

Scripture: Mark 1:29-31.

Theme: The Christian Servant.

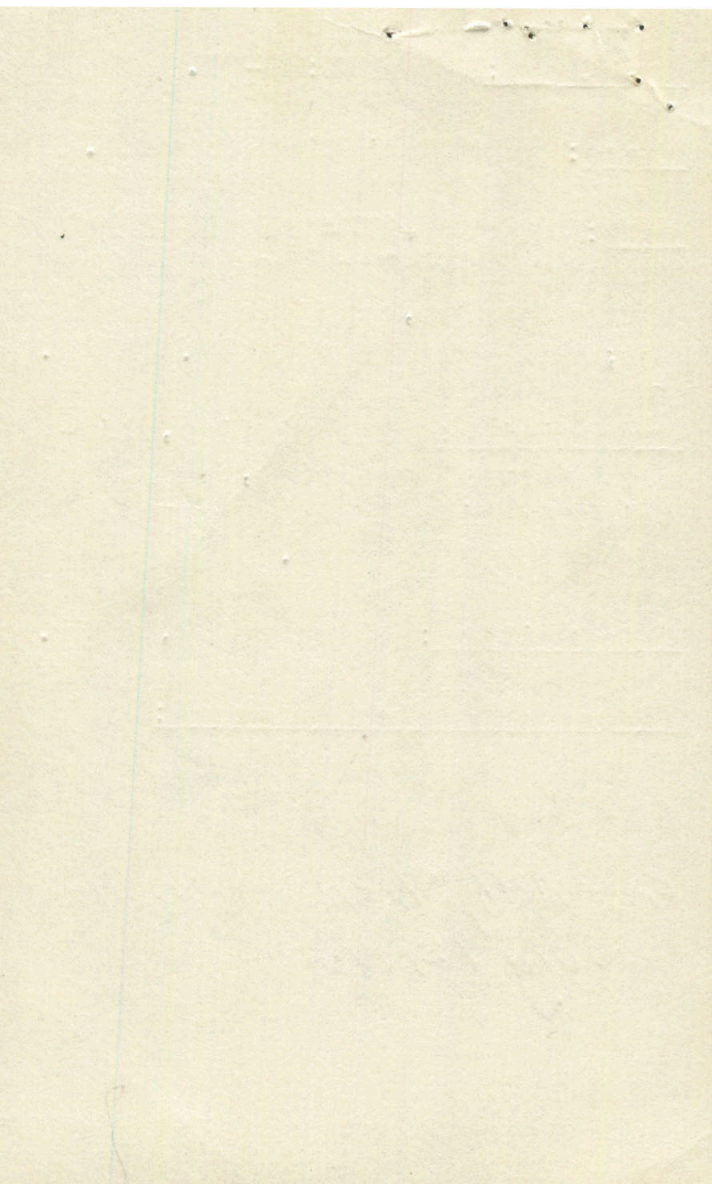
Text: Mark 1:31--"and he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her; and she served them." (RSV).

Proposition: A Christian, himself served by Christ, should think of himself as a servant of both God and man.

Date written: January 14, 1956.

