

A No Name Servant

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Preacher: Pastor Steve Hersey

[0 : 0 0] 2 Kings chapter 5. Over the last few weeks, we've talked about a lad whose name we did not know, who had five loaves and two fishes.

He didn't know his name, but he had an impact on the ministry that Jesus had. He had an impact on the people around him. He did something of service to God, even though we don't know his name.

Last few weeks, we've talked about a rich man whose name we do not know, and we learned about him in hell, and the things that we learned about hell from him.

It's invaluable to us to know what it is we are trying to avoid. Today, we're talking about a little girl whose name we do not know, a no-name servant.

Look at 2 Kings chapter 5 there, and beginning at verse 1. Now Naaman, captain of the hosts of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria.

[1 : 2 6] And he was also a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper. And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife.

And she said unto her mistress, Would God, my Lord, were with the prophet that is in Samaria? For he would recover him of his leprosy. And one went in and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that was of the land of Israel.

And we'll stop there. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, we pray that you would help us today to learn more. Lord, we don't have to be famous.

We don't have to be well-known. We don't have to be prominent to be of service to you. And we can do great things just by being available.

Just by allowing you to use us where we are. Allowing you to use us no matter who we are. And so, Father, I pray that you would help us to learn from these different ones we're talking about, whose names we do not know.

[2 : 3 6] But they did great things of service for you. And, Lord, we can be like that. We don't have to be prominent. We don't have to be well-known. We just need to be available. So, Lord, speak to our hearts today, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Talking about not being prominent in things, here's Naaman. He is prominent. Look at what it says about him there in verse 1.

It said, Captain of the host of the king of Syria, great man with his master, honorable, given deliverance unto Syria, mighty man of valor.

I want you to think for a second. The very next word. But. But. You know that little conjunction can make a whole lot of difference in things that are taking place in our life.

There's a sermon I've preached before. Actually, we'll look at the verses here shortly. Where it's talking about what people were like and how they lived their lives and stuff. Then it says, but God.

- [3 : 44] But God. But God. But. But. But God. But. But. That little word but. Everything can turn. Everything can flip. On that one little word. And notice what it says here about Naaman. It says he was captain of the host of Syria. He was a leader. He was a leader over their army. It says he was a great man with his master. He was loyal. So he's a loyal leader. And he was honorable. He was honorable. Which means all the people knew about him. Who he was. And what he was like. So he was legendary. Among the people. And then. It says by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria. He was a laborer. He did what God had called him to do. He did not necessarily believe in God. But God uses the ungodly sometimes. To accomplish his will. And so here's Naaman. He's a leader.
- [4 : 44] He's loyal. He's legendary. He's a laborer. But. He was a leper. You know. You stop and think about that. All the things. There's so many people in this world. Who have so many things going for them. They've got this money. And they've got this position. And they've got this prestige. And they've got that. But. They're a sinner. And all of the things that they have. Will do them absolutely no good. In eternity. See. Leprosy. Was a dreadful disease. You probably. Most of you know about leprosy. But it. It often goes unnoticed. At the beginning. Because. It begins. Under the surface of the skin. So you don't necessarily see it. At first. It begins under the surface. And begins eating away.
- [5 : 40] At the flesh. From the inside. Out. Often. It takes about. Three to five years. For it to. Manifest itself. After you have. Contracted it. You come in contact. With bacteria. And that bacteria. Begins working. Under the skin. And it starts. Doing its. Work. Some people have. The sin. Have. The bacteria. For like. Twenty years. Before the symptoms. Begin showing themselves. But once they do. After that incubation period. It starts working. Its way. To the surface. You know. The inside out nature. Of leprosy. Is like sin. In our lives. That's why the Bible. So often uses. It is a. Symbol.
- [6 : 37] Of sin. Fact that. It starts working. On the inside. And then finally. Works its way out. Where it can be seen. You know. God uses it. As a picture. Mark. Chapter 7. Verses. 21 and 22. It says. For. From within. Out of the heart. Of man. Proceed. Evil thoughts. Adulteries. Fornications. Murders. Thefts. Covetousness. Wickedness. Deceit. Placidiousness. And evil eye. Blasphemy. Pride. Foolishness. Verse 23. All these evil things. Come from. Within. And defile the man. He says. All of these things. Mark 7. 21 through 23. He says. Look. All these things. Start on the inside. All of these things. Start.
- [7 : 34] From within the heart. What does the Bible say? The heart is deceitfully wicked. Who can know it? He says. It all starts there. So we need to be so very careful. About what we are letting into. Our lives. See. Lippers in Israel. Were basically condemned. They were commanded to go outside.

