

Water Service

Three of David's mighty men risked their lives to obtain and deliver a drink of water to their thirsty king.

David honored that service.

2 Samuel 23:13-17 and 1 Chronicles 11:15-19

These three mighty men had a purpose: to please their king!

They had a mission: to protect and serve him

A particular goal: to fight through enemy lines and get him water

Truly I tell you,

if anyone gives even a cup of cold water in my name

because you belong to the Messiah

to one of these little ones who is my disciple,

that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

Matthew 10:42 and Mark 9:41

Jesus speaks of those whose purpose was belong to the Messiah.

They had a mission: to be a servant to people.

A particular goal: get water for those who were in need.

Grace Goes Beyond Mercy

Grace goes beyond mercy.

Mercy gave the prodigal son a second chance.

Grace threw him a party.

Mercy prompted the Good Samaritan
to bandage the wounds of the victim.

Grace prompted him to leave his credit card
as payment for the victim's care.

Mercy forgave the thief on the cross.

Grace escorted him into paradise.

Mercy pardons us.

Grace empowers us.

And according to Paul,

God's **grace** is all we need
to meet every single challenge
of our lives.

The Size of Your Audience

Elijah thinks that he is alone – he sees no one on his side

**His successor Elisha, on the other hand,
realizes that there is a host around him
and his servant is shown the part of the great army of God.**

[Morris]

**Elijah could only see an audience of one (himself),
and didn't really even include God in as a supporter;
but God knows the impact of his victory (over Baal)
and his life of prophecy and service.**

**All we need is for God to “find” us and notice us
(which He obviously does);**

**As long as God knows us we are blessed
and we must find Him in return.**

God is the only audience we need!

**Whatever our audience –
God gives the increase!**

Going Outside the City

**Elijah became desperate enough
to ask for death (1 Kings 19:4),
but that was because the people
had failed to believe his preaching.**

**Jonah also asks for death (Jonah 4:3),
but it is because the people did
believe him.**

Tim Keller

Going Outside the City

**Jonah went outside the city,
hoping to witness its condemnation,
but Jesus Christ went outside the city
to die on a cross
to accomplish its salvation.**

Tim Keller

Understanding God's Commands

**Adam and Eve,
like Jonah many years later,
decided that
if they couldn't think of a good reason
for a command of God,
there couldn't be one.**

Tim Keller

**God's Word to Abraham
was even more inexplicable
than his Word to Jonah.**

Nevertheless, what did Abraham do?

He went up the mountain.

He refused to act as if he knew best.

Tim Keller

Victory Through Struggle, Failure, Suffering, etc.

Jacob was not prepared to lead the family of God until he had been forced to flee from his home, experienced years of mistreatment at the hands of his father-in-law, and faced (what he thought was) a violent encounter with his aggrieved brother, Esau.

It was only then that Jacob met God face to face (Genesis 32: 1– 32).

Abraham, Joseph, David, Elijah, and Peter all became powerful leaders through failure and suffering.

Tim Keller

Consider adding Moses to this list, as shown in the theme example.

Jesus' Burial

It's a bit ironic

that the burial of Jesus should be conducted,

not by those

who had boasted they would never leave, [his disciples]

but by two members of the Sanhedrin –

two representatives of the religious group

that killed the Messiah.

Max Lucado

Not thinking yourself better than others

When he [the king] takes the throne of his kingdom,
he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law,
taken from that of the Levitical priests.

It is to be with him,

and he is to read it all the days of his life

so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God

and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees

and **not consider himself better than his fellow** Israelites

and turn from the law to the right or to the left.

Deuteronomy 17:18-20a

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.

Rather, **in humility value others above yourselves,**

not looking to your own interests

but each of you

to the interests of the others.

Philippians 2:3-4

Jesus Stooping or Bending Down

**Jesus “stooped down and wrote in the dust”
(John 8:6,8 – the woman caught in adultery).**

**We would expect him to stand up, step forward,
or even ascend a stair and speak.**

But instead he leaned over.

**He descended lower than anyone else –
beneath the priests, the people, even beneath the woman.**

The accusers looked down on her.

