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Sermon Transcript

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Servant Based Leadership — Christ's Example

Isaiah 42:1 - "*Behold my servant,*" (of thee, my ebed), my servant, this is God speaking. Christ was to be God's servant. Now of course Christ himself was God. We understand that from other scriptures. But "*My servant,*" says God, "*whom I uphold, My elect One in whom my soul delights! I put my Spirit upon Him; and he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.*"

Verse 2 - "*He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.*" He wasn't a street preacher, He preached in the synagogues. He took the message of the gospel first of all to His own people in the synagogues. Later, of course, it was taken elsewhere; this is part of the work that He was given to do.

Verse 3 - "*A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench.*" Remember the story of the woman caught in adultery in **John 8**? Well this is telling us in **verse 3** that Jesus Christ at His coming didn't lean hard on somebody already bruised, somebody who is already hurting. He told her to go and sin no more. He knew she was already hurting, she already felt remorse. "*A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth.*"

Verse 4 - "*He will not fail nor be discouraged,*" (that was also part of His commission as a servant, He wasn't going to fail.) He was going to do the work that He was given to do, part of the lesson for us. "*Till He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law.*"

It's very interesting, by the way, when you look at some of the commentaries, and you look at some of the annotated Bibles; and these prophecies of Isaiah that kind of mingle together what Christ was to do at His First Coming, and what He will yet do at His Second Coming. And very often some of the commentaries sort of read over the segment, the portion that has to do with what Christ will do at His Second Coming. They see and understand what He did at His First Coming, but sometimes the commentaries miss what He is yet to do at His Second Coming. And yet, Isaiah was inspired to depict Christ as the servant at His First Coming and Second Coming, and often the prophecies of the First Coming and the Second Coming are kind of fused together, and you need, maybe, a little hindsight, discernment, guidance of the Spirit of God to figure out exactly what is

being referred to. God didn't inspire the prophets to write like historians. Sometimes the prophets didn't know how far in the future they were seeing. But anyway, **verse 4**, of course, talks about Jesus Christ's work at His Second Coming.

Verse 5 - *"Thus says God the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, and that which comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it:*

Verse 6 - *"I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand"; (this is still speaking as a servant.) "I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people".* Jesus Christ was that "covenant of the people", not to the exclusion of the law of God, but He was the center of the covenant. He mediated that New Covenant, the one that we're under. He's the very center of it. *"As a light to the Gentiles,"* that was part of His work as well, people who hadn't been given light. Light began to shine on them at His First Coming.

Verse 7 - *"To open blind eyes, (remember what He did for the blind man in **John, 9?**) "To bring out prisoners from the prison." ...Not yet awaits His Second Coming. "Those who sit in darkness from the prison house."* There are some remarkable things said here about Jesus Christ and about the way in which He's to serve, He is the Servant. King James translation makes servant capital S; actually if you look at a Jewish translation there's a very different understanding of that among the Jewish people, but it is, of course, the reference to Jesus Christ as the servant.

Turn with me, if you would, to **Isaiah 52**, to the longest and probably the best known of the servant prophecies of Jesus Christ. **Isaiah 52:13**, this is a long servant prophecy or servant song, as they're sometimes referred to.

Isaiah 52:13 - *"Behold, My Servant"* (once again this is prophetic of Jesus Christ; He's God's servant), He *"shall deal prudently,"* (Jesus knew how to deal with people, how to work with people) *"He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high."* Jesus Christ was exalted, but first of all He had to serve; first of all He had to bring service and go through a great deal of suffering.