The city walls. They could not be in the city. Where they could affect. Infect people. They were told to go out there. And somebody comes walking out of the city. Or coming toward the city. And they're along the way there.

They were. Unclean. Unclean. Those of you who are here for the film night. When we were showing that film on Jesus. Remember the guy?

He was doing that. Unclean. Unclean. They weren't supposed to go near those guys. Syria. Syria. On the other hand. Had a different. Philosophy. On dealing with lepers.

[8 : 30] They tolerated them. They allowed them to live with their families. They allowed them to have jobs. And do things. That's why Naaman. As a leper. Is the captain of the army.

He's in charge. Of everything. Even as a leper. Too often. Our culture. Kind of is like Syria. Syria. Sin.

Doesn't matter. Go ahead. Do whatever. We don't care. You look at. The times. That we live in now. Sin is even. Promoted.

We encourage. Sin. We encourage it. To be a part of. Our lives. We actually. Have little. Tolerance. For people who don't.

Want. The sin. In their life. And so. Here's this. Sin. Growing. In our country. Growing. In people's lives. And you think.

[9 : 29] About leprosy. There was no cure. Naaman. Was going to die. With leprosy. Unless there's some kind of. Miracle. Took place. People with sin.

We've got the answers. For sin. Today. Don't we. Education. Psychology. Sociology. Even some.

Religion. You know. We'll fix sin. We'll take care of man. We got. We got it covered. No. We don't. Sin is not fixed. Short of. The miracle.

The salvation. Take your Bible. Hold your finger there. In second Kings. Go with me over to. Ephesians chapter two. Ephesians chapter two. Ephesians chapter two.

Beginning at verse one. Ephesians two. Beginning at verse one. And you hath he quickened. Who were dead. In trespasses and sins.

[10 : 38] Wherein in time past. Ye walked according to the course of this world. According to the prince of the power of the air. The spirit. That now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also.

We all had our conversation in times past. In the lust of our flesh. Fulfilling the desires of the flesh. And of the mind. And were by nature the children of wrath.

Even as others. But. God. Who is rich. In mercy. For his great love.

Wherein he loved us. Even when we were dead in sins. Hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace. Are ye saved. He says.

You. Were just like that. The leprosy of sin. Had taken over. But. God. God makes all the difference in the world.

[11 : 34] So the miracle of salvation. Takes place in our lives. We have the message. Of the truth of the gospel. Comes to our life. We understand who Jesus is.

We understand what he has done. And we are saved. Through what Jesus did. He did a miracle. He went. He was. He died. He was buried.

He rose again. A miracle took place. That gives us the forgiveness of sin. In Romans chapter 10. You don't have to go there. But. Romans chapter 10.

Verses 13 and 14. It says this. For whosoever. Shall call upon the name of the Lord. Shall be saved. How then. Shall they call on him. Whom they have not believed.

And how shall they believe on him. Of whom they have not heard. And how shall they hear. Without a preacher. He says. Look. You want a miracle. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord. Shall be saved. As easy as that.

[12 : 30] You call on him. You trust him. You ask him to be your savior. He says. You're saved. But. Again. How can they call on him.

On whom they have not believed. Most people don't believe in Jesus. Not only that. How can they believe. On somebody they never heard of. A lot of people haven't even heard of Jesus.

Other than as a swear word. Then he says. How can they hear. Without. A preacher. How can they hear. Without you going out and telling him.

He says. Look. Anybody can be saved. And trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. But they got to know. And that's our job. To make sure that they know. They know. So. Here we are.

We're in Syria. Naaman's got leprosy. And. His leprosy. Is going to be. Changed. Transformed.

