

Lesson 6: Core Values – Serve as Christ Served

Opening:

Why did Jesus come to earth? What was his one driving motivation? Our main text today will provide us the answer to that question. Jesus tells the disciples in Mark 10:45 “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Jesus came to earth to serve and the greatest act of service that He could make was to give His life in exchange for us. We deserved the punishment of God and we were enslaved to sin. We could not overcome our sinfulness on our own. We need a Savior.

Look at the following texts and make note of how Jesus served others through His compassion for them:

Matthew 9:36-38 _____

Matthew 15:32-36 _____

John 13:1-5 _____

Central Truths:

- Serving others requires us to focus on His mission.
- Serving as Christ served requires us to learn to submit to God and to one another.

Core Values: Serve as Christ Served

Serving as Christ served means more than just giving up some time to think about other people. It is more than a temporary inconvenience to us so that we might help others. Serving as Christ served means that we learn to view everything that we say, do, plan, and dream considering eternity.

Service requires submission. The word “submit” means to “place oneself under” an authority. The Bible teaches us that we are to submit to God (James 4:7); the rulers and overseers that God has placed over us (Romans 13:1-7 and Titus 3:1); and to one another (1 Peter 5:5).

Serving others requires sharing of what God has given us. Look at the following ways that Scripture teaches us to give and share with others.

Romans 12:13 _____

Romans 15:1-2 _____

Galatians 6:2 _____

James 2:14-17 _____

Examining the Text:

Mark 10:35-45

³⁵ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." ³⁶ And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³⁷ And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." ³⁸ Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" ³⁹ And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." ⁴¹ And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. ⁴² And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Serving as Jesus served always involves embracing the right mission and focus.

Look at VV. 35-37. Jesus has turned His face and attention toward Jerusalem. He is heading toward His sacrificial death on the cross for our sins. Yet, His disciples still have in mind a different kingdom than the one that Jesus will provide. They believe that He is going to take over, to establish the kingdom in a political sense. James and John simply want to be in a position of power when Jesus takes over

Jerusalem. In one sense, they trust Jesus and believe that He has the power to conquer the city, but they have not yet understood or embraced the mission of Jesus. Learning to serve as Christ served means putting aside our ideas of success and glory and embracing the mission of serving in whatever ways Jesus has called us to serve (Philippians 2:3-5). We are to use our spiritual gifts to build up others (Romans 1:11-12).

Serving as Christ served requires spiritual maturity because it goes against our human inclination to put ourselves first or to serve others for personal gain. Look at vv. 38-40 Jesus reminds James and John in this part of the text that the focus of a follower of Christ is to serve and to do the will of God without regard to the position that one gains. Instead we are to learn that we serve because we have already been given a position in Christ (Galatians 3:29). He saved us not because we are good, but because He loves us. He calls and gifts us to serve Him by serving others as a response to the grace that He has shown us. The more we understand that Jesus gave Himself up for us, the more we appreciate His grace and follow Him.

Serving as Christ served means drawing attention to Jesus. Look at vv. 41-45 The other disciples become angry with James and John. Their anger is not a holy anger but a self-focused anger. They want to be in positions of power in the kingdom of God. Jesus reminds them that to serve means to be humble and point to a source greater than self. All our service to one another should point people to Jesus.

Applying the Text:

Serving means not demanding my way. It means giving myself up for the mission that God calls me to. Thom Rainer in his short book *I Will* suggests that what we need most in our churches is what he calls a “serving revolution.” He suggests that we make a commitment to take a 90-day test. For those 90 days we make a commitment to do three things: 1) ask nothing from the church; 2) do not complain in any way; and instead 3) we commit two hours a week to serving someone else outside of ourselves and our immediate family. Rainer does the math and he notes that if 100 people will commit to refrain from negativity and serve others just two hours a week for 90 days the result would be nearly 2600 hours of service in those 90 days. If we take the math one step further we would notice that 90 days includes only 2160 hours. That means that if 100 people

would serve just two hours a week, we would collectively be offering to God over 100 days worth of service in just 90 days.

How might God begin to change the members of your small group if we took up this challenge together? How might God begin to conform our church more into His image if we took up such a challenge? What barriers might God knock down if we committed to serving Him as He served us? How might the community around us look differently if we learned to serve as Christ served?

Action Steps:

- If your heart is struggling to love others, ask God to begin to change your heart.
- Ask God to show you each day what needs to be done, and trust Him to help you accomplish His list rather than seeking to complete your own list.
- Do simple things to place others first daily.
- Ask God to help you use your gifts to serve the church, and to serve your neighbors.