

~FAITHFUL AND DISCREET SLAVE (429)

- **When answering the apostle's question concerning his future presence and the conclusion of the existing system of things, Jesus Christ included a parable, or illustration, dealing with a faithful and discreet slave and an evil slave.**
- **The faithful slave's master appointed him over his domestics, or household servants, to provide them their food. If approved at his masters coming, evidently from some trip, the slave would be rewarded by being placed over the master's entire property.**
- **While he was sitting upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples approached him privately, saying; Tell us, When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things? ([Matthew 24:3](#))**
- **Who really is the **faithful** and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? ([Matthew 24:45](#))**
- **Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. ([Matthew 24:46](#))**
- **Truly I say to you, he will appoint him over all his belongings. ([Matthew 24:47](#))**
- **But if ever that evil slave should say in his heart; My master is delaying. ([Matthew 24:48](#))**
- **And should start to beat his fellow slaves and should eat and drink with the confirmed drunkards. ([Matthew 24:49](#))**
- **The master of that slave will come on a day that he does not expect and in an hour that he does not know. ([Matthew 24:50](#))**
- **And will punish him with the greatest severity and will assign him his part with the hypocrites. There is where his weeping and the gnashing of his teeth will be. ([Matthew 24:51](#))**
- **In the parallel illustration at;**

- And the Lord said; Who really is the **faithful** steward, the discreet one, whom his master will appoint over his body of attendants to keep giving them their measure of food supplies at the proper time? (**Luke 12:42**)
- Happy is that slave, if his master on arriving finds him doing so! (**Luke 12:43**)
- I tell you truthfully, he will appoint him over all his belongings. (**Luke 12:44**)
- But if ever that slave should say in his heart; My master delays coming, and should start to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink and get drunk. (**Luke 12:45**)
- The master of that slave will come on a day that he is not expecting him and in an hour that he does not know, and he will punish him with the greatest severity and assign him a part with the **unfaithful** ones. (**Luke 12:46**)
- Then that slave that understood the will of his master but did not get ready or do in line with his will, will be beaten with many strokes. (**Luke 12:47**)
- But the one that did not understand and so did things deserving of strokes will be beaten with few. Indeed, everyone to whom much was given, much will be demanded of him, and the one whom people put in charge of much, they will demand more than usual of him. (**Luke 12:48**)
- The slave is called a steward, that is, a house manager or administrator, one placed over servants, though he is himself a servant. Such a position was often filled in ancient times by a **faithful slave**.
- Hence Abraham said to his servant, the oldest one of his household, who was managing all he had. Put your hand, please, under my thigh. (**Genesis 24:2**)
- The case of Joseph at;
- As for Joseph, he was brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, a court official of Pharaoh, the chief of the bodyguard, an Egyptian, got to buy him from the hand of the Ishmaelites who had

brought him down there. (**Genesis 39:1**)

- But Yehowah proved to be with Joseph, so that he turned out a successful man and came to be over the house of his master, the Egyptian. (**Genesis 39:2**)
- And his master got to see that Yehowah was with him and that everything he was doing Yehowah was making turn out successful in his hand. (**Genesis 39:3**)
- And Joseph kept finding favor in his eyes and waited upon him continually, so that he appointed him over his house, and all that was his he gave into his hand. (**Genesis 39:4**)
- And it followed that from the time he appointed him over his house and in charge of all that was his Yehowah kept blessing the house of the Egyptian due to Joseph, and Yehowah's blessing came to be upon all that he had in the house and in the field. (**Genesis 39:5**)
- Finally he left everything that was his in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what was with him at all except the bread he was eating. Moreover, Joseph grew to be beautiful in form and beautiful in appearance. (**Genesis 39:6**)
- In Jesus illustration the steward is first assigned only to the supervision and timely dispensation of the food supplies to the masters body of attendants, or servants, and later, because of his **faithful** and **discreet** handling of this ministry, his assignment is widened out to embrace supervision of all the masters holdings. Regarding the identification of the master **Greek**, *ky'ri-os*, also rendered lord, Jesus had already shown that he himself occupied such a position toward his disciples, and they addressed him as such on occasion.
- A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his lord. (**Matthew 10:24**)
- It is enough for the disciple to become as his teacher, and the slave as his lord. If people have called the householder Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household so? (**Matthew 10:25**)
- Then Peter came up and said to him; Lord, how many times is my brother to sin against me and am I to forgive him? Up to

seven times? ([Matthew 18:21](#))