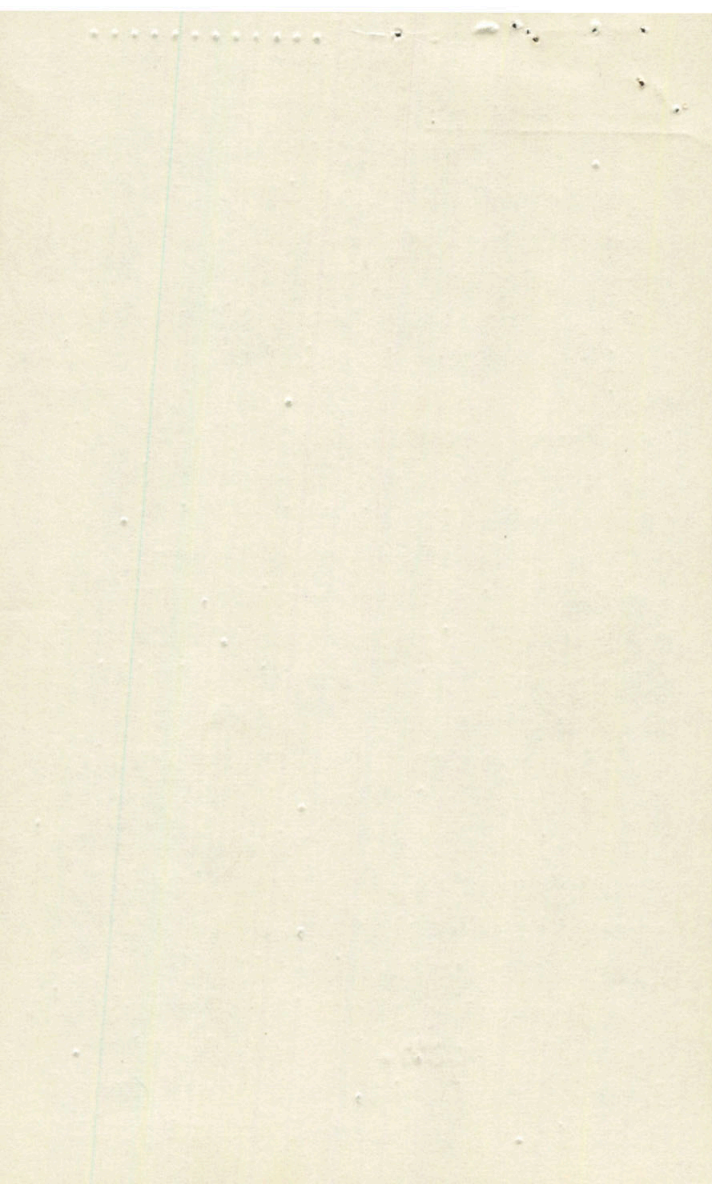
Places and dates preached:

Grace, Cheepune, Wyo. ~~Nov~~-15, 56  
Aye, N.Y., July 22, 56  
First M.E.M., Sheridan, Wyo., 11a.m.,  
July 13, 1958



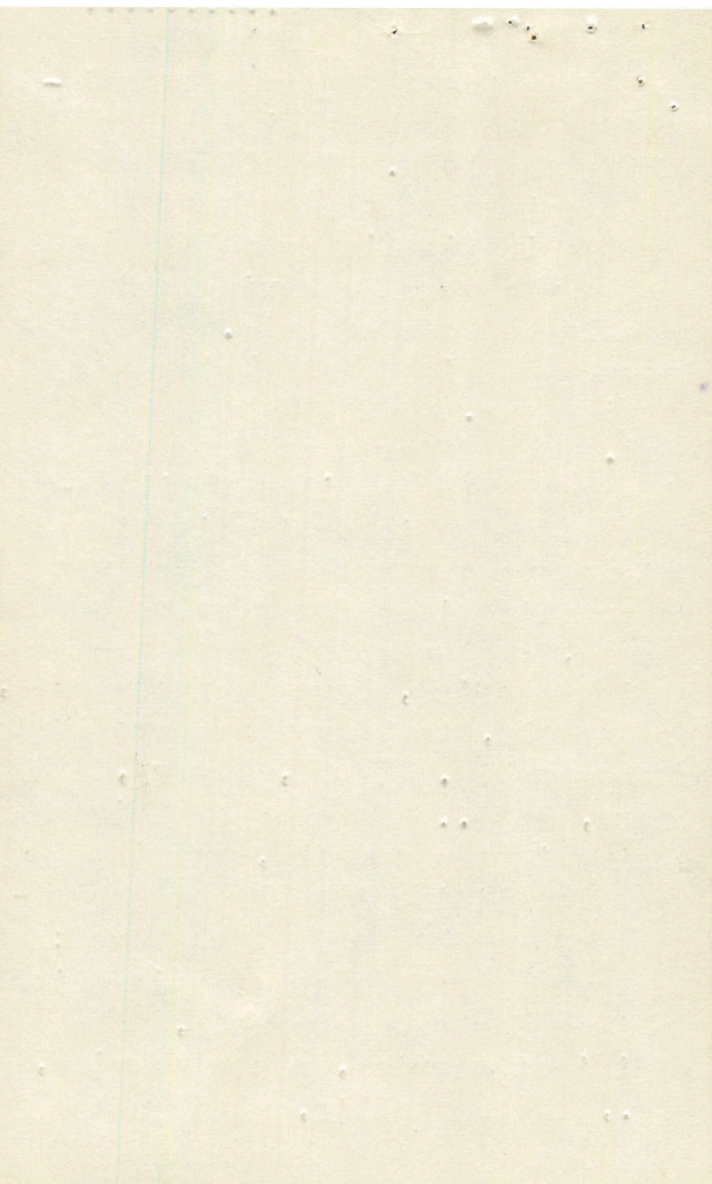
Introduction:

