

The Servant's Meat
by Gary Carpenter

Jesus described the heart of a first class servant when He said,

Luke 17:7-10 But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? (8) And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? (9) Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. (10) So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

A first class servant always puts the needs of his Master FIRST! Jesus, Himself, is the pattern for us. He is the freeborn Son of God who has chosen, for love's sake alone, to be His Father's Servant. We see this "first class servant" attitude of heart in the story we call the "Woman at the Well." (John 4:1-42)

Jesus' disciples had gone into the city to buy food. While they were gone Jesus was serving the Father by "seeking to save" the Samaritan woman at the well. He spoke with her until she was convinced He was the Messiah. She ran back into her village and told the people,

John 4:29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

The people listened to her and went out to meet with Jesus in order to listen and decide for themselves.

John 4:30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

Now the scene is set. Jesus, the Serving Son, is at the well and a multitude of people from the city have come out to listen to him. This is why Jesus came to earth, "to seek and to save" the lost. His mission is to reap a harvest of souls for the Father.

It is upon this scene that the disciples return with the food they had gone to purchase. They see all of these people at the well, waiting to hear the "words of life" from Jesus Christ. But notice what is most important in the minds of the disciples,

John 4:31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

Using the analogy we have been studying, the food brought by the disciples represents the "dinner table." The multitude of people represents the "harvest field." Jesus now has a choice to make. The dinner table is prepared. He can now choose to sit and get His own needs met first, or He can choose to continue laboring to harvest more souls for His Master ... the Father.

Jesus, being the Son who is also the first class Servant, chooses to put the needs of His Master [Father] FIRST! He tells His disciples,

John 4:32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

They correctly perceived that Jesus was saying, "I already have what I need to satisfy My hunger." They, not having the same servant's heart in themselves at this point, thought that He must have meant that somebody else had already given him natural food,

John 4:33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?

Now we have arrived at the critical point for all who desire to become "first class servants" to their Master. Yes, food satisfies "hunger." But what is the driving force, the motivating "hunger" of a first class servant? His greatest hunger HAS TO BE, "I must meet the needs of my Master ... FIRST!"

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Said another way, "My life is not about getting My needs met. My life is about meeting the needs of My Master [Father]. My service for Him IS MY MEAT! My GREATEST 'hunger' is satisfied when His needs are met!"

For teaching purposes, picture in your mind the scene described for us here. Jesus is at the well. There is a crowd of "hungry" people who have come out to hear the "words of life." These souls represent the very purpose for which the Father sent Jesus into the earth. At the same time, the disciples are standing there with the food they purchased. They are basically, ringing the dinner bell saying, "Jesus, come in from the harvest field. It is time to eat!"

In my mind's eye I can see Jesus directing the disciple's attention toward the crowd of people assembled there and in this setting, He says to the disciples,

John 4:35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

I can see Jesus waving his hand toward the assembled group of people, saying to His disciples, "Can't you see this harvest field? This crop is ready to be harvested NOW for the Father. This is no time to sit down at the dinner table. Look at the people. The Father sent Me to harvest as many of these souls as possible. A first class servant never sits down to get his own needs met while the harvest is ready to be reaped for His Master [Father]. Given the choice, a first class servant always meets the needs of His Master FIRST! The servant can sit down later at the dinner table to get his own needs met."

THE DINNER TABLE IS ALWAYS SECONDARY
TO THE HARVEST FIELD!

This next statement puzzled me for awhile because it seemed to violate something that the Holy Spirit had already taught me concerning the fact that father's do not "pay" their sons [like employees] for their labors in the fields. No, father's provide for their sons at the dinner table. The sons do not receive "wages," like employees, for their daily labors. Yet Jesus said,

John 4:36a And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal:

At first glance, that certainly seems to contradict the previous teaching, but Jesus explains what He means in the second half of the verse,

John 4:36b ... that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

"He that soweth" is the Father. The Father has "sown" His Son, Jesus Christ, into the earth in order to "seek and to save" the lost. Jesus is "He that reapeth." He has left His Father's house [heaven] to go into the field [earth] to be about His Father's business [saving the lost].

Jesus is drawing the analogy of the ambassador who has been sent from a wealthy nation to benefit the impoverished people of a poor nation. The wealthy nation "meets the needs" of their ambassador by providing him with a house and a salary so he does not have to devote his time to acquiring such things. Rather, the ambassador can give his full attention to the mission for which he was sent ... in this case, reaping a harvest of souls for the Father.

Jesus was saying, "Look, I am not concerned about what I will physically eat. I 'take no thought' for what I will eat, what I will drink, what I shall wear. My Master [Father] knows that I have need of all those things. He supplies all of my needs and there is an abundant supply. I don't have to stop and physically eat now, just because you have brought the food at this time."

"Even if I never eat this particular meal, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE MORE FOOD SUPPLIED FOR ME! I don't have to worry about such things. I will eat AFTER the needs of My Master [Father] are met. As a first class servant, I am not so concerned about the "meal" that is presently set before me, but rather the "harvest" that is presently set before me. My Master [Father] will ALWAYS supply My own needs. There will always be an abundant supply for Me, but opportunities to reap the harvest must not be postponed."

At this point, I must add another word to describe a first class servant, as depicted by our "Pattern," Jesus Christ. We are not only seeing the heart of a "first class servant." We are seeing the heart of a "trusting," first class servant.

Jesus "knows" His Master, the Father. He knows that the Father both loves Him, and understands that Jesus has physical needs. Jesus need not "stop harvesting" in order to eat this particular meal because He "knows" His Master [Father] will NEVER leave His physical needs unmet. If Jesus does not eat this particular meal, He is resting in the knowledge that there will be plenty of food to eat later, AFTER the harvest has been reaped. There is no need to fear lack ... of any kind!

Both the Sower [the Father] and the Reaper [the Son] rejoice that the fruit of eternal life is being gathered into the Father's granary.

**AS TRUSTING FIRST CLASS SERVANTS,
OUR SERVICE IS OUR MEAT!**

WE NEED NEVER FEAR LACK!

**THEREFORE, WE NEVER HAVE TO PUT
MEETING OUR OWN NEEDS FIRST!**

**WE ARE FREE TO DEVOTE OUR LIVES
TO MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR MASTER ... FIRST!**

Gary Carpenter Ministries
P.O. Box 9667
Tulsa, OK. 74157