

God's Word
The Two Edged Sword

Being Served to Becoming a Servant

Jesus the Son of Man is introduced in prophecy as a servant from God.

Isaiah 42:1-4 [NIV] *“Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope.”*

Servant sent by God.

Isaiah 52:13-15 [NIV] *“See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. Just as there were many who were appalled at him, his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness, so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.”*

A suffering servant.

Jesus in His life fulfilled this image of a servant.

One who would lay down His own will and life for others; friends and enemies.

Jesus came from above bringing from God that which can only come from God, namely unconditional love and forgiveness for every human being.

John 3:16-18 [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.** Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.”*

Those who are enslaved to sin and guilt welcomed Jesus the Son of God and His message, recognising it was from God.

Those who did **not** believe in this free forgiveness offered by God through faith in His Son, preferred to stand before God on their own merits did **not** accept Jesus or His message.

Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane had a choice as the Son of Man, as much human as He was the Son of God.

Jesus could stop preaching and flee the country into obscurity or He could continue to preach this message and face certain death from those in power who rejected His message.

Jesus the Son of Man behaved like a servant and put the interests of God and other human beings ahead of His own interest and welfare.

Philippians 2:1-8 [NIV] *“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. **Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.** Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. **Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, **taking the very nature of a servant,** being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross!”*

We are invited to follow this example of Jesus, to become servants to other human beings.

John 15:12-13 [NIV] *“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”*

This command of Jesus to His disciples is in the context of the illustration of the vine and its branches.

John 15:1-8 [NIV] *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. **No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.** “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”*

Christ is saying to us *“there is only one Servant [Jesus the Son of God] but there can be many other servants of God [branches].”*

We are those servants when we are joined to Jesus through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-18 [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you **another Counsellor** to be with you for ever, **the Spirit of truth.** The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you.**”*

The Holy Spirit in us, directing our lives, will be Jesus Christ, the Servant of God, continuing His life of a sacrificing servant in us.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, **to offer your bodies as living sacrifices,** holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

Jesus the Son of Man, and the Servant of God offered His body as a sacrifice for all humanity, is now alive by His resurrection.

We are, out of gratitude for what God has done for us, encouraged to follow Jesus’ example.

Being served and being a servant is **not** only about dying.

God serves us in so many ordinary ways every day, and we are invited to serve God by serving others in many ordinary simple ways.

Our lives will be judged by how we perform as a servant.

Matthew 25:31-46 [NIV] *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ “He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”*

Simple acts of compassion and love, all of which are a sacrifice of our personal time, which is our life.

Luke 17:7-10 [NIV] *“Suppose one of you had a servant ploughing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’? Would he not rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’? Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’”*

This life of a servant cannot in any way earn us salvation, only the blood sacrifice of Jesus the Son of God gives us salvation as a gift when we trust, have faith, in Him.

Our serving of others is only a reflection of God’s Love and compassion in our lives, a response to God’s Love for us.

One other illustration of the being served and becoming a servant is found in the story of Mary and Martha.

Luke 10:38-42 [NIV] *“As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. **She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said.** But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!” “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”*

Mary was making sure that she had heard what Jesus had to say, before jumping in and deciding for herself as to how she was to act as a servant.

Matthew 5:13-16 [NIV] *“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. **“You are the light of the world.** A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the*

same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

Mary was absorbing the Light [Jesus Christ], before trying to shine herself.

We have a very good example of this principle in God’s physical creation.

For us to be a light in this spiritual dark society we have to act like the moon.

The moon generates **no** light of its own, it only reflects the light of the sun [Son].

When the sun [Son of God] is present the moon may still be visible in the sky but the real light that draws people to it is the sun [Son of God].

Mary’s and our time to serve will only come after we have spent time with Jesus Christ absorbing His words and personality.

First we accept God serving us then we become servants of God.