1. The motion picture "The Best Years of our Lives" was named from the fact the the best years of the lieves of the three main characters were given to their country in military service during World War II. The story is woven around the efforts of the three men to re-establish themselves in civilian life. One of the three was an army sergeant in the service, but a bank executive at home. Shortly after returning to his civilian job he made a large loan to enable a young fellow to go into farming on his own. He made the loan without observing the bank's usual standards of required security for loans, after the young man told him "if I had the land for security I wouldn't need the lan. I know farming. I grew up in it, and you know I know it. How can I start unless



somebody will help me?" Later the executive had to defend himself to the bank president for making the loan. He did so on the thesis that the bank as a service institution should help people who were deserving and capable but needed help. He thought of his job as being a service one.

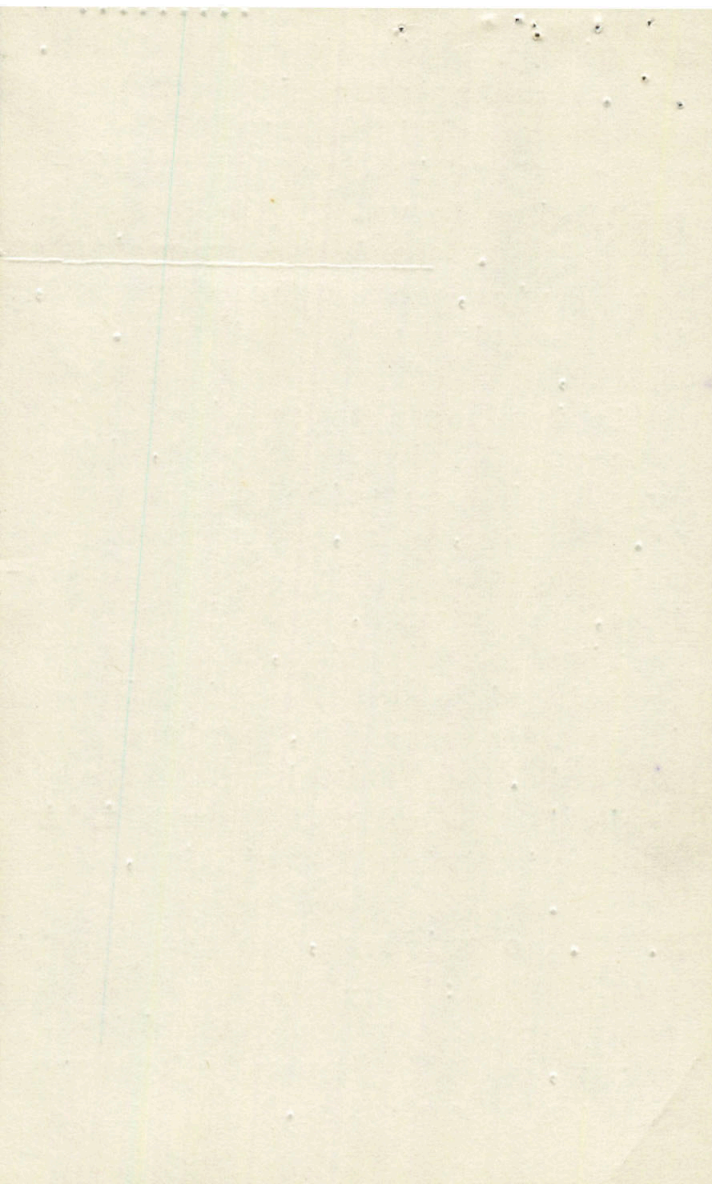
2. Case after case from real life could be compiled to illustrate that business institutions which have thought of themselves as organizations for service of people, and not just as money-making outfits, have been the ones, frequently, that grew and profited phenomenally. (Ford, Penney, Sears, etc).. Some of the biggest chains in the country, and in many localities the larger department stores began just that way: the owner or founder starting with an idea for cheaper goods, more efficient service, a new service, etc., to the public, with just a



