

Champions/Women of Destiny

Year 2 LESSON 19



Servanthood: The Art of Significance

Servant Leadership series

Read: Mark 10:35-45; John 13:1-17

I was visiting with a youth group when I heard the Youth Pastor tell his teens that he needed them to sign up on committees for the upcoming Krunkfest Youth Outreach Rally.

He read the planning list of committees available. Some signed up for the music committee; some for the program team; some for hostesses; some for concession stand; and some for the security team. The Youth Pastor then asked, "Can I get some of you for the clean up crew?" But no one volunteered.

The Youth Pastor asked a couple of the teens if they would join this committee. The teens were not happy! They said something that helped me to understand the importance of this lesson and the importance of the Higher Ground Camp at KAA. They said, "Why do we have to clean-up? Why can't we do something more important? I don't have the gift of a Janitor."

What these teens and many others don't understand is that serving is the most important responsibility. Servanthood is a significant characteristic of the Christian. In other words, if you really want to be important, be a servant.

The Importance of Being a Servant

During the three-and-a-half years spent with His disciples, Jesus told them several times about His approaching death and resurrection. But they didn't really understand what He was truly saying to them. Instead, they still expected Him to bring in the Messianic Kingdom during their lifetime.

They were excited about Christ's glorious reign predicted in the Scriptures! Even though Christ would rule with a rod of iron, it would be a time when God's people would not suffer anymore or be ruled by others. That was the disciples' expectation and hope for Jesus.

The disciples were so caught up in the excitement of Christ's kingdom that they were playing one another for the most prominent positions and places with Christ. They didn't understand that Christ was going to check their attitudes and motives. In Matthew 20:20-21, James and John, at their mother's insistence, were the first to ask Jesus for a spot in royalty. But the other 10 disciples also wanted positions next to Christ (Mark 10:41). They thought greatness came from a position of power and influence. However, Jesus was about to teach them what leadership was truly all about.



True Leadership

True leadership, Jesus explained, comes from serving others instead of waiting to be served. Leaders should be servants even in their positions of power and authority.

Christ is the ultimate example of being a servant. *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many* (Mark 10:45). He spent His life on earth serving others. In His death, He shed His precious blood to pay the penalty for our sin.

Understanding Servanthood

One example of Jesus' life-style of serving others is recorded in John 13. The night before His crucifixion, the disciples were still arguing over greatness as they gathered together for the Passover celebration (Luke 22:24-27). Consequently, no one volunteered to perform the duties of a house servant and wash the disciples feet.



In that time period and place, people wore sandals and walked on dirt roads. When they arrived at a house, there was always a large tub of water at the entrance and usually a slave for washing feet. This task was one of the worst possible, reserved just for servants. But it was an important task, especially when people came for a meal. Instead of sitting in chairs around a table like we do today, they reclined on cushions/pillows on the floor around a low table. When someone's feet were in your face, you wanted them to be clean!

Although Jesus had already taught His disciples the importance of serving others, no one volunteered to serve the others and wash their feet. They were more interested in being served than in serving. **So Jesus showed them by His own example just what a servant is really like** (John 13).

Characteristics of a Servant

1. **He doesn't publicize.** Jesus didn't ask for volunteers or announce to the media what He was going to do. He just did it (see John 13:4-5).
2. **He meets needs in an active way.** People with servant hearts look for ways to help others and then perform their service. The immediate need was to wash feet, and Jesus did just that.
3. **He doesn't exert authority.** Jesus could have ordered one of the disciples to do this task. After all, He was God, the ultimate authority (v.3). Plus He was their leader. But true servants don't operate that way. Jesus said: ***"No servant is greater than his Master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him"*** (v.16).
4. **He doesn't expect thanks.** The disciples did not even thank Jesus for washing their feet. In fact, Peter took advantage of the situation and wanted more than His feet washed.
5. **He isn't weak.** Serving others is not a sign of weakness. On the contrary, it takes a strong person to give up his or her rights and comfort to help others.



6. **He is humble.** No one can develop a servant's heart without first getting rid of pride. Proud people usually don't do thankless jobs for others.
7. **He doesn't have a choice.** After Jesus set the example, He commanded His disciples – and us – to follow His example: ***“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you”*** (v. 15).



Results of Serving

Those who serve others, Jesus taught His disciples, experience true happiness: ***“Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them”*** (v. 17).

But more important, Jesus taught His disciples that true greatness comes from giving up your rights and desires as a servant to help others: ***“Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant”*** (Mark 10:43).

In John 13, Jesus used the Greek word **doulos** for servant. This word designated a slave who had no choice in the matter. He was someone else's property with no rights of his own. He was totally dependent on his master and had to give him unconditional, absolute obedience. He wasn't paid for his service and was rarely given thanks; he did what was required of a slave. To the African-American ancestry, this type of bond-servant is understood though not condoned. However, a **doulos** belonged body and soul to another, just like Christians belong to God.



In Mark 10, Jesus used another Greek word, **diakonos**, for minister or servant. In its general sense, this word referred to someone who provided for or cared for others. In the New Testament, it referred to someone who carried out his master's orders and sacrificed his own interests to help others achieve theirs. It focused on the servant (slave) at work. When used in describing Christians, a **diakonos** is one who actively serves others in love on Christ's behalf.

In light of these definitions, what kind of servant are you? At home? At school? In your Church? In your neighborhood?

If God were to grade you on being a servant, what grade do you think you would receive? Share your answers to these questions with your mentor.

Memory Verse - Mark 10:43-45

“Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Now watch this Supplemental Video about your lesson: <https://youtu.be/hfPfDIsIP08>

Champions and Women of Destiny

LESSON 19 Review Quiz



Click here if you are taking your quiz online, then send the email you receive to your mentor to grade and discuss: <https://forms.gle/WHa6jk4QXfxXPnFLA>

Student name _____
(PRINT CLEARLY)

1. In your own words, define a servant.
2. Multiple Choice: What are the benefits of being a servant?
(a) Lots of recognition (b) Greatness (c) Happiness (d) Gratitude
3. How does the world measure greatness?
4. How does God measure greatness?
5. True or False. One of the options believers have is to serve God.
6. Fill in the blanks. "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your _____, and whoever wants to be _____ must be servant of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be _____ but to serve, and to give His life as a _____ for many."
7. In Bible times, whose job was it to wash the feet of guests in the home? Why?
8. Who is the ultimate example of serving others? How did He show this example in John 13?
9. True or False. Good servants announce their actions so everyone will notice what they are doing.
10. Do you agree or disagree. Serving others is a sign of weakness. Please explain your answer.

I shared my memory verse with my mentor. Yes ___ No ___