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### **With God, in the Service of Mankind**

*But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.*

Mark 10:42-44 KJV

Each person has an invisible face, a side that is not any less important than the visible face! We carry in ourselves as many kinds of thoughts, feelings, emotions, desires as many of us is seated here, and as many people are alive. There are some among you who listen to every word with good intentions, some listen with malfeasance, some with faith, and some with manufactured criticism. Some people's thoughts are somewhere else altogether, tending to the daily needs of their rushing lives. Each of us is a unique, closed world, a cosmos, the understanding of which is a futile undertaking through the methods of science. That is because it is impossible to measure intellect, intent, and the multitudes of emotions, desires, and inspirations. On top of that love, hate, anger animosity, fear, cowardice and bravery frequently defy logic.

Let us then travel through this boundless world of the spirit. We observe Abraham prepared to scarify Isaac, his only child! We observe Jesus spreading his arms as he is nailed to the cross! We observe the iron door of the prison cell shutting behind David Ferenc! Because in the soul of those individuals and a million others alike, the law is the declaration of the reformer: "Here I stand, I can do no other". In those examples it was not smartness that won the day, but the people of faith!

We observe the stone axe carrying men drawing onto the wall of caves. We observe the Pharaohs using hundreds of thousands of people to build pyramids. We observe Michelangelo working till he goes blind; we observe Milton finding his happiness in the paradise of words; we observe Beethoven finding his happiness in the paradise of

sounds. In those examples it was neither smartness nor faith, but beauty that won the day in the soul of those individuals and a million others alike!

We observe Hebrews holding up two stone tablets, Christians raising a cross, Hussites holding a chalice, the protestants carrying a star, and, for these symbols individuals and millions alike lose their lives! In these examples the symbols win the day! The people are behind the symbols, and in the symbols are the concepts!

These are laws just like the law of gravity, the speed of light, and the conservation of energy. The laws in the spiritual world of people are: faith, beauty, symbols, truth, goodwill, and freedom.

On the façade of our churches there is the motto: "To the glory of the one God". Whether it is a white-washed church in a village, or a more ornate church in a town, the meaning of that motto has been present in every prayer, every praise, every hymn, every word that has ever been said and is being said to honor God. Just as the visible human body encloses an invisible world, within the walls of each Unitarian church there is an invisible writing, motto, symbols, and law that reads like this: "With God, in the service of mankind!"

We are all children of God. Such kinship comes with obligations. Among the obligations are service, and aiding personal improvement, as God wants our salvation, and for us to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). Every person is a unique, independent world. In that cosmos the utmost priority is maintaining life, which is the underpinning principle of every possibility and outcome. That command mandates the protection of life, and the extinguishment of sin, whatever its origin. The life of one person is less than the lives of two; the life of a family is less than the life of a community; the life of a group, no matter how large, is less than the life of mankind. We could name this principle the gravitational law of God's kingdom, because Jesus, the son of man, came to serve and to give his life for the life of many. He, who understood most perfectly the properties of the human soul, wanted to remove selfishness - that largest obstacle to human development - because selfishness is a universal childhood disease of mankind. And it is obstructing efforts to personal improvement!

Children want everything for themselves! They want food, drink, toys; they are not disturbed when they cause pain to their pals and make them cry. Because of their rudimentary thought processes and protection of only their own lives, they are the center of everything. Even the disciples remained in the cosmos of their self-centered, child-like soul. Everything is about me! I ought to be the *chiefest* - the greatest, because I am the most true, most faithful, most trustworthy - the center of the world, they thought! And then Jesus said: "Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the *chiefest*, shall be servant of all!"

You are only kind inasmuch as you help others with your kindness! You are only as true as long as your truth is better than that of the Pharisee. You are only as faithful as you faithfully keep my commandments. You are only at the center of the world as long as

you serve others and put them in the center. The son of man didn't come to be served, but so that he could serve!

We observe the disciples bowing their heads and this new law now becomes the foundation of a developing, rising Christian thought. The law about this sacred obligation: to serve others. The law of being exulted because of self-denial! Thus, the apostles and believers will become *chiefest* and greatest through their service to others.

It is a sad testament to the heedless nature of men that the rivalry among the disciples about faithfulness has been repeated time and time again. Since then some disciples, who received their knowledge from Jesus, became prosperous and acquired wealth and power, and reigned and ruled like heathen princes. They demanded servitude from others. Those who would attempt to recall the words of the Master now faced the flames at the stake: on the banks of the River Thames and Lake Constance, on the Plateau of Geneva, at the market of Granada. However, the fires of the stakes couldn't incinerate, and the cries of excruciating pain couldn't repress the eternal command from the road to Jerusalem: "Whosoever of you will be the *chiefest*, shall be servant of all!"

Teach everyone, because knowledge belongs to everyone! Share the wealth equally, because prosperity is for everyone! Serve mankind, because it is the wish of God that all His children live placidly in peace, in gladness, and are saved!

David Ferenc emerged from that great storm of a struggle to retain the purity of the words of Jesus. He wanted to fulfill the spiritual command of Jesus: serve everyone. Thus, he preached in 1568: everyone ought to believe and attain salvation according to their own conscience. Let there be a freedom of conscience, a freedom for the words of preachers, a freedom for all mankind.

That is how fifteen hundred years after the constructive life and ghastly death of Jesus, a new church, our church, gained an organized format: "To the glory of one true God and to the service of mankind."

Only the format, the framing, is new. Its teachings, faith principles, motto, and goal match the original. That is what Jesus, the kindest son of God, preached in Galilee, in Judea, at Lake Gennesaret, on the banks of the River Jordan, in Capernaum, and in Jerusalem: the love of God, and the love of mankind!

The history of the many thousands of years of mankind, the two thousand years of Christianity, and the four hundred years of the Unitarian Church stand as testimonials to the fact that only those who served mankind became great, became *chiefest*! In the sciences, in religion, in the arts only those became great who, whether individuals or institutions, could act, even at the cost of sacrifice, in the interest of mankind.

The teaching of Jesus is clear, and the command of Jesus is simple: serve mankind! Not only to serve the men of wisdom, or only the men of religion, or the men of beauty, or the men of symbols, not only the white, the black, the yellow, or this or that! Serve

everyone! Because the son of man didn't come to be served, but so that he could serve others!

All faithful who set foot in a church built to glorify the true God, all who hear and follow the teachings of Jesus, must inscribe this into their hearts and minds, and must prove through actions: *I live not for myself, but for the service of others.*

The command from the rivalry of the disciples is a teaching not only for holidays or for weekdays, but it is inevitable on all days. We can read in the columns of newspapers, hear it through the speakers of radios, and see it on television screens, and we preach about it in the pulpit: Native tribes are exterminated in the rainforests of Brazil; in some countries slavery is still thriving; thousands of tons of bombs explode every day in Vietnam and villages and towns are destroyed, and thousands of children, mothers, men and women bleed; famine kills hundreds of thousands in various regions of the world. Mankind, while flying rocket ships to other planets, continue to suffer, because it cannot overcome its own selfishness. Do not wait for others! Be the one who speaks and serves! Serve mankind, serve everyone, now and forever! Amen.