

# JUST AS THE SON OF MAN DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED, BUT TO SERVE

Matthew 20:17-28

## I. THERE'S A GREAT CONTRAST BETWEEN THE WAY JESUS THOUGHT OF HIMSELF AND OTHERS AND THE WAY THE DISCIPLES THOUGHT OF THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.

- A. Matthew 18-20 emphasizes humility, lowliness, childlikeness, and servanthood as principles of kingdom greatness (Matthew 18:1-4,21-35; 19:27; 20:25-27).
- B. Jesus saw His life in terms of the cross, serving others and giving His life as a ransom for many. (Matthew 20:17-19,28)
- C. The disciples were concerned about which of them was the greatest (Matthew 20:20-24).
  1. "Are you able to drink the cup..." (v.22)
  2. The sons of Zebedee are overconfident in themselves, "We are able" (v.22).
  3. The sons of Zebedee couldn't keep watch with Jesus (Matthew 26:36-40).

3 John 9

I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.

## II. IN MATTHEW 20:28, JESUS TAKES ONE OF THE MOST EXALTED TITLES FROM THE BOOK OF DANIEL ("SON OF MAN") AND COMBINES IT WITH THE SUFFERING SERVANT OF ISAIAH (Daniel 7:13-15 with Isaiah 42:1-9 [The Call of the Servant]; 49:1-13 [The Commission of the Servant]; 50:4-11 [The Commitment of the Servant]; 52:13-53:12 [The Career of the Servant])

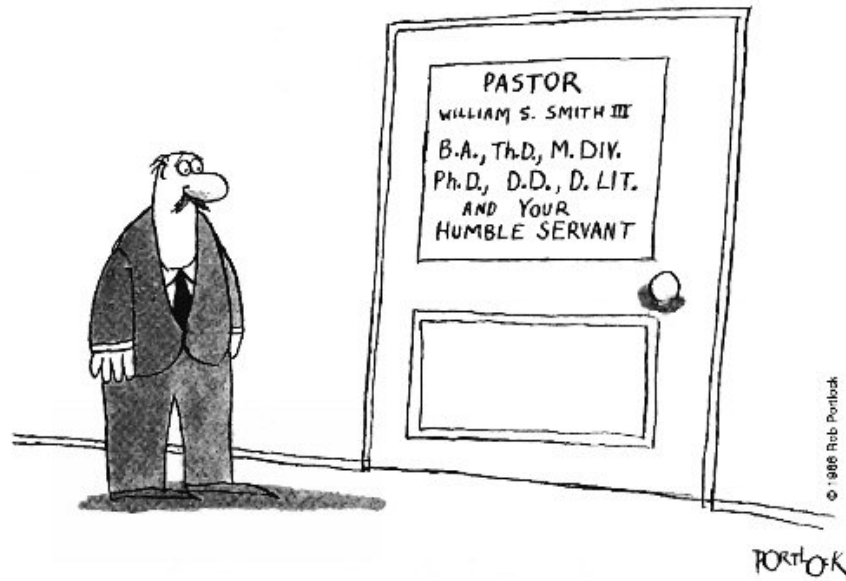
**NOTE:** Matthew explicitly connects the "servant" of Isaiah with Jesus in Matthew 8:17 and 12:15-21. The connection between Jesus' self-designation, "Son of Man" and Daniel 7:13-14 is made explicit in Matthew 26:63-64.

- A. Jesus does not deny His exaltation or the exaltation of His disciples (**Matthew 19:28-30**). Rather, He emphasizes that humiliation comes before exaltation (Matthew 20:25-28).
- B. Instead of asking Jesus for the best and most honored seats in the kingdom, the disciples should have been asking, "How can we serve others?"
- C. The concept of servanthood was nothing new to the disciples because the great men of the Old Testament were frequently called servants.
  1. Caleb is called God's servant (Num.14:6-10,24).
  2. Moses is called God's servant some forty times (Josh.1:7 with Acts 3:22-23; cf. Ex. 5:20,21; 15:24; 16:2,3; 17:2-4; Num. 14:2-4; 16; 20:2-5; 21:4-6; Deut. 1:12,26-28).
  3. David is called God's servant about fifty times (Luke 1:69; Acts 4:25; cf. 1 Sam.30:6).
  4. Israel is called God's servant (Isa.41:8; 42:19; 43:10; 44:1,2,21; 45:4; 49:6-7; Jer.46:28; Luke 1:54; Mt.23:31,37; Lk.13:34).
  5. Isaiah is called God's servant (Isa.20:3).

Servant/slave - one who submits his/her life to the needs of others for the sake of Christ. There is no higher calling in this life than service to the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt.20:25-28).

"One of the ironies of language is that a word like 'minister,' which in its roots refers to a helper, one who 'ministers,' has become a badge of honor and power in religion and politics" (D.A. Carson, *Matthew* 432).

- D. The Pharisees loved the place of honor (Matthew 23:6-12).
- E. Paul calls himself "servant" "slave" "the very least of all the saints," "the least of all the apostles," "the foremost" of all sinners and a "nobody" (Eph. 3:8; 1 Cor. 15:9; 1 Tim. 1:15; 2 Cor. 12:11; servant [*diakonos*]: 2 Cor.3:6; Eph.3:7; Col.1:23; slave [*doulos*]: Romans 1:1; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Gal.1:10).
- F. We need to be careful of a false humility (see Matthew 23). In biblical times the cross was unmentionable. Today it has become fashionable.



### **III. ARROGANCE, PRIDE, AND SELFISH STRIVING FOR GREATNESS IS THE RESULT OF A CROSS-LESS LIFE.**

A. The antidote to pride, arrogance and selfish striving is taking up your cross.

Romans 14:19

So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

B. “We help others become slaves of Christ by being His slaves to others.”

1. *How can I live as a servant in the workplace?* (Ephesians 6:5-7)
2. *How can I serve in my marriage?* (Ephesians 5:21)
3. *How can I serve in my family?* (Ephesians 6:1)

1 John 3:16

We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

## **QUESTIONS FOR SABBATH DISCUSSION & MEDITATION:**

*Take what you have learned this morning and turn it into a prayer. Confess any pride and arrogance in your life.*

*Explain the contrast between the way Jesus thought of Himself and others and the way the disciples thought of themselves and others.*

*How is kingdom greatness emphasized in Matthew 18-20?*

*Explain how Jesus combines the “Son of Man” imagery of Daniel with the suffering servant of Isaiah.*

*What are some ways in which the church has lost sight of servanthood?*

*Arrogance, pride, and selfish striving for greatness is the result of a \_\_\_\_\_-less life.*

*How can I live as a servant in the workplace?* (Ephesians 6:5-7)

*How can I serve in my marriage?* (Ephesians 5:21)

*How can I serve in my family?* (Ephesians 6:1)

*How can the church better serve our community?*

