

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

Dave Owen

SERIES

Disciple

PART

4

TITLE

Servant

SCRIPTURE

John 13:1-17, Mark 10:35-45



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City Serve is an opportunity for us to engage our city and show the love to the community around us. In the past, we would gather on one day and go out into the community, but with COVID, we're using the opportunity to meet more in small groups, and be able to minister individually. We have a Feed the Hunger Packathon going on today. These food bags prepared today will be shipped all over the world. It'll provide not only hope for their physical needs, but also we have prayed over each one of these bags. And it's an opportunity for us to bring Christ and his love to them. One of our other initiatives is for our healthcare bags. These blessing bags are being prepared, just as an opportunity to engage your hospital staffs, and tell them how much we appreciate what they've done for our community during the COVID crisis, and anything else that comes up. We're preparing 1000 blessing bags to go to nurses, support staff, cleaning crews at the hospitals. It's an opportunity just to remind them that we're praying for them.

The heart and soul of City Serve is really to engage our members in the community and share love. The love of Christ, and answer some of the questions that people have. So while most people won't pick up the phone and call the church and ask for help, when we go out and engage the community in love on them, it's a great opportunity to bring Jesus to their doorstep, and to share the compassion and love that we have for them, that was shown to us through Christ.

Well, good morning to you Providence. It is great to see you. My name is Dave, one of the pastors here. And it's a joy to be able to teach you. If you are a guest with us this morning, we say a special welcome. And for those online, we say good morning to you as well. And for any Clemson fans in the house, we just say, we're grateful you're here and... Okay, here we go. Hey, we are excited for City Serve, what God did in the spring. Amazing things happened, so much so that it even continued to the summer. And I just want to applaud you Providence as a people. Your generosity has been amazing. And so we've had the opportunity, the last two weeks, we heard word from some of our contacts of the hospitals that we try to just love on and serve, that a lot of the nurses were just completely exhausted. And so they would 12 hour shifts and just go home. And so we was like, "We could do meals for you." And so God opened the door for the last two weeks to deliver 600 meals to the nurses. So well, we can praise God for that.

We had a team of volunteers that met them when they got off of work at 7:00 AM, they did the 12 hour night shift. And it was enough to feed a family of four. And so we got those to them. And then we had another group meet the nurses at 7:00, when they got off at night, and to be able to just take that meal home. And so we're just grateful. And so with City Serve, we love it around here. We're excited to be able to get back to some normalcy as we look in October 23 to meet in this room and to rally together, we gather together then we scattered throughout. And so sign up for that. It's an amazing joy of serving our city. Over 20 different locations we've identified right now, that we will be throughout the city, loving on them, encouraging them, and serving them.

And so no greater time to launch the sign up for City Serve than when you are going to look at a passage and what a disciple is. And the thing that we're going to study today is a disciple is one who serves. And so we thought that was extremely fitting. And so Matthew 28, tells us this; that Jesus has come out of the grave, he's resurrected from the dead and he says all authority has been given to me. And so go and make disciples and before you make a disciple, you have to be a disciple. And to be a disciple, you have to know what a disciple looks like. And we've looked the last three weeks in our study of just these characteristics of a disciple. And they are they're marked by love. We learned they are worshipers of Jesus. And the last week we looked at they learn. They lean into the word, they learn about the Bible, and they study the Bible. We offered an incredible amount of... If you took the Bible reading journals, and they're still there if you don't didn't get one. So we've got those.

But today we want to look at just the idea of not just coming off of your own throne in your heart and serving every now and then, but what does it look like to lay your life down and lean in to be a servant, to live a life of servants. And when you think about this topic, serving it's usually never convenient, and left to the clock and perfect timing is probably not I'm going to happen. But when you lean into it, you slowly enter yourself of yourself. And if you're filled with God, you see this remarkable thing takes place. And this is horrid. This is the paradox of Christianity, that when you give your life away, you find it. There's joy, and there's hope that rise. And listen, if you are living your life, full of trying to be served all the time, it is both empty and exhausting. There's a better way. So let's pray together.