To see Jesus, they had to look down even farther.

He does that.

He bent down to wash feet, to embrace children.

Bent down to pull Peter out of the sea,

to pray in the garden before soldiers arrested him.

Bent down to carry the cross they used to crucify him.

Grace is a God who stoops.

God Substituting Himself for Man

The biblical gospel of atonement
is of God satisfying himself by **substituting** himself for us.

The concept of **substitution** may be said, then,
to lie at the heart of both sin and salvation.

For the essence of sin is man **substituting** himself for God,
while the essence of salvation is God **substituting** himself for man.

Man asserts himself against God
and puts himself where only God deserves to be;

God sacrifices himself for man
and puts himself where only man deserves to be.

Man claims prerogatives which belong to God alone;
God accepts penalties which belong to man alone.

John Stott

Christ and the Prodigal

While Christ was no prodigal,

He was most assuredly a son who had journeyed to a foreign land.

I can almost hear the Father say to His servants,

“Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him.

Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

Bring the fattened calf and kill it.

Let's have a feast and celebrate.

For this son of mine was dead and is alive again!”

(see Luke 15:22–24).

Beth Moore

Christ and the Prodigal

Look at the headings in Leviticus 23.

This awesome Old Testament chapter
records the annual feasts God appointed to Israel.

I am convinced every one of them
is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

...

Now do you see the significance
of what happened on Pentecost?

Fifty days earlier Christ,
the Passover Lamb,
had been crucified.

On the day of Firstfruits, that very Sunday morning,
His life was waved acceptable before God
as the firstfruit from the dead.

Realize you are guilty, too!

The men of Israel took captive from their fellow Israelites who were from Judah two hundred thousand wives, sons and daughters. They also took a great deal of plunder...

But a prophet of the LORD named Oded ... went out to meet the army ... He said to them, "Because the LORD, the God of your ancestors, was angry with Judah, he gave them into your hand. But you have slaughtered them in a rage that reaches to heaven. And now you intend to make the men and women of Judah and Jerusalem your slaves. **But aren't you also guilty of sins against the LORD your God?** Now listen to me! Send back your fellow Israelites you have taken as prisoners, for the LORD's fierce anger rests on you."

So the soldiers gave up the prisoners and plunder in the presence of the officials and all the assembly. 2 Chronicles 28:8-14

Consider this as a parallel to the story of the woman caught in adultery, when her accusers realized their own sins against God. They then left the woman alone with Jesus. from John 8:1-11

Humility and Feet

John the Baptist considered himself unworthy to tie the sandals on Jesus' feet -

“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:7, Luke 3:16, John 1:27

... but Jesus was “worthy” to wash His disciples' feet –

“... so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.”

John 13:4-5

Lists of Heroes

A short list of heroes in 1 Samuel 12:11:

Then the Lord sent Jerub-Baal [Gideon], Barak, Jephthah and Samuel, and he delivered you from the hands of your enemies all around you, so that you lived in safety.

Recall similar language in Hebrews 11:32-34:

And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about **Gideon**, **Barak**, Samson and **Jephthah**, about David and **Samuel** and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies...

Two who betrayed their Master

Ahithophel and Judas had several things in common:

Both were chosen members of a very important [king's] cabinet.

Both betrayed their masters and went with the crowd.

Both hung themselves when things went wrong.

Beth Moore

Ahithophel was an advisor for David who sided with Absalom.

Torn in Two

“Then the veil in the Temple of the sanctuary is torn (eschisthē) in two.”

The only other use of this word in Mark is when the sky is torn in two at Jesus’s baptism at the Jordan River.

So at the beginning and the end of his public ministry there is a dramatic opening of the heavens, a dissolution of the boundaries between above and below.

James Martin

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.

Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45

Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.

Mark 1:10

Loyalty in Staying; Even to the Death

We remember the story of Ruth:

But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.” Ruth 1:16-17

But think about Ittai as well:

But Ittai replied to the king, “As surely as the Lord lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king may be, whether it means life or death, there will your servant be.” 2 Samuel 15:21

Also Elisha (honorable mention):

Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here, Elisha; the LORD has sent me to Jericho.”

