



Servant of the Lord

One definition for being a **faithful servant**, according to the Bible, is to be a **devoted and helpful follower, to be humble before God, to be ready to act as God nudges and inspires us, to help meet the needs of other people, and to remember that it is not about money or reward.**

The apostle Paul, in the opening of his letters to the **Romans**, **Philippians** and **Titus**, along with **Colossians 1:23**, speaks of himself as “a servant of Jesus Christ.” **Jude**, half-brother of Jesus, introduces himself as “a servant of Jesus Christ.”

To be a humble person is very often misunderstood. It has nothing to do with feeling like a worthless lump. **It has everything to do with attitude.** As the great Christian writer C.S. Lewis explained in his own definition of humility, “Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less.”

1 Peter 4:10-11 “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. Whoever speaks, let it be with God’s words. Whoever serves, do so with the strength that God supplies, so that in everything God will be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.” (NET)

The Servant of the Lord fulfills God’s will and is often presented in Scripture as someone chosen by God to hold a leadership position, to represent Him, and to accomplish a certain divine work. In the Bible, the term Servant of the Lord has been applied to individual people, certain groups of people, the nation of Israel, and the Messiah, who is identified as Jesus Christ in the New testament.

The book of Isaiah contains four “Servant Songs” describing the Servant of the Lord. The first is found in Isaiah 42:1-9; the second in Isaiah 49:1-13; the third in Isaiah 50:4-11; and the fourth in Isaiah 52:13 through 53:12. In Jewish tradition, the Servant of the Lord in all four passages refers to the nation of Israel. In the final Servant Song of Isaiah 53, a singular pronoun he is used for the Servant of the Lord.

The New Testament clearly identifies the servant of the Lord in Isaiah as our Savior, Jesus Christ of Nazareth. This unique Servant takes a preeminent place above all others in Scripture. This perfect Servant never fails to accomplish the will of the Lord and the purposes of God (John 17:5). The final Servant Song (Isaiah 53) is about an innocent Suffering Servant who dies in

place of the guilty. That passage foretells the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ, the Servant of the Lord, was “pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). In giving His life for us, “he was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth” (verse 7). At His trial, Jesus did not defend Himself but remained silent against His accusers. He suffered and died in the place of guilty sinners. The sins of all people were placed upon Him, the sacrificial Lamb of God. Jesus paid the price for our salvation. These are just a few of many details in Isaiah 53 that point to Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of messianic prophecy (Matt. 8:17; Luke 22:37; John 12:38; Acts 8:32-33; romans 10:16; I peter 2:22, 24-25).

When God the Son came to earth, He took on the role of a servant. The Creator chose to serve His creatures. Jesus said that He had come “to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28). In the book of Acts, the word servant is applied to Jesus four times in connection with His death (Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30). The humility of Jesus, the Servant of the Lord, is unmistakably seen in Philippians 2:7-8: “He gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross” (NLT).

The patriarchs are often named as servants of the Lord. Moses is repeatedly called the servant of the Lord. The Bible describes leaders like Caleb, Joshua, and Samson as servants of the Lord (Numbers 14:24; Joshua 5:14; 24:29; Judges 2:8; 15:18). David, Solomon, and Hezekiah are kings referred to as the Lord’s servants (Psalm 89:20; I Samuel 23:11; 2 Samuel 7:5; I Chronicles 17:4; I Kings 3:7-9; 14:8; 2 Chronicles 32:16). Prophets such as Ahijah, Elijah, Jonah, and Isaiah are also called servants of the Lord (I Kings 14:18; 18:36; 2 Kings 14:25; Isaiah 20:3).

Samuel’s mother, Hannah, describes herself as a servant of the Lord in I Samuel 1:11. Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, is described as a servant of the Lord in Haggai 2:23. Even the pagan kings Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus are named among the servants of the Lord in that they fulfilled the purposes of God (Jeremiah 25:9; 43:10; Isaiah 45:1).

Groups referred to as servants of the Lord in the Bible are the people of Israel (Isaiah 41:8-9; Leviticus 25:42, 55, the priests (Exodus 28:1, 41, the Levites (Deuteronomy 18:7; I Chronicles 23:28-31, and the prophets (Jeremiah 7:25; 29:19. Other nations are also called the Lord’s servants on occasion (Psalm 72:11; Isaiah 56:6).

In the New Testament, several believers define themselves or are named by God as servants of the Lord. They include Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:38, 48, Simeon ((Luke 2:29, Paul (Acts 27:2; Romans 1:1; Ephesians 3:1), James (James 1:1, Simon Peter (2 Peter 1:1), Jude (Jude 1), and John (Revelation 1:1). All of these servants are simply following the example of the ultimate Servant of the Lord, Jesus Christ.



Motivation is defined as “that which moves one toward an action; that which changes, provokes, or impels our very being.” The Bible has a great deal to say about motivation. The motivation of Christians is different from that of unbelievers. For one thing, our sense of motivation or inspiration comes from God, not from the things of the world. David spoke of his motivation in his psalms: “I desire to do Your will, O my God; Your law is within my heart” (Psalm 40:8). Later he wrote, “Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you” (Psalm 73:25).

The world is motivated by self and the aggrandizement of self, the all-about me syndrome, which is identified by self-determination, self-obsession, and self-worship. The Bible does not teach us to be centered on ourselves. In fact, it teaches just the opposite. Jesus said, “The greatest among you will be your servant for whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted” (Matthew 23:11-12); Luke 9:48). As followers of Christ, we are called to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him (Matthew 16:24). The cross was an instrument of death, and Jesus’ message to us is that only those who die to self will truly follow Him. We do that by doing nothing out of vanity and conceit, but instead considering others better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3).

Jesus set the example for our motivation in this life: “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work” (John 4:34). **Jesus was concerned with pleasing His Father, and so should we be motivated by that same concern.** He always did the Father’s will, motivated by pleasing Him through obedience (John 8:29). His obedience extended all the way to the cross where He humbled Himself and “became obedient unto death” (Philippians 2:8). Our motivation should be the same as His— the obedience by which we prove we are truly His. “If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

The apostle Paul spoke of what motivated him to endure the suffering he experienced: “For me, to live is Christ. . . (Philippians 1:32: compare 2 Corinthians 11:23-28). It wasn’t money, it wasn’t fame, nor was it being the best apostle that motivated Paul. It was living for Christ that superseded everything (Philippians 4:12-13). Our motivation as believers stems from a yearning to have peace with God (Romans 5:1; Philippians 4:7) to have His grace as well as hope (Romans 5:2; I John 5:13). The Christian views life through the lens of the future—being in the presence and glory of God (John 17:24), and this is our true motivation.

[Help! I can’t Get Motivated](#) by Adam Embry