“Are You A Servant?”

Titus 1:1-9

April 30, 2017

Please find with me Acts 13.

How important is it that you consider yourself a servant?

Is it possible to imagine God as a servant?

God, the Son entered humanity, not coming as One to be served; but to serve.

Are you a servant?

I want to begin by just a few reminders of what the LORD says about servanthood.

Numbers 12:7 *“****My servant Moses*** *... (8) With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against* ***my servant Moses****?”*

Numbers 14:*24 “But* ***my servant Caleb****, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.”*

Joshua 1:2 *“****Moses my servant*** *is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.”*

II Samuel 3:18 *“Now then do it: for the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of* ***my servant David*** *I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.”*

Job 1:8 *“And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered* ***my servant Job****, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”*

Isaiah 20:3 *“And the Lord said, Like as* ***my servant Isaiah****…”*

Did you notice that in each of these verses it’s the LORD speaking? And did you notice that He calls each man “my servant”?

And servanthood is not a thing of the past. What is it that all these have in common? A tailor, a valet, a butler, a shoe-shiner, a house-keeper, and a driver? They are all modern-day servants.

Try, if you can, to imagine the lowest position you’ve ever held. I was once a dish-washer. A dish-washer is a servant. Anyone else here have a history of dish-washing? A waiter is a servant. I was also once a floor sweeper and mopper and re-waxer?

I think the lowest position I ever held was this. I found a position cleaning out a dry well; a hand-dug one. The one I cleaned out was about ten feet deep. You see, when a dry well gets filled, the lines feeding it from the house became clogged. Two of us teenagers had to dig it out, all the way to the bottom. Not pretty. I learned as a teenager that that is what a servant is like.

I’ve titled today’s sermon “Are You A Servant?” Shall we pray?

If you were to read the Book of Acts as a stage play, you’d discover that the first twelve chapters present Peter. You could even call it “The Acts of the Apostle Peter.” The rest of the book focuses on “The Acts of the Apostle Paul.”

The great nineteenth century Bible Commentator Henry Alford put together this history Paul’s life.

STEPHEN STONED/PAUL WATCHES 37 AD

PAUL'S CONVERSION 37 AD

HIS TRIP TO JERUSALEM 40 AD

PAUL IN PRISON IN PHILIPPI 43 AD

HIS FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY 45 AD

A DOCTRINE MEETING AT JERUSALEM 50 AD

HIS SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY 51 AD

PAUL ARRIVES AT CORINTH 53 AD

HIS THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY 54 AD

PAUL AT EPHESUS 55 AD

HIS IMPRISONMENT IN CAESAREA 58 AD

2 YRS. IN A ROMAN PRISON 61-63

You’ll find all of this in the Book of Acts.

But beyond Acts, read with me Paul’s self-description in his letters to the Churches.

Romans 1:1 *“Paul,* ***a servant of Jesus Christ****, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,…”*

Philippians 1:1*“Paul and Timotheus,* ***the servants of Jesus Christ****, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:…*

Titus 1:1 *“Paul,* ***a servant of God****, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;…”*

And who was Paul’s example? The LORD of Heaven and Earth. Jesus came to serve. Mark 10:45 *“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered [served] unto, but to minister [serve], and to give his life a ransom for many.”*

Now, follow with me from Acts 13 and see if you can discover who the servant is. Acts 13:1 *“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.*

*(2) As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. (3) And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.*

*(4) So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. (5) And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.*

*(6) And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: (7) which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.*

*(8) But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. (9) Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.*

*(10) And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?*

*(11) And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.*

*(12) Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. (13) Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.”*

Have you ever wondered when and why Saul changed his name to Paul?

You just read it with me. It’s very likely, although we don’t know for sure, that this is where Paul got his name-change from.

What we find here is this. We see Paul and Barnabas preaching on the Island of Cyprus. And the regional deputy, a man named Sergius Paulus, invites them to teach him the Word of God. When he does, a sorcerer named Barjesus objects.

Look again at verse six. Acts 13:6 “*And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer [a witch], a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: (7) which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.”*

We also find a Jewish man, a false teacher by the name of Barjesus, practicing sorcery.

By the way, a sorcerer is a witch. In Acts 8, we read about another witch. Acts 8:9 *“But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: (10)**To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.*

*(11) And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.”*

And what was the penalty God required for practicing witchcraft? Exodus 28:18 *“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.”*

Leviticus 20:27 *“A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.”*

This sorcerer goes by the name Barjesus, which means “son of Jesus.”

And where did Paul get his name change from? Acts 13:6 “*And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer [a witch], a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: (7) which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.”*

The Regional Deputy was a man named Sergius Paulus. Luke describes him as “a prudent man,” meaning that he was a wise man. And, not only does he listen to Paul’s teaching, he turns his heart to the LORD. He becomes a Believer.

Saul changed his name that day from Saul of Benjamin to Sergius Paulus. The name Sergius means “Servant.” And Paul counted himself from that day forward as a “servant of the LORD Jesus Christ.” What better name could he have chosen!