Verse 14 - *"Just as many were astonished at you, so His visage was marred more than any man,"* (He went through a terrible beating, an enormous scourging. They pushed a crown of thorns down on His head, you know, you've probably seen in the movies and some of the artwork the way it depicts it. The crown of thorns pressed down on His head so heavily that the blood was streaming down His face. He went through a terrible beating.) *"And His form more than the sons of men;"*

Verse 15 - *"So He shall sprinkle,"* probably a better translation of this word is "startle" many nations. Once again we're reading about the return of Jesus Christ, what He is to do in serving when He comes back at the Second Coming. He shall "startle" many nations, because if you look at the context sprinkle doesn't really fit. *"Kings shall shut their mouths at Him;* "this is Christ at His return; this is the kings of the earth seeing Jesus Christ coming back as Lord of Lords and clapping their hand over their mouth in astonishment. *"For what had not been told them they shall see, and what they hadn't heard they shall consider.*

Isaiah 53:1 - *"Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?* And of course, when the gospel began to be preached by Christ very few people accepted it. It was a little group of people, even as it is today, little group of people who accepted that message.

Verse 2 - *"For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form of comeliness;"* One of the things that we see reflected in the gospels is that when Jesus Christ walks around Jerusalem and Judea, He had to be identified. He looked pretty well like any other Jewish man of His age. He wasn't unusual in appearance, so that Judas Iscariot had to identify Him by giving Him a kiss. *"He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him.*

Verse 3 - *"He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;"* (just like Peter denying Him). *"He was despised, and we didn't esteem Him.*

Verse 4 - *"Surely He has borne our griefs"* (and now this very famous passage that's featured in Handel's Messiah), *"Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken."* This is prophecy of the entirety of Jesus sacrifice; it's not physical healing to the exclusion of the forgiveness of our sins; it's not forgiveness of sins to the exclusion of physical healing. It's one sacrifice.

Verse 5 - *"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed."* And that's quoted repeatedly in the New Testament, in both physical and spiritual contexts.

Verse 6 - *"All we like sheep have gone astray;"* Jesus Christ is depicted in the Old Testament as a sheep, and we Christians are depicted as sheep as well. We need a pastor; we need to be pastored, we heard that in the special music. Jesus Christ pastors us. *"We have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

Verse 7 - *"He was oppressed, He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,"* that's another image of Christ that begins in the Old Testament, of course, back in the book of **Exodus**. In **Exodus 12**, when they selected that lamb for the Passover, that too was prophetic of Jesus Christ, and when He was led to the slaughter, there were moments when He said nothing, like a lamb to the slaughter. *"As a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth."*

Verse 8 - *"He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken."* This is what Jesus Christ did, as a servant, for you and me, and ultimately for the whole world, gave up his life.

Verse 9 - *"And they made His grave with the wicked",* the ultimate irony. Here was a man who committed absolutely no sin and he gets crucified and interred among sinners. *"But with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth."* Quite a thought, you know, when you stop to think about this and we usually do this at the Passover, but perhaps we should do it a little more often and stop and think about who Jesus Christ was and about the nature of the sacrifice that He made. Never one sin, never one sin, and yet He went to His grave for you and me; gave up His life, died a terrible death, this was part of His act of service.

Verse 10 - *"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see his seed,"* this is all part of God's plan, this was what He had to do. When God made His soul an offering for sin, Jesus Christ saw His seed. Sometimes you wonder; how could He have gone through with it? How could He have hung on that tree, or the cross, or the stake, or whatever it was, and gone through with that terrible death? Part of what sustained Him was that He knew this was part of God's plan that He had to go through with it. He knew there was a group of people that would come after that in the Spirit that would be given by God after his death and resurrection. *"He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand."* It was all decided beforehand. Jesus Christ and God the Father decided that He was to be the one who would come.

Verse 11 - *"He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities."* And that's what He still does; he still intercedes for us. That's part of his ongoing work as God's servant.

Verse 12 - *"Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul to death, and He was numbered with the transgressors."* And of course there were two common criminals there hanging with Him, one of whom realized, "Well, we deserved it;

this man's done nothing wrong, but we deserved it". The other one had begun to revile Jesus and say, "Come on, do something, get us down from this." And the other man said, "No, no, no, you shouldn't be reviling this man. You've got to watch what you say. We deserved it; He didn't." *"And He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."* And He still does that; He still intercedes for us. That's part of Jesus Christ's service now; He intercedes; He's our intercessor. That's quite a thought as well. We won't take time to go through that, but, of course, in **Hebrews 4:15**, which we won't look at, won't turn there, but it talks about Christ interceding for us. He does that on an ongoing basis.

