

Biblical Perspectives from God's Word

The Dynamics of True Servanthood

Ken Birks, Pastor/Teacher

I. Introductory Remarks.

2 Timothy 1:9 ...who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began...

In this lesson we will see what it really means to be a servant of God. We will see that when we have a true Biblical perspective of what true servanthood is we will find ourselves in a place where we are fulfilling the will of God for our lives.

II. The True Meaning of **Servanthood**.

1. The Example of Jesus.

- **Scriptures describe Jesus as God's **Servant**.** Jesus came as a servant to accomplish God's will in the redemption of humanity.

Philippians 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

- **His instructions to His disciples **describe** His own role of service.**

Matthew 20:26-28 "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave; "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

- **He also told us about our relationship in Him.**

John 20:21 Then Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

2. Servanthood: What It is Not - What It Is.

- **The world's concept of servanthood.**

Often times we confuse true servanthood with the world's concept of it. The world's concept of a servant is that a servant goes to the master and says, "Master, what do you want me to do?" The master tells him, and the servant goes off by himself and does it.

- **The Biblical concept of servanthood.**

The Biblical concept is more like the Parable of the Potter and the Clay – Jeremiah 18:1-6. Be moldable and remain in the Master's hand.

Jeremiah 18:6 *"O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the LORD. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!"*

- (a) **The clay has to be molded.** The clay has to be responsive to the potter so the potter can make any instrument of his choosing.
- (b) **The clay has to remain in the potter's hand.** When the potter has finished making the instrument of his choosing that instrument has no ability to do anything whatsoever. It has to remain in the potter's hand.
- (c) **Example of a cup.** A cup has to remain in the potter's hand so that he can use in any manner he so chooses.

- **Key Point.**

The Biblical view is very different than the world's view of a servant. When you come to God as His servant, He first wants you to allow Him to mold and shape you into the instrument of His choosing. Then He can take your life and put it where He wills and work through it to accomplish His purpose. Just as a cup can do nothing on its own, you do not have any ability except to be where the Lord wants you to be.

- **The servant of the Lord has to do two things.**

- (a) Be moldable and
- (b) Remain in the Master's (potter's) hand.

John 15:5 *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."*

John 5:19 *Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.*

With God working through the servant, he or she can do anything God can do.

- **Servanthood requires obedience.** You must do what God is instructing, but remember it is God who is accomplishing the work.

You do not get orders and then go out and do them. You relate to God, respond to God, and adjust your life so that He can do whatever He wants to do through you.

3. The Example of Elijah - 1 Kings 18:16-39.

- Elijah challenges the prophets of Baal and the prophets of Asherah - Vs 19.
- Elijah challenges the people of Israel to follow God - Vss 20-21.
- Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord - Vss 30-31
- He stayed with God and did everything God commanded Him to do - Vss 34-36. He was acting in obedience to God's command and not based on his own initiative.
- He went where God told him, when God told him, and did what God told him.
- Then God accomplished His own purposes through him.
- Elijah wanted the people to identify the Lord as the true Lord.
- This is exactly how the people responded.

Key Point.

Did Elijah or God bring down the fire from Heaven? God did. What was Elijah doing? Being obedient. Elijah had no ability to do what God was about to do. When God did something only He could do, all the people knew that He was the True God. And, God did it through His obedient servant.

III. Concluding Remarks.

We are a "doing" people. We always want to be doing something. Once in a while someone will say, "Don't just stand there, do something."

I think God is crying out and shouting to us, "Don't just do something. Stand

there! Enter into a love relationship with Me. Get to know Me. Let Me love you and reveal Myself to you as I work through you." A time will come when the doing will be called for, but we cannot skip the relationship. The relationship with God must come first. Jesus said,

John 15:5 *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

God wants you to come to a greater knowledge of Him by experience. He wants to establish a love relationship with you. He wants to involve you in His kingdom purposes. He wants to accomplish His work through you.

Do you want to be a servant of God? Find out where the Master is, then that is where you need to be. Find out what the Master is doing, then that is what you need to be doing. Jesus said,

John 12:26 *"If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

- **Five Summary Statements.**

1. To be a servant of God I must be moldable and I must remain in the Master's hand.
2. Apart from God, I can do nothing.
3. With God working through me, I can do anything God can do.
4. When I find out where the Master is, then I know that is where I need to be.
5. I come to know God by experience as I obey Him and He accomplishes His work through me.