Here’s what’s really on my heart today. Are you a servant? And are a you a servant of the LORD Jesus Christ?

First, servanthood is an attitude.

Philippians 2:5 *“Let this mind [attitude] be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of* ***a servant****, and was made in the likeness of men:…”*

If you are saved and if you are convinced that the Bible is the final authority for your life, you will be asking yourself this question from these words “am I letting this attitude be in control in my life.”

Philippians 2:5*“Let this mind [attitude] be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:* …”

Attitudes are chosen, aren’t they? All of us, daily, have a feeling that we are, in some degree, better than someone else. But listen again to Paul, the servant. Philippians 2:3 *“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. (4) Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. (5) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:…”*

Ask yourself. “Have I done things this week through strife?” Or for “vainglory”? Or, have I, with humility of mind been esteeming others better than myself? And I focused merely on “my” things or on the needs and things in others?

That tells you whether you’ve been letting the attitude of servanthood prevail.

You see, servanthood is about *how* you do what you do. It’s an attitude that says that you aren’t in this world to fix everybody else. You’re here, by God’s plan, to work on making sure that the attitude of servanthood is on display.

Servants serve. Who did you serve this week? Did anyone ask you to assist them this week? Matthew 5:41 *“And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain [two].”*

First, servanthood is an attitude.

Second, a servant has only one Master.

Matthew 6:24 *“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”*

The LORD uses this term three times. Mammon has a lot to do with your attitude again; especially your attitude towards money. Mammon was the demon of covetousness. Serving Mammon means you don’t need the LORD and that you are alright with trusting in your wealth.

One Pastor says it this way. *“Mammon promises us those things that only God can give — security, significance, identity, independence, power, and freedom. Mammon tells us it can insulate us from life’s problems and that money is the answer to every situation.”*

[Found on <http://blessedlife.gatewaydevotions.com/breaking-spirit-mammon> “The Blessed Life” by Robert Morris].

How many times have you heard the words “If I just had more money, I would…”

Folks, everyone thinks they need more money. But Jesus makes it crystal clear. You can’t serve two lords. One of them will come out on top.

And how can you be sure that Jesus is your LORD and not Mammon? Ask yourself this. Who owns your money?

Because if the LORD is the Owner, then you are His steward. You are handling money and possessions and things that belong to Someone Else. You are His manager. He’s the Rightful Owner. And He’s placed both money and things into your hand so that you can use it for His glory.

You’re His servant. That means He’s your LORD. Remember that it’s not money that is the root of all evil; but the love of money. I Timothy 6:10 *“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”*

And then there are those who say “I’ll serve God after I achieve all my financial goals.” No, it’s not likely that you will. Today, decide Who is the True Owner of your money and your possessions. If He is, then say so. Tell Him that all you are and have it His to do with as He pleases.

Frances Havergal had a desire to help others find a deeper walk with the LORD. She had a beautiful singing voice. She learned how to play the piano. She wrote many, many hymns on the Christian life. She knew both Greek and Hebrew. She had much of her Bible memorized. She says this. It was February 4, 1874. *“There were ten persons in the house; some were unconverted and long prayed for, some converted but not rejoicing Christians. [God] gave me the prayer, “Lord, give me all in this house.”*

*And He just did. Before I left the house, everyone had got a blessing. The last night of my visit I was too happy to sleep and passed most of the night in renewal of my consecration, and those little couplets formed themselves and chimed in my heart one after another till they finished with “ever only, ALL FOR THEE!”*

That day she is said to have written these words.

1. Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in endless praise.
2. Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.
3. Take my voice and let me sing,
Always, only for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.
4. Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use
Every pow’r as Thou shalt choose.
5. Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.
6. Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

You see, first, servanthood is an attitude.

Second, a servant has only one Master.

Third, and finally, God’s call is on the life of a servant.

Deuteronomy 10:12 *“And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, …”*

One of the earliest events recorded in the life of Jesus was the day Satan came to Him with four large temptations. Here’s a portion of those temptations given to us by Dr. Luke, the same man who wrote the Book of Acts.

Luke 4:1 *“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, (2) Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.*

*(3) And the devil said unto him, if thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. (4) And Jesus answered him, saying, it is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. (5) And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.*

*(6) And the devil said unto him, all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. (7) If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. (8) And Jesus answered and said unto him, get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and* ***him only shalt thou serve****.”*

You have been called to serve. And your service is to be to Jesus Christ and Him alone; ***“him only shalt thou serve****.****”***

Are you a servant?

First, servanthood is an attitude.

Second, a servant has only one Master.

Third, God’s call is on the life of a servant.

So, what will you do with the Word of God today? Will it be to let the words fall on deaf ears? Or, will you pray this prayer along with me?

*“LORD, I am Your servant. Take my life and everything in it because it’s all Yours. Bless and use each thing as You please. I am Your servant from this day forward. In Jesus’ Name, amen.”*

Shall we pray?

Hymn # \_\_\_\_\_ “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”