

Servanthood

I. Introduction & Definition

A. Hebrew vocabulary

1. נַעַר na'ar ^{#5288}: *boy, lad, youth, servant* (Num. 22:22; Jdg. 7:10,11; 1st Sam. 9:3ff.; 2nd Kgs. 4:12,25).
2. עֶבֶד 'ebed ^{#5650}: *slave, servant*. Used 800x. (Gen. 9:25-27; 24:2-66_{x15}; 39:17,19; Ex. 13:3,14).
3. שָׂרָת sharath ^{#8334}: *to serve, minister to*. Ptc. שָׂרָתָה m^cshareth used of Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 39:4; 40:4), Joshua to Moses (Ex. 24:13; Num. 11:28; Josh. 1:1), Elisha to Elijah (1st Kgs. 19:21).

B. Greek vocabulary

1. διάκονος ^{#1249}: *minister, servant, deacon* (Matt. 20:26-28; 23:11; Jn. 2:5,9; Phil. 1:1; 1st Tim. 3:8,12).
2. δοῦλος ^{#1401}: *slave, subject*. Used 125x. (Matt. 18:23-35; Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22).
3. παῖς ^{#3816}: *child, boy, servant, slave* (Matt. 8:6,8,13; Lk. 7:7; 15:26).

II. Development & Application—slavery to God.

A. The Apostles considered themselves bondslaves of God (Acts 4:29; 16:17; Tit. 1:1).

B. Every believer is a bondslave of God (Ps. 119:125; Isa. 65:8,9,13_{x3},14,15; 1st Pet. 2:16; Rev. 1:1; 2:20).

C. Specific OT עֶבְדֵי יְהוָה 'abadiym of God:

Abraham (Gen. 26:24; Ps. 105:6,42); Isaac (Gen. 24:14); Jacob/Israel (Ezek. 28:25; 37:25 1st Chr. 16:13); Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob (Ex. 32:13; Dt. 9:27); Moses (Ex. 14:31 & dozens of times); Joshua (Josh. 24:29; Jdg. 2:8); Caleb (Num. 14:24); Job (Job 1:8; 2:3; 42:7,8_{x3}); David (2nd Sam. 3:18; 7:5,8,26 +27x); Hezekiah (2nd Chr. 32:16); Zerubbabel (Hag. 2:23); Eliakim (Is 22:20).

III. Summary & Conclusion—servants to one another.

A. As imitators of Christ (1st Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1), every believer ought to be servant-minded (Matt. 20:25-28).

1. Servant-mindedness is alien to the thinking of this world (Matt. 20:25).
2. Eternal greatness and priority is proportionately related to temporal servant-mindedness (Matt. 20:26,27).
3. Jesus Christ illustrated the principle. He was the greatest servant in the history of the world, and is the greatest Being for all eternity (Matt. 20:28).

B. Believers oriented to their bond-service to God are then motivated to their bond-service to the Church (2nd Cor. 4:5).

1. Bible communicators do not promote themselves, but rather proclaim the glory of Jesus Christ (v.5a).
2. Bible communicators maintain their servant-mindedness “for Jesus’ sake” διὰ Ἰησοῦν (v.5b). Prep. διὰ ^{#1223} a marker of something constituting cause; the reason why something happens; *because of, for the sake of*.

C. The spiritual gift of “service” is one of the highest honors in the church (Rom. 12:7).

1. The spiritual gift of “service” is the gift of διακονία ^{#1248}: *service, ministry*.
2. Although every believer is called upon to serve (Eph. 4:12), certain believers are specifically gifted with the spiritual gift of service.
3. Some teachers equate “service” with “helps” ἀντίλημψις ^{#484}: *helpful deeds* (1st Cor. 12:28). Pastor Bob believes that διακονία and ἀντίλημψις should be kept as separate gifts.
4. The gift of service is one of the behind-the-scenes gifts that is classified as a “greater gift” (1st Cor. 12:15-26,31).