Dear Center for Creative Ministry,

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Paul Richardson, Director
Center for Creative Ministry

*Contemporary Comments*

"Philip as Missionary"
September 5, 2015

**Texts:** 2 Corinthians 4:18; Acts 2:44-47; 4:34-36; 6:1-7; Acts 8, 21:7-10

They are paid very little, but we expect much from them. Waiters and waitresses are not required to even have a high school education to get a job. But the best of them need to have customer service skills that are...
par excellence while providing food and drink as requested.

Waiting staff have a very important role in a restaurant. They are the face of the business. These servers need to always be attentive and accommodating to guests. Managers like to see them always busy, always moving among customers. Waiting on tables is one of the most common occupations in the United States in the service section. The most recent U.S. statistics indicate there are over 2.2 million in this business.1

A good waiter or waitress has a "sixth sense." They are intuitive and must listen to the cues of their clients, even subtle or nonverbal hints. Not only do these often unappreciated workers prep areas for guests, guide them to a preferable location for seating, offer drinks, make recommendations from the menu, and bring the right food to the right person at the right time, they must sometimes deal with obnoxious customers.

Philip would have understood. When the early church exploded in growth and everyone shared their resources unselfishly, a problem arose: prejudice. The Greek-speaking Jews complained that their widows were getting overlooked in the daily distribution of bread. The Hebrew-speaking Jews received a larger share. So, the apostles made a practical decision. They assigned seven men to serve as deacons.

Philip, who had a Greek name (as did all seven men), was among these chosen servants. His practical work provided food for members in need. This gave the apostles more time to preach. While Philip thoughtfully served bread, the disciples served the bread of life. Some people might think he was "just" a waiter. But his quiet role in a divisive situation was like oil in the gears of a smoothly running church.

Imagine a restaurant without waiting staff. Nobody greets you when you walk in the door. No one helps you find a comfortable place to sit. Have you ever sat at a table with a menu and wondered if you were being overlooked? Philip would have noticed. His life as a missionary is not as dramatic as that of Paul, but his work was equally as important.

The next time you receive excellent service at a restaurant, think of Philip the missionary. Then vow to be more like this great servant who waited on tables.

~cr

1. wikipedia.org

About Us

Since 1988, the Center for Creative Ministry has been serving local church leaders and individuals around the world. Formerly known as the publishers of ABBA Newsletter and the Baby Boomer Ministries Resource Center, we have now broadened our generational/ministry focus to include our children. The Center for Creative Ministry took on its new name on June 1, 1996.
The Center for Creative Ministry, formerly Baby Boomer Ministries, is a privately funded and managed para-church ministry fully recognized by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. We are dedicated to supporting the local church in outreach and nurture ministries by providing resources, information, training, and consulting.