

Justified! The Series – Chapter 6: Have You Considered My Servant “_____”

Description

6-7 One day when the angels came to report to God, Satan, who was the Designated Accuser, answered God, “Going here and there, checking things out on earth.”
8 God said to Satan, “Have you noticed my friend Job? There’s no one quite like him here.”

Job 1:6-8 MSG

My friends this **Justified** series has been rich and truly a blessing to me, as I hope it has been to you. Please don’t take this as a finale introduction, because we are just getting started. I’d like to jump out of The Gospels for a moment and look at a very familiar passage, and one that I have written on several times in the past to pull something new and flavorful for our spiritual consumption.

Have you considered my servant Job (NKJV)?” Now some of you may be wondering why the post title is from the New King James Version (NKJV), but the selected verses are from The Message (MSG) version? The word choice of the versions of the Bible are very important, because sometimes our interpretation or takeaway from the scriptures can be attributed to the version/translation that we read. I like the MSG version because it identifies Satan by his actual title that many believers would do well to remember and understand when they are feeling unworthy of God’s goodness, or challenged by life’s troubles.

The Designated Accuser

This is who satan aka lucifer aka the devil actually is; he is a designated accuser of everyone on Earth, but he especially takes a liking to making accusations against those who have made a decision to follow, and serve God whole-heartedly. In the story of Job, we understand that satan appeared before God twice to seek permission to test Job; but here’s the interesting thing about the story that most people never realize, or fully appreciate; Satan never asks or requests to test Job, God actually volunteers Job to be tested by satan. Let that marinate. God actually puts Job on satan’s radar, he offers him up for this test. Now you may ask yourself why God would do something like this; why would he voluntarily remove his hedge of protection from around someone who loves, serves, and believes in him wholeheartedly?

Some may say that God and satan have a petty back and forth relationship, a tit-for-tat, but if you really understand it, it is only satan that has a beef with God. In these verses we see that satan is practically on the prowl, or as the Apostle Peter accurately described him, “a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8-9),” looking for someone’s life to ruin. In this passage, satan presents himself before God with the rest of God’s angels, and reports to God his activities. Also understand the power structure at play, satan doesn’t skip line to the front, and he doesn’t speak until God addresses him (that will be explored in another post). I heard a pastor once say that, “satan lies to us, but he tells God the truth.” Let that marinate.

There is no one quite like “ _____ ”

These are God's words to satan, about Job. Now remember that this conversation/interaction is going on without Job's knowledge. Job hasn't advocated to be tested, he hasn't antagonized satan, or bragged about his blessings, Job is guilty of nothing other than serving and believing in God. Because God has observed Job's faithfulness, and knows his heart, he volunteers Job for satan to test. As you let that fact digest, consider why God would do such a thing. Is it possible that some of your problems and struggles are not your fault, is it possible that satan isn't picking on you because you are a believer, is it possible that things can go wrong even when you are serving God faithfully? The answer to all those questions is yes; you are not responsible for all your struggles or problems, yes bad things happen to good people and believers, but most importantly, yes satan isn't always picking on you because you are a believer. Sometimes satan is given your name because God knows that you are capable of withstanding satan's greatest attacks because he knows that your heart and faith is firmly rooted in him. I can remember when I was in school, sometimes when we'd have important visitors such as the superintendent, school administrators, or my teacher was being evaluated, my teacher would specifically call on me to answer questions because they knew I was capable of giving the correct answer. Think about that, I could have interpreted it as them picking on me, or holding me to standards that others didn't have to keep, but as a few of my teachers told me, "I expect more of you because there is more in you, and I know that you can handle it." They selected me specifically because they knew when they needed someone to count on to show their effectiveness as an instructor, they could almost guarantee that I would perform well under pressure. When satan presents himself before God, God is already aware of satan's tactics and plans, so instead of allowing satan to set his own terms, God instead determines the conditions; he selects one of his trusted servants, and gives satan restrictions. God knowing that he has already defeated satan, essentially invites satan to participate in a rigged arrangement; "Have you considered my friend Job, there's no one quite like him." God is petty!! He is literally taunting satan in front of the rest of the angels, and he uses Job, like he sometimes uses us, like a favorite child that is paraded before a jealous rival in saying look at my child, he/she is perfect, loved, and protected. They love me, and I love them and you can't do anything about it, despite your best attempts. If that ain't **justification** then I don't know what is. God affirms Job **BEFORE** Job is even tested/attacked by satan. Because he knows Job's heart, he is confident that Job will succeed, and it is because of this that he entrusts Job for this assignment. Take a moment to understand that it is more than your actions that **Justifies** you, it is your faith and heart that God approves. God **saw** Job, he **trusted** Job, but most importantly God **loved** Job, as much as he loves you and me. Before he allowed satan to test Job he had already blessed him and covered him, even protecting his life as you can read later in the chapter. When you are tested and feel overwhelmed you would do well to remember this verse

No temptation [regardless of its source] has overtaken *or* enticed you that is not common to human experience [nor is any temptation unusual or beyond human resistance]; but God is faithful [to His word—He is compassionate and trustworthy], and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability [to resist], but along with the temptation He [has in the past and is now and] will [always] provide the way out as well, so that you will be able to endure it [without yielding, and will overcome temptation with joy].

1 corinthians 10:13 AMP

Reflection Time

Can God trust you? I want you to really think about that question. Can God trust you to remain faithful to, believe in, and trust in him when circumstances are not ideal? If God can't trust you, then why is that? What causes you to lose faith, and/or give up when things are going rough? Do you have spiritual support, or a spiritual plan that you can use when life is feeling hard? Do you understand that God does NOT cause trouble for his people, yet he allows his people to go through tough times while perfecting their faith? Will you make the changes and adopt the the practices that will allow God to brag about you, and know feel confident when it is your turn to be tested by satan?

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