So, these are fairly lengthy passages, I realize brethren. I took a little bit of time to go over these two servant passages, to show you, first of all that Jesus Christ was prophesied to be the servant; this was all planned ahead of time. He was to come and give the ultimate act of service laying down his life, opening the doors of salvation, so that you and I could look forward to the kingdom. We'll be looking forward to that at the Feast of Tabernacles coming up quite shortly, looking forward to the prospect of eternal life, living forever as sons and daughters of God. This was Jesus Christ's step, that step in God's plan, although, of course, it continues.

Turn with me if you would now to **Philippians 2**, there's some fundamental scriptures on this subject of Jesus Christ as a servant. **Philippians 2**, beginning in **verse 5**, and what I would like to do, well, let's read a verse or two, and then I want to read you from some other translations, because the *New King James Version* is not a terribly good translation in this passage, and yesterday I was looking at some of the other translations, and I looked at the *New Revised Standard Version* and they don't have a good translation of this passage either, but I want to read you one verse from a few other translations. Let's begin in the *New King James Version*, **Philippians 2:5**. We've read a little bit about what Christ was to do; we know what he did.

Philippians 2:5 - *"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,*

Verse 6 - *"who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,"* I used to read that scripture for years and couldn't quite figure out what it's talking about. *"Didn't consider it robbery to be equal with God."* The translation is not a very good one. I'm not much of a fan of the *NIV*, but the *New International Version* in this case has got **verse 6** rather well. *"Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,*

Verse 7 - *"but made Himself nothing."* The sense of this is that Jesus Christ, who was God, who was there with the Father, didn't hold on to it. He let it go, because that was part of the plan that God the Father and Jesus Christ had. The "Moffatt" translation: *"Though He was divine by nature, He did not set store upon equality*

with God" makes it a little clearer, doesn't it? *New English Bible*: "For the divine nature was His from the first, yet He did not think to snatch at equality with God." And finally, *The New Jerusalem Bible*, "Who being in the form of God did not count equality with God something to be grasped." He didn't hold on to it; He let it go. He was God! He had it made, in a sense. He was there in heaven; He had the power of a spirit being and He gave it up, because He knew there was work to be done. And the footnote to this *New Jerusalem Bible*, which is a rather nice translation by the way, brings out a rather interesting point. They say the contrast here is with Adam. Adam, who was not there; he didn't have eternal life and he tried to grab it, tried to get it, tried to do it the wrong way. And Jesus Christ, who was there, who had eternal life, who was there with the Father and had existed in eternity, and he gave it up to come down to earth in an act of selfless service. "He didn't consider it robbery to be equal with God."

Verse 7 - "But He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men,

Verse 8 - "Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross." He became a bondservant, now I think you may well know the word that is used here in the Greek; the Greek word is *doulos*. It's a very interesting word, because in writing some of these things, Paul is deliberately overturning some of the cultural values in the Greco-Roman society. In the Greco-Roman society, if you were the "lord", you were not a servant. You were not a slave. The *doulos*, the bondservant; let me read you William Barclays' comments on this: he's talking about **Philippians 1**, where, right at the beginning of the epistle by the way, we won't go there, but it's interesting, Paul and Timothy refer to themselves not as apostles here, but as *douloi*, as slaves of Jesus Christ. Paul claims to be the servant, *doulos* of Christ as the *Authorized* and *The Revised Standard Version* have Him, but *doulos* is more than servant; it is slave. A servant is free to come and go, but a slave is a possession of His master forever.

When Paul calls himself the slave of Jesus Christ, he does certain things:

1. He lays it down that he is the absolute possession of Christ. Christ has loved him, and bought him with a price, and he can never belong to anyone else. And so this concept of being a bondservant or a slave meant you were a total owned possession of the one who owned you. If you were a bondservant, you belonged to them; you turned yourself over entirely to that individual.
2. He lays it down that he owes an absolute obedience to Christ. A slave has no will of his own, his master's will must be his; so Paul has no will but Christ's, and no obedience but to His Savior and Lord. That from William Barclay on *The Epistles of the Philippians*.

