

From Servant To Son

I was watching a video presentation by a minister who spoke about how God gently deals with us. It was thoughtful and beautiful; the way he expressed the love of our Father. He told a story about a young horse that had never been ridden or broken. He explained how some men use force and whips to break a horse into submission, but he had found a better way.

He stepped into a round pen with this horse that had never submitted to a man. Slowly, he slipped a rope around its neck, and the horse immediately pulled away. He demonstrated how he could bring this untrained animal to yield by gently tugging on the rope, even as it resisted his lead. As we watched, he shared scriptures about the Father's love toward us. The horse circled him again and again, but gradually it began to calm as he drew it closer. In time, the horse submitted and learned to trust the man.

It was a beautiful example of how the gentle leadership of a master can win the trust of a servant. As I watched, I found myself saying "amen," because what he said was good. But then I heard the Lord speak clearly to my heart:

"Yes—but you are not a horse!"

In that moment, I understood what God was saying, and what He had been teaching me about my relationship with Him. For most of my life, I had served God from a master-to-servant mindset. While that isn't wrong, He had something far deeper in mind. It took time for Him to convince me it was possible, but He desired a Father-to-child relationship with me.

It was time for me to draw closer to Him, not just as a servant, but as a son. I felt secure within the boundaries and rules of servitude. I could please Him through good works and obedience; it felt safe because my worth was measured by what I did for Him. But God wanted more. He wanted more from me, and more from our relationship than mere command and obedience.

He desired intimacy, a connection born of love. He wanted to nurture me and establish a fatherly bond. Yet to enter that kind of relationship, I had to face the fear of not being accepted, of not being good enough. I had to move from believing that my works and obedience made me acceptable, to trusting that He loved me simply because I was His child. I came before Him vulnerable, with nothing to offer but myself, and that was exactly what He was after all along.

Many believers don't realize that they serve God much like that horse being trained to obey its master—but God invites us into something far greater. A good horse yields its will to its master, and words like obedience, submission, and surrender describe that kind of relationship. In the Old Testament, it was much the same. They were not born again, and their relationship with God was limited to that of a master and servant.

But we live under a New Covenant. Though God is still to be obeyed, He offers us a far more excellent relationship through salvation, one built not only on obedience, but on love, trust, and family.

You've been born of God! Even Nicodemus marveled at Jesus' words about being born again. He understood that Jesus was describing something miraculous, something beyond human ability. A brand-new life. A child born of God. And that child is you. Jesus wasn't speaking of a simple change in direction; He was describing the incredible miracle that happens at salvation.

Jesus said in John 3:3–6: *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”*

This new birth is not only a new beginning and a new name, it makes you a new creation, born from above. This was what Nicodemus struggled to comprehend, and what many believers still struggle with today. You became a new creation at your salvation, and now you are His child. You never truly lived until you were born of Him, yet now, you are alive!

He desires to pour into you as a father does his children, to see you learn and mature through Him. Pastor Dave Roberson once said, “If it’s not family, it’s not God!” That is such a powerful way to interpret everything we’re taught. Is it how a father would instruct his children, or how a master would train his horse? Sadly, so much teaching in the church still reflects that master-to-servant mentality.

Jesus told His disciples something similar in John 15:15:

“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.”

God doesn't want you to simply follow instructions, He has made it possible for you to understand why.

When you make the shift from servant to child of God, you begin to walk out of religion and into relationship. You'll begin to see how much your Heavenly Father truly believes in you. You'll discover a boldness rising from within to believe God for incredible and impossible things, faith rooted in His work within you. Faith that moves mountains.

You are not a horse to be controlled, but a child to be nurtured and loved.

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