

GOD USES HUMBLE SERVANTS AND ALL THE GLORY GOES TO HIS SON

John 3:22-36

Sometimes churches and ministries compete with each other, get jealous, and attack each other. But what does God want from His servants? There was no one greater than John the Baptist.

1.THE SERVANT GOD USES: THE AMAZING HUMILITY OF JOHN – John 3:22-30

- Jesus' disciples are baptizing – John 4:1,2. But John is still baptizing at a place where there is much water. John's disciples get into a dispute over purification. The disciples of John come to him because they are concerned that "all are going" to Jesus. Formerly, these crowds would have flocked to John. It seems to be envy and covetousness. They expect John to take their view that this is not good. But John shocks them with his lack of jealousy and his deep humility.
- The proper perspective in ministry: everything we do for God comes from God – verse 27. This is based on a recognition of God's sovereignty – John 19:11. All "success" is from God alone. Anything we accomplish in ministry is of God - John 15:5.
- Knowing our role in ministry: pointing to Jesus as one sent to represent Him – verse 28. John points away from himself to Jesus. Jesus is Messiah, not John. John's role was forerunner – John 1:6-8; 22-23. John finds his joy in wholeheartedly embracing God's Will and his role in it.
- The joy of ministry: seeing Jesus exalted as the Bridegroom of His people – verse 29. The friend of the bridegroom rejoiced in the joy of bringing the groom and bride together. He didn't covet the bride, but was delighted to stand alongside the Groom in the joy of the wedding. This was Paul's attitude toward the Church – 2 Corinthians 11:2.
- The purpose of ministry: making much of Jesus, not ourselves – verse 30. It is a God-ordained necessity that Jesus be exalted not us. The true servant of God always wants Jesus glorified. The stars can shine brightly, but not when the sun comes out! We don't have glory in comparison to the Son. Illus: Joseph Parker – "Joseph Parker is the greatest preacher that there ever was"; and Charles Spurgeon – "Jesus Christ is the greatest Savior that ever there was!" *"We can never make too much of Christ...we can never have too high thoughts about Christ, can never love Him too much, trust Him too implicitly, lay too much weight upon Him, and speak too highly in His praise. He is worthy of all the honour that we can give Him. He will be all in heaven. Let us see to it, that He is all in our hearts on earth."* – J.C. Ryle.
- John's amazing humility is something we all should desire. *"True humility is a healthy thing. The humble man accepts the truth about himself. He believes that in his fallen nature dwells no good thing. He acknowledges that apart from God he is nothing, knows nothing and can do nothing. But this knowledge does not discourage him, for he knows also that in Christ he is somebody. He knows that he is dearer to God than the apple of His eye and that he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him; that is he can do all that lies within the will of God for him to do...When this belief becomes so much a part of a man that it operates as a kind of unconscious reflex...the emphasis of his life shifts from self to Christ, where it should have been in the first place, and he is thus set free to serve his generation by the will of God without the thousand hindrances he knew before."* – A.W. Tozer

2.THE SON WHO SAVES: THE SURPASSING GLORY OF JESUS – John 3:31-36

- Jesus is from Heaven and above all. Jesus is not just from Bethlehem and Nazareth. He is supreme over everyone and everything on earth. – verse 31. John was only from the earth. Jesus surpasses all prophets and servants in coming from Heaven.
- Jesus speaks God’s truth. Jesus speaks what He has seen and heard – verses 32 and 33. Jesus spoke only what He received from the Father – John 12:49. Jesus came speaking the words of God. However, no one naturally accepts His testimony – John 1:10 – 12. But Jesus is God’s final and ultimate Word – John 1:18; Hebrews 1:1,2.
- Jesus is in union with and filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus is equipped by the Spirit in boundless measure – Isaiah 11:2; 42:1; 61:1. Jesus accurately communicates God’s Word – verse 34. The Father loves the Son and Jesus is God’s perfect spokesman.
- Jesus is given all authority by His loving Father. Jesus has dominion over all creation – verse 35; Matthew 11:27; 28:18.
- Jesus is the only way to have eternal life – verse 36. Saving faith includes believing and obeying. Rejecting Christ is not obeying Him and “results in God’s righteous anger continually resting on you.” The coming wrath has become a present reality – Mathew 3:7. *“Since those who will not obey the Son cut themselves off from the benefits of His sin-removing work, their persistent impenitence leaves them exposed to the wrath of God...the eternal life which believers receive involves their being accepted by God as righteous in Christ; apart from this divinely provided way of righteousness men remain liable to the judgment of heaven...they are condemned already – F.F. Bruce, John – John 3:18..*

Concluding Applications:

- Are you obeying Jesus by trusting Him?
- Is your focus on Jesus being exalted?
- Is Jesus being exalted in your life? What difference does He make?
- Have you found in Jesus your ultimate treasure and joy?