And he replied, “As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they went to Jericho.

2 Kings 2:4

Retrieving a Body

[Jeremiah had been put into a well by the king's advisors]

... Ebed-Melek, a Cushite, an official in the royal palace, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. Ebed-Melek went to the king to complain about this mistreatment. The king authorized him to take thirty men and get Jeremiah out of the cistern. So Ebed-Melek took some old rags and worn-out clothes from there and let them down with ropes to Jeremiah and using the rags as padding, they pulled him up with the ropes and lifted him out. And Jeremiah was put in the courtyard of the guard.

Jeremiah 38:1-13

[Jesus buried in the tomb]

... Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Accompanied by Nicodemus, the two wrapped the body, with the spices, in strips of linen. They placed it in the new tomb in a garden.

John 19:38-42

Each essentially rescued a body (alive or dead), asked authorities for permission to take it, and used strips of cloth help with the body!

It is Finished

The banner on the seventh day of creation is

“It is finished” (Gen. 2:1-2)

The banner over the believer at the cross as a new creation in Christ is

“It is finished” (John 19:30).

And the banner over the re-creation of all things is

“It is finished” (Rev. 21:5-6).

Ten Words to Live By, Jen Wilkins

He who was seated on the throne said,

“I am making everything new! ...

It is done.

**I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the Beginning and the End.**

Revelation 21:5-6

Graven Images – calf and snake

Aaron created a golden calf in an effort to show the people of Israel an image of the God that rescued them. Remember that this was before the 10 commandments were given to the Israelites (the commands that Moses went up on the mountain to receive them from God). **Exodus 32**

As the Israelites traveled in the wilderness, they grew hungry and they spoke out against God and Moses, complaining that there was no water or bread. Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them that bit the people and many Israelites died. When the people repented, the Lord had Moses make a bronze snake on a pole so that those who had been bitten could look on the snake and be healed. **Numbers 21**

Aaron's calf was meant to facilitate worship with the **good God** that saved His people. Moses **broke it up** and ground it into dust.

Moses' snake was a **representative of the evil** meant to heal the people from the results of their sin. It later became an idol (Nehustan) that was worshiped in a manner similar to the calf. It was removed and **broken up** by Hezekiah. **2 Kings 18:4**

Falling on someone and kissing them

[The story of the Prodigal Son and the Loving Father: Luke 15:11-32]

“And running, he fell upon his neck and fervently kissed him.”

It recalls the tender scene in the Book of Genesis where Joseph,
in service to the Pharaoh,

is overcome with emotion

at being reunited with his brothers

(who had sold him into slavery),

falls upon them, and kisses them.

Joseph cries so loudly

that all of Pharaoh's household can hear him.

James Martin

Note in each case one falls on and kisses the one that wronged him.

All I have is yours!

[The story of the Prodigal Son and the Loving Father]

The father says to the prodigal's brother,

“‘My son,’ the father said,

‘you are always with me,

and everything I have is yours.

But we had to celebrate and be glad,

because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again;

he was lost and is found.”

Luke 15:31-32

[Jesus' prayer to His Father, before the Garden of Gethsemane]

Jesus says,

“All I have is yours, and all you have is mine.

And glory has come to me through them.”

John 17:10

(note the “vice versa”).

Note the sharing of all things connected with glory and celebration!

Our Difficulty to Understand

When the disciples did not understand the parable of the sower and asked Jesus to explain it, he responded, “**Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable?**” (Mark 4:13).

When they were surprised by his ability to calm the storm on the lake, he asked, “**Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?**” (4:40).

They also failed to understand how he could instruct them to feed the five thousand (6:37,52).

And later that same day, “**they saw him walking on the lake, [and] they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, ‘Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid’**” (6:49-50).

When they asked Jesus about the parable of the clean and unclean cup, he responded, “**Are you so dull? . . . Don’t you see?**” (7:18).

