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# Humble Servanthood

## CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

*bimonthly (interim) schedule*  
**1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of the month**

**TUESDAY, 4 APRIL 2023**

**12 NOON IN 318 CLOB (& ZOOM)**

Capitol Commission (interim) Bible Studies are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of the month. The *bimonthly Bible studies* are *nonpartisan* and *non-denominational*, in addition to being *open-to-all*. The current study is the continuation of an exposition in the Gospel of Matthew.

We have an in-person Bible study in 318 CLOB (Senate Committee Room) *and* also use Zoom. Scripture is taught chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse with everyone having the opportunity to comment or ask a question.

For archives of past Bible studies (dating from 2010), please visit <http://www.capitolcom.org/georgia/studies>. *Capitol Commission's prayer is that this study will be edifying to you.* The sole intent of this ministry is to serve you, as a resource for pastoral attention, counsel, and prayer. *The present Bible study is just one aspect of that desire.*

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

## Capitol Commission Bible Study

*is*

**Tuesday, 4 April 2023**

### Matthew 19:1—20:16 – “Humble Servanthood”

B. B. Warfield (1851-1921) was a seminary professor at Princeton during the late 1900s. He is best known as the theologian of the doctrine of inspiration, which (summarized very simply) is the teaching that the Bible is God's word written and that what Scripture says, God says, and thus it is absolutely true. Inspiration was not his only concern and interest for a heart of worship always motivated his theology. All his sermons reflect a spirit of tender devotion. He once preached a sermon entitled “The Example of the Incarnation,” which is a captivating description of humble servanthood.

He [Jesus Christ] did not cultivate self, even His divine self: He took no account of self. He was not led by His divine impulse out of the world, driven back into the recesses of His own soul to brood morbidly over His own needs, until to gain His own seemed worth all sacrifice to Him.

He was led by His love for others into the world, to forget Himself in the needs of others, to sacrifice self once for all upon the altar of sympathy.

Self-sacrifice brought Christ into the world. And self-sacrifice will lead us, His followers, not away from but into the midst of men [and women].

Wherever men [and women] suffer, there will we be to comfort. Wherever men [and women] strive, there will we be to help. Wherever men [and women] fail, there will we be to uplift. Wherever men [and women] succeed, there will we be to rejoice.

Self-sacrifice means not indifference to our times and our fellows: it means absorption in them. It means forgetfulness of self in others. It means entering into every man's hopes and fears, longings and despairs: it means manysidedness of spirit, multiform activity, multiplicity of sympathies. It means richness of development.

It means not that we should live one life, but a thousand lives,—binding ourselves to a thousand souls by the filaments of so loving a sympathy that their lives become ours. It means that all the experiences of men shall smite our souls and shall beat and batter these stubborn hearts of ours into fitness for their heavenly home.

It is, after all, then, the path to the highest possible development, by which alone we can be made truly men. Not that we shall undertake it with this end in view. This were to dry up its springs at their source. We cannot be self-consciously self-forgetful, selfishly unselfish.

Only, when we humbly walk this path, seeking truly in it not our own things but those of others, we shall find the promise true, that he who loses his life shall find it.

Only, when, like Christ, and in loving obedience to His call and example, we take no account of ourselves, but freely give ourselves to others, we shall find, each in his measure, the saying true of himself also: “Wherefore also God hath highly exalted him.”

The path of self-sacrifice is the path to glory.

Jesus Christ is the greatest example of humble servanthood. His self-sacrifice on the cross as the propitiation for sin was the single greatest act of servanthood in history. His example of living to help others is worth emulating. The greatest person in the kingdom of God is the humble servant. True greatness is being a servant of others. Furthermore, any and all sacrifices of servanthood on behalf of God will be rewarded abundantly.



## THE REWARDS OF SERVANTHOOD

(*Matt 19:1-30*) Jesus encountered “large crowds” as He journeyed toward Judea and Jerusalem (vv. 1-2). The Pharisees had previously questioned Jesus as He ministered in Galilee, and now came to test Him in Judea. Specifically, they wanted to know if there was any reason for divorce in marriage. **The motives will be different but there will always be someone to challenge faith in God, and the best response is by means of Scripture (as Jesus demonstrated).**

The Pharisees were divided concerning divorce. The school of Rabbi Hillel said that a man could divorce his wife for almost any reason, while that of Shammai said only for adultery. In theory, the Jewish people of the first century had a high ideal of marriage but a low view of women, which meant their precepts were constantly compromised. The Pharisees wanted to discuss rabbinical options, but **Jesus referred to Scripture** and the first marriage (vv. 4-6).

