

# Servants (Part 2)

Sunday, October 1, 2023

A brief series on who we are in Christ and what we do.

## 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

**4 This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. 2 Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.**

The foundational characteristic of who we are in Christ is seen in the fact that we are "Servants of Christ" And being a servant means that we have a relationship with the master we serve. It also means that we have been given a trust and that we must be faithful to DO what we have been entrusted to do.

Last week we began by examining the Characteristics of our Relationship with God. We defined the relationship with the following terms...

1. Belonging
2. Surrender
3. Love and Intimacy
4. Forgiveness, Redemption and Transformation
5. Communication
6. Service
7. Obedience
8. Faithfulness
9. Exclusivity

This morning I want to continue exploring the nature of who we are in Christ and what we do as His servants. I want to take you to 2 Kings Chapter 5 and show you what the Holy Spirit revealed to me about being a servant of Christ through this passage.

As we listen, see how many different servants you can identify and what they might have to teach us about being a faithful servant of Christ.

## 2 Kings 5

5 Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

2 Now bands of raiders from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. 3 She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

4 Naaman went to his master and told him what the girl from Israel had said. 5 "By all means, go," the king of Aram replied. "I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman left, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing. 6 The letter that he took to the king of Israel read: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy."

7 As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"

8 When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." 9 So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. 10 Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

11 But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. 12 Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage.

13 Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed!'" 14 So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

15 Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant."

16 The prophet answered, “As surely as the Lord lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing.” And even though Naaman urged him, he refused.

17 “If you will not,” said Naaman, “please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry, for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the Lord. 18 But may the Lord forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down and he is leaning on my arm and I have to bow there also—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord forgive your servant for this.”

19 “Go in peace,” Elisha said.

After Naaman had traveled some distance, 20 Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said to himself, “My master was too easy on Naaman, this Aramean, by not accepting from him what he brought. As surely as the Lord lives, I will run after him and get something from him.”

21 So Gehazi hurried after Naaman. When Naaman saw him running toward him, he got down from the chariot to meet him. “Is everything all right?” he asked.

22 “Everything is all right,” Gehazi answered. “My master sent me to say, ‘Two young men from the company of the prophets have just come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two sets of clothing.’”

23 “By all means, take two talents,” said Naaman. He urged Gehazi to accept them, and then tied up the two talents of silver in two bags, with two sets of clothing. He gave them to two of his servants, and they carried them ahead of Gehazi. 24 When Gehazi came to the hill, he took the things from the servants and put them away in the house. He sent the men away and they left.

25 When he went in and stood before his master, Elisha asked him, “Where have you been, Gehazi?”

“Your servant didn’t go anywhere,” Gehazi answered.

26 But Elisha said to him, “Was not my spirit with you when the man got down from his chariot to meet you? Is this the time to take money or to accept clothes—or olive groves and vineyards, or flocks and herds, or male and female slaves? 27 Naaman’s leprosy will cling to you and to your descendants forever.” Then Gehazi went from Elisha’s presence and his skin was leprous—it had become as white as snow.

So can you identify the 6 servants spoken of in this passage?

1. Naaman
2. Israelite Girl
3. King of Israel
4. Elisha
5. Naaman's Servants
6. Gehazi

Each one can teach us something about being a servant of Christ...

### 1. A servant must learn that his own strength is not enough

5 Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

- Naaman

- Zechariah 4:6

6 So he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty.

- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- Philippians 4:13 (NLT)

13 For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

- The king of Israel didn't understand this

2. A servant must realize that God can use their difficult circumstances to place them in positions of ministry that could otherwise not be obtained

2 Now bands of raiders from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. 3 She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

Don't forget the storm the disciples had to go through... But on the other side was a demon possessed man who needed deliverance

Philippians 1:12-14

12 Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters,[\[a\]](#) that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard[\[b\]](#) and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

3. A servant points people to God

3 She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

2 Corinthians 4:5

5 For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

4. A servant sees through eyes of faith, that God is greater than the battles that come against them

7 As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"

2 Kings 6:8-17

8 Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place."

9 The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: “Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there.” 10 So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places.

11 This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, “Tell me! Which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?”

12 “None of us, my lord the king,” said one of his officers, “but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom.”

13 “Go, find out where he is,” the king ordered, “so I can send men and capture him.” The report came back: “He is in Dothan.” 14 Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

15 When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?” the servant asked.

16 “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

17 And Elisha prayed, “Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

## **Bigger Than Any Mountain**

*Song by Amy Lambert, Ann Downing, and Stephen Hill*

Bigger than all my problems Bigger than all my fears  
God is bigger than any mountain That I can or cannot see  
Bigger than all my questions Bigger than anything  
God is bigger than any mountain That I can or cannot see

Bigger than all the shadows That fall across my path  
God is bigger than any mountain That I can or cannot see  
Bigger than all the confusion Bigger than anything  
God is bigger than any mountain That I can or cannot see

Bigger than all the giants Of fear and unbelief  
God is bigger than any mountain That I can or cannot see  
Bigger than all my hangups Bigger than anything  
God is bigger than any mountain That I can or cannot see

5. A servant is confident in the words that God has given them

8 When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: “Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel.” 9 So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha’s house. 10 Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, “Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed.”

Matthew 10:16-20

16 “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. 17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

6. A servant reasons to help people see the truth

11 But Naaman went away angry and said, “I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. 12 Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn’t I wash in them and be cleansed?” So he turned and went off in a rage.

13 Naaman’s servants went to him and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, ‘Wash and be cleansed!’” 14 So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

Acts 18:4

4 Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

7. A servant obediently follows God's leading even when it doesn't make sense

10 Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

14 So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

- Elijah's ministry provides many instances of obeying God when it doesn't make sense (1 Kings 17)
  - Ravens
  - Widow with only one meal left
- Peter couldn't make sense of God's plan to let Jesus go to the cross

8. A servant makes sure all the glory goes to God

15 Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant."

16 The prophet answered, "As surely as the Lord lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing." And even though Naaman urged him, he refused.

1 Peter 4:10-11

10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen