

## JACK'S CORNER

**QUESTION:** You have to do a talk or write a newsletter article on “The Servant’s Heart, Defined!”

**ANSWER:** I received this anonymous request back in March. I am first and foremost reminded of St. Paul’s inspired words describing our Lord Jesus in the second chapter of Philippians:

*“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be **grasped**, but made himself **nothing**, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man he **humbled** himself and became **obedient** to death—even death on a cross.”* (PH 2:6-8)

In order to understand and define the servant heart, we must look to the actions, words and motive of Jesus.

1. The servant heart is “clawless”; it is not “grasping” (v. 6). It does not cling tenaciously to status, position, title, or power. The servant heart willingly lets go of any entitlements for the sake of reconciliation and relationship.
2. The servant heart makes itself “nothing” (v. 7) so that it will not intimidate, threaten, or drive away the object of its service. It sacrifices all authority and status, if need be, in order to serve with meekness.
3. The servant heart is “obedient” (v. 8) and submissive to the Father, because it rests trustfully in God’ omniscience, omnipotence, and divine love.
4. The servant heart does not require recognition, compensation, or gratitude in order to perform its duties. It works without reward, thanks, or acknowledgement. *“So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants: we have only done our duty.’”* (LK 17:10)
5. The servant’s heart is wise, but willingly becomes the “fool” in order to love others with both strength and humility. At times, a servant’s heart will “turn the other cheek” (LK 23:34) and endure great injustice in order to surprise evil with good. At other times, the servant heart possesses a strength of character that boldly loves by holding others accountable. (JN 21:15-19)
5. The servant heart is “inconspicuous”; it works unaware even to itself, for it is not self-focused. *“But when you give to the needy, do not let your right hand know what your left hand is doing.”* (MT 6:3)
6. The servant heart is sacrificial. Its own needs and wants are subservient to the needs of others. *“The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* (MT 20:28)
7. The servant heart has great self-esteem, because it knows it is loved perfectly by God. *“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!”* (1JN 3:1)

8. The servant heart's reward is knowing it serves God. *"Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does..."*(EP 6:7,8) The servant heart serves not because the recipient is appreciative, receptive or deserving; it serves because of the character of the One who IS worthy.

9. The servant heart willingly denies its desires and rights in order to follow the Ultimate Servant, Christ himself. It thinks, acts and speaks like Jesus. *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."* (LK 9:23)

10. The servant heart looks to the future and the transcendent. It sees through the eyes of eschatological hope and is therefore capable of enduring great tribulation and persecution with true inner joy and peace.

11. The servant heart serves the One Master. It has room for only one throne. *"No one can serve two masters."* (MT 6:24) The servant heart does not serve itself, or some organization or philosophy; it serves the Lord. *"...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve..."* (JOS 24:15)

Without the power of the Holy Spirit, we are incapable of possessing the servant heart as defined by Scripture. In His great mercy, God does, at times, allow us a glimpse of what will be in eternity.

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