

# Message: "Learning To Serve" *Ephesians 5:13-16*

I am amazed by our military. It is a volunteer force. These men and women have volunteered to serve our nation and, if necessary, die defending her. I am astounded by fire-fighters and policemen, who are willing to run into the danger to serve. I grew up at the close of the Viet Nam conflict when such service was disrespected by large swathes of our culture. Especially our educated elites. We saw a change for the better in the mid-eighties and later following 911. That generation's views, however, continue to poison our culture.

**Series: 4 Days That Encourage Us**



*Christian Service is  
founded in honor  
and duty.*

Garrison COG - Nov. 1, 2020

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John F. Kennedy famously stated: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." It feels like we now have updated this motto in our modern culture: "Demand that your country do for you what you want, if it doesn't burn it down."

What drives these young people in spite of the prevailing cultural attitudes to sign up for service to our country? In 2 words it is honor and duty. These young men and women believe in the honor of one's word and the sense of purpose and pride in service of a great cause.

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serve

13 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.

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

15 But if you **bite** and **devour** one another, **beware** lest you be consumed by one another!

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not **fulfill** the **lust** of the **flesh**.



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Nov. 11 is "Veteran's Day". World War 1 concluded on the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month in 1918. The world had never seen a war of such catastrophic and meaningless destruction. Western culture frayed almost to the breaking point due to voracious and greedy politicians, inept bureaucrats, military elites and class structures that ignored talent and ability. Unfortunately, armorers seemed to be the only ones with advancement in their skills. They created some of the most terrible weapons imaginable.

It was the courage and bravery of the soldiers who fought and died in service that somehow held together our crumbling civilization. It has been so through most of our wars. Service whether in the military or in other aspects of life is what stands between chaos and civilization.

*British WW1 poster, Are you sure you would volunteer?*





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## **John 13:13-17**

13 "You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.

14 "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

16 "Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

17 "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

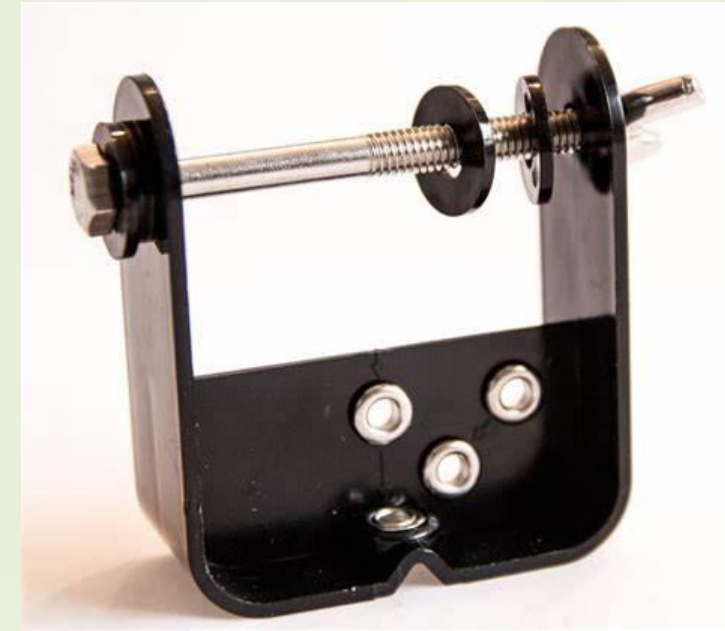
*British WW1 poster, Are you sure you would volunteer?*



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I became interested in archery as a study. I was intrigued by the methodology of building bows. That led me to research bow strings. I found out that since ancient times there was a high level of technology in the development of bow strings. The bow string must have a high tensile strength yet a low stretch coefficient. Modern bowstrings are stranded rather than braided to avoid weakness and stretch due to weaving. The problem is the strands, when under tension are subject to breakage due to abrasion from the nock of the arrow. To protect the bowstring it is wrapped by a strong thread called a "serving". To create this protective wrap on a bowstring the bowyer is said to "serve" the string.

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*Bowstring serving tool*



Modern bowstring with serving in the center and both end loops

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## **Mark 10:44**

44 "And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all.

45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."



