

Spiritual Growth Lessons

LESSON 17 of 32



Many of our relationships with Jesus Christ have much glory and honor attached to them, such as "Sons of God," "Daughters of the King," "Children of the Kingdom," and "the Bride of Jesus Christ." Other relationships that we have with Jesus do not appear to be so glorious, but there is great blessing connected with them. This is very true of our relationship with Jesus Christ as His servant.

THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

A "lord" is one who has power and authority over others. Those subject to him are "servants." There is only one supreme Lord, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Read Deuteronomy 6:4, Luke 2:11, John 13:13, Acts 2:36, and Ephesians 4:5. In fact, He is called the "Lord of Lords and King of Kings" (Revelation 17:14).

THE SPIRIT OF A SERVANT

"The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord" (Matthew 10:24).

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (John 15:20).

"Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" (John 13:13).

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15).

Is Jesus telling us in John 15:15 that we no longer have a servant relationship with Him? Not at all! He said, *"I call you not servants . . . but . . . friends."* Although our relationship with Jesus Christ is much greater than that of a servant to his lord, we are to consider ourselves as servants and possess the spirit and attitude of a servant.

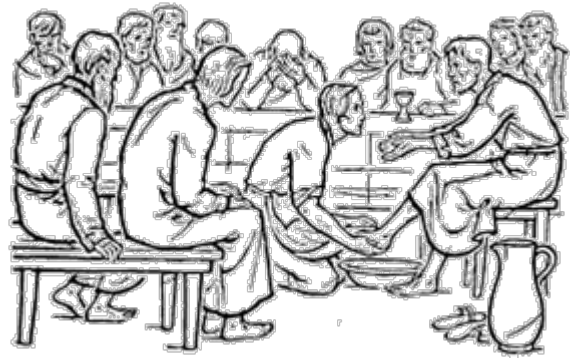
"But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow (think) not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:7-10).

We learn from these words that after we have obeyed our Lord's every command, we are to still consider ourselves unprofitable servants, and say, *"I am an unprofitable servant."* However, if we have this attitude, the Lord will say, "You are my friends."

Jesus Christ set the example for us by taking upon Himself the spirit and attitude of a servant: *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient*

unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." (Philippians 2:5-9).

One of the ways He manifested to His disciples this servant attitude was to wash their feet. When He was finished, He questioned them: "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him" (John 13:12-16).



A MINISTER IS A SERVANT

The mother of James and John came with her two sons desiring a special place for them in Jesus' kingdom. Her idea (and perhaps her sons, also) of the ministry to which they had been called was that it was a high and exalted position (and so it is!), and so they would sit like kings or vice-kings, sharing a throne with Jesus. Jesus answer to this was: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister (servant); And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:25-28).

THE SERVANT ATTITUDE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

Paul, with all of his education, and the great work that he had accomplished for God, still considered himself a servant of Jesus Christ. He wrote: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ . . ." (Romans 1:1).

The church at Corinth suffered division, because some people considered Paul to be greater than Apollos, and others considered Apollos to be greater. Both of these men had baptized people in the church at Corinth. Paul knew that they were exalting he and Apollos too much. He wrote to them: "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers (servants) by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:4-7).

THE DUTIES OF A SERVANT

The servant cannot pick what duties he wants to perform. He must do whatever his Lord requires him to do: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

When a person has truly placed himself in the position of a servant of Jesus Christ, he will ask, like the Apostle Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

Read Luke 9:57-62 concerning three people who called Jesus "Lord," but were not willing to obey Him, unless they could dictate their own terms. This the servant has no right to do!

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LORD TO HIS SERVANT

The Lord supplies the tools for his servant. It is the Lord's field, the Lord's vineyard. Our own equipment is not sufficient. We must seek the Lord so that He will supply us

with what we need to get the job done (Acts 4:29-31).

The Lord hires and sends forth the laborers (Matthew 9:37-38).

The Lord rewards His servants for their faithfulness, or for their lack of faithfulness, accordingly (Matthew 25:14-30).

If we keep a servant-like attitude, and are submissive to the Lord, some day we will be duly rewarded: *"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them"* (Luke 12:35-37).

What Jesus is saying is that if we will take upon ourselves the spirit or attitude of a servant, the day will come when He Himself will minister to us. *ds*

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