- Keep on the watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ([Matthew 24:42](#))
- And so he came to Simon Peter. He said to him; Lord, are you washing my feet? ([John 13:6](#))
- You address me, Teacher, and, Lord, and you speak rightly, for I am such. ([John 13:13](#))
- The question remains concerning the application of the figure of the **faithful** and **discreet slave**, or steward, and what his dispensing food to the domestics represents.
- Commentators often view this as a general exhortation to any and all who have individual positions of responsibility in the Christian congregation. The requirement of **faithfulness** in discharging responsibility clearly applies to all such.
- For it is just as when a man, about to travel abroad, summoned slaves of his and committed to them his belongings. ([Matthew 25:14](#))
- And to one he gave five talents, to another two, to still another one, to each one according to his own ability, and he went abroad. ([Matthew 25:15](#))
- Immediately the one that received the five talents went his way and did business with them and gained five more. ([Matthew 25:16](#))
- In the same way the one that received the two gained two more. ([Matthew 25:17](#))
- But the one that received just one went off, and dug in the ground and hid the silver money of his master. ([Matthew 25:18](#))
- After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ([Matthew 25:19](#))
- So the one that had received five talents came forward and brought five additional talents, saying; Master, you committed five talents to me; See, I gained five talents more. ([Matthew](#)

25:20)

- His master said to him; Well done, good and **faithful** slave! You were faithful over a few things. I will appoint you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master. (**Matthew 25:21**)
- Next the one that had received the two talents came forward and said; Master, you committed to me two talents. See, I gained two talents more. (**Matthew 25:22**)
- His master said to him, Well done, good and **faithful slave**! You were faithful over a few things. I will appoint you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master. (**Matthew 25:23**)
- Finally the one that had received the one talent came forward and said; Master, I knew you to be an exacting man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not winnow. (**Matthew 25:24**)
- So I grew afraid and went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours. (**Matthew 25:25**)
- In reply his master said to him; **Wicked** and **sluggish slave**, you knew, did you, that I reaped where I did not sow and gathered where I did not winnow? (**Matthew 25:26**)
- Well, then, you ought to have deposited my silver monies with the bankers, and on my arrival I would be receiving what is mine with interest. (**Matthew 25:27**)
- Therefore take away the talent from him and give it to him that has the ten talents. (**Matthew 25:28**)
- For to everyone that has, more will be given and he will have abundance, but as for him that does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. (**Matthew 25:29**)
- And throw the **good-for-nothing slave** out into the darkness outside. There is where his weeping and the gnashing of his teeth will be. (**Matthew 25:30**)
- For an overseer must be free from accusation as God's steward, not self-willed, not prone to wrath, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, not greedy of dishonest gain. (**Titus 1:7**)

- But hospitable, a lover of goodness, sound in mind, righteous, loyal, self-controlled. (**Titus 1:8**)
- Holding firmly to the **faithful** word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict. (**Titus 1:9**)
- Yet, the impossibility of each and every one of these individuals being placed over all his master's belongings at the same time, the time of the master's arrival, is obvious. This, however, does not require that the **slave** prefigure only one particular person who would be so privileged.
- The Scriptures contain examples of the use of a singular noun to refer to a collective group, as when Yehowah addressed the collective group of the Israelite nation and told them: You are my witnesses, *plural*, even my servant, *singular* whom I have chosen.
- You are my witnesses, is the utterance of Yehowah, even my servant whom I have chosen, in order, that you may know and have faith in me, and that you may understand that I am the same One. Before me there was no God formed, and after me there continued to be none. (**Isaiah 43:10**)
- Similarly, the figure of the **unfaithful evil slave** could apply to a collective group in the same way that the antichrist is shown to be a class made up of individual antichrists.
- Young children, it is the last hour, and, just as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now there have come to be many antichrists, from which fact we gain the knowledge that it is the last hour. (**1 John 2:18**)
- For many deceivers have gone forth into the world, persons not confessing Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. (**2 John 1:7**)
- Those forming the Christian congregation are referred to by the apostle Paul as members of the household of God.
- Certainly, therefore, you are no longer strangers and alien residents, but you are fellow citizens of the holy ones and are members of the household of God. (**Ephesians 2:19**)

