

Although the half-brother of Jesus, James didn't come to faith until after the resurrection...and then voluntarily labeled himself a 'slave' which proved a mark of spiritual maturity. The term was not popular in 50 A.D., just as it carries very unpopular connotations in today's culture. Yet:

James 1:1: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings."

- **Grammatical Usage:** "**servant**" or in the Greek, "doulos" means, "a voluntary, fully devoted slave"; "**Dispersion**": "Diaspora" meaning, "scattered throughout".
- **Literal Interpretation:** I, James, am a slave of God and the Master Jesus, writing to the twelve tribes scattered to Kingdom Come: Hello!
- **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word.

I. BEING A SERVANT IS "WHAT A DISCIPLE OF JESUS IS CALLED TO BE"

A. JESUS STRESSED THIS TRUTH ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS...

1. While pointing out the faults of the scribes and Pharisees - **Mt 23:8-12**
2. During the Last Supper, a vivid demonstration of servitude - **Jn 13:12-17**
3. Even by His own example, as He came to serve - **Mt 20:25-28; Phil. 2:5-8**

B. SPECIFICALLY, WE ARE CALLED TO SERVE...

1. God - **James 1:1; Hebrews 9:14**
2. Jesus Christ - **James 1:1; 1 Corinthians 4:1**
3. Righteousness - **Romans 6:17-18**
4. Each other - **Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

II. BEING A SERVANT IS "A MARK OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY"

A. A PERSON WHO SERVES OTHERS...

1. Is certainly not selfish, but concerned with the needs of others: maturity

III. BEING A SERVANT HAS SEVERAL "IMPLICATIONS"

A. IT IMPLIES "ABSOLUTE OBEDIENCE"...

1. In a slave-master relationship...
 - a. The slave knows no law but his master's word
 - b. He has no rights of his own
 - c. He is the absolute possession of his master
 - d. He is bound to give his master unquestioning obedience
2. Does this describe our relationship to Christ?
 - a. It should, especially in light of **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**
 - b. We have to come to Jesus on HIS terms, not our own - **Luke 6:46; Matthew 7:21**

B. IT IMPLIES "ABSOLUTE HUMILITY"...

1. Otherwise, absolute obedience is not possible
 - a. When we have a humble opinion of ourselves, we are receptive to the idea of complete obedience
2. Does this describe our relationship to Christ and His Will?
 - a. Jesus said it should! - **Luke 17:10**

C. IT IMPLIES "ABSOLUTE LOYALTY"...

1. Since we become servants FREELY, it should be expected that we:
 - a. Are to be loyal to Him first - cf. **Galatians 1:10**
 - b. Do not consider our own profit or preference important, but that of the One we freely serve!
2. But it is amazing how anyone can claim to be servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, while:
 - a. Complaining about having to do the will of God, OR...
 - b. Being negligent or slothful in carrying out His will
3. But some act as though they are being forced against their own will!
 - a. They don't "have to" serve the Lord Jesus...if we don't serve Jesus, by default we serve Satan
 - b. But God by His grace has offered salvation; never grumble or complain that He calls us to life of service in grateful appreciation!

IV. BEING A SERVANT IS "A GREAT HONOR"

- A. FAR FROM BEING A TITLE OF DISHONOR, IT WAS THE TITLE BY WHICH THE GREATEST MEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WERE KNOWN...
 1. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob - **Deuteronomy 9:27** ("**Thy servants**")
 2. Moses - **1 Kings 8:53** ("**Thy servant**")
 3. Joshua - **Joshua 24:29** ("**Servant of the Lord**")
 4. Caleb - **Numbers 14:24** ("**My servant**")
 5. Job - **Job 1:8** ("**My servant**")
 6. Isaiah - **Isaiah 20:3** ("**My servant**")
 7. The prophets - **Jeremiah 7:25** ("**My servants**")
- B. While servants of Christ have specific jobs, given gifts and opportunities He provides, some requirements are universal for anyone called to be a servant of Christ:
 1. Continue in faith (**Colossians 1:23**)
 2. Destroy arguments, lofty opinions raised against the knowledge of God &
 3. Take every thought captive to obey Christ (**2 Corinthians 10:5**)
 4. Pursue holy living (**1 Peter 1:14-16**)
 5. Daily crucify the lusts of the flesh (**Romans 6:1-6**)
 6. Love brothers and sisters in the faith (**1 John 3:14-15**)
 7. Store up treasure in heaven (**Matthew 6:19-20**)
 8. Eagerly await the Master's return (**Revelation 22:20; 2 Timothy 4:8**)

➤ **Conclusion:** As I consider servanthood: do I qualify?