Mark Dever

Do you now believe? [or, “Finally you understand!”] (John 16:31)

No Greater Story

[OT: no greater story]

Ask now about the former days, long before your time, from the day God created human beings on the earth; ask from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything so great as this ever happened, or has anything like it ever been heard of? ... Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by testings, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? You were shown these things so that you might know that the Lord is God; besides him there is no other.

Deuteronomy 4:32ff

[NT: the greatest story ever told]

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

John 15:13

There is no greater love than that of a Creator God who laid down His life for His creation.

The Fasts of Moses, Elijah, and Jesus

... that neither Moses nor Elijah was assailed by the Devil, constitutes not the only, though a vital, difference between the fast of Moses and Elijah, and that of Jesus.

Moses fasted in the middle, Elijah at the end, Jesus at the beginning of his ministry.

Moses fasted in the Presence of God; Elijah alone; Jesus assaulted by the Devil.

Moses had been called up by God; Elijah had gone forth in the bitterness of his own spirit; Jesus was driven by the Spirit.

Moses failed after his forty days' fast, when in indignation he cast the Tables of the Law from him; Elijah failed before his forty days' fast; Jesus was assailed for forty days and endured the trial.

Moses was angry against Israel; Elijah despaired of Israel; Jesus overcame for Israel.

Alfred Edersheim

Saving Lot

Abraham rescued Lot when he and his possessions, were captured by a coalition of kings (it is assumed that many fled, but some besides Lot could not). When Abram learned about it, he took his trained men and traveled to the uppermost part of the promised land (Dan) to rescue Lot, his possessions, and the “women and other people”. He then paid tribute to the priest of God, Melchizedek, in gratitude for this success. (Genesis 14)

It is interesting that Abraham did not rush to save Lot when God declared the destruction of Sodom. Perhaps he knew he could not get there before God’s angels. But he negotiated with God to try to save others in the city. He was successful, to a point, assuming that there were at least 10 righteous people there. (Genesis 18 - 19)

Different responses to different situations – Abraham acted when the problem was caused by man, but when the cause was God, he knew not to interfere directly.

Sons of Thunder

[Jesus and the Sons of Thunder]

... he appointed ... James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”) Mark 3:16-17

And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, “Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?” But Jesus turned and rebuked them. Luke 9:52-55

[David and the Sons of Zeruah: Joab, Abishai, and Asahel]

Abishai (and brothers): Wanting to kill Shimei for cursing David, 2 Samuel 16:9-10 (leaving Jerusalem) and 2 Samuel 19:21 (returning to Jerusalem)

David, “What right do you have to interfere?”

Wanting to kill Saul for chasing David, 1 Samuel 16:6

Joab: murdering Abner and Amasa, 1 Kings 2:5

All were commanders of David’s army (or part of it); 2 Samuel 8:16 and 18:2

Both sets of “sons” had difficulties with their desire to bring judgement

His Blood on Us

[Those who demanded the crucifixion of Christ]

All the people answered, “His blood is on us and on our children!”

Mathew 27:25

[Those who are saved by the blood of Christ]

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them.

John 6:54-56

But when Christ came as high priest... he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood... the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death...

Hebrews 9:11-14

We want His blood on us for a different reason, thinking of it as a blessing and not a possible curse.

Being Satisfied or Content (PDE)

Adam and Eve were not satisfied with their relationship with God, and wanted more (especially when convinced by Satan that it was available).

Paul had learned to be content in whatever situation in which he found himself (Philippians 4:11-13):

I am not saying this because I am in need,
for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

I know what it is to be in need,
and I know what it is to have plenty.

I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation,
whether well fed or hungry,
whether living in plenty or in want.

I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

[the real reason for content]

What else can we really need but God?

Being Caught – and “Released”

Hosea's wife was essentially caught in a life of promiscuous adultery.

The law said that she should be stoned (Leviticus 20:10),
but God told Hosea to bring her back as his wife.

The Lord said to me, “Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites...”
Hosea 3:1

Jesus was confronted with those who brought a woman caught in adultery.

The law said that she should be stoned (Leviticus 20:10),
but Jesus offered release by asking those without sin to perform the stoning (John 8:3-11).

Divine mercy was shown in each of these instances –
in contradiction to divine law.