Mark 1:31-32  
anominal profit to the business.

3. Our Scripture illustrates how the unselfish servant of others often is rewarded by himself being served by the one he has helped. Scripture recapitulates. But service, not expected reward, is the motive of a christian. Surely, the one who would be Christian needs to consider this concept of being a servant, if even Christ practiced and taught it. Surely, also, we need to think of the fellowship of Christians, the church, as primarily a service organization, and not an organization seeking primarily its own enlargement, enrichment and gain. In thinking of "The Christian Servant" we are thinking of the individual Christian, you and me.

4. To guide us, we use as our text Mark 1:31 -- "and he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her; and she served them."



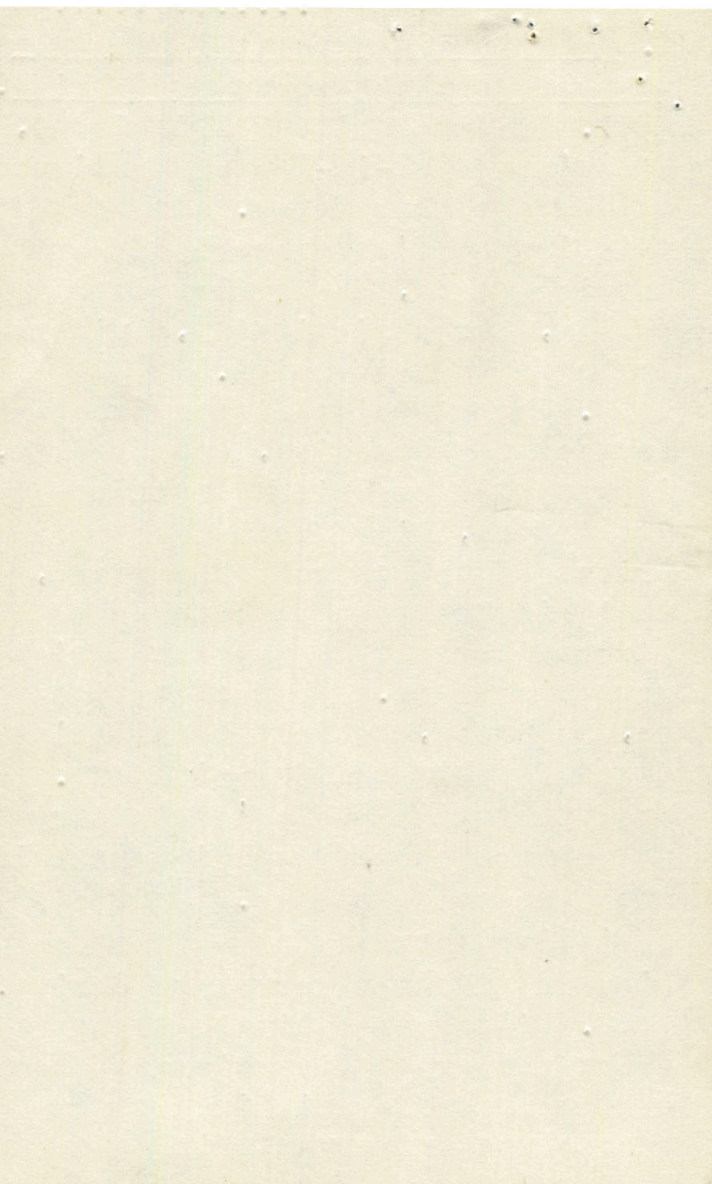


I. A Christian servant is one who himself has been served by Christ.