So, here once again we get some fundamentals about the work of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ gave it up; he didn't hold on to it.

What I want to do now is look at some of the teachings and examples of Jesus Christ on leadership and servant leadership in the church. Let's go to **Matthew 20**, some fundamental passages; I think you know them well, but let's take another look at them - **Matthew 20**, where Jesus is deliberately overturning some of the false concepts. Here he's talking to Jewish disciples, and of course here's the same famous scene where Mrs. Zebedee comes along and says to Jesus, "I've got a little request for you. There's just something that I'd like for my little boys here; aren't they nice little boys." And I think most of you know my background is Jewish. Jewish moms can be like this. Jewish moms want their little boys to be successful in life, so here is Zebedee's wife and her two little boys, and she wants, not that they would be doctors or lawyers, but she comes along with a little modest request that she makes at this point. **Matthew 20:20** -

Matthew 20:20 - *"Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.*

Verse 21 - *"And He said to her, 'What do you wish?' She said to Him, 'Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom.'" "I'm not asking much, I've just got a little request of you; they're my boys; aren't they nice boys? This is what I'd like; that is all I ask for. Is that too much to ask?"*

As I mentioned, you know, Jewish moms can be like that. They push their sons; they want them to become the tops; doctors, lawyers. ...This reminds me of a friend of mine back in London, a young man from a Jewish family. I knew the family rather well at the time, and the young man's father was a taxi driver, to the eternal dismay of mom, who thought this was not prestigious enough. So this friend of mine, whose name was Richard; she had made up her mind that her son was not going to be a taxi driver. And when he was getting ready to finish high school, you know what she would do to get him to do his homework and make good grades? She would lock him in his bedroom; literally, she would force him into the bedroom and lock the door. Now I don't know what he did in the bedroom when she'd lock the door, but the idea, of course, was that he would study and make good grades and not become a taxi driver. I'll never forget my friend, Richard, who flunked out at the end of high school. We had finished our A levels and I remember coming out of the A levels; and he took his blazer, his school uniform, and he cut it up with a knife, because he was so glad to be out of school. Then the results came out and Richard had failed his tests, and he had to go back and redo some of them. You know what he's doing now? Yeah, that's right; he's a taxi driver. Doing rather well, you know, making a good living.

Anyway, the point being, as a little bit of a backdrop, the point being that Jewish moms are like that, they can be a little bit pushy; my own mother was not like that, thankfully, is not like that, but could be a little bit pushy. What do you want? So she makes this little bit of a request, this modest request. Then Jesus takes that as an opportunity to give an answer beginning in **verse 22**, and of course this is very basic, but quite startling instruction about serving.

Verse 22 - *"Jesus answered and said, 'You don't know what you're asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' They said to Him," they sure thought very quickly, "Oh, yeah, we're able; oh, yeah, we'll do it." They don't know what they're saying.*

Verse 23 - *"He said to them, 'You will indeed drink My cup, this is prophetic of the way in which their lives were to end. Almost all of Jesus' apostles were martyred, of course. "And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." It's interesting; it's the Father who determines the roles that we will have in the kingdom; it's not Jesus Christ. The Father is the one who calls; it's Jesus Christ who is over the church, and it's the Father, apparently, who will determine what everybody will be doing in the kingdom. Interesting the way that works out.*

Verse 24 - *"When the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers.*

Verse 25 - *"But Jesus called them to Himself and He said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them.'" This is something that we see colorfully depicted in the modern world today. You can see leaders of different nations lording it over people, abusing their subjects. Using their office as an excuse to squirrel away money and make sure they're well taken care of while people in their nation may be starving to death. You can think of a lot of examples of that. That still happens. **Verse 26** - But He gives them this very important teaching:*

Verse 26 - *"It shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant." And the word for servant here is a different word, it is *diakonos*; we'll talk about that in a minute.*