'Father, we love you. And we are so grateful for this amazing word that you have given us. So as we read it, God, may read us, and as we get in it, may it get in us. And God, we don't want just more information. We're familiar with this story. And can I just pray right now, against the familiarity of this story, kind of seeing this as another boring story? It's not, it's remarkable. So you need, God, by your spirit and your power to move in our hearts, and open our eyes, to behold, the Son of God. And then may we be shaped in such a way that we would learn from him to leverage our life, to live a life of service. So God, do only that which you can do. We pray, in Jesus name, amen.'

So if you have your Bibles, John chapter 13. John, chapter 13. If you don't have a Bible, it's underneath the chair there, you can have that. And John chapter 13, we're going to read through that. If you're new to Christianity, and new to the Bible, we're just grateful that you're with us and the larger numbers of the chapters, the smaller numbers of the verses, and we're just going to kind of plow through this chapter, chapter 13. Let me give you the context, John, is the beloved disciple, very close to Jesus, saw a lot. And John 20, he writes, specifically, that he writes this book, this letter, in hopes that you would believe on the Son of God, and then by believing on him, you would find life. So that's the thesis of the whole book.

And then one through 12 is incredible chapters of the overview of his life and ministry, and certain things happening. But then when you get to chapter 13, from chapter 13, to chapter 17, slows way down. I mean, it's like the brakes, you stop. And then you're able to just really see that it's only in those four or five chapters,

it's like hours of what's happening in those last hours of the life of Christ. And so when we come to this chapter, we are the night before he is going to be arrested later that night, in the early morning, and it's the Last Supper, as we would know it. Here we're going to read about the feasts of the Passover, I'll explain that in a second. But this is the setting, he's at a table with his disciples, and he's hours away from being arrested and crucified.

And so chapter 13:1, here's what it says; 'now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world, to the Father, having loved his own, who were in the world, he loved them to the end. And during supper when the devil had already put it into his heart, into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon son to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God, and he was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments and taking a towel, tied it around his waist, and then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples feet and to wipe them with a towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" And Jesus answered him, "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." And Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." And Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." Of course, Peter being Peter says, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands in my head." And Jesus said, "the one who is bathed does not need to wash except for his feet. But is completely clean and you are clean. But not every one of you," for he knew who he was to betray him. That was why he said, not all of you are clean.

Verse 12, 'when he washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I've done to you? You call me teacher and Lord, and you are right, for I am so. If I then your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you An example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

So three truths this morning. I want to show you about a disciple that shape the way you serve. The first one is this his disciples of Jesus ponder his eagerness to serve. Disciples of Jesus ponder his eagerness to serve. It's the feast of the Passover, what is happening. This is the celebration once a year of God's people who were in captivity in Egypt, and God raised up Moses and Moses went to the Pharaoh and hundreds of years of captivity and slavery and bondage and really hard lives that they lived in. And he goes, and he says, "God has sent me to let you know that he wants you to let my people go," and he just says no, over and over and over. And then God finally raised up 10 plagues against Egypt and against the people of Egypt, and it was chaos. The Book of Exodus, just walks through all of that.

And then the last plague is the plague that is... We would know this as the death angel. It's the death of the firstborn in all homes. And the only way that you could escape the death angel coming and impacting your home, was if you would kill a lamb and put the blood over the doorpost of your home. And as the death angel entered into Egypt, if the blood was there, he would literally pass over that doorpost. And so if you were the people of Israel, and this happened in the history of your time, and then Moses led you out of captivity and into the promised land, you would set up a remembrance of that. And this is what's happening. It's the feast of the Passover. They're celebrating thousands years earlier, God's deliverance from slavery, and it's just a way of reminder. It's a reminder of what God's doing. And what's amazing about God's sovereignty and timing is the very Passover lamb is at the table, and he is celebrating along with them, but he's going to point their eyes from that feast and that supper to himself.

