

September 11, 2005
Patchogue Church of the Nazarene

Service – “Lord, Make me a Servant!”
Mark 10:32-45

Today I conclude our series on the five essential disciplines for our spiritual growth. The way to grow in our faith, and therefore, grow in *Christ's-likeness* is to do the things Jesus did. If we want to be like Jesus, we should do the things Jesus did. These five things don't actually change us, but as we do them, God changes us. Now here are the five things, that Jesus did and wants us to incorporate into our own lives:

1. Devotions – private time alone with God. This is so vital for Christians, and so neglected by Christians - to be alone with God and to be with God alone. We need times like that on a regular basis.
2. Public Worship - the weekly corporate worship experience. We need public worship as well as private.
3. Discipleship – We need to be in a small group, a church within the church, for the purpose of prayer, Bible discussion/learning, community building, and accountability.
4. Witness – to share your faith, your testimony, the Good News of Jesus with others. This is our mission. This is why we Christians are still here on earth. To show people Jesus.
5. Service - Jesus was constantly ministering to others. And He wants you to do the same. God has a plan for you. He has a ministry for *you* and has given you the gifts necessary that you might accomplish the plan / ministry / assignment He has for you. When you see a need and it is something that really becomes a burden to you, my suggestion would be to feed it – don't ignore it, let it make you so burdened that you *have* to do something about that need. God is showing you where He wants to use you.

In our passage this morning, we discover some very important things about Jesus and His disciples when it comes to service: Mark 10:32-45 NLT

32 They were now on the way to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. The disciples were filled with dread and the people following behind were overwhelmed with fear. Taking the twelve disciples aside, Jesus once more began to describe everything that was about to happen to him in Jerusalem. 33 "When we get to Jerusalem," he told them, "the Son of Man will be betrayed to the leading priests and the teachers of religious law. They will sentence him to die and hand him over to the Romans. 34 They will mock him, spit on him, beat him with their whips, and kill him, but after three days he will rise again."

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came over and spoke to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do us a favor."

36 "What is it?" he asked.

37 "In your glorious Kingdom, we want to sit in places of honor next to you," they said, "one at your right and the other at your left."

38 But Jesus answered, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of sorrow I am about to drink? Are you able to be baptized with the baptism of suffering I must be baptized with?"

39 "Oh yes," they said, "we are able!"

And Jesus said, "You will indeed drink from my cup and be baptized with my baptism, 40 but I have no right to say who will sit on the thrones next to mine. God has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen."

41 When the ten other disciples discovered what James and John had asked, they were indignant. 42 So Jesus called them together and said, "You know that in this world kings are tyrants, and officials lord it over the people beneath them. 43 But among you it should be quite different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be the slave of all. 45 For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many."

Jesus says, "Even I, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, God the Son, came here to earth not to be served but to serve others..." Look first at:

I. The Destination of Jesus

A. It says in Mark 10:32-34 [They were now on the way to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. The disciples were filled with dread and the people following behind were overwhelmed with fear. Taking the twelve disciples aside, Jesus once more began to describe everything that was about to happen to him in Jerusalem. "When we get to Jerusalem," he told them, "the Son of Man will be betrayed to the leading priests and the teachers of religious law. They will sentence him to die and hand him over to the Romans. They will mock him, spit on him, beat him with their whips, and kill him, but after three days he will rise again."]

B. There's no doubt that Jesus knew where He was headed and what awaited Him there. Jerusalem was His destination; His eyes and heart were fixed on Jerusalem and the cross that awaited Him there.

C. Everything He did and said in His earthly life, He did with His destiny in mind. He would fulfill the Father's will. This was God's plan for Jesus . . . the cross. Jesus was called to give His life to serve others – you and me. Phil 2:6-8 NIV "(Jesus) Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death- even death on a cross!"

D. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we must remember to live with our destination in mind too.

II. The Destiny of the Disciples

A. At least three times in Mark's gospel, Jesus describes His destiny: the cross. And all three times, the disciples miss it.

