

## Serve

### **Mark 10:43b-45**

<sup>43</sup> ...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> 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.”

### **Imagine the day when we stand before Jesus.**

- He judges our life and weighs our works.
- It will happen.
- When we stand before him there will be no earthly titles of significance.
- It won't matter if we had a big house.
- Our academic accomplishments will not be important.
- Our net worth will be worthless.
- The businesses we built and land we owned won't matter.
- What will matter is how well we did loving and following Jesus.
- The most significant one on that day will be the one who served in the greatest capacity.
- On that day servants will be elevated to the top.
- You will receive a crown and all of our crowns will be laid at the feet of the one who served the greatest – Jesus Christ – God's son.
- It will be a great day.
- It will be a shocking day.
- It will be a surprise to many.
- What I want for you most of all is that on that day you have **ZERO regrets.**
- Nothing left undone.
- No work not accomplished
- All of our selfishness and pride defeated in our lives.

### **Three characteristics of a Jesus loving servant.**

#### **I. Servants live a crucified life.**

### **Galatians 5:24**

<sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. (NIV)

### A. Unpack

1. This is easy to talk about and hard to live.
  - a. The word crucified is used.
  - b. There is nothing easy about a crucifixion.
  - c. Crucifixion means death.
  - d. So when you talk about crucifixion what you mean is dying.
  - e. Dying in a certain way.
  - f. Dying publically.
  - g. Dying openly
  - h. Dying completely
  - i. Dying willingly
  - j. Jesus willingly laid down his life.

### B. Those who belong to Jesus Christ.

1. There is a belonging.
2. A belonging to another – to be included in or connected to.

### Illustration

- Right above these verses is the verse on the Fruit of the Spirit.

### **Galatians 5:22-26**

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

3. This kind of sacrificial, servanthood life requires a unique relationship to Jesus Christ.
  - a. Galatians describes it as “belonging” to him.
  - b. The metaphor is that of a vine and it’s branches.

### Illustration

- Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.
- That is the kind of belonging Galatians is speaking of.
- So the fruit comes as a result of being connected to the vine or “Belonging” to Christ.
- The flow of life sustaining substance comes through Jesus Christ into those who are connected to HIM.
- He is the source of this Belonging life.

- He is the only source of life

### **Application**

- You are connected to HIM through your FAITH\*
- You need to know how powerful your faith is.
- Mustard seed faith moves mountains.

### **C. We are not alone in this.**

#### **Jesus makes this possible.**

1. We have the work of the cross completed.
2. Jesus work on the cross **does not** make it **automatic**.
3. Jesus work on the cross makes it possible.

### **Illustration**

- The things of God are not placed in your hand.
- The things of God are placed within your grasp.

### **Galatians 5:24**

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. (NLT)

### **D. God initiates and we respond.**

1. When you respond in **FAITH** – something powerful happens.
2. The passions and desires of our sinful nature are nailed to HIS cross and there they are crucified.
3. Right there on the cross of Jesus Christ.

### **Matthew 16:24**

If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me.

### **E. Jesus gives a very direct and simple response to his followers—and to us—about what it takes to become a true follower of Christ:**

#### **Take up Your Cross**

- Jesus was wrongfully sentenced to death, ridiculed, beaten, and spat on.
- After he was condemned to die, the Romans made Jesus carry his cross.
- Some scholars believe that this cross weighed over 100 pounds!
- But what is astonishing is that Christ does not give up.
- He carries his cross, and accepts God's will and God's plan for him.

- This is something that I have had to learn.
- I have learned not to only accept God’s plan for my life, but also to be resilient and be immovable in my faith.
- In times of difficulty, it is easy for us to try to run away from our problems or simply pretend that they do not exist.
- But what I believe Jesus is teaching us through carrying his own cross is that we only find true peace when we decide to embrace our suffering head-on and to move through the challenges, no matter how difficult they become.
- In fact, if you ask me, carrying our cross is not meant to be a solitary act. In the Stations of the Cross, we see Simon of Cyrene come to the aid of Jesus and help him carry the heavy cross for a while.