[13 : 26] First of all. Because. Of a captured slave. A captured slave. This young. Unnamed servant girl. She's not in Naaman's home.

By choice. She's a slave. She was captured. Spoil of war. And brought to his house. To work with his wife. Look at verse 2. Back in 2nd Kings.

Chapter 5. And the Syrians. Had gone out. By companies. And had brought away. Captive. Out of the land. Of Israel. A little maid.

And she waited. On Naaman's. Life. Think about this. Little girl. Notice who uses the word. Little. I'm thinking. When I think.

A little girl. I'm thinking. Eight. Nine. Ten. Eleven. Somewhere in there. Here's a little. Excuse me. A little girl. Who's been taken.

[14 : 22] Out of her land. Taken captive. Put in somebody else's house. How do you react to that? The trauma. Of all of that.

Happening to you. And she's been taken. As a slave. And her entire life. Has been turned upside down. She's not with her family. She's not with her friends. And her culture.

Is different. So one of the things. About this captured slave girl. She's now put into. A different culture. A different culture. Think about.

One thing we've already pointed out. About the difference in culture. In Israel. Lepers were put outside. In Syria. She's working for one. In Israel.

The leper would be out. Trying to find money. In any way he could. In Syria. The leper is. The captain of the entire army. No. So it's a totally different culture for her.

[15 : 25] They've been. We're different gods. Different foods maybe. All kinds of different things. And she's facing. As a little girl. It's a really difficult situation.

She's in. Let me ask you. How would we do. In a difficult situation. Do we keep our focus on God. Do we keep trying to serve him.

No matter what. You know. A lot of us. Unless it's easy. And comfortable. We don't want to serve God.

You know. I'm not going to. I always admire missionaries. And I. And you know. My philosophy on missionaries. Kind of. I'll. Inform you about that in a minute. But.

Our missionaries give up. What they're used to. To go to different cultures. They give up. And go to different foods. And different types of personalities. Different customs.

[16 : 24] Different. Everything. They give up what they know. They go from. What they're very familiar with. To a. Total change. Now. My philosophy on missionaries. Is not totally.

That bleak. When. When I was a teacher. Principal. We had. A family. A missionary family. Came to our Christian school.

And. It was time for them. To go back on the field. And. The kids were all like. Oh man. These boys. There was three boys. Said. Oh. They're going to.

Have to go back. And they're not going to be able. To go to McDonald's. And they're not going to be able. To do this. The height of everything. You know. Going to McDonald's. That's you. The height of our culture. They're not going to be able. To do this. That.

And the other thing. And oh. I said. Whoa. Whoa. Whoa. Wait a minute. I said. How many of you. Have ever ridden an elephant? They have.

[17 : 18] How many of you. Have ever been to Paris, France? They have. You know. All these different things. I'm like. Yes. They're giving up things.

Here in the United States. But look at what they're gaining. And. All of this. Is on top of the fact. That they're serving the Lord. So. Here's this little girl. It's a totally different culture.

And everything. But. She has an opportunity. To serve. The Lord. We need to give our lives. To Christ. And allow him. To do a work. In our lives.

Luke chapter 14. Verses 26 and 27. If any man come to me. And hate. Not. His father. And mother. And wife. And children. And brother. And sisters. Yea.

And his own life. Also. He cannot be my disciple. For whosoever doth not. Bear his cross. And come after me. Cannot be my disciple. And we say. Oh man. God wants too much from us.

[18 : 15] He wants us to hate. Father and mother. This is Luke chapter 14. Verses 26 and 27. He said. God wants us to hate. Doesn't he? God doesn't want you to hate all those people.

But your love for him. Is so great. It's like. I really don't care about these people. Because I love him. No. I love these people. A lot of these people.

Are not saved either. And so. I love them. I want them to see Christ. I want them to know him. So I'm going to tell them about it. I'm just thinking about. The Hebrew children.

That's the name. Others. The piece of their matter. When they're little. That they are taught. And how important that is.

To teach them. So that they have that knowledge. Of one true God. And that enables them to stand for that.

[19 : 11] When they're in a position. To be comfortable. Yeah. You know. And that. That's a good point. You moms. What a.

