

# Be A Gracious Receiver

**Romans 12:1** [New King James] *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”*

**God expects us to be willing to lay down our lives to serve other people.**

**Galatians 5:13** [New King James] *“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”*

**As Christians we are to serve one another.**

**1 Peter 4:10** [New King James] *“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”*

**We are to use the gifts we have received from the Creator God to serve one another. This includes our accepting the service of other people.**

The purpose of this article is to show how we can be a gracious receiver of other people's service.

There are three basic principles to being a gracious receiver –

## **1 Be willing to receive services that are offered to you –**

**Jesus Christ was a gracious receiver.**

**Mark 14:3-9** [New King James] *“And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head. But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, ‘Why was this fragrant oil wasted? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.’ And they criticized her sharply. But Jesus said, ‘Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.’”*

**Notice the two attitudes about the gift, that of the disciples and that of Jesus Christ.**

The disciples murmured indignantly as they disagreed with what this woman was doing.

Some people criticise what the giver is doing, even to the point of refusing the gift, pretending to be too humble to accept, as if they do **not** deserve to be helped.

**Such an attitude can be insulting to the server, and very discouraging to someone who is just learning to serve others.**

**How did Jesus Christ react?**

Did He criticise or insult her decision to give this service?

Did Jesus Christ tell her to give it to someone else in some other way?

No, Jesus Christ accepted her good work, her gift and service, and complimented her.

**This woman's action and Jesus Christ's response have been preserved for us to follow, both in giving and receiving.**

## **2 Express our appreciation –**

**Luke 17:11-19** [New King James] *“Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!’ So when He saw them, He said to them, ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’ And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?’ And He said to him, ‘Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.’”*

In this example, Jesus Christ was the One who gave healing to 10 lepers.

Only one returned to say thanks. But Jesus Christ implied that all of them should have given thanks.

**How about us? Do we make the effort to thank those who have helped us?**

We should constantly be thanking the Creator God for the life He has given us and how He sustains that life, [1 **Thessalonians 5:17**].

## **3 Never demand service –**

The Word of God, the Christian Bible, does command us to serve one another.

**Galatians 5:13** [New King James] *“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”*

We do this through the love we have for all human beings because of the active flow of the Holy Spirit through us, [John 7:38-39], love being the foremost “fruit” of the Holy Spirit, [Galatians 5:22-25].

**This service must be done willingly, gladly from the heart and human spirit, [Job 32:8].**

**Never should we demand or take for granted a service from other human beings.**

It is out of our love for them that we graciously accept any service so that they may be blessed by God for giving such service, [Acts 20:35].

**Philippians 4:10-18** [New King James] *“But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.”*

The apostle Paul was not demanding, even though he suffered greatly at times, he was content, [verse 12].

Paul told the Philippian Church members that he appreciated what they gave him, [**verse 17**].

He also appreciated the attitude they had behind the gift. Since they had given him much, he did **not** want them to think that he was just asking for more.

Rather, Paul wanted them to grow spiritually as a result of their generous attitudes.

Of course, this does **not** mean we should not make our needs known if we are in the need of help.

But never take service from others for granted.

Putting demands on the giver reduces the joy of serving.

Always let the person give willingly.

## **Conclusion –**

Being a Christian involves serving and being served.

When we are being served, let us be gracious receivers.

- 1 Be willing to receive service.
- 2 Always give thanks.
- 3 Never be demanding that others serve us.

**If we put these principles into practice, we can help others by making their serving more enjoyable.**