And so God's doing a work. And so Jesus is there. He's at the table. And it's amazing what verse one says, notice that verse one it says, that when Jesus knew that his hour had come, so it's, it's winding down, the cross is coming to depart out of this world, the way he would depart out of this world was through a cross, and then resurrection. And so all of this is coming, the tension is building in the text. And then he says, having loved his own, who were in the world, he loved them to the end. This is remarkable. His eagerness to serve by serving and loving them, even to the last breath that he had. He loved them to the end of his life, and he will love you to the end of your life. And he leans in. And what's fascinating, the writer quickly tells us... I would just go to verse three, four, but quickly after he says, he has loved them to the end. And in verse two, notice what he says in verse two during supper when the devil had already put it in into his heart. So the devil is already put it in his heart. Judas is at this table, and Jesus is still demonstrating love.

You work with some people, they remind you of the devil, don't you? You live with some. You go to school with some. And if the Savior can love even those who hate him, you and I can too.

It's fascinating, what takes place. And I think the reason for you and I and for Jesus because we're going to hear it in the next verse that he could love even the one who was going to betray him is because he knew the end of the story. Notice verse three, verse three, says, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hand, and that he had come from God, and he was going back to God. He knows that meta narrative, he knows the endgame. That's what gives you endurance sometimes when you're in those hard places, is that the end of Jesus, he's the sovereign one, and that he has loved you in remarkable ways. And because of the way he's loved you, even in spite of yourself, even when we were sinners, He loved us, we can extend love. We have to stay close to this narrative. This is what he's doing.

Now, I want you to lean in for just a minute because we're going to... It's 11 o'clock service. You've had four cups of coffee. I need you to buckle up. Okay? We just taxied right then, okay, we just taxied. And we're just turning around. And you know how she gets a little bit louder, right? And then... Right? And we were getting ready to go, okay? So I need you to stay with me. I need you to stay with me because I'm going to give you multiple passages. I'm not going to read every one of them to you. But for you to feel the weight and the

context of verse four, we got to go through these other verses. Okay. And so here we go. Matthew 18:1-5, Mark 9:30-41, and Luke 9:43-50.

So the other accounts of the gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, there's these three stories that are recorded in these three Gospels. The stories are recorded, you have the story of the Transfiguration. Since it's a big word, what happened there? Well, Jesus, he takes his inner squad of his disciples, Peter, James, John, they go up to a mountain top, right, they go to a mountaintop, and as they're up to the mountaintop, the Spirit of God falls unique, fresh way on Jesus's face and his countenance and God's voice comes from a cloud. He says, "This is my son, whom I'm well pleased. I mean, it's so amazing what happens, the countenance of Jesus, the sign is shown. And his boys are like, "We got to build a cabin up here. We need to stay here. This is remarkable." But he's like, "No, we're not doing that. There's more to be done. And so all three of those passages capture the Transfiguration.

We then come down, and Jesus engages with this demonic power, that he cast out, this demon. And so it's like, you see the power of God on display through Jesus. And then on all three accounts, right? You go from the mountaintop to watching his power, the gospels record that the disciples that were following Jesus, that an argument broke out among all of them. I hear you say, "Well, what was that argument?" The argument was, who was the greatest among themselves? You've seen the Transfiguration, you've seen the power of God, you've been walking with Him, and then in the back, there's... like sometimes when you're walking, there's a little mumbling behind you, and you wonder what's going on behind. What's going on behind is that they are arguing among themselves, behind and close to the great one, right? They're arguing in such a way of who's the greatest. They don't quite get it.