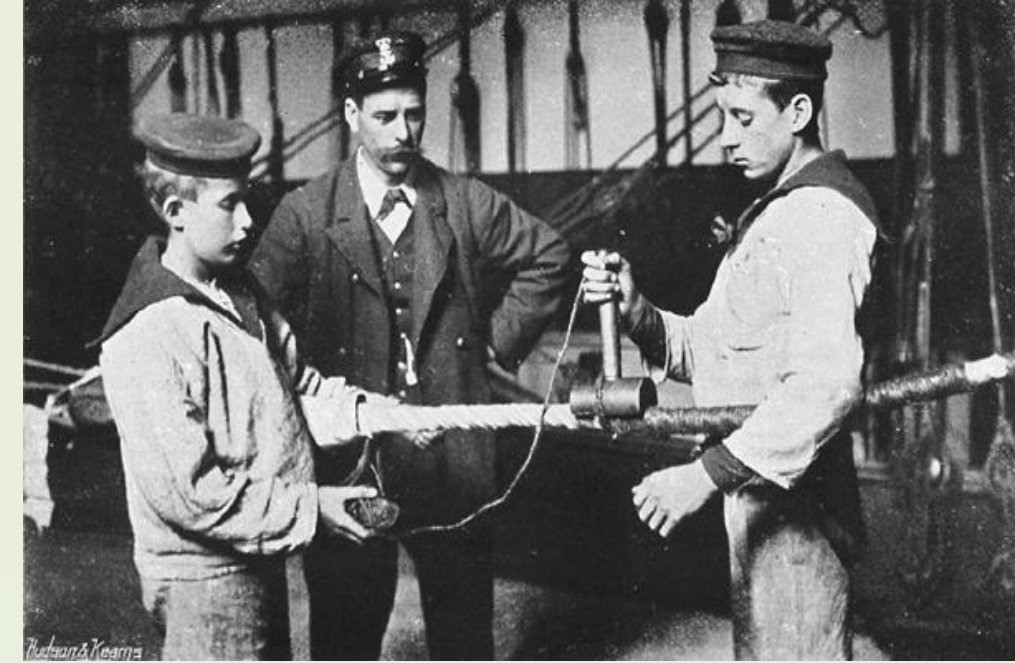
*Bowstring serving tool*



Modern bowstring with serving in the center and both end loops

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The term originally comes from rope riggers, especially on the sailing ships. The natural fiber ropes that were used on sailing ships were very strong but subject to corrosion and damage by weather, sea water, collisions with objects and rubbing wear. They were "served" to protect them. The process involved filling the voids in the twists with "worming cordage" to round out the profile. The rope and worming would be painted with a tar lacquer called Stockholm Tar, then wound with an overlapping fabric tape, called parceling, in the direction of the twist and again lacquered. Finally, the entire working portion of the rope would be served with Marlin cord [a strong fishing line cordage] in the opposite direction to the twist of the rope and receive a final coating of tar lacquer. This method was used for chain as well. Some applications involving steel cable still use this method.



Young sailors being trained in the late 1800s how to "serve" a rope with a "serving mallet". "Old Tar" is a term for a sailor because of the use of "slushing tar" on rigging ropes.

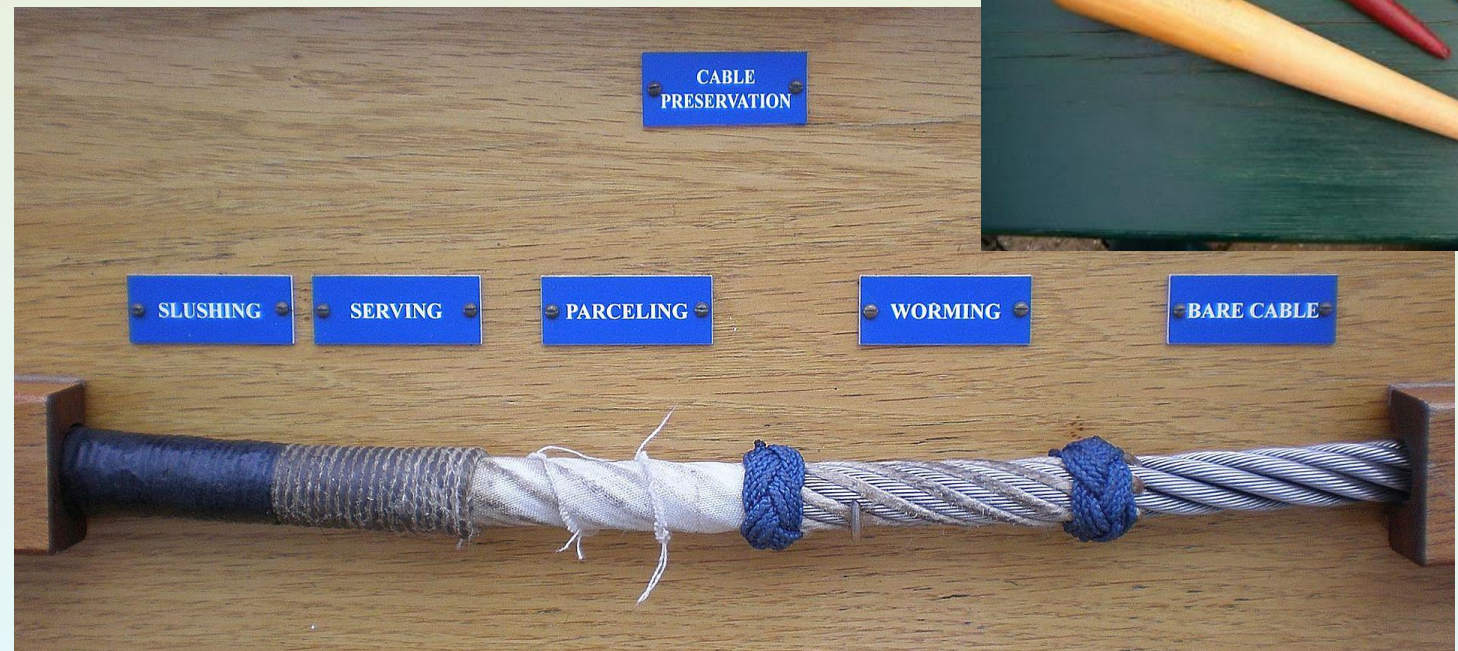


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The serving is a sacrificial covering that protects the substance beneath. Without it, ropes in bygone days would wear out in a matter of weeks. The process of serving is tedious and wearing but its importance is incalculable. Christ has called us to service. It is not glamorous, but it is of tremendous importance.



Tarred Marlin cord, Marlin spikes and Fids. [Marlin spikes and Fids are used to separate the strands of rope]





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Paul tells us that we are called to serve one another. As a Christian I believe in something beyond myself and my own desires. I believe my decisions have real meaning and I have a responsibility to make honorable decisions and follow through with my commitments. That is the heart of service. As a result, for Christians, service is not an option it is a duty that honors our Lord.



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