

Three Steps in Benjamin's Logic on Service

Key Scripture Mosiah 2–5

Explanation King Benjamin, in his great discourse to the people in the land of Zarahemla, answers the question “Why should we serve?” In his speech recorded in Mosiah 2–5, he provides a logical yet somewhat surprising explanation for service. Benjamin is well known for his famous dictum on service in Mosiah 2:17. Actually, he mentions service two other times as he develops this topic more fully. This chart considers these three statements. They deal with service to God, our debt to God, and knowing God. On one level, a certain logic is embedded within each of these individual statements. On another level, the relationship between them is also logical and interdependent. If we serve men, then we only (merely) serve God. This does not win us great credit, for when we serve God, he blesses us and we are continually in his debt. Thus we have no reason to boast. Why, then, should we serve? If we are humble in our service, we will know God. Knowing the Master whom we serve is the great blessing that profits us more than anything else. This, to Benjamin, is the ultimate reason for service.

Source John W. Welch, “Benjamin’s Speech: A Masterful Oration,” in *King Benjamin’s Speech: “That Ye May Learn Wisdom,”* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 77–82.

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1 All service is merely service to God.

Therefore, serving fellow beings produces no reason to boast, unless serving God produces some reason to boast.

"When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God" (Mosiah 2:17)

2 But no matter how much we serve God, we remain unprofitable servants.

Therefore, we have no reason to boast.

"If ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet would ye be unprofitable servants" (Mosiah 2:21)

3 We do not serve God to get ahead with God or man, but to know the voice by which we are called.

Therefore, service to God is valuable, but not in ways people always think.

"For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served?" (Mosiah 5:13)