

## Matt. 12:15-21 - My Chosen Servant

Written by Tim Black  
Sunday, 23 August 2009 13:00 -

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### Body

1.

**The Fact of Christ's Humility.** In vv. 15-16 we see Christ's saving servanthood in the fact of Christ's humility

1.

### Text

1.

15 Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all 16 and ordered them not to make him known.

2.

**The Pharisees.** Notice the Pharisees. In v. 14, the Pharisees went away to take counsel how they might destroy Jesus, not only because His miracles took away their honor, but also because His teaching condemned their pride, hypocrisy, and selfish ambition.

3.

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**Christ's Humility.** But in contrast to the Pharisees, notice Christ's humility.

1.

**Hiding Himself.** The Pharisees sought public honor, but Christ hid Himself. Out of selfish ambition the Pharisees sought to destroy, but as the Sun of Righteousness rose in glory with healing in His wings, He humbled Himself lower than any other man. He healed, but He " withdrew from there.

" He gave the sick reason to praise God, but " ordered them not to make him known.

" He hid Himself. Why did He do this? Not out of fear but because, as He said to His mother at the wedding in Cana, "

My hour has not yet come.

" (

### John 2:4

) It was not yet the time, the place, or the way for His glory to be fully and finally revealed. Christ hid Himself for your sake; had He died before His time He would not have preached and you would not have heard the full message of the gospel.

2.

**Humility.** This move to hide himself amidst the undeniable glory of His miracles is evidence of Christ's humility. Matthew Henry writes, "As in the midst of Christ's greatest humiliations, there were proofs of his dignity, so in the midst of his greatest honours, he gave proofs of his humility." Rather than glory in popular fame or seek political power, He "made himself nothing, taking the form of servant.

" (

### Phil. 2:7

) He didn't even rely on a miracle to protect Himself, but submitted to the infirmities of our nature by using the ordinary means of withdrawing to a different place, and of telling His followers not to speak. The Pharisees hated not so much His miracles, but the stir they caused, and Christ would never stop doing good, but did prudently avoid the wrath of the Pharisees, and gives us an example of humility. Christ did come to reveal Himself as our Savior, but did not do good works "

to be seen by men

" as did the Pharisees. (

### Matt. 6:5; 23:5

) He is gracious because He is humble; He is humble because He is gracious. His grace and humility are the only source from which ours can spring, we who are otherwise the " sons of pride.

" (

### Job 41:34

) Hear His words to our proud hearts, "

But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be

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humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

" (

**Matt. 23:11-12**

) "

When you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

" (

**Matt. 6:3-4**

)

3.

**Christ's Followers, and Christ's Healing.** Notice also Christ's followers, and Christ's healing . Though the Pharisees—the greatest leaders and teachers of Israel—would not follow Jesus, yet great multitudes of the common people

followed Him, willing to risk whatever dangers they might face, so long as they could be with Jesus. Christ served common folk. And why did they follow Him with such abandon? I'm reminded of an account I read of a lady who hitchhiked to the Woodstock festival. She and 400,000 others went thinking they were abandoning the selfish capitalistic society of their parents, and were devoting themselves to a cause wholly outside themselves, to peace, love, and music, only to find in the end that Woodstock's free love led to unwanted pregnancies and disease, and Woodstock's free drugs led to addiction and death. Woodstock gave a promise of salvation that was false. But what did Jesus do with the great crowds who followed Him? He "

healed them all

." (

**v. 15**

) "

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

" (

**Acts 4:12**

) Jesus Christ

really is

the Savior.

4.

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**The Fulfillment of God's Promise. vv. 17-21** Christ's saving servanthood was revealed in the fact of His humility, but also in the fulfillment of God's promise

. God's way of revealing our Savior Jesus Christ started even before Jesus was born. It began with a promise. When God makes a promise, He keeps it. We see in vv. 17-21 that Jesus fulfilled God's promises about His "chosen Servant." Matthew tells us, "

17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, " and then Matthew quotes from the Greek translation of Isaiah 42, which foretold the Father's pleasure in

,  
promise to  
, and  
prediction concerning Jesus Christ

1.

**The Father's Pleasure in Christ v. 18a.** See the Father's pleasure in Christ.

1.

### Text

18 "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased.

**God's Servant.** Christ was God's servant.

This title of God's servant; "My servant," has an important context in the book of Isaiah. In Isaiah, not only the Messiah, but Israel was God's servant. God's people were to be God's servant. (Is. 41:8, 9; 42:19; 43:10; 44:1, 2, 21; 45:4; 48:20) But God's people were an unfaithful servant to God, as God made clear in

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### Is. 42:19

by saying,  
"

Who is blind but my servant?

