

Study Guide for May 25th, '03 Distinguishing Marks of a Disciple: Luke 17:7-10 SERVANTHOOD.

Introduction: Describe a time you served and your effort was either unrecognized or not appreciated?
How did you feel about the experience? What do you think God was teaching you?

I. The Term:

Definition: **Servant** is a translation of the Greek word *doulos*. The *doulos* belonged to someone else. Greek culture valued individual freedom--being independent of others and able to manage one's own life. Being in subordination to the will of another was repulsive. The *doulos* may have been treated humanely, even given considerable responsibility, but his life was one of unrelieved compulsory labor and service.

- A. How is this a helpful term to describe one's relationship with Christ? (see Mt. 20:27, II Cor. 4:5)
- B. What limitations do you see in this term? (see John 15:13-15, Philemon 16)
- C. What are the personal implications of being a **servant** (*doulos*) of Christ?

II. The Example: Jesus - the Servant. Reflect on the descriptions of Jesus in the following passages.

- A. Matt. 20:20-28:
- B. John 13:1-17
- C. Philippians 2:1-7

III. The Parable: (Luke 17:7-9)

- A. What's wrong with the story as Jesus presents it? Why do you think people probably laughed?
- B. Rewrite the Parable with contemporary characters appropriate to our culture.
- C. What do you think was the main point of the Parable? Jesus was trying to get his disciples to . . .

IV. The Application: (Luke 17:10)

- A. Fill in the blanks. "So you also, when you have done _____ you were told to do, should say, 'We are _____ ; We have only done our _____.'"
- B. Reflect on the following statement by Richard Foster, "(There is a) difference between choosing to serve and choosing to be a servant. When we choose to serve, we are still in charge. We decide whom we will serve. And if we are in charge, we will worry a great deal about anyone stepping on us, that is, taking charge over us. But when we choose to be a servant, we give up the right to be in charge. There is great freedom in this. If we voluntarily choose to be taken advantage of, then we cannot be manipulated. When we choose to be a servant, we surrender the right to decide who and when we will serve. We become available and vulnerable." (Celebration of Discipline, pg. 132)
- C. How would your work in church be affected if you saw yourself as a servant instead of doing service?