

CTW: Psalm 30

Reading: \* I Kings 5:1-17

\*[Before we read the text let me encourage you too look for the servants.]

AGD: Have you ever had job that you dreaded to go to? "Shut up Troy, I've got one now—that's why I'm coming to church!"

The economy of the ancient world worked differently than ours today but when the Scripture talks about servants its not a stretch to apply it to issues of employment for us today. There have always been people working for other people.

In our text Naaman works for the king of Syria, unnamed servants work for Naaman and Elisha works for the Lord. I wonder who makes the best boss?

### Naaman's Journey

- Back story—disfigured but effective. Syrian king often at war with Israel.
- Supported by his king.
- Some kind of hope
- [King of Israel (also unnamed in our text but it's Jehoram) forgets there is a prophet and more importantly that there is a God in Israel!]
- Not greeted by Elisha
  - Offended
  - Reasons
  - Mistaken
  - But persuaded by his servants ( Didn't I tell you to keep your eyes on the servants?)
- Naaman finally humbles himself
  - How hard is it for you to humble yourself?
  - A good indicator is how you deal with bosses and coaches and others in authority
  - God's gifts are only received by the humble
    - Power and wealth can make us trust in them to get what we want/need
    - Without knowing it we can begin to trust in almost anything but God wants us to trust in Him alone
    - Who are the people who "get it" in this text? Not the kings or the general but the servants
  - Naaman is healed and converted

### Elisha the "Man of God"

- Seems indifferent but obedient
- Knows who he is working for
  - Colossians 3:22-24 "Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ."
- Didn't accept payment from another

Whom do you serve? What kind of service do you offer?

## Serve the Lord

The Scripture says of Jesus, “6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,[ being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:6-8)

If it was hard for Naaman a Syrian general to humble himself for a bath in the stream Jordan then what did Jesus give up to be born in a barn and live a human life?

**Let me give a warning.** See, you serve somebody. Right now your life is being lived in devotion to someone or something. We all have priorities that we live by. You may have definite priorities in mind or maybe you never even think about what is important but you have priorities and the proof of what is important to you is revealed by how you spend your time, money and energy.

You might be living in devotion to family. You might serve the god of security or wealth.

Sometimes we mindlessly serve our comforts, creditors or children.

Be careful whom or what you serve because there is One we are all called to serve and it is the Lord. The servants of the Lord in our text were not the rich, comfortable and powerful but the obscured and unnamed.

Like the servants of Naaman and his unnamed captive girl.

- I wonder about her fear and her experience...
- In spite of it all it seems she remembered that regardless of her earthly master she served the Lord of heaven and earth.
- We don't even know her name but the Lord did. He knows those who serve Him. The Lord knows whose hearts is His.

## Your service is important to God

Over and over the Bible says that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

- Naaman remained a leper until he humbled himself

Jesus shows us that this is the way. He humbled himself and was obedient (as I read earlier) even to the point of death, even death on a cross” (but the passage continues)

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We please God when we offer humble service like Jesus. Set aside your pride, humble yourself and He will heal you and put you to work

So, whether you've got to work for an unbelieving boss, or you have a king who foolishly forgets there is a God in this land or even if you are an unnamed servant girl—we can be servants of the Most High God.