you'll find our Lord Jesus, His whole life is to occupy with His Father's business.

He came into this world not to do His own business. He wanted to be occupied with the Father's business. And you also remember, when He was thirty years old, He came to John the Baptist to be baptized.

And John the Baptist says that here was a perfect man. He had no need to be baptized. No need to repent.

So John said, I need to be baptized by you. How come that you come to me to be baptized? And our Lord Jesus said, Let us fulfill the righteousness of God. Because this is the way of God.

That the way of God is through repentance. Even though He had no need to repent, but He took our place. And He received the baptism of repentance.

Then He was filled with the Holy Spirit. So you'll find that throughout the life of our Lord Jesus, in all His services, He served by the power of the Holy Spirit. Again and again He said, I can do nothing by myself.

I do what I see my Father doing. I cannot say anything out of myself. I say it because I heard my Father say it.

His whole life is to do the will of God. And without the will of God, He did nothing. And He was obedient to His Father to the extent even to death and the death of the cross.

Dear brothers and sisters, no wonder during His life the heavens opened three times. And the voice from above said, This is my beloved Son in whom I have found my delight. Dear brothers and sisters, Our Lord Jesus said, If anyone wants to serve Me, let him follow Me.

Wherever I am, there shall he be. And he who serves Me, my Father will honor him. So dear brothers and sisters, the blueprint of spiritual service is our Lord Jesus.

That is the reason why we need to know Him so intimately, so personally. The measure of your knowing Christ is the measure of your spiritual service. You cannot serve Him above what you know Him.

Now this morning we would like to go to the second question. Having seen the blueprint of spiritual service, now let us consider our present service. Because without knowing the pattern, there is no standard.

There is no way to consider our service. The only way to know what our service today is, is by comparing it with the pattern. But brothers and sisters, let us remember one thing.

Our Lord Jesus is perfect. In His whole life, His service is always maintained on the highest level. But so far as our service is concerned, because we are so limited, therefore our service is relative.

Not only relative, but it should be progressive. In other words, our service is measured by our knowledge of our Lord Jesus. When we first believe in the Lord Jesus, we know Him just a little bit.

And because this is all that we know, this will be the limit of our service. But that doesn't mean that because of this, our service is perfect. We need to grow in life.

And by growing in life, it simply means we grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus. You know, growing is not a matter of mentally knowing, mental knowledge. Growing is life.

And the growing of spiritual life is the growing of the life of Christ in us. And as we grow in spiritual life, or put it into another way, as Christ grows in us, then you'll find our service should be progressive. And our service should not just remain as it was when we first got saved.

In other words, we need the light of God. We do not need to be retrospective, introspective. You know, we do not need to just look at our service and try to find out where it stands.

Because if we examine ourselves in our own life, we will either become proud or in despair. So this is not a matter of being introspective. But it is a matter of we need to place ourselves in the light of God daily.

In Psalm 36, verse 9, it is said, In God, in Him, is the fountain of life. And in Thy light do we see light. Now the light here is the light of life.

Every believer has the light in Him. And the degree of that light is according to the degree of the life of Christ in Him. And it is in this light that we see light.

Therefore we need to place ourselves before the Lord and ask the Lord to shine upon us. Not only to examine our life, but also to examine our service. And you remember in Psalm 139, the prayer of David,

examining me and know my heart.

Examine me and know my way. And see if there is anything evil in me. And lead me in a life everlasting.

Dear brothers and sisters, so in the matter of our service, we need to constantly come to the light of God. And ask Him to shine upon us according to His light of life. Where does our service stand? Is it according to His pleasure? Or it has already departed? So that's the reason why we read the book of Haggai.

In Haggai, you'll find God through the Prophet Haggai spoke to the remnant who returned to Jerusalem. The children of Israel, because they rebelled against God, so they were taken into Babylonian captivity. And they were there for 70 years.

But by the grace of God, in the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, he gave an order. Anyone among the children of Israel could go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. Now you know that during that period of captivity, God was no longer addressed as the God of the heavens and of the earth.

