



# Life of Christ

A study of the life and teachings of Jesus

## The Obedient Servant

*by Bobby Hamilton*

I've always been what I would call "ambitious." Climbing and competing to win in business was a constant drive for me, and often to my harm.

I was excited when I got my first real job as a buyer for a prominent department store in Louisiana. However, it was in the baby goods department! As a 25-year-old unmarried man, it took a while to learn the specific items related to babies. What is "layette" anyway, or "burp cloths"? I had to conquer that learning curve very quickly, but with the help of many others, I finally started feeling confident.

One day, I took a chance on what I thought would be a good "buy" of around 200 high chairs at a fair price and ran an ad on them. To my surprise, they all sold within 90 minutes of the store opening, and customers were angry that they were gone. Thankfully, we were able to give rain checks and fulfill their purchases.

The store owner came to see me that day, and I wasn't sure what he would say. Would he be angry or happy? I was nervous at the prospect, but to my surprise, he said, "Good job! Do it again!" I loved the attention, so I tried many other times to duplicate this success. I achieved a similar result a few times, but I never got another visit from him, and I never got a bonus. Not even a pat on the back! I was a little confused and brought it to God in prayer.

The Lord reminded me that each month I got a paycheck from the company, and they expected me to be successful. My success was a condition of receiving my check. Once I accepted this reality, I was able to live with a healthier outlook than before and with a sense of joy that came from within myself. And after two years of being faithful in the position, I was given a promotion to the men's department, which I had desired from the beginning. The far-off reward was so much better than the immediate gratification I had once sought.

Our healthiest love for our Master is seen when our devotion to Him is not based on an immediate reward but on a realization of His worthiness. We trust His character and love for us, and we know that all of His promises are true. Galatians 6:9 encourages us to keep on in our serving: "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

**Question** Why are you serving God? Are you serving Him for a reward, to get something back from Him? Do you think or feel that God owes you something, or are you serving Him just because He is God?

**Prayer Starter** Jesus, may my thoughts, my words, and my actions today remain humbly in alignment with Your will for my life. I choose today to honor You in all things, without seeking a reward for obedience. You are God, and I am not.

**Family Chat** Today's Question, Prayer Starter, and Take Action are great conversation and prayer starters for today's Family Chat!

**Take Action** Check the "why" behind your "what." Why do you choose to serve, to tithe, or to give of your time and talents? Talk to your accountability partner about it.