

“By your command...”

(Cylon response in Battlestar Galactica)

paraphrasing of 1 Samuel 3:9b

By your command, Lord...

We begin in the Old Testament

1 Samuel 3:3-11

An attitude of simple service honouring God
His service is without hesitation

Eli provides the proper response to the Lord
“Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.’

By your command, Lord...

“By a voice which came forth from the most holy place, from between the cherubim, the seat of the divine Majesty”.

John Gill

Samuel is called from the holy place, where they knew the Lord dwelt.

By your command, Lord...

The term for servant in 1 Samuel 3:9

(עבד) 'ebed (slave/servant) in Hebrew

or

δοῦλος (bond servant) in Greek
in the Septuagint (LXX).

By your command, Lord...

Now let us jump forward to the NT

How do the Apostles characterize their relationship to Christ?

Romans 1:1, Romans 6:16, Titus 1:1, James 1:1, Jude 1:1, Revelation 1:1, and 2 Peter 1:1 (Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ)

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In every case, the word used is δοῦλός

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Christ is said to have taken the form of a bond servant in Philippians 2:7

This characterization is not restricted to the apostles...

“Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ”

Colossians 1:7

and also Colossians 4:7

By your command, Lord...

Nor is it limited to just men

‘And Mary said, “Behold, the bond slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word” ... ‘

Acts 1:38

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The English rendering of these verses may vary but the original word is the always the same.

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Initial characteristic of a δοῦλός or bond-servant, bond-slave

- servitude without the negative sense of bondage that would most likely be associated with it today.

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The related verb **δουλόω** is used in Rom 6:18 and 6:22 to indicate becoming bond slaves leading to righteousness and eternal life.

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In the more global sense, in the OT, in Isaiah 49:3, the LXX uses the same word to describe the position of God's people and what the purpose of that position will be:

He said to Me, "You are My *Servant*, Israel, In Whom I will show My glory."

Isaiah 49:3

By your command, Lord...

This is replicated in the position of bond slave of Christ in the NT:

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that **you are not your own**? For you have been **bought** with a price: therefore **glorify God in your body.**”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

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Summary Characteristics

- Belongs to the Lord as Master.
- Christ's interests and plans are the underlying motivation of their thoughts and actions.
- Joy and delight stems from the Master's satisfaction and delight.
- It is the bond servant's privilege to engender the Master's delight.

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Paul's Attitude as a Bond-Servant

“For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? **For you are our glory and joy.**”

1 Thessalonians 3:19-20

Concern for the believers before himself, often at his own expense.

His glory is only in their glory before the Lord.

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Back to 1st Samuel 3

A summary demonstration of the NT position of bond-servant of Christ.

“Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.”
models the simple attitude for the bond servant believer.

This mirrors the single minded and focused attitude contained in Paul’s statement in 1 Corinthians 2:2

“For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”

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What could this look like?

In prayer - simply coming as a bond servant glorifying the Father with but one expectation, the Father's will.

In life -rejoicing not only at having been redeemed, but in the provision of life in all it's aspects by the Lord. Seeing that glory continually.

In living - filtering ALL of life through the mandate as bond servants to build up and glorify Lord, whatever that may entail.

By your command, Lord...

Do we really come as Eli instructed saying,
without provision

‘Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.’?