And so what's fascinating about each of these texts, now, I'm just going to, again, you got to stay with me, I'm just going to give you a snapshot from Matthew, Mark, and Luke, from each of those of just ASINITS that Jesus responds, how he responds, it's fascinating. In Matthew 84, he says, 'listen, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.' He's a little kid, he's utilizing this humility, this dependence that a kid has with mom and dad. There's a humility that needs to come. That's what greatness is. In Mark 9:35, he says, 'if anyone would be first he must be last of all and servant of all. In Luke 9:48, he says, for he who is least among you all, is the one who is great.' So just almost one liners, just a response over hearing the argument breaking out, right? He's trying to give them some categories for what greatness looks like. Because when we're full of our self, it's empty and exhausting. Seeking to be served.

I love the book by Tim Keller. It's really thin, but it's powerful. It's called the Freedom of Self-Forgetfulness. And the thesis of the book is this, is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less. This is what he's trying to get the guys to do. Well, then we come to... Hang on. Here we go, it gets better. Matthew 20. Now, this is about the third time that he is telling them about his death. Each of these times when this argument even broke out, there's a small few sentences, and it says that he foretells of his death and resurrection. One language was like, hey, it's going to temple's going to come down in three and then be raised up and they're

like, “You’re the temple or what?” And then they argue with who’s the greatest. And so he’s foretelling at different points and times of his death and burial and resurrection.

Well, in Matthew 20, he leans in with more specific language of saying, I’m going to be crucify. And then I’m going to be raised from the dead. Now, he’s using this language, right? So the disciples don’t get it. Well, now we’re going to see shows up. So Mama, the mother of Zebedee’s sons came to Jesus in Matthew 20:20, and knelt down and asked of a favor from King Jesus, right? It’s sort of like parents, we all do this, right? Kids, a middle school to develop an end to the sports, but you think they’re the greatest in any sport, right? And so you go to the coach, and like, “Coach, if you could just see what I saw in the backyard last week, you would put them on a team now, come on.” Right? That’s just the way we... Well, Mama was thinking like this with Jesus and the kingdom.

And she asked this. And he says to her, he responds, “You don’t know what you’re asking?” Matthew 20:26, it’s almost as if he took what we just saw from Luke and Mark, and Matthew, it’s almost encompassed in his response. He says, he gets a little bit deeper. It’s not just a one liner. He says, “Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your servant, even as the Son of Man came, not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” I mean, do you feel the tension? There’s arguments breaking out who’s the greatest, he’s foretelling of his death and burial, resurrection, and they’re just not getting it. Mom doesn’t get it. And then here’s what’s... This is so fascinating. Now, I’m going to hit timeout on John 30, for a second. You don’t have to turn there. Just stay with me. Luke 22. Now, Luke 22, records this same dinner situation, this feasts of the Passover, this last supper as we would know it.

And when I witness accounts, and people that record this, just because they’re not exactly the same, it actually validates for me the totality of everything that was taking place. It doesn’t cause me to question well, I didn’t hit it. No, it just, man, Here’s the breadth of this. And what Luke records, now, what Luke records, there you got to stay with me, Luke records, this Passover, so much so with specificity that Jesus is going to transition from the Passover meal to the instituting the Lord’s Supper. The crescendo of years and years and years of this meal is actually about his blood in his body. Luke will say it, and he at the dinner table at this same scene, as we read in John 13, ‘and he took the bread he gave thanks to it and broke it, and gave it to them saying, This is my body given for you. This is... Do this in remembrance of me. And in the same way after the supper, he took the cup saying that this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. This is the table. This is the moment before the cross.’ And then Luke 22:24 tells us this. “A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be the greatest.”

Are you serious? Yeah, I’m serious. Because that’s you and me as well. Watching God do incredible things, and still not listening to him. Right? I mean, they’re at the table. See, the problem was they were fighting over a title and not a towel. That’s what’s going on. They’re fighting over a title and not a towel to wash feet. They missed the point. They want status, not servanthood and John... Okay, Luke 22, back to John. So John gives

us what many scholars believe, is Jesus's reaction to overhearing the argument that we just read from Luke 22 of who was the greatest. Are y'all with me? Y'all stay with me?

