

The main points again...

Stuck in a moment- and you can't get out of it

Exile
Sin-sickness

Someone new- The Servant

'...a deep reversal of fortunes- in the life of Israel, in the life of Jesus- is evoked by the radical, powerful, inscrutable resolve of God to do something new.'

God uses not supermen, but servants
Exaltation is linked to humble service

'This is our God: the servant king'

An ugly Saviour...

Whose ugliness?
The story of a painting in the attic

But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.



Two dimensions of the Servant's work:

1. Through what he experienced, my righteous one, my servant, will make many "righteous ones," as he himself carries the burden of their sins.
2. 'It is as though the vicious cycles of violence must be broken. But they cannot be broken by force, by power, by assertion, for such vigorous assertion only escalates and evokes more from the other side. The Servant, this Nobody with no resources, breaks the cycle of death and hurt precisely by a life of vulnerability, goes into the violence and ends it tyranny'

- Walter Brueggemann

Are you being served implies Are you serving...

But while the suffering and death of Jesus is definitive and complete, there is more- and the more has to do with our participation in what Jesus accomplishes in his suffering and death. There is more than to the servant than Jesus- there is also his servants'

- Eugene Peterson

I did it my way? I did it his way?

Slaves saved to be servants

'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, "Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness.'

- Exodus 7.16

Serving the Servant means doing it his way...

Getting our hands dirty

Lessons from Lightning McQueen

'Even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many'

- Mark 10.45

So what...

Take time to read the whole of this passage out loud.

[You might like to read Psalm 22 alongside it]

Share your responses to what is here.

Where do you see yourself in the passage? Pray

This passage is the last of four servant songs in Isaiah- the others are found in Isaiah 42:1-7, Isaiah 49:1-6 and Isaiah 50:4-9.

The original hearers may have thought this figure represented as specific agent in the end of exile or ideal Israel.

We tend to see Christ in these words.

BUT the figure is known enigmatically as the Servant...

Why do you think God sends a Servant not a Superman?

How do you respond to the focus on ugliness in the early verses of ch.53?

In a world concerned with looking good how does an ugly Saviour challenge us?

Read vv.4-6?

Whose ugliness is it? Pray

Read the Brueggemann quotation opposite (cf.Cols 2.15)

Do we think enough about the cosmic, global work of the Servant?

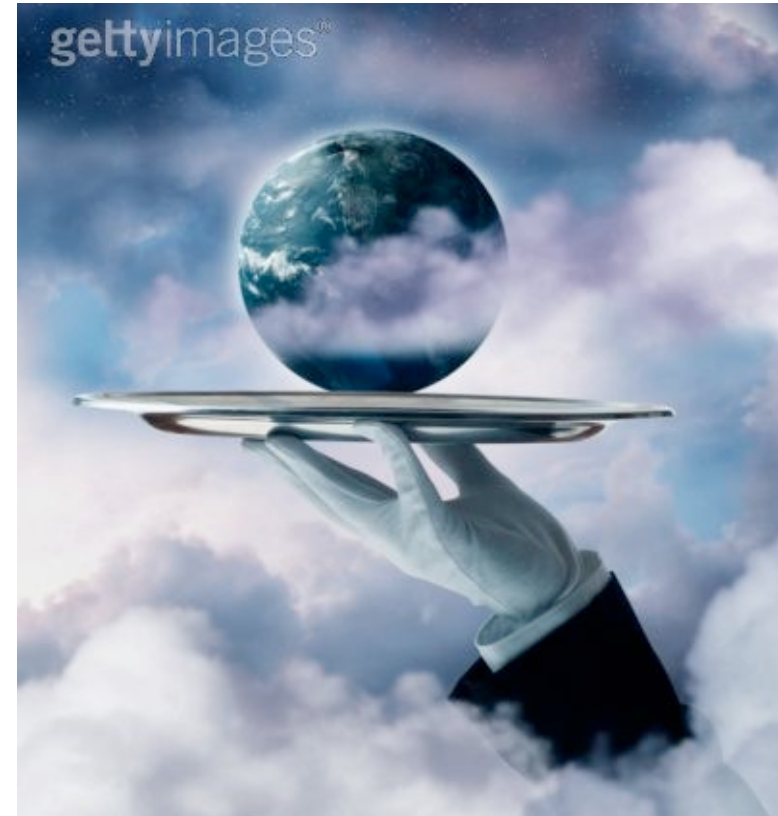
Read the Peterson quotation

Do you feel able like you are saved to serve? (Cf. Ex 7.16)

Are we prepared to be servants of this servant- to do things his way? Cf. Luke 9.23

Pray

Sunday March 30th 2008



'Are you being served?'

- Isaiah 52.13-53.12

**Devoted to Christ,
his people, his mission**