B. Example: Mark 8:31-34 NLT [Then Jesus began to tell them that he, the Son of Man, would suffer many terrible things and be rejected by the leaders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, and three days later he would rise again. As he talked about this openly with his disciples, Peter took him aside and told him he shouldn't say things like that.

Jesus turned and looked at his disciples and then said to Peter very sternly, "Get away from me, Satan! You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's."

Then he called his disciples and the crowds to come over and listen. "If any of you wants to be my follower," he told them, "you must put aside your selfish ambition, shoulder your cross, and follow me.

C. You see, like the rest of the disciples, Peter did not understand the concept of Messiah as suffering servant. They wanted Jesus to be a Messiah shaped in their image. They just didn't get it. That's why, after Jesus spilled His guts about His persecution, trial, and crucifixion, the disciples said (and I'm quoting from The Message, "Hey Teacher, we have something we want you to do for us! Arrange it so that we will be awarded the highest place of honor in your glory." Now, some of these guys may not have been well educated, but they were not stupid. They didn't hear Jesus' attempts to reveal what He is really like because they didn't want to hear it. They wanted a different kind of Messiah. They wanted a Messiah that would slap the Roman Empire around. They wanted a Messiah who would make them healthy, wealthy, and prosperous. Deep down inside they did not want a Messiah-servant who would die spread out on a Roman cross.

D. Jesus emptied Himself, and took on the form of a servant, and expects His followers to do the same. And I think the more we study Jesus' life, we will realize how little we really do think and act like Him, how much room we have for growth in Christlikeness. This leads us into the next thing we see in this passage.

III. The Disciples' Desire for Position

A. Imagine with me. A party of Jewish pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for this exciting Feast of the Passover. Jesus led the way with His disciples and a few others following Him. The whole trip they've been jockeying for position. As they get closer and closer to the holy city, Jesus turns to His disciples and says, "Come here, I've got something to tell you."

B. I'm quoting The Message now: "Listen to me carefully. We're on our way up to Jerusalem. When we get there, the Son of Man will be betrayed to the religious leaders and scholars. They will sentence Him to death. Then they will hand Him over to the Romans, who will mock and spit on Him, give Him the third degree, and kill Him. After three days He will rise alive."

James and John, Zebedee's sons, came up to him. "Teacher, we have something we want you to do for us." "What is it? I'll see what I can do." "Arrange it," they said, "so that we will be awarded the highest places of honor in your glory—one of us at your right, the other at your left." Jesus said, "You have no idea what you're asking."

C. The fact that Mark includes this story in his gospel account shows how honest he is. At this time in their lives, the disciples had some ambitions that were not very Christlike. Not pleasant, but true! He describes the disciples, warts and all.

D. Ever heard that phrase? Ever wonder where it comes from?

E. Years ago, a court painter was commissioned by Oliver Cromwell to paint a portrait of Cromwell. Cromwell was afflicted with warts on the face. Thinking it would please Cromwell, the painter omitted the warts in the painting. When Cromwell saw it, he said, "Take it away! And paint me warts and all."

F. It's Mark's intention in this gospel to show us Jesus' disciples, warts and all. These were ordinary people like us. But Jesus changed them and they changed the world. So can we!

IV. The Discipleship of Jesus

A. This passage makes it clear that Jesus' mission included making disciples out of this mixed little group of men (people of different backgrounds and personalities) and of questionable character. Discipleship—becoming like the teacher.

B. We serve God by serving others. In our self-serving culture with it's me-first mentality, being a servant is not very popular. In our American consumer culture even in church Christians come to be served rather than to serve. Christians ask "how will the church serve me" rather than, "how can I serve the church."

C. Everyone wants to lead, but no one wants to be a servant. But to be like Jesus is to be a servant. That's what He called Himself. He said He came to serve, not be served, and to give His life as a ransom for many. (v45)

The call of Jesus is so simple and clear: "Follow Me!" And that is a call to love expressed by sacrifice and servanthood.