

# THE LORD'S SERVANT

Matthew 24:45-51

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## INTRODUCTION:

1. These verses identify two kinds of servants: (1) the faithful and wise servant (v. 45) and (2) the evil servant (v. 48).
2. Only the faithful and wise servant was acceptable to his lord. We need to know the characteristics of both and to imitate the good one.

## I. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNACCEPTABLE SERVANT.

- A. He *was evil*, v. 48. (God's servant must learn to discern between good and evil: Heb. 5:12-14; Rom. 12:1-2)
- B. He *was presumptuous*: "shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming" (v.48) as if he could know and influence his master's will. (Many today assume they have plenty of time, etc.)
- C. He *was abusive* to his fellow servants: he began "to smite his fellow servants" (v. 49) (Christians who bite and devour fellow Christians seem to forget that all are on the same team, cf. Gal. 5: 15.)
- D. He *was profligate and undiscerning* about his choice of companions and behavior: He began "to eat and drink with the drunken" (v. 49b). Cf. 1 Cor. 5:6, 9-13; 15:33.
- E. He *was unprepared*: "The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (v.50-51). As a ruler over his lord's household, his constant concern should have been to be ready for his lord's return His involvement in other things had caused him to totally reverse his entire mission.

## II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ACCEPTABLE SERVANT OF THE LORD.

- A. He *must be faithful*: (v. 45). Cf. Rev. 2: 10; Matt. 25:14-23, 1 Cor. 4:2.
- B. He *must be wise* (v. 45). Cf. Matt. 10: 16; James 1:5.
- C. He *must know that he is a servant*, limited in authority and charged with responsibility. It was "his lord" that had made him ruler over his household and who could promote him later (v. 47). He was appointed a servant in order to serve—not to usurp.
- D. He *must minister when the service is needed*: "whom his lord made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season" (v. 45).

*Illust. Adam Clark*: "He must give the domestics—the sacred family, their food; and this food must be such as to afford them true nourishment . . . This must be done in its season. There are certain portions of the bread of life which lose their effect by being administered out of proper

season, or to improper persons" (Vol. V, p. 235).

- E. He *must persevere*: "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (v. 46). It was not a one-time duty. Not knowing when the lord would come, his only way to be prepared was to be continuously faithful.
- F. He *must expect greater honor and duty*, but only after being faithful in a lesser role: "He shall make him ruler over all his goods" (v. 47). Cf. Luke 16:10; 19:17.

**CONCLUSION:**

1. The danger to the unfaithful servant was not lessened by the distance he assumed was between him and his lord.
2. So with us and Jesus. We may assume that judgment is far off, but for each of us, the time to give account is as near as is our death: *J. W. McGarvey*: "Whether he first comes to us, or we first go to him, the result will be the same, for as we are at death we will be at his coming, seeing that it is concerning the deeds done in the body that we will be judged. (2 Cor. v. 10)" (*Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, p. 215).