Tremendous blessing. And a tremendous responsibility. To teach. Those kids. Now dads aren't excluded from that. Dads are supposed to do the same. The Bible talks about that too.

But you moms have more of an attachment. To those children. And Moses. And Samuel. And others. They were. With their moms. So they were five. Yep. So they can learn.

And all of that can be. Put into their hearts. So they know. They're true. There used to be the saying. Give us a child until they're five. And we'll have them for the rest of their lives. Because where does most of the learning take place.

In those first five years. So. So. We need to have a love for Christ. That outweighs everything else in our life.

[20 : 13] And this little girl had learned that. She knew all about it. And then. Not only was it. Um. A different culture.

But think about. It was a difficult. Different. Difficult. Circumstance. A difficult circumstance. Circumstance. See this little girl. Through no fault of her own.

Nothing that she had done. Is now forced to be part. Of a culture. In an area that did not believe in God.

Like she did. She is forced to be. A maid. In the house of a man who's a leper. Perhaps her job. Was to wash his clothes.

Here's a leper. Skin coming off. And things and stuff. News and news. And she's forced to wash his clothes. Or maybe she changes the bed linen. Every day.

[21 : 13] Because of him sleeping in the bed. And having leprosy. Maybe that's part of her job. And stuff. You know. And think of how unclean. That was.

And how filthy that was. What does the Bible say. In Isaiah 64. 6. For we are all. As an unclean thing. And all of our righteousness. Are as filthy rags.

He says. That's what we're. Excuse me. That's what we're like. Everything about. We think we're so good. We think we're so righteous. We think we're so.

He says. It's like an unclean. Filthy rag. And that's what she's having to deal with. With the leprosy. We have to deal with that. In our culture. All the time. We have to deal with that.

In ourselves. Because ourselves. Left to ourselves. Can be pretty unpleasant. Filthy rags there. Is the idea.

[22 : 10] Of those rotting. You know. They used to. Take rags and things. And. They would scrape. The flesh. Trying to get rid of. Things that were.

Taking place on them. And stuff. Can you imagine how. You know. I guess there are some places in the world. That leprosy is still a thing. But. I'm glad it's not.

Prevalent. In this day and age. In 1958. The ship. The■■■ of Japan. The■■■ of Japan. Yep.

Yep. She was on her way to Japan. See, one of the things about this passage here is you read it and you see her concern and she's saying, you know, there's a prophet he could go see.

Here she is, taken from her home, put into captivity, a slave, and there's absolutely no bitterness, no discontentment, she goes about her tasks and seems to do it cheerfully. She's concerned about Naaman.

[23 : 16] He's her captor, but she's concerned about him. She wants to see him healed. She wants to see him taken care of. What a testimony for a little girl to go through all of this. You know, I think of our song in our hymn book, I Saw Jesus and You.

Here's this little girl. There, you know the story about Naaman, what's going to happen. All because of the testimony of this little girl. They saw something in her.

They saw the sincerity in her. They saw the fact that she actually cared even though she was a slave. Most people would be going, yeah, I hope this guy dies. And she's like, no, I want to see him healed.

You know, the circumstances that we're in does not dictate the contentment that we feel. Let me say that again.

The circumstances that we are in does not dictate the contentment that we feel. are you content in God?

[24 : 25] Are you happy in God? Are you like, I've got God, I've got everything I need. Doesn't matter what else takes place. You know, this verse, Philippians 4, 13, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

2 Corinthians 12, 9. 2 Corinthians 12, 9, he says, he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in mine infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. He says, his grace is sufficient. He says, his, my strength is made perfect in weakness.

God says, my strength is made perfect in your weakness. You ever have times in your life and you're just like, I don't know how I'm going to do this, I don't know what I'm going to do. I have no clue. And you watch God work things out for you.

You watch God take care of things. It's his strength is made perfect in our weakness. He can give us the grace. He can give us the strength. He can give us everything we do need so that like this little girl, we can do things cheerfully even in the midst of the worst of circumstances.

[25 : 36] We can take care of things. So, she's in a different culture. She's facing difficult circumstances.

But one of the things she knows about God, it was for a designed cause. What does that mean? God had a plan. But I had to make it literate.