He was only addressed as the God of the heavens. In other words, He was dismissed back to heaven. Because there was no testimony of His testimony on earth.

The children of Israel were in captivity. Babylon was destroyed. I mean, Jerusalem was destroyed.

The temple was destroyed. There was no place where God could place His name. But thank God in His mercy, the children of Israel were allowed to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.

A remnant returned. They were stirred by the Spirit of God. They wanted to live for God.

They wanted to serve God. So they left Babylon, returned to Jerusalem, a place of ruling, surrounded by enemies. But they came back with one purpose, to rebuild the temple of God so that God may have a name on earth.

What a glorious vision! They came back. The second day, the second year, they laid the foundation. But after the foundation was laid, their enemies were stirred up.

Their enemies tried every means to stop the building. And finally, their hands got so weakened, so they stopped building. But during the years where the building was stopped, what did they do? They had to do something.

So they began to build their own houses. And they built such beautiful houses, paneled houses. So in the second year of Darius, his tempest, God raised up a prophet.

Haggai. And God, through Haggai, challenged his people. He called them to consider.

Now brothers and sisters, the word consider is a strong word. It means, set your heart on it. You ponder over it.

You think over it. You see if what you have done is the right thing. Whether you have departed from God's will.

So God called these returned remnants. Consider your ways. Do you think your ways are right? Don't you see that you sow much, but you reap little? You eat, but you are not full.

You drink, but you are not quenched. You clothe, but you have no warmth. In other words, everything is unsatisfactory.

Why is it so? Because everyone goes to their own house. And forget the house of God. So here you find the prophet says to the people.

Consider. And the word consider is used five times in the book of Haggai. Haggai has only two chapters.

Being an old man. So he spoke very little. But in these two chapters, five times the word consider is used.

God said you consider the past. What has happened? You consider the future. What will happen? Consider the future.

When the foundation is laid, and God will begin to bless you. So brothers and sisters, I do think that it is very good that even if this is the new year, I do think that even if this is the new year, we need to consider. We need to consider our present service.

What is the condition of the service you are engaging today? What is the condition of the service you are engaging today? Is it something that is in the will of God? Is it something that pleases, satisfies God's heart? Or has it been departed? It is no longer in God's way. It is no longer for God's purpose. It has been generated into something that will satisfy yourself.

Dear brothers and sisters, we need to come to the presence of God and ask his light to shine upon us. We who have served the Lord for many years, we are the ones who need this consideration most. Because you know, when we begin to serve, and when we begin to learn how to serve, in the beginning there is life there.

In the beginning there is first love there. But as we continue to serve, we begin to learn how to serve. Soon it becomes a routine.

There is no need to pray about it. We do not need to be on our knees anymore. We know how to do it.

So we just go ahead and do it. Brothers and sisters, is it not time that we should return to the Lord and see if we have deviated from God's will? Whether it is personal service, the service that God has entrusted to you personally, or whether it is corporate service, the service of the church. Brothers and sisters, we all need to place under the light of God and let him shine upon us.

But again, this is such a personal matter. How can we examine under the light of God? What to be examined? There are so many areas that we need to be considered. I think we will just try to reduce them to four areas.

So far as our service is concerned, number one, let us consider the nature of our service. What is the nature of our service? We already mentioned before that we serve a living God. God is living and he has to be served with life.

So we need to consider whether our service today is of life. Is it out of the life of our Lord Jesus in us? Or it has been degenerated into a routine? Outwardly we are busily serving, but inwardly that life is not there. For instance, in the book of Revelation chapter two, our Risen Lord wrote to the church in Ephesus.

Now we know the church in Ephesus began with a wonderful beginning. The Apostle Paul stayed there for three years. Night and day he served with tears.

In public and in private. He preached the kingdom of God and he did not withhold anything from them. He showed them the whole counsel of God.