" Because God's people were an unfaithful servant, a faithful servant was needed who would save God's people from His wrath by obeying God in their place, as their representative, as their Redeemer. This was God's gracious will, as He promised regarding the Messiah in

### Is. 53:10-12

"  
10 It was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.  
. 12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors."  
"

-

And so Christ was God's Servant. Christ served God the Father in His great work of our redemption. He submitted to the Father's will (Heb. 10:7), humbling Himself by taking on human flesh, being born of a woman, "and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross." (SC 27) Christ served God the Father, but He also served you. He humbled Himself for your sake, to accomplish a substitutionary atonement as your covenant representative, the second Adam, so that " as [Adam's] one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so [Christ's] one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all " God's elect. (

### Rom. 5:18

)

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**God's Choice.** Christ was God's choice. As God chose His people to be His own, God chose Christ to make them His own. God chose Christ for this particular service, and Christ would fulfill it! No one else but the God-man, the Servant chosen from among God's chosen servants, even the Servant of all, none but He was fit for the task of redeeming God's elect by being the "one Mediator between God and men." (1

**Tim. 2:5**

)

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**God's Beloved.** And for this reason Christ is God's beloved, with whom God is well-pleased. Because He would be "obedient unto death, even death on a cross

!" (

**Phil. 2:8**

)

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**The Father's Promise to Christ v. 18b.** This is the Father's pleasure in Christ. See also the Father's promise to Christ in v. 18b.

1.

**Text**

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I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

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**He Will Be Fully-Qualified.** God promised, "I will put my Spirit upon him." This means He will be fully-qualified  
. God promised He would be anointed with "  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

" (  
**Is. 11:2**

)  
This Spirit was the "  
oil of gladness  
" with which Christ was anointed "  
beyond [His] companions

" (  
**Heb. 1:9**

), making Him more qualified than any other to be our Savior.

-  
**He Will Be Fully Successful.** Not only is Christ fully-qualified, but He will be fully successful. God promised, " he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. " "The will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

" (  
**Is. 53:10**

) This is in fact what happened. Christ preached to those bordering on Gentile nations when He went to the region of Tyre and Sidon and to the Decapolis. The parallel account in **Mark 3:6-12**

states in more detail that those who followed Him at this time were from " Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon.

" Those were Gentiles. He teaches Gentiles then and now to do what is just—that God is just to condemn men for their sins, but also because of the substitutionary atonement when Christ died for our sins, "

if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

" (  
**1 John 1:9**

) God "

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show[s] his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

" (

**Rom. 3:26**

) Christ "

will proclaim justice to the Gentiles

, " "

and they will listen

" (

**Acts 28:28**

), and will be saved!

-

**The Father's Prediction concerning Christ vv. 19-21.** See, lastly, the Father's prediction concerning Christ , in vv. 19-21.

1.

**Text**

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19 He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets;

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20 a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory;

-

21 and in his name the Gentiles will hope."

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**His manner.** God promised the manner of Christ's kingdom would be full of neither the earthly glory nor the destructive power we sinners too often prefer. He would be neither more proud than the Pharisees nor more cruel than their cold hearts.

-

**No earthly glory.** He does not come with an earthly glory. "He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets."

His kingdom " is not coming with signs to be observed

" ( **Luke 17:20-21**

), not with riots in the streets, unnecessary noise or ostentation, but with self-denial, with self-sacrifice in love and holiness, with His own body broken, and His own blood shed, for you.

-

**No destructive power.** He does not come with the destructive power we sinners would prefer; not with severity and rigor. "

A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench.

" If you are hurting, He will heal; He will give strength to the weary, power to the faint; they who wait for this Lord shall renew their strength. (Is. 40:29, 31) He will restore unto you the joy of your salvation, and renew a right spirit within you.

-

**His Results: In His name the Gentiles will hope.** Because Christ calls even us Gentiles, "**Come unto Me, and I will give you rest**

," even we Gentiles have found hope in Him. "

In his name the Gentiles will hope.

" This quote stands in the place of Is. 42:4, but the Hebrew of Is. 42:4 reads, " the isles shall wait for His law

." The meaning is the same, because the isles were Gentile peoples, and according to

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### Gen. 10:5

, they were descendants of Noah's son Japheth. God promised in

### Gen. 9:27

that one day Japheth would dwell in the tents of Shem, from whom Israel descended, and now in Christ we see that has happened—we Gentiles have found refuge in the God of Israel through salvation in Jesus Christ. In His name we Gentiles now hope.

## Conclusion.

1.

We can only do this because Jesus Christ humbled Himself. Because He became a man. Because He died for our sins. He did not seek first His own glory but the glory of God the Father. He did not seek first His own will, but the will of His Father in heaven. This is not the way we sinners would do it. But saved sinners must cry out, "I would have it no other way!" Because there is no other name under heaven whereby we may be saved. Unless God's chosen servant Jesus Christ washes us, we will have no part with Him. (**John 13:8**)

2.

Are you washed with the blood of Christ? None of us would ever want to take a shower, or a bath, in the blood of another man! Nor would you throw a party with a meal that symbolizes a man's dead body and spilled blood. And this Lord's Supper would be revolting—were it not the ultimate act of self-sacrifice; Christ humiliating himself, bearing your iniquities, that you would be accounted righteous; Christ receiving the full weight of God's wrath for your sins in His ruined body and blood, so you would not receive it in yours. Because He is gracious He humbled Himself to this—He became obedient unto death; even death on a cross. He graciously calls you to believe in Him—that Jesus Christ died for your sins—and believing, to have life in His name. This is not the way we would have done it, but it was God's gracious will. Thank the Lord that Jesus Christ is God's chosen Servant!

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Matthew Henry, 166.