Verse 27 - *"And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave--" And Jesus here uses that word *doulos*, somebody who is completely given to service to his master.*

Let me read you a little from Larry Walker's article in the latest Ministerial Quarterly (Summer 2002 pp. 12-13) about *diakonos*, the first word that Jesus

uses here. If you desire to be great, let you be your servant. The word is *diakonos*; the *Inter tandard Bible Encyclopedia* explains "the verb *diakoneo* originally means 'wait at table'... more often, however, the term is used in the wider sense of 'render a service.' The noun *diakonia* denotes the activity of *diakoneo*, i.e. 'service at table, provision of food, or in a wider sense, 'service' of any sort. Likewise, *diakonos* denotes a 'waiter at a meal,' an 'attendant,' or in general, a 'servant;' in a few instances it designates a specific ecclesiastical office, e.g. 'deacon.'

"In **Matthew 25**, Jesus comprises under the term *diakoneo* many different activities such as giving food and drink, extending shelter, providing clothes and visiting the sick and prisoners. The term thus comes to have the full sense of active Christian love for the neighbor, and as such it is the mark of true discipleship."

So that's what Jesus is telling them in the first statement that He makes. "Do you want to be great? You've got to be a *diakonos*." Then He says, "If you really want to be great, here's the way to do it is by becoming a *doulos*."

"In his classic work, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, Richard Trench contrasts *doulos* and its antithesis *kurios* to define it as 'one that is in a permanent relation of servitude to another, his will altogether swallowed up by the will of the other'. ...

"*The New Bible Dictionary* compares *doulos* to *diakonos*: 'The lowliness of Christian service is emphasized even more strongly by the use of the word *doulos* or slave; it was the form of such a bond-servant that Christ assumed (**Philippians 2:7**), and, following His example, the apostles and their fellow-laborers are designated as the slaves of God or Christ."

Now what Jesus Christ does in this passage, of course, He takes the concept of greatness back then, and He turns it on His head. Because back then they had certain concepts about what greatness was; it was to become prestigious; it was to throw your weight around; it was to be in authority; and that included mistreating people at times. And Jesus said, "No, in the Christian community in the church, if you want to be great, you accomplish that through service."

He turns it on its head and it does the same for us today, because if you think about the concepts of greatness in our society sometimes, you know, people think greatness is prestige, greatness is having lots of money; greatness is being on TV and being regarded as being one of the best looking people in the whole country. So Jesus makes this point that greatness in the Church of God is quite, quite different. Greatness in the Church of God is in contrast to greatness in the society back then and in our society. It's not prestige, it's sometimes not visible; greatness is quite, quite different. Let's look at a few more examples of this. Go

with me if you would, please, to **John 13** where Jesus, of course, washes the disciples feet. **John 13:1-5** -

Verse 1 - *"Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, and His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."* That, of course, is also part of servant leadership.

Verse 2 - *"And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son to betray Him."* That's interesting, Judas was there having his feet washed as well.

Verse 3 - *"Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,*

Verse 4 - *"rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself."* He wrapped the towel around His waist and He began to wash their feet.

Verse 5 - *"After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded."* Shocked them! Startled them! He was their Lord; yes He was. He was also their servant; He was their teacher; He was their rabbi, but He was also one who before His death got down on His hands and knees and began to wash their feet, and they weren't even converted yet. Then look at Simon Peter's reaction in **verse 6** -

Verse 6 - *"Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?'"* And then in **verse 8** -

Verse 8 - Peter said, *"And you shall never wash my feet!"* Peter's shocked, horrified, by this act of lowly service. Keep your place here in the "New Testament," turn back with me to **I Samuel 25:41** - Foot washing was the lowliest of tasks in the household. Washing someone's feet was what the servants did. This is Abigail and David and look at her comment; I just want to pick up one little comment here in **Verse 41**.

