

**ARE YOU WILLING TO BE A SERVANT?
LUKE 17:7-10**

Introduction:

One thing that becomes amazingly clear from the teachings of Christ is that **He expects those of us who know Him to be His servants.**

This is not an option for the child of God, in fact, it is at the very heart of our new relationship with Christ. The disciple is to have this servant mind set with respect to both God and fellow believers. If we are to know true fellowship with Christ and have any degree of holiness in our lives, we must become His servants.

When we understand the humbling and self-emptying that is involved in really being a servant, it becomes evident that only those who are prepared to live under the shadow of Calvary will be willing to assume that lowly position of a servant.

There are three thoughts that we must look at in order to better prepare us to understand this low and humble position which Christ desires us to take.

First, we need to understand that there are different kinds of servants mentioned in Scripture and it is important that we discern which type of servant is being talked about in Scripture we are looking at!

1. **In the Old Testament there are two types of servants that are mentioned:**
 - a. **There were the hired servants.**
Hired servants received wages and had certain rights.
 - b. **There were the bond servants or slaves.**
Bond servants were owned by their master. They had no personal rights, they received no wages and they had no appeal.

2. **When we come to the New Testament and find the word "servant" mentioned in regards to the servants of the Lord, it does not refer to "hired servants" but to "bond servants."**

The Greek word "servant" means *slave*. Paul referred to himself many times as a *servant* in this matter.

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Romans 1:1 "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called [to be] an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God"-- the Greek word translated "servant" here means "slave."

Philippians 1:1- Paul refers to himself and Timothy as *servants* or *slaves*.

James, Peter and Jude all introduced themselves in their Epistles as *servants*.

They were calling themselves "*bond servants*" or "*slaves*" **which had no rights, received no wages and had no appeal.**

This position shows that we are the absolute property of our Master to be treated and disposed of just as He wishes. **(1 Corinthians 6:19-20)**

The second thing that we need to see is that we are to be bond servants of the one who was Himself willing to become a bond servant.

Nothing shows us better the humility we are to have as servants than He that left His throne in glory to put on the cloak of humanity. **(Philippians 2:5-7)**

He allowed Himself to have no rights. He was willing to be totally submissive to the will of the Father. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!

Christ's shining example shows us how low our true position should be. It shows us what it should mean for us to be ruled by the Lord Jesus. We should be willing to be totally submissive to the Lord Jesus Christ!

The third thing that we need to consider is this—Our servanthood to the Lord Jesus should also show itself in our servanthood to other fellow believers.

Paul told us in *2 Corinthians 4:5—"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."*

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Each of us will be judged by Christ in the area of our servanthood both **in our relationship with Him** and **in our relationship with our fellow believers**.

By our unwillingness to serve others in humbling ways, which at times are costly, the Lord Jesus takes this as our unwillingness to serve Him.

With these thoughts in place, I want to show how we can apply this to our lives personally in a real way.

We will be looking at the five marks of a bond servant.

If we allow these marks to become a reality in our lives, then we can answer the question which this message has been entitled "*Are you willing to be a servant?*" with an honest "*Yes, Lord, I am willing to be a servant.*"

I. A BOND SERVANT MUST BE WILLING TO HAVE ONE THING ON TOP OF ANOTHER PUT UPON HIM WITHOUT ANY CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN HIM. (vs. 7-8)

Look at the illustration seen in our Scripture: The servant has to immediately prepare a meal after working in the field all day; serve it to his master and all this before he has a chance to eat himself. He was expected to serve the Master first instead of himself.

When we look at this in light of ourselves, how willing are we for this to be our lot?

How quickly is there murmuring and bitterness in our heart when that sort of thing is expected of us?

We need to understand that the moment we start murmuring, we are acting as if we had rights, and a bond servant hasn't any!

II. A BOND SERVANT MUST BE WILLING NOT TO BE THANKED FOR HIS WORK. (vs. 9)

Look at the illustration of this in Scripture:
A bond servant must be willing to bear not being thanked when he does what has been piled on him by the Master.

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So how do we do? How much self-pity do we have when we serve others and they don't even thank us.

How bitterly do we complain when it seems as though some take our service as a matter of course and they don't even thank us for it.

How much like the Saviour are we in this area?
I find very few places in the Gospels when someone thanked our Saviour what He had done for them.

(A classic example of this is found in the next 9 verses—*Luke 17:12-19*)

Remember, hired servants may expect something, but not bond servants.

III. A BOND SERVANT MUST NOT CHARGE THE MASTER WITH SELFISHNESS.

When we read this passage, we may feel that the master is rather selfish and inconsiderate.

In the example that the Lord gave, the servant makes no such charge. He understands that his position as a servant is to serve the interest of his Master.

How about our service? Are we not forever charging folks in our minds with selfishness.

If we are true servants, we will find that the selfishness of others is a further opportunity to identify ourselves afresh with our Lord as the servant of all.

IV. A BOND SERVANT MUST CONFESS THAT HE IS AN UNPROFITABLE SERVANT. (vs. 10)

This is an acknowledgment that we are of no real use to God or man in ourselves.

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Romans 7:18—"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but [how] to perform that which is good I find not."

But how do we see ourselves after we have served? Do we get puffed up occasionally? Do we begin to think great things about ourselves? Do we begin to see ourselves as more than a servant?

It is only through the Lord Jesus Who dwells in us and Who has made us willing are we anything.

1 Corinthians 15:10—"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

V. A BOND SERVANT MUST CONFESS THAT AFTER DOING WHAT HE HAS BEEN ASKED TO DO BY THE MASTER, HE HAS NOT DONE ONE EXTRA THING MORE THAN IT WAS HIS DUTY TO DO.

Man was created that he might be God's bond servant. Man's sin showed his refusal to do so.

When we consent to this truth, then we understand that we have nothing to crow about.

Conclusion (Look at Luke 18:28-30)

The path of a bond servant is the only path to spiritual power, authority and fruitfulness.

It is the only path for us to be radiant, happy souls overflowing with the life of our Lord.

It is the only path to true spiritual exaltation.

Matthew 23:12—"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

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We must allow the reproving of the Scriptures to illuminate the areas of pride and its exceeding sinfulness in our lives.

How willing are we to be true servants of the Lord? Do we have these five marks of the bond servant upon our lives?

As I think of the five marks, I realized that the fifth one was perhaps the hardest to live. Let me try to illustrate this with a thought that crossed my mind as I was studying for this message.

When it comes being asked to do something at Church, do you do just what is required? Or do you your dead level best to do it to the best of your ability?

I would like to be able to say that I am the epitome of what a servant of the Lord should be.

But at times, just like you, I find that self gets in the way too much for me to be effective as a servant.

It is Christ's desire that we become a Church full of bond servants to the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you willing to be a servant?