1. In our Scriptural incident, Simon's mother-in-law was relieved by Jesus of her fever. In Mark this is the first record of her knowing Jesus, so her loyalty to Him, her christianity, evidently began at this point.

2. In Methodist history the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, is recorded as being a rather "cold fish," ineffectual as a priest of the church of England, until in the room on Aldersgate Street in May 1738 he felt Christ warm his heart. From that time on, he wrote, he felt that Christ cared for him and was with him. From that time Wesley's ministry was a warm one of real interest in and service to others. He was a christian servant only after he himself had been served by Christ.

3. History has little to say about the great financiers of the past unless they distinguished themselves as servants in some way



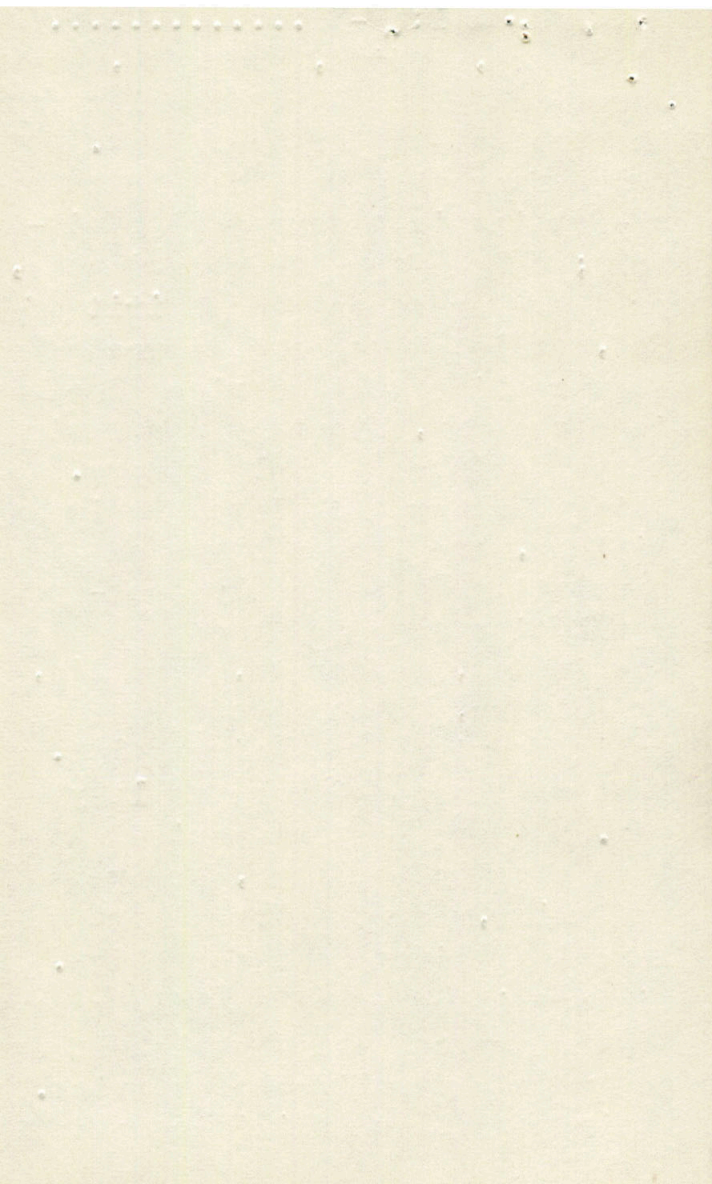
The Dukes, Perkins, Garretts, Drew, Fords and others are examples from the present-day or near past.