I Samuel 25:41 - *"Then she" (Abigail) "arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, 'Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord."*

"I'm not even going to wash your feet, David, I'll wash the feet of your servants. That's how lowly I am." That probably explains why Peter was so shocked; he was horrified by this. Here was his Lord, his Master, who begins to wash his feet.

And Jesus of course was giving them a lesson; He was giving a lesson in humility. The lesson for us from his example, of course, is that we, like Jesus Christ, are to be humble as He was humble, and He was God in the flesh. How much more so us? What God wants from us is humility, not so much our qualifications, not so much what we've done, not our resume, God can't work with a resume; what He wants is our humility. I remember years ago in Pasadena hearing a sermon; it was a good sermon; it was one line that stands out in that sermon for me. The man got up, and he said what God is telling us is, "I want you, I don't want your resume." I thought it was a good line, "I want you; I don't want your resume." And of course when you compare your resume, or anyone's resume with God's resume, then you realize you've got plenty of cause for humility. So Jesus set that example in humility.

Number two - he set it in the example also in patience. Jesus was patient with His disciples when He washed the feet. Judas Iscariot was there as well, and there are many examples that we can look at in the gospels where the disciples betray the fact that they're still unconverted. They're still like little children; they're still under the tutor. They haven't yet received the Spirit of God.

Matthew 17 - Patience, we all run out of patience sometimes. Parents run out of patience with their children; probably children run out of patience with their parents; teachers run out of patience with their students. What's interesting in the gospels is that Jesus Christ never seemed to run out of patience. He was constantly teaching and trying to enlighten the group of people who didn't yet even have the ability to learn that and receive the Spirit of God yet. **Matthew 17:14** - here's the story of the healing.

Matthew 17:14 - *"When they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying,*

Verse 15 - *"Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.*

Verse 16 - *"So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."* And look at what Jesus says to them:

Verse 17 - *"O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you?"* Now the time's running out; He's to die; He's gotta be resurrected. And yet, apparently He's taught them these things, and He's dismayed; He's down; He's discouraged about it, but He doesn't run out of patience. And then, of course, He says: *"Bring him to Me,"* and He casts out the demon. And then they turn around in **verse 19** and they say:

Verse 19 - *"Why couldn't we cast it out?"* And Jesus takes that as an opportunity to teach them; it's amazing how patient He was with them. They should have

understood; He hoped they would understand, but often they didn't, but He was patient right up until the end. Patience is part of Jesus' interaction with them.

Another example that He gives us is that Jesus corrected His disciples. The relationship between Christ and His disciples was not all candy bars. He loved them; He served them; He cared for them, but there were times when He corrected them. He drew their attention to the areas where they needed to change. He chided them. **Mark 10:13-14**, many examples of this. It's an interesting study, the relationship between Christ and His disciples. It was a strong enough relationship that He could encourage them; He could express disappointment with them; He could chide and correct them; that was all part of it, **Mark 10:13-14**. Look at this example, what it says in the middle.

Mark 10:13 - *"Then they brought young children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them.*

Verse 14 - *"When Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, 'Let the little children come to Me,' (a little bit of correction; they didn't understand) "and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God."* Many of other examples that we could look at. So Jesus sets us an example in this area as well. When we serve people, we have to be patient as well. When we serve people, there are times to be direct. There are times when it's not appropriate to give a candy bar; sometimes we have to chide and correct as Jesus Christ did, because they didn't understand.

Another point in Jesus Christ's work as a servant is that he never deviated from His mission. Jesus Christ was very goal oriented. **Isaiah 50:7**, back in the book of Isaiah, another servant passage here in **Isaiah 50:7**:

Isaiah 50:7 - *"For the Lord God will help Me; therefore I will not be disgraced; therefore I have set My face like a flint."* This is prophetic of Jesus Christ once again. He made up His mind; He was going to go through with it. He knew how painful it was going to be; he knew how difficult it would be humanly speaking. *"I've set my face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed."*

Luke 9:51 - Here's the fulfillment of that passage as Jesus Christ was determined to do what he had to go through with.

