

Servanthood - Who Me? A Servant? – Lesson One

Mark 10:42-45

42 But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

The first reaction of most people when confronted with the idea of servanthood is; "Who, Me? A servant?" Sometimes we think, "If I could have walked with Jesus like the apostles did, I could learn how to serve and give of myself after being with Him!" Right? Wrong!

Matthew 20:20-21

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedees children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

The mother of James and John understood this when she asked for the second and third places in the Kingdom of God for her sons. James and John also understood this concept of position and power, for their mother came "...with her sons... desiring a certain thing from Him."

The other ten apostles also thought in terms of the world's system. They were "moved with indignation" (anger) at James and John for asking for the second and third places of power. **They were ticked!** They wanted those places of honor for themselves.

Matthew 20:25-28

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.
26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;
27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:
28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Jesus emphasized he that would be great in the Kingdom of God shall be your servant. It is attitude that is most important. One who would be great must have an attitude of serving; the desire to serve and to give. One of the greatest examples of this outside of Jesus himself was the apostle Paul. Though he had all the credentials of position and authority, he considered himself the servant of all.

Philippians 3:4-6

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:
5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;
6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Even though he was an apostle, almost without exception he refers to himself in his correspondence to the churches as "Paul, a servant..." or "Paul, a bondservant..." In looking at the life of Jesus and of Paul, we can find basically three major characteristics that relate to the servant image.

Transparent Humanity

1 Corinthians 2:1-3

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.
2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.
3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

2 Corinthians 10:10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

Paul, though an apostle of the highest degree, admitted that when he stood before the Corinthians, he did so in "weakness and fear and in much trembling."
He didn't pretend to be something he was not or act as though he was perfect...
He did not try to hide his "humanity," he admitted it!

Genuine Humility

1 Corinthians 2:4-5

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

When people follow image-conscious leaders, the leader is exalted.

When people follow leaders with a servant's heart, the Lord Jesus is exalted.

These people speak of God's person, power, work, will, name, purpose...all for God's glory.

Two revealing tests of humility are:

A non-defensive spirit when confronted – this reveals a willingness to be accountable. (Nothing to prove, nothing to lose)

An authentic desire to help others – a sensitive, spontaneous awareness of the needs of others.

A true servant stays in touch with the struggles that others experience.

There is that humility of mind that continually looks for ways to serve and to give.

Absolute Honesty (Integrity)

2 Corinthians 4:1-2

1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

1 Thessalonians 2:3-4

3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

Honesty has a beautiful and refreshing simplicity to it, as do true servants of God. No ulterior motives, no hidden agendas, no games, no hypocrisy; no shallow meaningless speeches, no need to manipulate others. When we cultivate a taste for the genuine and the real; the fake and imitations will become distasteful.

The whole message is this: **be real! Be who you really are!** God is not looking for your impersonation of anyone else. Seek God and find out what he wants YOU to be and then allow the Lord to develop in you a style of serving that fits you.

(S. H. A. P. E.)

Spiritual Gifting

God has given you special abilities called spiritual gifts to give you the ability to minister to your brothers and sisters within the Body of Christ, and to reach out to a lost world with the love of Jesus Christ.

Heart

God gave you a unique passion for particular activities, subjects and circumstances. He gave you a Heart for the things you feel deeply about to help define how and where He wants you to serve Him.

Abilities

You have Abilities, given to you before you accepted Christ, that God can use in specific ways to assist you in your ministry.

Personality

God needs a Personality in ministry that's exactly like yours! He wants to use you whether you're an extrovert or an introvert; whether you enjoy routine or variety.

Experiences

God has placed a multitude of Experiences in your life to help mold you for ministry. He can use the experiences in your background to help heal the hurts of others in your church and your community.