



19-Minute Studies: Grand Themes Key Words

Slaves and Servants

Old Testament Themes & Words

Angel of the LORD
Circumcision
Fasting
Line of the Savior
LORD
Sabbath
Tithes and Firstfruits
Zion

New Testament Themes & Words

Apostles
Body of Christ
Children of God
Gospel
Kingdom of God
Persecution
Reconciliation
Repentance

Figures of Christ

David's Son
King Priest
Prophet
Rock
Shepherd and Sheep

Slaves and Servants

Son of Man

Salvation Words

Covenant
Faith
Glory of the Lord
Grace
Holiness
Redemption
Resurrection
Righteousness
Sacrifice for Sin

Important Symbols

Anointing
Fire
Idolatry and Adultery
Light and Darkness
Seven
Twelve
Water
Wind and Spirit
Yeast

Christian Life

Themes & Words

Abraham's Children
False Teaching
Holy Spirit's Presence
Law
Miracles, Signs, Wonders
Names
Presence of Christ
Retribution and Restitution
Testing Faith
Witnesses

1. How would you describe the difference between a “slave” and a “servant”?

John 8:34—*I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.*

Matthew 6:24—*No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.*

Romans 6:16—*Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?*

2. These three passages speak about a negative spiritual slavery. In John 8:34, Jesus is not talking about those who sin in weakness but of those who sin in absence of any faith. What kind of slavery do such people find themselves in?
 3. What warning does Jesus give those who think they can love God and be greedy for money at the same time? What other things can be enslaving?
 4. What is the spiritual danger of these types of slavery?
- Isaiah 53:11**—*By his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.*
5. Who is this servant? How did he serve us?
 6. Think about what we talked about in question #1. What does that mean in regard to this Bible passage?

Helps

1.) We usually think of one as worse off than the other. 2.) They are slaves to sin. They can neither free themselves from its grasp nor can they free themselves from the punishment sin deserves. 3.) Jesus gives a warning because it is very easy to fool ourselves about these things. We think we are the masters—but we are not. Just about everything in this world can be enslaving. 4.) Sometimes we get distracted by the addictive nature of these things (alcohol, money, work, etc.) and forget that the greater danger is spiritual. 5.) Jesus came to serve his heavenly Father. It was the Father's will that his service would be to bear our sins. 6.) While Jesus did serve voluntarily, it was still complete subjection to serve someone other than himself. 7.) In Matthew 20, Jesus was the "ransom" for us. 8.) His life of service leads us to want to do the same. 9.) We never reach the level of self-sufficiency; we are always dependant upon God—and no mere human has ever been any different.

Matthew 20:26-28—Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

John 13:14-17—Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

7. The two passages above talk about a good kind of slavery or servant-hood. How did we escape being slaves to sin and become slaves to God?

8. In Jesus' own words, what makes a Christian naturally want to serve others?

Luke 17:10—You also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty."

9. Does any Christian have the right to boast of his or her life of service? Apply this to the lives of the so-called saints in the Roman and Orthodox churches.

Prayer

Jesus, Servant of the Lord, thank you for suffering enslavement to sin and death on our behalf. Since you have set us free, cause us to serve you with great abandon throughout our lives. Amen.

Answers

- 1) We usually think of slaves as worse off than servants. However, the way we think of these two words is not completely accurate for how the Bible uses these words. In fact, most of the time the New Testament uses the same word for servant and slave. Translators translate the word differently according to the context. Generally, slavery in Bible times was not as harsh as we think of slavery. Few people had many slaves. Of course, that is not to say it was a pleasant position in life.
- 2) They are slaves to sin. They can neither free themselves from its grasp nor can they free themselves from the punishment sin deserves.
- 3) Jesus gives a warning because it is very easy to fool ourselves about these things. We think we are the masters—but we are not. Just about everything in this world can be enslaving and addicting.
- 4) Sometimes we get distracted by the addictive nature of worldly things (alcohol, money, work, etc.) and forget that the greater danger is spiritual. Terrible as addiction is, it is nothing compared to the eternal punishment slavery to sin will bring. We can easily get caught off guard here and think about how terrible a hundred different addictions here. We can forget that even if we have nothing resembling a clinical addiction in our lives, we deserve nothing but hell for our lives.
- 5.) Jesus came to serve his heavenly Father. He is the one prophesied in these verses. It was the Father's will that his service would be to bear our sins.
- 6.) While Jesus did serve voluntarily, it was still complete subjection to serve someone other than himself. He was a servant/slave to free us from sin, death and hell.
- 7.) In Matthew 20, Jesus was the "ransom" for us.
- 8.) Jesus served both in the big way of saving us (Matthew 20), and also in the little ways that he served people like us in his life (John 13). Jesus is both the cause of our love and an example for our love to follow.
- 9.) We never reach the level of self-sufficiency; we are always dependant upon God – and no mere human has ever been any different.
Part of the Catholic doctrine of the saints is that they have done so much good—even more good than God requires—that a Christian can supposedly tap into the saints' extra supply of good works for his own benefit. That is most blatant idolatry. I imagine that most of the "saints" would themselves have been shocked to hear such a thing!