

“Bond-Servant!” (Slide 1)

Reading: Philippians 2:1-7

Last week we noted that to be “Great” we must “Serve!” Jesus is our ultimate example of a Servant. Paul says that Jesus became a “Bond-Servant.”

Verses 5-7 in our reading:

(Slide 2) ***5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.***

He didn’t come to be served but came to seek, save and serve. He became a bond servant!

We noted some of what Jesus stated:

Matthew 20:26 (Slide 3)

It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant

Matthew 23:11

But the greatest among you shall be your servant.

Mark 9:35

Sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, “If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”

Though He is speaking to His disciples who would later be His Apostles, there is no reason to believe that these concepts don’t apply to His

disciples today. In fact, Service is a valuable element of the serious Christian's lifestyle.

The Apostle Paul refers to himself as a *"Bond-Servant."*

Romans 1:1a (Slide 4)

Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus

2 Corinthians 4:5

For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

Paul even teaches that the conduct of the bond-servant must have temperance in their approach to those being served. In fact, the behavior of the bond-servant can have a profound effect on all people.

2 Timothy 2:20-26 (Slide 5)

20 Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. 21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, (Slide 6) useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. 22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 23 But refuse (Slide 7) foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. 24 The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, (Slide 8) if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

Serving and serving with distinction in the Christian walk is an honorable undertaking. It is impactful and helpful to anyone who may see the word of Christ that dwells in us. Just as it is among us as faithful servants.

Colossians 3:16 (Slide 9)

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Serving is a method of teaching and admonishing. Serving displays the characteristics of the serious Christian!

(Slide 10) Most often in the New Testament the word **servant** is translated from the Greek word "*diakonos*." That's the word used by our Lord in the examples given in the beginning of this lesson.

The basic meaning of this Greek word for Servant is "*one who waits on tables*."

I would imagine that most of us have had the experience of being waited on in a restaurant.

We've had the so-so server, the server who doesn't care, the server who forgets what we ordered or mixes our meal up with another table and seems to have disregard for their own mistakes or we've had one in similar circumstances that seems genuinely apologetic.

Just as likely we have had the conscientious, hard working server who tends to our desires and does the best they can to serve us well. This is the server who is often berated by a customer whose complaint is out of the server's control yet the server does not respond in kind.

The dictionary defines conscientious as someone who "*wishes to do what is right, especially to do one's work or duty well and thoroughly*." That fits the definition of the conscientious servant of Christ.

(Slide 11) The Greek word for Servant is thought to be tied together with the verb “*dioko*.” It means “*to hasten after, pursue*.”

This could be said of a runner in a race. How intense must the action and effort of a runner be to win the race? Relating it to the Christian Servant, the intensity to serve must match that physical and mental output of the true runner.

We would want an eager server at a restaurant who hastens to and works hard to provide us superior service. God expects the same from His children in serving one another and in presenting the Gospel Plan of Salvation.

I have seen several times when customers complain to their server. Sometimes it's justified but often the server has no control over the situation. I have rarely seen a server react to the complaints or make the customer feel that they are an imposition or inconvenience. Most often they take the complaint with a cheerful attitude.

This is how we should serve each other and those outside of Christ. Cheerfully, respectfully, and hospitable at least when it is reasonable to do so.

1 Peter 4:8-9 (Slide 12)

8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint.

I believe this admonition from Peter applies to all people we may converse with or encounter in our daily walk.

Paul says that we have all been given certain gifts. There are some gifts that are exclusive to individuals because they are in the purview of their abilities. But all serve in one capacity or degree.

Romans 12:6-8 (Slide 13)

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; (Slide 14) 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

All of these gifts serve if we conscientiously serve with the proper intent. When we sing together in a great sense we serve one another in admonition. If we are in Christ then we should be as the Apostle Paul and be a Bond (slave) Servant for Him.

Again in:

1 Peter 4:10-11 (Slide 15)

10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; (Slide 16) whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

This lesson begs an answer for this question: *Are we the Spiritual Waiter-Servant that God expects us to be?*

Invitation

Of course, if we are outside of Christ we cannot be a Spiritual Servant. We implore you this day, if you have not put on Christ through Baptism, why wait? Do it today!

If you have been baptized but have left the path of truth and righteousness, may we pray for you and with you and help you be the *Spiritual Servant* that you used to be?

Please let us know how we can assist you this day.

Reading:

Philippians 2:1-7

1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

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