

ESF, Lord's day service message
10/9/2016

Jesus, The Servant

Mark 10:42-45

Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Most of us have the desire to be greater than others. One day two disciples, James and John, asked Jesus to give them the highest position in His kingdom. They expressed their ambition to be greater than others by requesting the highest position of authority to rule over others. When the other disciples heard what the two disciples asked, they became angry. Why? Because every one of them also had the same desire to be greater than others. But Jesus did not give them what they asked, Instead, He told them that they should serve to be great.

With this word, Jesus does not say that we must not have the ambition to be greater. Jesus says that we must accomplish that ambition the right way. And the right way is through serving. Jesus teaches us here how we can become greater by serving.

Serving is taking care of the shortcomings of others

Jesus served His disciples by washing their feet (John 13:4-9). By washing their feet Jesus did not mean just cleansing their dirty feet, but He meant taking care of their shortcomings. By washing their feet which were the dirtiest part of their bodies, Jesus taught them to take care of each other's shortcomings: *Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have*

washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet (John 13:14).

Satan uses a person's shortcoming to condemn the person and kill the spirit of the person. Yet, Jesus does not condemn a person's shortcoming. Instead, Jesus covers the person's shortcoming with God's mercy. Jesus does not harshly demand that the person change. Instead, Jesus gently takes care of the person and encourages the person to overcome the shortcoming.

When you want to be great, follow the attitude of Jesus. Instead of criticizing other people's shortcomings or demanding that they change their shortcomings, find ways to take care of their shortcomings. Instead of criticizing a person for dirty feet try to wash their dirty feet.

Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be (Thomas A Kempis).

Serving is sharing other people's pain and joy together with them

Jesus served all people by sharing their joy and pain with them. Jesus did not avoid people who suffered from pain. Jesus mourned with those who mourned. Jesus wept with the people who were weeping over the death of a loved one (John 11:33-35).

Jesus also rejoiced with those who rejoiced. Jesus came to a wedding banquet, and joyfully celebrated the wedding with all people in the banquet. He even performed a miracle to provide the best wine for the people when their prepared wine was gone (John 2:1-12).

By these examples, Jesus teaches us that serving is sharing other people's pain and joy intimately.

Paul said in Romans 12:15, "*Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.*"

Americans remember George Washington as one of the greatest leaders. He became a great leader by sharing the pain and joy of all people rather than by his military leadership or political genius. In his time, the people of Philadelphia built an elaborate mansion for him outside of the city. Yet, he refused to live in it, feeling the mansion wasn't among the people.

Some years ago, Harry Carey, a broadcaster of the Cubs, a Chicago baseball team, died. At that time, many people honored him as one of the greatest sports broadcasters not because of his broadcasting skill but because he was a person who always shared the joy and pain of others. When he became successful in the sports world, he never forgot who he was. He grew up as an orphan. He always shared his heart with poor and abandoned people. But he also knew how to fully enjoy life and shared that joy of life with many people.

Is there anyone around you who is suffering? Sympathize with the person. Is there anyone near you who rejoices? Rejoice with the person. This is Jesus' way of serving others. This is Jesus' way of becoming great.

Serving is treating others with kindness

Jesus accomplished His great mission to lead people to God not by force but by His kindness. Jesus showed kindness to everybody, especially to strangers and to the poor and weak and the sick. The apostle Matthew testifies to Jesus' greatness through His kindness in Matthew 12:18-20.

¹⁸ “*Here is my servant whom I have chosen,
the one I love, in whom I delight;
I will put my Spirit on him,*

- and he will proclaim justice to the nations.*
- ¹⁹ *He will not quarrel or cry out;
no one will hear his voice in the streets.*
- ²⁰ *A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out,
till he has brought justice through to victory.*
- ²¹ *In his name the nations will put their hope*

Kindness is the key to serving all people well and to winning their hearts. Treat everybody you meet with kindness. Your kindness not only makes other people happy, but also makes you happy and blessed. Your kindness to all people will shape your character and as a result you will be likable and respected by them.

When you think of kindness, chances are that one of the first names that comes to mind is Mister Rogers. A year or two before Fred Roger's death someone in Philadelphia where he lived stole his car. The news media got ahold of the story and before long all the local TV stations were broadcasting the story. Thousands of Philadelphia citizens saw the story, including the thief who stole the car. This criminal had dealt with his own share of difficult times, but he knew that when he was small Fred Rogers had been a positive influence on him. Fred Roger's kindness prompted him to do something that he had probably never done before. He returned the car. Kindness has the power to touch the hearts of the most hardened people.

If you treat people kindly, they feel good and happy whenever they see you. They will like you, love you and respect you. In this way you will become great. No one likes and respect an unkind person. No one likes and respect you when you are mean to others. Yet, when you act kindly and say words kindly, everybody will like you and respect you.

Mother Teresa once said, "*Be the living expression of God's kindness;*

kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting.”

However, we must always remember that true kindness cannot be manufactured only by man's effort. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). While you try to be kind, keep following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He will give you kindness. It is His gift.

Serving is forgiving our enemies

Jesus served all people including His enemies. How? By forgiving His enemies. When people killed Him by crucifying Him on the cross, He didn't die immediately. It took several hours for Him to die on the cross painfully. They mocked and insulted Him while He was agonizing with pain on the cross. Their cruelty was unbearable. Satan provoked Him to curse such cruel enemies.

However, He prayed a prayer of forgiveness for them: “*Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing*” (Luke 23:34). The prayer was not only for them but also for us. Because of our sins Jesus was crucified. To take the penalty for our sins Jesus sacrificed His own life on the cross. With that prayer Jesus forgave us when we were His enemies. By His forgiveness of all, He became the greatest of all.

Serving all people includes serving our enemies. How can we serve our enemies? As Jesus did, to serve our enemies we must forgive our enemies.

Who are your enemies? You may not have anyone who has tried to kill you. Yet, you have enemies. Your enemies may be;

Those who hate you. Those who hurt you. Those who insult you. Those who offend you. Those who give you a hard time. Those who betray

you. Those who deceive and manipulate you.

By forgiving these enemies, you can eventually gain their hearts.

William McKinley, president of the United States from 1897 to 1901, was a man who understood that principle. During one of his campaigns, a reporter from an opposition newspaper followed him constantly and persistently misrepresented McKinley's views. Eventually during this campaign, the weather became extremely cold, and even though the reporter didn't have sufficiently warm clothing, he still followed McKinley. One bitter evening, the president-to-be was riding in his closed warm carriage, and the young reporter sat shivering on the driver's seat outside. McKinley stopped the carriage, gave the reporter his coat and invited him to ride with him inside the warm carriage. As a result, in the remaining days of the campaign, the reporter continued to oppose McKinley, but never again did he write anything unfair or biased about the future president.

By forgiving all His enemies, Jesus has become the greatest of all and the Lord of lords. Jesus gives the grace of forgiveness in our hearts also so that we can forgive our enemies too. We cannot forgive our enemies just by our own effort. We need the grace of Jesus' forgiveness which is not of human effort but a divine gift. Ask Him to give you His grace of forgiveness. He will gladly give you the grace of forgiveness. With it, you will be able to forgive your enemies. By forgiving your enemies you serve them. This will make you great.