Only after they realized that money-getting is a poor goal of itself; only after the consciences, or I prefer to say the Spirit of God, at least to some degree made them realize that service to others is necessary, did they use their large fortunes to help others.

Going further back into American history, the famous names of revolutionary and early post-revolution days are those of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and others, famous because of their services to their nation.

Most of these men were wealthy men. Others of that period who were equally wealthy, or even wealthier, for the large part have long since been forgotten.

History illustrates that the renowned men are capable people who are motivated by an idea of service. Their unusual capabilities and



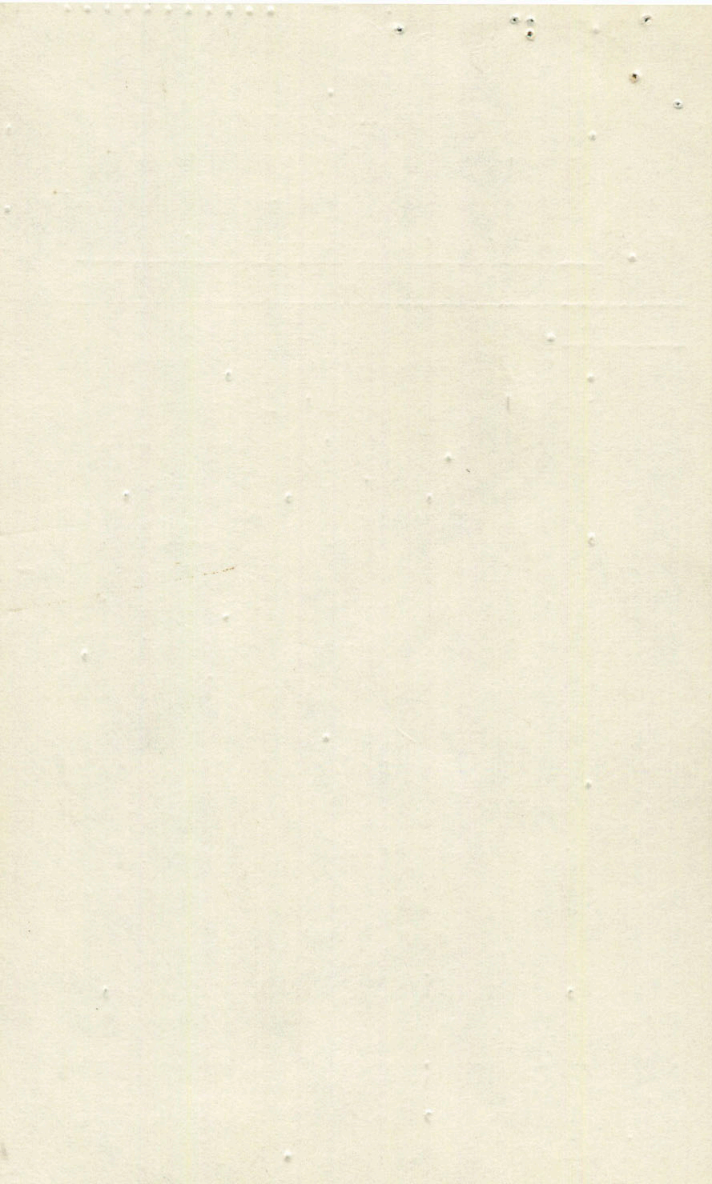
their motive for service existed as gifts from God.

4. In our terminology of today, a christian servant is one who himself has been served by Christ.

II. A christian servant is one who seeks to serve both God and others.

1. In our Scripture, it is said of Simon's mother-in-law that "she served them." This means she served Jesus, Simon, Andrew, James John, and probably others that were in the house but who are unnamed in the Scripture. Having herself been served by Christ, she responded with service both to God and to others.

