

Introduction

Having just finished our study of 1Peter, I thought it would be beneficial for us to continue on to Peter's second epistle. Not needing to be introduced to Peter, we should probably just jump in...

1:1a Servanthood

Peter's first statement about himself in this letter is that he is a bond-servant. Today, the idea of slavery and servanthood is met with disdain. To our twenty-first century minds, being owned by another or spending our lives serving someone else is not something to be desired.

But my personal position is that there is no better position. In fact, I have found that there is nothing more fulfilling in life than serving others. Of all of the different jobs I do in the course of ministry, simple serving by far the most fulfilling. Assisting someone else, carrying their burden, filling their glass, holding the door, practically meeting their needs... there's just nothing that brings more joy to me, nothing that makes me feel more like Jesus than that.

Why? Because Jesus was a servant. He said,

Matt. 20:28 "...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve..."

One of the interesting things about the early church is that they called Jesus the servant of the Lord (Acts 3:26; 4:27; 4:30). This is what was fresh in their minds right after Jesus left: He was the servant of God.

Then, Peter says he is the servant of Jesus. Jesus was the servant of God. Simon Peter is the servant of Jesus. The whole concept travels down the ladder. And so I feel called to serve the Simon Peters of the world. In other words, I can be a servant of God by serving you who serve Jesus who serves God. Paul told the Galatians,

Gal. 5:13 ...through love serve one another.

The Bond-Servant

Now Peter isn't just saying that he is a slave, but that he is a slave of a certain type: a bond-servant.

God's Law in Exodus 21 describes the process by which a slave became a bond-servant:

Ex. 21:2 "If you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve for six years; but on the seventh he shall go out as a free man without payment."

Ex. 21:5-6 "But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man,' then his master shall bring him to God, then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently."

And so the bond-servant was one who voluntarily chose to serve for life. His choice to do so was because he knew that the life he had as a servant was better than he would have as a free man. He was one who had decided to be a slave as long as he lived.

Peter was a bond-servant of Jesus Christ. Deciding to be a bond-servant of Jesus is to say, "I'm committing to serve God for my entire life, because I love my Master, and I realize that my so-called 'freedom' in the world can't hold a candle to my 'slavery' in Christ" (Rom. 6:22).

Have you decided to be a bond-servant of Jesus Christ? Not a lot of people truly have. Sure, they're happy to be saved, but most Christians seem to be stuck in the mode of, "How can God serve me," rather than, "How can I serve God?"

Is serving God something that you occasionally do, or sometimes think about? Or is your life completely devoted to serving Him and those who serve Him?

The examples we have in Scripture of people who decided to be bond-servants of God form an impressive list. In addition to Simon Peter, Simeon (Luke 2:29), Luke (Acts 16:17), Paul (Rom. 1:1), Timothy (Phil. 1:1), Ep-af-RAS (Col. 1:7), Too-khee-KOS (Col. 4:7), James (James 1:1), Jude (Jude 1:1), and John (Rev. 22:6) were each referred to as bondservants of the Lord.

This is a group that I hope and pray you desire to be included in and listed among.

The Apostle

Next, Peter describes himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. What is an apostle? The word "ap-OS-tol-os" in Greek means, "One who is sent out, a delegate, a messenger."

Peter was one of the original twelve apostles Jesus had named. You may recall that early in His ministry, Jesus...

Luke 6:12-13 ...went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles

These were the twelve that He sent out to do the work of the ministry. It is interesting to me that Jesus named the twelve, gave them just a short time of examples of preaching and doing ministry (Matt. 5-9), and then sent them out to do the same (Matt. 10).

The instructions He gave them (Matt. 10:5-11:1) included:

- He told them to preach that the kingdom of heaven was at hand.
- He told them to do the work of the ministry: serving and healing.
- He told them to go in faith, trusting God for every provision
- He told them to stay where their message was received, and leave where it was not.

Ultimately, the job of the apostles was to fulfill the great commission, which Jesus said was preaching the gospel and making disciples of those who responded to it (Matt. 28:19).

Once a person came to salvation, how did the apostles make them into a disciple? Just as when they followed Jesus' example when they were sent out, they followed His example when He had made them disciples: He'd taught them, prayed with them, fellowshiped with them, and ate with them. So, to make disciples, they did the same thing:

Acts 2:41-42 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

This is how the apostles made disciples, to bring new believers into

maturity, that they would then do the same thing for the next generation (Eph. 4:11-13).

1:1b Those Who Have Received A Faith

Peter, the bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, is writing this letter to those who have received a faith of the same kind as his. Many people claim to be people of faith, but what faith is it? Peter says that his letter is for those whose faith is specifically by the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Have you come to faith in Jesus Christ yet? Have you recognized that you don't have the righteousness of God apart from Him? The Bible tells us that,

Rom. 3:10 ...THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE

Rom. 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

**Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of
God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

When you receive the free gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, God takes away the death penalty of your sins, and considers you righteous.

**Rom. 3:22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Je-
sus Christ for all those who believe...**