Because the church in Ephesus was noted for its love. They might not be as intelligent as the church in Corinth. Yet Paul could not share with the church in Corinth the whole counsel of God.

Because they were bathed in Christ. They did not grow up. But with the church in Ephesus because they loved the Lord.

You remember the ending of the letter to Ephesus by Paul. He ended up with that grace be with you who love God with undying love. In other words, the people in Ephesus they love God with an undying love.

And because of that undying love God was able to open his heart to them and show them all the mysteries of the centuries. They had lots of work lots of labor lots of patience but then when you come to Revelation chapter 2 you find when our original road to the church in Ephesus we say, I know your work. I know you have much labor I know your patience and endurance but I am against you because there is no first love.

Dear brothers and sisters when you read 1 Thessalonians you find the church in Thessalonica Paul said you have the work of faith you have the labor of love and you have the hope of endurance but here in Ephesus they have work, no faith they have labor, no love they have endurance, no hope in other words you'll find Christ is missing there His life is missing there and yet all the things are going on as usual Brothers and sisters our greatest problem is we can be so lulled into spiritual sleep it's almost like a spiritual coma to say that we are dead, we are still living but to say we are living we are in a coma we are so dull we do not even realize where we are Brothers and sisters may the Lord have mercy upon us that we may be awakened only in His light can we see light we need to humble

ourselves and place ourselves, our service before His light and enable His light to shine upon us that we may repent and return so brothers and sisters God being a living God we have to serve Him with life we have to serve Him with our heart we have to serve Him with first love otherwise our service has degenerated things can still continue on but remember our Lord is not served He is not satisfied and the Lord said to the church in Ephesus unless you repent and return I will remove the gold lampstand in other words before God their testimony was removed on earth they may still continue but before God it was gone so dear brothers and sisters it is very very important lest our service become just a work we cannot measure our service by the success of the work because the success or failure

of service has another standard number two we need to consider the matter of the vision in Proverbs we are told without vision the people perish or without vision the people have no restraint without vision the people scatter vision is very important in our service vision gives us the purpose of our service vision gives us the direction of our service vision gives us the strength of our service it gives us endurance it is most important that in our service there is vision put it in another way you cannot have any service without vision because you have no direction you have no purpose in it may I put it this way because I remember many years ago our dear brother Waterman Nee told us he said the problem with God's people today is that we have many small visions but we lack the heavenly

vision some have vision of evangelism so they devote themselves to evangelism but they make evangelism as all things they do not know that evangelism is one of the process towards the eternal purpose of God and they just stay there they do not grow into the heavenly vision that God gave to Paul and some may have the vision of having a hospital and because of that vision they try to serve people but they do not know that this is only a part of the heavenly vision so they just limit themselves to that small sphere the most important thing is we all have that heavenly vision you remember Paul said I was not disobeying to the heavenly vision on the road to Damascus the Lord gave him the overall vision it is concerning with the eternal purpose of God the very heart of God's heart what is God

really after what he has purpose even before the foundation of the world what explains all his working throughout the centuries what he is really after what does he want to get brothers and sisters this is something that every child of God should know because God's heart is centered upon his beloved son he has given everything to his beloved son we have already mentioned all the fullness of God dwells in him bodily and we are complete in him he is the heir of all things God has put everything under his feet he is to be all and all to us what is the church the church is the body of Christ the fullness of him who fills all and all so the church is nothing but the Christ in the church you see only Christ you do not see Adam we do not see each other we see Christ in each other it is just the

fullness of Christ that is what the church is what is the full gospel what is the great salvation that Hebrews talks about it is none other but that we may be complete in Christ Jesus this is the purpose of God this is the heavenly vision and this gives us direction gives us meaning shows us how to serve God so brothers and sisters this is another thing that we need to consider before the Lord does my service coincide agree with the heavenly vision or do I just serve according to the traditions of the fathers brothers and sisters that makes a great difference and that is the reason why even if our service is progressing we need to grow into the heavenly vision and let that heavenly vision guide our service and then thirdly we need to consider the outcome of service what do we expect to