- But in case I am delayed, that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in God's household, which is the congregation of the living God, a pillar and support of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:15)
- And the same apostle shows that **faithful stewardship** among such household members involved the dispensing of spiritual truths on which those becoming believers would feed.
- I fed you milk, not something to eat, for you were not yet strong enough. In fact, neither are you strong enough now. (1 Corinthians 3:2)
- What, then, is Apollos? Yes, what is Paul? Ministers through whom you became believers, even as the Lord granted each one. (1 Corinthians 3:5)
- Let a man so appraise us as being subordinates of Christ and stewards of sacred secrets of God. (1 Corinthians 4:1)
- Besides, in this case, what is looked for in stewards is for a man to be found **faithful**. (1 Corinthians 4:2)
- But in reply he said; It is written: Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Yehowah's mouth. (Matthew 4:4)
- Whereas this was a prime responsibility of those appointed as shepherds of the flock
- Therefore, to the older men among you I give this exhortation, for I too am an older man with them and a witness of the sufferings of the Christ, a sharer even of the glory that is to be revealed. (1 Peter 5:1)
- **Shepherd the flock of God in your care**, not under compulsion, but willingly, neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly. (1 Peter 5:2)
- Neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:3)

- The apostle Peter shows that such stewardship of the divine truths was actually committed to all the chosen ones, all the spirit-anointed ones, of the Christian congregation.
- Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the temporary residents scattered about in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, to the ones chosen (**1 Peter 1:1**)
- According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, with sanctification by the spirit, for the purpose of their being obedient and sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ; May undeserved kindness and peace be increased to you. (**1 Peter 1:2**)
- In proportion as each one has received a gift, use it in ministering to one another as fine stewards of God's undeserved kindness expressed in various ways. (**1 Peter 4:10**)
- If anyone speaks, let him speak as it were the sacred pronouncements of God, if anyone ministers, let him minister as dependent on the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. The glory and the might are his forever and ever. Amen. (**1 Peter 4:11**)
- Thus the entire anointed Christian congregation was to serve in a **united stewardship**, dispensing such truths. At the same time the individual members making up such composite body, or the domestics making up the house of God.
- Who really is the **faithful** and **discreet slave** whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? (**Matthew 24:45**)
- But Christ was **faithful** as a Son over the house of that One. We are the house of that One, if we make fast our hold on our freeness of speech and our boasting over the hope firm to the end. (**Hebrews 3:6**)
- Certainly, therefore, you are no longer strangers and alien residents, but you are fellow citizens of the holy ones and are members of the household of God. (**Ephesians 2:19**)
- Would also be **recipients** of the food dispensed.

- Concerning him we have much to say and hard to be explained, since you have become dull in your hearing. (**Hebrews 5:11**)
- For, indeed, although you ought to be teachers in view of the time, you again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God, and you have become such as need milk, not solid food. (**Hebrews 5:12**)
- For everyone that partakes of milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. (**Hebrews 5:13**)
- But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong. (**Hebrews 5:14**)
- For just as the body is one but has many members, and all the members of that body, although being many, are one body, so also is the Christ. (**1 Corinthians 12:12**)
- If they were all one member, where would the body be? (**1 Corinthians 12:19**)
- But now they are many members, yet one body. (**1 Corinthians 12:20**)
- The eye cannot say to the hand; I have no need of you. Or, again; The head cannot say to the feet; I have no need of you. (**1 Corinthians 12:21**)
- But much rather is it the case that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. (**1 Corinthians 12:22**)
- And the parts of the body which we think to be less honorable, these we surround with more abundant honor, and so our unseemly parts have the more abundant comeliness. (**1 Corinthians 12:23**)
- Whereas our comely parts do not need anything. Nevertheless, God compounded the body, giving honor more abundant to the part which had a lack. (**1 Corinthians 12:24**)
- So that there should be no division in the body, but that its members should have the same care for one another. (**1**

Corinthians 12:25)

- **And if one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it. or if a member is glorified, all the other members rejoice with it. (1 Corinthians 12:26)**
- **Now you are Christ's body, and members individually. (1 Corinthians 12:27)**
- **Expanded responsibility would result from faithfulness maintained until the masters promised arrival.**
- **Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. (Matthew 24:46)**
- **Truly I say to you, he will appoint him over all his belongings. (Matthew 24:47)**
- **Happy is that slave, if his master on arriving finds him doing so! (Luke 12:43)**
- **I tell you truthfully, he will appoint him over all his belongings. (Luke 12:44)**