So, a designed cause. God had a plan. She was brought specifically specifically to Naaman's house.

When she was captured, she came to his house. And I don't know about you, but I'm one of those who believes there are no coincidences.

God works things out according to his plan. God has a purpose and plan for everything. Nothing happens by accident. We're going to sing a song later this morning.

[26 : 38] I hope some of you know we're going to sing it in the morning service. Psalm 37, 23. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way.

The steps of a good man or the steps of a little girl who trusts in God are ordered by the Lord. We may not always understand everything God is doing.

We may not see why he's doing things the way he is, but do we trust him? Bonnie and I were talking this morning. You said you've learned that life is about trusting God and walking in the Spirit.

Trusting God. How many times do you hear me say, just trust God? Just trust God? And this morning in the morning service is what I'm talking about walking in the Spirit. There's a book written entitled How Life Imitates the World Series.

Didn't know it did, but that's the name of the book. But in that book there's a story in there. You've got to be a little older to remember a couple of these names. But the story about Earl Weaver.

[27 : 56] Earl Weaver was the manager of the Baltimore Orioles back in the late 60s, early 70s. I remember Earl Weaver very well. One of my best friends growing up was a Baltimore Orioles fan.

Liz and Manning is a Baltimore Orioles fan. I never did figure that one out. Still is to this day. I don't know. Anyway, Earl Weaver, there's a story about him that gives us a glimpse into what it means to have a narrow view versus a big view.

We live our life, you've heard me say many times, with this view of what's going on in our life. Whereas God sees this. He knows what's coming.

He knows what's going to happen. He knows where we need to be, what we need to be doing at the right time. Weaver had a rule. No one steals a base without getting a sign from him first.

Do not do it. Well, for a short time, a guy by the name of Reggie Jackson, you've probably heard that name, for like one or two years he played for the Baltimore Orioles.

[29 : 10] And he felt that he knew the pitchers and the catchers well enough that he could make a decision on his own whether to steal a base or not.

And so one day he takes off. Steals second base, slides in there, gets up all safe and everything, dusts himself off, smiles, looks over toward the dugout, and I did it without getting the signal and look, I'm here on second base.

After the game, Earl Weaver took him aside and showed him why he had not given him the steal signal. why I did not tell you to do that.

First of all, you're on first base. The guy at batting is a guy by the name of Lee May. Other than Reggie Jackson, Lee May is the best hitter on the team. He can power hit.

He can hit home runs. So you're on base, he's up, possible two runs there. But you stole second base. So what did they do with Lee May?

[30 : 20] They gave him an intentional walk. Didn't give him a chance to hit. He wound up going to first base on a walk. The Knicks guy up was a guy who statistically was not very good against this particular pitcher.

He had a lot of trouble with this pitcher. So now instead of possible two runs, we've got two guys on base, which sounds good, except the Knicks guy has real trouble with his pitcher.

And so Earl Weaver is pointing out to him and said, see, Reggie Jackson was thinking about himself. Reggie Jackson was thinking about, I can do this. This looks like a good situation to me.

I think, you know, I can do this. Earl Weaver was looking at the whole game because the guy who was not good against this pitcher, he pulled him and put in a pinch hitter.

A pinch hitter he could have used later in the game if he had been available, but he wasn't available anymore. So, all of these things, Earl Weaver is looking at all these things.

[31 : 21] Reggie Jackson was looking at this. I can steal the base. See, so often we tend to forget that God does this. I see this and this looks good to me and I think, ooh, this is, yeah, this is the right thing to do.

God is going, nope, not yet. I want you to go this way. I want you to go that direction. I want you to accomplish this thing. See, we have to remember and so often we forget Jeremiah 29, 11.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end. God says, I know what I need for you. I know what's best for you.

I know what I'm going to do to help you accomplish those things. I'm going to give you an expected end and that expected end is going to bring honor and glory to me. So I'm not going to leave you hanging out there.

And so here's this little girl. Everything looks bad. But God's saying, I've got a plan. You're there for a reason. I've got a plan. And we'll talk more about that plan next week.

[32 : 27] Father, thank you. You're there.