2. This attitude is in keeping with the teaching of Jesus when he said "the first and great commandment is "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all they heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul and with all thy strength; and the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."



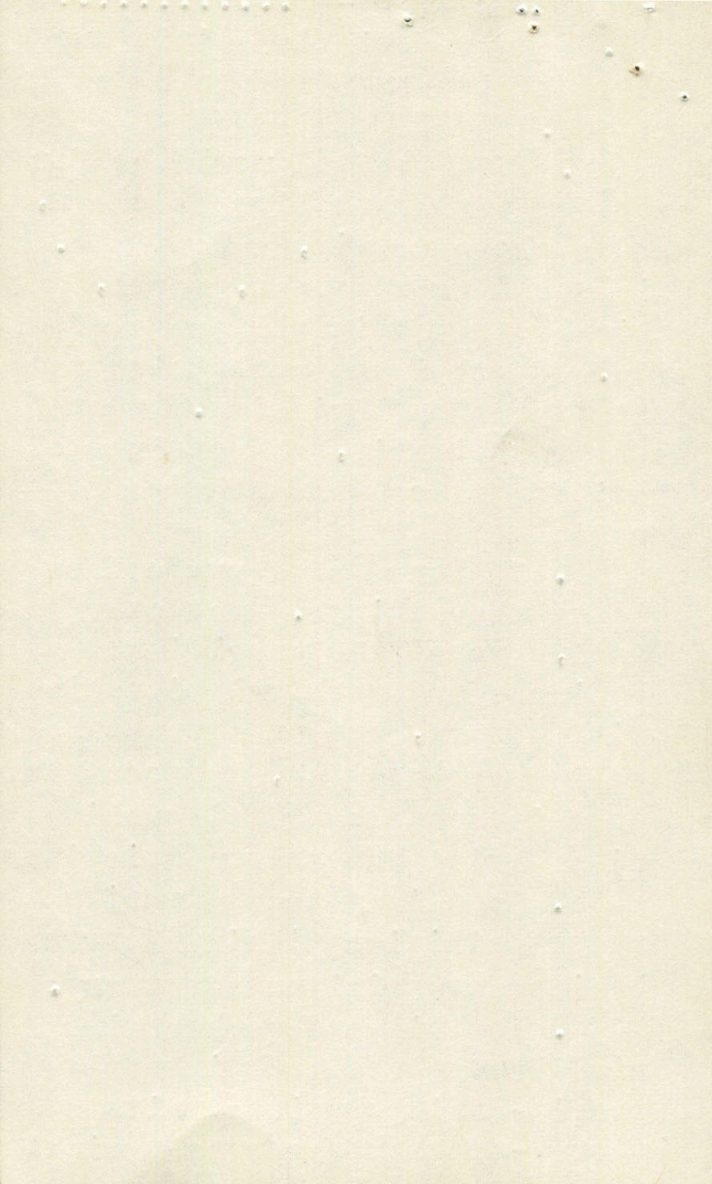
3. In our Christian living we should strive to serve both God and man.

a. To serve God would be for each personally to live as clean, and as close to Him, as possible. This would mean honest, moral, ethical conduct in all areas of life. There is no such thing as just "a Sunday Christian." But we do worship him, and strive to provide a place and method of worship

b. To love and serve others means many things. Not only good, honest and unselfish business and work relationships with others, but an attempt to help them know God, to accompany them into a closer fellowship with Christ and other Christians.

c. To this end we provide many facilities within a church besides the minimum sanctuary.

