



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

A Servant of One and All (Part 2): James 1:1

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We are thankful to God for giving us His perfect and unchanging Word, which assists us in growing in greater likeness to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Today we echo the heart attitude of the psalmist who in Psalm 119:18 requested of God, “Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.” Today we ask God to illuminate our heart as we consider what James meant when he referred to himself as “...a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” (cf. James 1: 1). What does it mean to be a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ within the State Capitol? May God grant us wisdom to this end, and help us apply His unchanging truths to our lives.

The author of the book of James described himself only as a “servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Why so short and introduction? Was James in a hurry to get to the point of his letter, or is it possible there was more to understanding what it means to be a “servant” than might be readily apparent on a first glance?

James 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

As we dig into the broader meaning of James’ use of the word “servant”, two points will be apparent. The first is that a servant of God is distinguished by their devotion to serving God above men, the second they are committed to serving all men in a manner that pleases God.

If you want to be an effective servant of the Lord Jesus Christ in the State Capitol, in your home, business and church communities, then you will hold these two aspects of service: devote yourself to serving God above men, and commit to serving all men in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord.

Looking at it from the negative, apart from devoting yourself to God over men, and serving all people in a way that is pleasing to God, one cannot ever hope to bring honor to God, as it would be the antithesis of His blueprint for being a faithful servant.

Most of the challenges you will face whether at home, or at work, or here in the Capitol, will be challenges that test your resolve to serve God without compromise, while serving all people in a manner that is pleasing to God.

While this is no easy task, part of the God given solution entails being committed to renewing our minds daily in God’s Word.

If we are faithful to remain in God’s Word, and actively applying it to our life, God promises that we will be adequately equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:17).

SERVING ALL IN A WAY THAT PLEASES GOD

We have covered the Scriptural emphasis, duration and priority of Serving God over and above men in the previous study (Part 1). Yet Scripture calls us to hold in tension the idea of serving others as part of our service to God. Thus Scripture calls the servant of God to serve One and all.

A. THE FOCUS

Mark 10:42-45 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.

Notice in v. 42, in contrast to the Gentiles, Jesus told us not to lord your authority over the ones you lead. In v. 43 he tells them from where true greatness comes. It doesn’t come from oppressing others, but rather by serving them faithfully.

The above passage clearly does not mean that leaders are to never exercise their authority (Jesus did and He charged His apostles to do so as well as the elders of the church. Scripture also declares that every leadership position be it state, church, commerce, marriage and family etc. has leaders who are called to lead with authority—but the point is that they are never to abuse their authority). The primary model for all leaders is the Lord Jesus Christ, because he is the ultimate leader in wisdom, the right exercise of power, and is without error or fault in any part of His being or in the administration of His action.

He who made heaven and earth has authority over it. Yet, our Lord’s model of leadership is a patient, sacrificial, caring, and

BIBLE STUDIES

WED. @ 7:00 - 7:30 A.M., ROOM 19 IN THE STATE CAPITOL
(TAKE ELEVATOR TO THE LOWER LOBBY, EXIT LEFT)

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benevolence service. While He will judge the nations it is His mercy that has ultimately triumphed over justice.

Notice, I have been primarily drawing your attention to passages emphasizing the word *doulos* (in Part 1), I will do so again, however there are other words used for “servant” in Greek (i.e. *diakonos*, in v. 43—the word used for the office of deacon in the church). So Jesus is using *diakonos* and saying anyone who is like this, will be considered great.

But notice however what is indicated v. 44, “whoever would be first *protos*, must be *doulos* of all.”

So if true greatness is what you aspire to—then the best way for you to achieve this is by being a servant of all people. This is a high standard to aspire to, but it is one that God can esteem with praise and reward. I can see that many of you already aspiring to serve out of your love for God—others are not there yet, and some are tempted to grow weary of serving. The key to serving God’s way is to remain in Him and to be filled with His Spirit. We cannot serve God apart from His grace, but with the strength He supplied we can serve faithfully year after year. So my message to the weary is draw nearer to Christ He will refresh you as a faithful shepherd. Do not stop serving—keep going, because God will reward you at the right time! I have found that burnout usually results not because of much activity, but because of misplaced priorities. We need times of refreshing too, but as a rule God wants us to bear much fruit, which often entails keeping our hands on the plow.

THE MODEL

I believe that Spiritual service begins on our knees in prayer; it includes love for our enemies and seeks unity between believers. When the church is divided unnecessarily it is like a fishing net with large holes—not useful for very much—until it is mended. But when the church is faithfully extends the gospel, and makes disciples there is hope for the next generation to grow to maturity. May God grant us joy, and peace grace as we co-labor together in this place, knowing that he grants wisdom, strength, and every good blessing.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Christ’s sacrificial service extended all the way to the cross, and as such, His service continues to offer lasting benefits years after He completed His earthly ministry.

His death provided more than an example to follow, but included a debt to be paid, and offers a righteousness to be had to all those willing to receive it. The death of Jesus Christ upon the cross was deemed by God the Father as a sufficient sacrifice to pay for all of the sins of all who would receive Christ as their Savior and Lord. Unfortunately, all will not seek to have their guilt and sins forgiven by turning away from them and towards Jesus Christ in faith.

Yet the offer of God still remains to all who would seek Him,

Romans 10:9-13 because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³ For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Jesus Christ remains the ultimate *doulos*, He has no equal. He provides many examples for all to aspire to. But the point that should not be missed is that in His service to God and all men He laid down his life so that sinners could be saved. He also rose again to be a living Savior and Lord. The question is have you already confessed your sins to God and received the forgiveness God offers in Christ? Do you want to grow in the grace and knowledge of God? If so, let me know. We would love to help you make progress with continuing to grow in the grace and knowledge of God.