## **II. Servants follow the Holy Spirit’s leadership.**

### **Galatians 5:25**

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. (NIV)

#### **A. We are not alone in this.**

**We have the help of the Holy Spirit.**

##### **1. That’s great news because-**

### **YOU NEED HELP!**

#### **B. These words can elicit a strong reaction.**

1. They are easier to hear in the form of a question: “Do you need help?”
2. The question at least gives us the opportunity to opt out, for denial.
3. “No, I’m fine. I can take care of myself.
4. I can do it myself.”
5. But in the form of a statement, the words “you need help” give the diagnosis before the excuses ever have time to leave our mouth.
6. These words can sound more like an accusation than a lifeline.

#### **C. It’s one thing to admit, “I get by with a little help from my friends”**

1. Most of us can agree to that.
2. We even find ways to dress up such superficial admissions as strengths.
3. The help that we need, the help that we learn to long for is **not a push in the right direction.**
4. We need resurrection and restoration.

**D. The Holy Spirit gives us the freedom to admit our weakness.**

1. The problem is that we are hindered from looking to the Holy Spirit for resurrection and restoration as long as we continue to fight admitting our own weakness.
2. The very nature of asking for help entails a confession: “I can’t do it.
3. I can’t stop. I can’t change on my own. I need help.”
4. This is indeed the first step.
5. But how can we get there if our inability to admit our weakness is part of the problem?

**Illustration**

**John 14:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, keep my commands. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

- In John 14:15–17 we are given our answer that Jesus is for us
- and that he prays for us.
- In the preceding verses of 12–14 we see Jesus promising his very own works will be done in and through us and
- “Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it” (13–14).
- Jesus is for us and gives us this unconditional favor and access to him and to the Father.
- When we are given this good news, we are freed from the power to be our own strength, righteousness, and holiness.
- This is exactly how God intends for it to be.

**As Marva Dawn states**

“Even as Christ accomplished atonement for us by suffering and death, so the Lord accomplishes witness to the world through our weakness. In fact, God has more need of our weakness than of our strength. Just as powers overstep their bounds and become gods, so our power becomes a rival to God... By our union with Christ in the power of the Spirit in our weakness, we display God’s glory.”

**E. Knowing that Jesus is for us in our weakness tells us of his loving and saving attitude toward us.**

1. It means that arm-twisting games are over.
2. He knows exactly what he is getting into with sinners like us and it doesn't scare him.
3. We can "let our guard down."
4. Knowing that he is praying for us tells us of his sovereign advocating care on our behalf (cf. Hebrews 7:25).
5. It means that Jesus is not only present in our weakness but active—actively making "all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

#### F. Ways the Holy Spirit helps us in our weaknesses.

- **Interceding for us:** The Holy Spirit prays for us when we don't know what to pray for. He prays in a way that aligns with God's will.
- **Strengthening us:** The Holy Spirit gives us strength to stand strong for the things of God.
- **Comforting us:** The Holy Spirit comforts us through prayer.
- **Teaching us:** The Holy Spirit teaches us and counsels us.
- **Bearing our burdens:** The Holy Spirit bears our burdens and advocates for us.
- **Transforming our character:** The Holy Spirit helps us develop Christ-like attributes, such as love, joy, peace, patience, and self-control.
- **Opening our hearts to God:** The Holy Spirit helps us grow and ripen for growth and maturity.

### III. **Servants keep their eyes on the prize.**

#### A. Unpack

#### **I John 2:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. <sup>16</sup> For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. <sup>17</sup> The world and its desires pass away, **but whoever does the will of God lives forever.**

- **Hate the things and systems of this world – do not love the world**
- **Do not love the world**
- **I will love God**
- **I will live in this world while I love God.**

## **Promise**

### **John 14:23**

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

## **Unpack**

**Servants live a crucified life.**

**Servants follow the Holy Spirit’s leadership.**

**Servants keep their eyes on the prize.**