

The Humility of Servanthood

A Reflection on Humility and Servanthood

Reflections Family, Discipleship and the Christian Life

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Matthew 12:50

It is a matter worthy of contemplation why James and Jude, though acknowledged as the half-brothers of Jesus Christ, consistently styled themselves as mere "servants" or "bondservants" of Jesus within their epistles. They conspicuously refrained from highlighting their unique familial connection. This deliberate choice served to underscore the profound significance of spiritual kinship and devoted servanthood, placing them far above any earthly or familial claims to status. It serves as a potent testament to their profound humility in the presence of Christ.

Their approach remarkably mirrors the very teachings of Jesus Himself. He, on numerous occasions, reoriented the understanding of familial bonds, stating unequivocally, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matthew 12:50, KJV). By embracing the title of "servant," James and Jude presented a model of humility and complete submission to Christ, a state they evidently considered a far greater honour than any mere human relationship could bestow.

In stark contrast, our contemporary society often witnesses a pervasive culture of comparison. Individuals frequently vie with one another to establish their connections, be it through shared ancestry, affiliation with caste membership – a concept I find particularly regrettable – or simply by boasting of their acquaintances. This emphasis on worldly networks and personal influence often overshadows more substantive virtues.

As adherents of the Christian faith, our fundamental identity is inextricably bound to Christ, and to Him alone. Every relationship we engage in, whether within the domestic sphere, the congregational life of the church, the professional arena of our workplaces, the halls of educational institutions, or indeed across the broader tapestry of society, ought to be viewed and conducted through the lens of Jesus Christ. Our connection to Him, and indeed all our actions, must be undertaken *with* Him and *through* Him.

To place undue emphasis on name-dropping or to constantly trumpet worldly associations is, in essence, to create a distance between ourselves and Christ. All such connections, which so many individuals

are wont to promote, are inherently transient. They are often underpinned by motives, whether overt or concealed, that serve a temporary purpose. At a certain juncture, these worldly allegiances are prone to friction and conflict, inevitably leading to distressing outcomes.

With Jesus, however, the relationship transcends the ephemeral. It is an eternal bond, present in our lives here and now, and destined to continue in His presence for all eternity. This is a fellowship that offers steadfast assurance and an enduring hope.