Luke 9:51 - *"Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem."* He was determined, and so the lesson for us as well is that we are to be determined. Now I know He got to the garden of Gethsemane, and He prayed that it would be possible for the cup to pass from Him, but He understood it had been made clear throughout eternity that there was a plan, and he never deviated from His mission. Part of an example for us as well.

Jesus Christ lives in us today; Jesus Christ serves through us today. I want to give a few points for us in the present; how can we be servants; again, some basic points. What is it Jesus Christ desires for us to do in serving?

Number one is to serve. Everybody should serve; Christ desires that we serve. Mr. McClain, in his sermonette talked about building a building. There's a building to be built. There's a structure to be put up; let's serve, everybody, without exception. You know, the Feast of Tabernacles is coming up; it's amazing how quickly the feast is coming up this year. It's September because all the Holy Days are very early this year, so it's just about two and one-half months away. And the Feast of Tabernacles is a wonderful opportunity to serve, in some way or another. Everybody, every member of the church should do something for the Feast of Tabernacles. That doesn't mean giving a sermon or a sermonette necessarily, and it may not even mean being on the parking crew. It may not be part of some organizational chart, but everyone should do something, but maybe that something is to pray about the feast. To pray about the weather, to pray for the speakers, to pray for people's health. It may be that that service is giving rides, visiting, taking care of people, looking after the sick or the elderly. Every member of the church should do something in service. **I Corinthians 12:18** - the New Testament brings this out; service is universal in the church.

I Corinthians 12:18 - *"But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased."* Everyone, everybody's got something to do, there's always something to be done. **Ephesians 4:15-16** -

Verse 15 - *"But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head --Christ --*

Verse 16 - *"from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."* Service is universal; service is something that the whole church should be involved in. We should never think, we should never get the wrong impression and think that whoever is up behind the microphone speaking is doing something that is more important than everybody else in the church. It's really not that way. And that's not the way the New Testament depicts it. The New Testament depicts the whole body is mutually supporting one another. And so, everyone should take on some role of service, and again, you don't have to be on the organizational chart. There is something to be done, guarantee you, look around for it. There's always some area of service. Service should be universal.

Number two, with regard to our service. We shouldn't adopt the attitude - it's below me. Service is humble; service can be lowly. A lot of opportunities, I think, in the church have been missed, because people have taken the wrong approach and said, "Oh that's below me. I don't want to do that because ...it's below me,

it's not for me to do." I'm reminded of an example that I heard about years ago when I was a student at Ambassador College. A friend of mine related this to me, something that happened at the Feast of Tabernacles. He'd gone to the feast, I really don't recall where, but he'd gone to the feast and there'd been some kind of problem, some basic job that needed doing. The floors needed mopping or the toilets got blocked, or something like this; I don't remember all the details, but this friend of mine was very, very impressed to discover that there was a man who was very prominent in the church at that time. Everyone knew his name; he was well known, and it was this particular man who rolled up his sleeves and simply did the work. He got on with whatever it was, unblocking the toilets or mopping the floor, or whatever it was that had to be done. We shouldn't take the attitude - it's below me. Now there are times when ministers are doing other things. They may be counseling, and it may be someone else's work, we understand that. But nevertheless, Jesus Christ never took that attitude. He didn't say this is work that is below me. Let's go back to **John 13:12**; service is humble.

John 13:12 - *"So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you?'"* The answer was probably "No." They didn't fully appreciate it.

Verse 13 - *"You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am."*

Verse 14 - *"If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."*

Verse 15 - *"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."*

Verse 16 - *"Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master;"* they acknowledged Him as master. They were His servants, His disciples, His followers. *"Nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him."*

Verse 17 - *"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."* And so, service is humble.

Point number three, something else to keep in mind in regards to the practical aspects of service, is that service sometimes goes unrecognized. Service sometimes goes unrecognized. There are times when people do things in the church, and nobody knows anything about it. People will serve; people will help in certain ways. Service can sometimes be covert; service can sometimes be completely anonymous. Lots of examples that we could cite about that. I remember something that would happen at Ambassador College again, thinking of the Feast of Tabernacles. A student would be short on money, and somehow the word got out; the student wasn't trying to publicize it, but didn't have enough money to go and keep the feast, and suddenly a plain white envelope with some

cash would appear in that student's mailbox. I know that happened on more than one occasion. **Matthew 6:1-4** - Service sometimes is unrecognized.