have after service you remember the apostle Paul says in 2nd Corinthians you know if you want to know the ministry of Paul you need to go to 2nd Corinthians because there he reveals to us the secret of spiritual service and to put it very simply if you read chapter 4 he says that we have a treasure in the earthen vessel that the radiancy of the power may be of God and none of us thank God we all have the treasure in this earthen vessel we all earthen vessels nothing common nothing special but thank God he puts a treasure in the earthen vessel you know nobody would do such a thing if you have a treasure you will put it in a gold box who will put a treasure in an earthen vessel that's the wonder of all God but remember to show the power of it the radiancy of it is not out of the earthen

vessel it's out of the treasure so for that radiancy to diffuse the earthen vessel has to be cracked and broken but brothers and sisters you know how we love ourselves self-preservation is one of the strongest instincts in human beings and yet the Lord said the way of service that earthen vessel has to be broken and thank God he raises up circumstances everything that happens to a believer nothing is incidental God has a purpose behind because we are called according to purpose so all things work together for good all these things came to break us and why? because the light of that treasure may come forth in other words what is service? what is the outcome of service? the outcome of service is imparting life so Paul said death works in me life works in you out of death comes life the

grain of wheat has to fall into the ground and die and then it will bear much fruit so brothers and sisters what is service? service is imparting life imparting the life of Christ in you and unless we are broken that

life is imprisoned within us the outcome of service is not largeness the outcome of service is life impartation we need to examine ourselves before the Lord in all our services how much life have we imparted to our brothers and sisters or whether it is just a matter of outward form this is something that we need to consider before the Lord and finally we need to consider the power of our service where does that power come from? you remember in Zechariah chapter 4 the Lord said not by might nor by power but by my spirit says the Lord so brothers and sisters it is very very

important that when we are engaged in service we need to examine before the Lord again and again whether the power of our service is coming from God even our Lord Jesus when he was on earth his service is completely in the power of the Holy Spirit he never depends upon himself he never serves out of his own mind he never does anything out of himself he said the Son can do nothing but he does everything in the power of the Holy Spirit because in serving God you cannot offer strange fire you remember the story in Numbers in Exodus 12 we remember in Numbers 12 the two sons of Aaron they were chosen to be priests to serve God but one day they put strange fire to their incense because the fire comes from heaven you remember after Moses finished the tabernacle and when he began to offer

sacrifice fire came down from heaven and burned the sacrifice and the fire never goes out so whenever you want to serve God you have to use that fire and yet these two sons most likely they were drunk so they used strange fire and entering into the holy place to offer incense to God and immediately they were stricken to death because no one can serve God with strange fire now what is the strange fire? the strange fire is our own fire it is our own strength our natural strength something that comes from ourselves instead of depending upon the power of God how many works of God are done in that way today? people use their psychic power we say this man has charisma now what is charisma? it is a power that comes out from self-love and how many God's works are being done in that way? it may be

successful in the sight of man but how much work is it before God? dear brothers and sisters if we want to serve God we have to depend upon the power of God that is the Holy Spirit especially with God's servants today we are so busy engaged in service we have no time to pray we have no time to wait upon the Lord we know what to do we know what to say we have done it for years brothers and sisters we may cheat ourselves we may even cheat our brothers and sisters but we cannot cheat God any service that is not in the power of the Holy Spirit is rejected by God so dear brothers and sisters we need to be before the Lord and ask Him to shine His light upon us you know sometimes we have to pray and we serve to such an extent that we cannot stop and wait before the Lord a momentum is moving on

we are driven as it were by the work brothers and sisters be careful the Lord is coming we shall all appear before His judgment seat our services will be judged and it will be according to Christ how much of Christ is in our service may the Lord have mercy upon us dear Lord we do pray that the light will shine upon us by Thy grace Lord that we may always walk in Thy light do not allow us to drift away into darkness that our service may be rejected by Thee we ask in Thy precious name

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