**GOD IS THE SOURCE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. . . . WHAT A PERSON CANNOT ACCOMPLISH TO ATTAIN SALVATION, GOD DOES BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH. . . .**

The Pharisees thought wrongly that Moses created or promoted divorce (v. 7), when he only sought to control it. The Mosaic Law regulated a bad situation, which, according to Jesus, meant allowing divorce because of low moral standards arising from hardened hearts, “but from the beginning it has not been this way.” **Jesus responded authoritatively that if someone has a passion for the things of God, he or she would desired the highest ideal as opposed to the lowest** (vv. 8-9). The disciples rightly understood marriage is not a commitment to enter casually or hastily (vv. 10-12).

In the midst of Jesus’ teaching, parents brought their children to be blessed (v. 13). The disciples’ response indicates they had not learned the significance of Jesus’ prior instruction (18:3-6). **Child-like humility and trust is essential for entering the kingdom of heaven** (19:13-15).

Just as the disciples’ question of 18:1 indicated they misunderstood greatness in the kingdom, so did that of the rick young ruler reveal his wrong impression concerning goodness in the kingdom (vv. 16-22). **Salvation is entirely of God and not dependent upon the works of a person.** While it might be possible not to break God’s commands outwardly, there is still a more important, internal obedience.

**God is the source of righteousness and this means people do not possess what is essential to enter his kingdom.** Nevertheless, “with God all things are possible.” What a person cannot accomplish to attain salvation, God does by grace through faith (and redemption is thus a supernatural gift).

The discussion concerning money and possessions (vv. 23-26) led to the disciples’ inquiry as to their reward for having abandoned everything to follow Jesus (vv. 27-30). **Jesus** did not rebuke Peter, but **simply promised rewards for faithful discipleship**, which does imply sacrifice. Many people who seem to be deserving of reward will receive less than expected, while those committed to humble servanthood will be first and will receive great reward.

## THE GRACE OF SERVANTHOOD

(*Matt 20:1-16*) The parable of the vineyard is directly related to Jesus’ conversation with the rick young ruler and his disciples. The point is that **entrance into heaven is dependent upon God’s grace, not a person’s so-called righteous works.** Reward in heaven is also based upon divine appraisal, not human assessment. Rewards are commendable, albeit God determines them by his own reckoning.

Jesus’ parable illustrates the limitless nature of God’s grace. The story concerns an owner of a vineyard who hired workers (v. 1). Some were hired early in the morning (v. 2), while others were simply promised a fair wage (vv. 3-4). Still others were hired at different intervals of the day (v. 5). The last workers were hired near the end of day and were willing to accept whatever the landowner thought was fair (vv. 6-7). In agreement with the Mosaic Law (Lev 19:13), workers received their pay at day’s end (v. 8). **Each was paid in accordance with their agreement and should have been satisfied** but some grumbled at the landowner’s generosity (vv. 10-12).

The parable depicts God as the landowner and followers of the Lord are to labor for Him. The application could involve people saved at different times in life: youth, middle age, or later. **God’s reward is not based upon what a person deserves but upon the divine standard,** in addition to a person’s faithfulness in action and attitude to one’s given stewardship (vv. 13-16; cf. 1 Cor 4:5).

**God will always do what is right.** He is faithful to every promise. God will also extend grace in more ways than expected. Therefore, grace should be particularly evident in one’s servanthood. The humblest servant who is most dependent upon divine grace is the one who is greatest in God’s estimation.

*Thank you for the privilege in providing you with the Capitol Commission Bible study. If we can serve you in any manner, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.*

### About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission exists to minister gospel hope and spiritual strength to legislators, staff, lobbyists (i.e. the entire Capitol community). The focus of our ministry is people as opposed to politics, and thus to be a spiritual resource to the legislature. Our ministry strategy is expressed by pastoral presence, the proclamation of the Bible, and fervent prayer for every legislator.

God values civilization. The Hebrew word *sbalom* (“peace”) testifies to the Lord God’s desire for society. When peace describes society, it refers to a prosperous and wholesome civilization. God has a high standard for governing authorities, referring to them as his ministers (Rom 13:4). He desires their salvation and for them to have knowledge of his truth (1 Tim 2:1-2). Our passion is the same as the Lord God, which is why Capitol Commission provides hope “behind the scenes” through a ministry of presence.

The gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16). The Bible provides equipping “for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17). Capitol Commission state ministers value prayer because we exist as a ministry to people. God hears and answers prayer! “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much” (Jas 5:16b).

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As the Lord Jesus said, “look on the fields, that they are white for harvest” (John 4:35). If you would like to partner with Capitol Commission, Georgia with your talents, time, or treasure, please contact us by email, mail, or phone; or, visit online at <http://capitolcom.org/georgia/donate>.

this week’s Capitol outreach sponsored by:



Enhancing Trust

**NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDY:**  
Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> of April @ 12 Noon