Matthew 6:1 - *"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven.*

Verse 2 - *"Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly I say to you, they have their reward."* That's all they're going to get; because what they want is recognition. By the way, I've seen this. I can remember as a young man going to the synagogue, which I didn't do on a regular basis, but I can remember going to the synagogue and some important person would be called up and the cantor or the rabbi would turn to him and say, "How much are you donating to the synagogue?" And then that was announced during the course of the service. I'm remembering that quite distinctly; I'm not saying all synagogues do that, but he would say, "Well, I'm giving so much money," and sometimes people would be very impressed with that. Well, people were impressed by it; I don't know how impressed God was.

Verse 3 - *"But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,*

Verse 4 - *"that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."* Sometimes God will hold back recognition. There are times in our lives as Christians, when, if we desire recognition, God may deliberately withhold it. He looks to see whether we'll serve anyway. The answer: we have to serve anyway. Sometimes God realizes that what this person wants more than anything else is for people to notice. You know, you go around doing something and you feel, well, nobody's noticing. Nobody knows, the important people don't know what I'm doing. Don't they notice? I remember saying that a number of years ago to a good friend of mine. I was helping out quite a lot in one particular congregation in southern California and doing a lot of things, and I said to the ...Spanish church, so the language was a different language and for those of you who were in Pasadena, at the time, you'll remember that the Spanish church was up the hill. This was not the auditorium, but I was serving a lot in the Spanish church, and you know, at one point I was ... I had to learn this lesson. I turned to a friend of mine and said, I've got this feeling no one's noticing. And this friend of mine who is now, by the way, an elder in "United," gave the right answer. He said, "I think somebody's noticing." He was right. Sometimes God withholds the recognition and gives a little bit of publicity at the appropriate time.

What about the future; what about Jesus Christ as a servant in the future? We see some amazing things in the scriptures that Jesus Christ will continue to serve when He comes back. He will be Lord of Lords. He will be King of Kings. He will

be crowned and given power over the entire world, in charge of the entire earth, and we might think well, when he comes back as King of Kings, he'll be the king, he won't be the servant any longer. He won't be serving people because after all, he will have been glorified. Turn with me if you would to **Luke 12**. There's a remarkable little detail here in **Luke 12:37** - Jesus Christ once again talking about servants, the faithful servants and the evil servant and responsibility of the faithful servant. And in **Luke 12:37**, look at what He says:

Luke 12:37 - *"Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he (this is the master) will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them."* Now I don't know exactly how that's going to play out. I imagine Christ is referring to the wedding supper, but it says it very clearly that Jesus Christ will come and serve those who've been good servants. Hopefully, that's you and me if we're faithful, if we serve without that desire for recognition, if we continue to serve right up to the second coming of Jesus Christ or the end of our lives. But He's going to serve us. He's going to serve us probably at table and that wedding supper, I think that's what's referred to. Jesus Christ, you see was, is, and will be the eternal servant. The paradox is that when we try to become great God doesn't give greatness, when we serve, that's the way to greatness. It's the exact opposite of the world's system.

What then is the outcome of serving as Jesus Christ served? What's the end product of it? Let's go back to **Philippians 2:8-10**, Jesus Christ teaches us that service is the way to greatness; service is the way to please God. **Philippians 2:8-10** -

Verse 8 - *"And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*

Verse 9 - *"Therefore God also has exalted him, and given him the name which is above every name:"*

Verse 10 - *"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and those in earth, and of those under the earth;"*

Verse 11 - *"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* That's the ultimate greatness. That's what God will give to Jesus Christ. That's the destiny that we will have as well as servants of God, servants of Jesus Christ. In His kingdom, Jesus Christ will be the eternal servant, and we will serve with Him.