

Servants (Part 3)

Sunday, October 8, 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.

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

Last week we turned to 2 Kings Chapter 5 and the story of Naaman being healed of leprosy exploring the nature of who we are in Christ and what we do as His servants.

We identified 6 servants in the passage and said each one has something to teach us about being a servant of Christ

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

Let's listen once again and see if we can remember what we learned last week before looking at a few more lessons about servants from this passage

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.

1. A servant must learn that his own strength is not enough.
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.
3. A servant points people to God.
4. A servant sees through eyes of faith, that God is greater than the battles that come against them.
5. A servant is confident in the words that God has given them.
6. A servant reasons to help people see the truth.
7. A servant obediently follows God's leading even when it doesn't make sense.
8. A servant makes sure all the glory goes to God.

Part 3

9. A servant is careful of appearances
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."

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (KJV)

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (New Life Version)

22 Keep away from everything that even looks like sin.

Ephesians 5:15-18

15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,

1 Peter 2:11-12

11 Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. 12 Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

10. A servant would rather bring peace than judgment

19 “Go in peace,” Elisha said.

John 12:47-48

47 “If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day.

1 Corinthians 4:4-5

4 My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. 5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.

I am not talking about not speaking the truth, but we speak the truth in love. I am not talking about shying away from talking about what's right and what's wrong. We are called to be a light in the darkness. But I am speaking about bringing people into peace with God which will in turn bring judgement, conviction and correction into their lives. Sometimes we try to stand in the place of God and play the role of Judge.

11. A servant is more concerned with giving than getting

19 ..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.”

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Too many in the church have done great disservice to the Kingdom of God, because, like Gehazi, they have been more concerned about what they can get. Being a servant of God is not about getting... In fact, it is about giving up everything.

Acts 20:35

35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”

Luke 6:38

38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

12. A servant prioritizes people above possessions

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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.

13. A servant's greatest testimony is to humbly minister to others

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.

14. A servant cherishes the truth

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.

Ephesians 4:25

25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

Psalm 15

1 Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain?

2 The one whose walk is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart; 3 whose tongue utters no slander, who does no wrong to a neighbor, and casts no slur on others; 4 who despises a vile person but honors those who fear the Lord; who keeps an oath even when it hurts, and does not change their mind; 5 who lends money to the poor without interest; who does not accept a bribe against the innocent.

Whoever does these things will never be shaken.

15. A servant doesn't allow pride and greed to lead them astray

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?"

1 Peter 5:2-3 (Evangelical Heritage Version)

2 Shepherd God's flock that is among you, serving as overseers, not grudgingly but willingly, as God desires, [\[a\]](#) not because you are greedy for money but because you are eager to do it. 3 Do not lord it over those entrusted to your care, but be examples for the flock.

Pride and Greed never have enough and will eventually consume and lead us astray if not kept in check

16. A servant is held to a higher standard of accountability

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.

Luke 12:48 (NLT)

48 But someone who does not know, and then does something wrong, will be punished only lightly. When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required.

James 3:1

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.