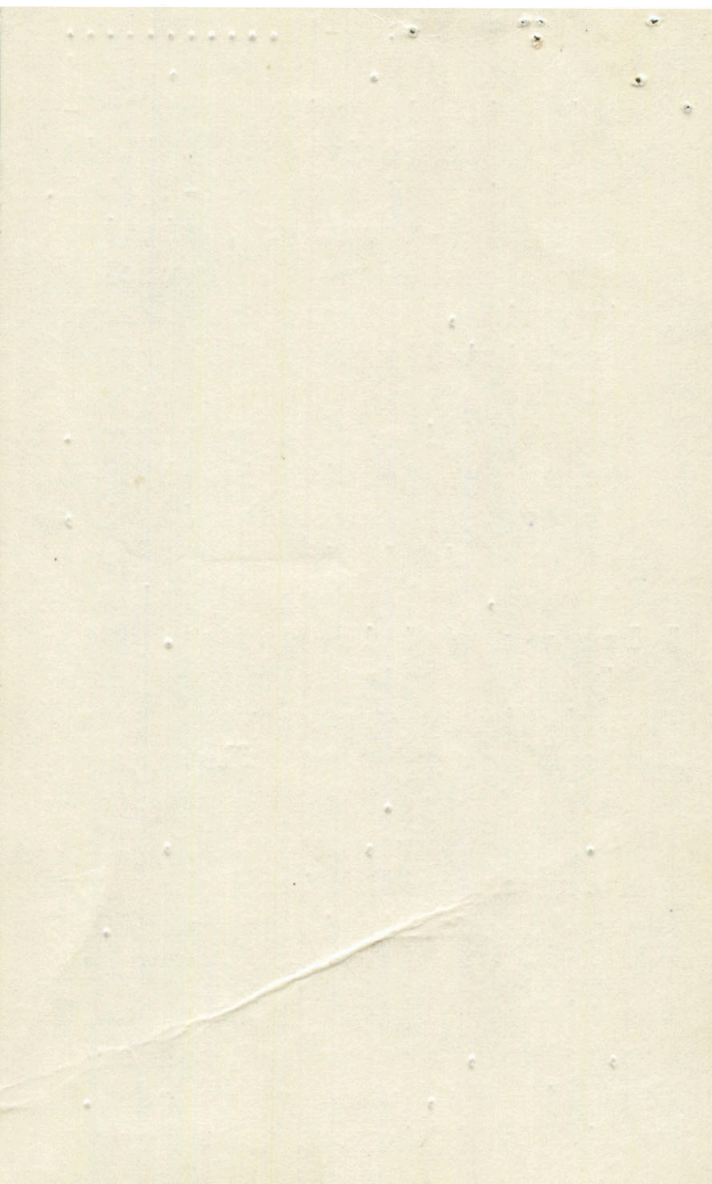
d. To this end we keep in mind that the church is not a profit-making business with stored-up cash reserves against





t the rainy day. Instead, it is an institution with such tremendous objectives that it is never financially well-heeled. The banded-together Christian servants who are the church give time, talents and money sacrificiãally that they may get closer and closer toward the objectives of the church. A church objective is always larger than seems obtainable, but even if it is neared or reached, a larger objective boomseupvãndtiseadapted. A live and active serving christian church never "gets ahead" or reaches "flowery beds of ease."

4. Somewhere, recently, I read a story or poem which tells the story of a christian servant. The plot was about a man out in the winter cold who found another man, older, weaker and colder than himself, who had no coat. Pulling off his own coat he



placed it on the needy old man. Before he could reach the end of his own journey a fierce storm arose. Without the protection of his coat, he soon froze to death. In heaven he was brought before the Lord. Looking up at the blinding glory and purity of the Creator he suddenly gasped, "Lord --it can'tt be. Yes, it is. Lord, you're wearing my coat."

Conclusion: A Christian, himself served by Christ, should think of himself as a servant of both God and man. Reward is not to be considered, but the reward of Christian service is eternal. Will you be a Christian servant, through home, work and church serving God and others? In an impractical sort of way He gave himself for you, but it turned out to be the most practical fact of all history. Will you in an impractical way dedicate yourself fully to Him. You'll find it the greatest thing you can ever do.