Are you? So Luke 22 is recording this arguments breaking out. John didn't record the argument, break it out. But if you do a little cross referencing, I believe that his response and what we're going to see in verse four, verse four is getting ready to land on us, is His response to the argument, who's the greatest?

Verse 4, 'he rose from supper.' Notice no one liners. Notice no statements, no categories of shifting of the categories. Nope. 'He rose from supper. And he laid aside his outer garments. Taking a towel, tied it around his waist, poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples feet.' Listen, he washed, nasty, dirty feet. Custom in the day custom in the day is, you travel everywhere with your Chacos on, collect the dust settles in between the toes, says nasty. Then you go to dinner, and the way you eat dinner is you leave them on the floor, with elbow here, and use the right hand eat and the feet are stretched out. And the person at the table, their head is next to your feet all the way around the table.

And here's the Son of God standing up hours before the cross washing nasty feet. And the path to the cross was through the nasty dirty feet. Because the point of cleaning dirty feet is that he would make a way to clean our dirty hearts. He is blazing a trail to a hill called Calvary and he is putting on a remarkable display of what servanthood looks like at this table. But it will be times that thou on that cross.

And listen, I'm spending a little more time on this first point because the fuel and the resource that will sustain your heart and your mind to live a life of service is to ponder how much you have been served in Christ. This is the fuel. This is the resource. It's the gospel, the gospel of Jesus, His death, burial, resurrection life he lived that we cannot live. All of that when you embrace that the first time you're justified the first time you're made right, you're declared right with God, then you how do you live? Do you live in your own strength? No, you live in the strength that he displayed there. You're not justified over and over, you sanctify, you're being made like him and you're pondering all that he does, because the resources you have to serve the way he served, is you remember, over and over how much you've been served by Christ.

That's the resource. It's not do better, it's remember more. You ponder the cross. No filth, or sin is so far outside the reach of His love and no amount of good is there to merit his favorite. It's by faith through grace, it's his mercy, but God who's rich mercy. This is what he's accomplished. You admit and believe and confess. And he says you're born again, not physically, but spiritually, he gives you a new heart. And if you are over that, or you are bored by that, I'd encourage you to repent this morning. I'd encourage you to repent. Because I want to ask you the way of application, do you ponder the cross daily? Do you ponder? I mean, is there some time in your Bible reading plan in your prayer time before a meal, something daily, where you ponder all that the Son of God accomplished for you that you could not accomplish? Could there be a daily reminding of yourself of what you could not accomplish that Christ has accomplished for you, and you ponder that few minutes longer? And just be remind. It takes you really low, and it builds you up. This is the heart transformation.

And so do you ponder the cross daily? Or have you put your trust in Christ? Listen, I encourage you today to put your trust in Christ to lean in to all that he has accomplished.

The second point is this his disciples of Jesus, they pursue his explanation of a servant. They not only ponder his eagerness to serve, but they pursue his explanation of a servant. Notice in verse 12. Notice in verse 12, what happens. He says, “Do you understand? Do you understand what I have done?” He’s washed their... You call me teacher and Lord, I am the teacher, I am the Lord. I’m at the table. And he begins to unpack what greatness is. And it’s fascinating because Jesus, listen, he doesn’t rebuke ever throughout the scriptures. He doesn’t rebuke the desire to be great. He redefines the idea of what greatness is.

What greatness is all about is not where you sit, it’s how you serve. You don’t seek to be served you seek to serve. You don’t grab the high chair, you take the low chair. William Lane, a commentator says this, “The reversal of all human ideas of greatness and rank was achieved when Jesus came not to be served, but to serve.” He’s redefining what greatness looks like. Listen, it’s in all of our heart, right? It’s in your heart. It’s in my heart. It’s in all of our hearts. When we’re young, it’s manifested, sinfulness has manifested over a period of time. But you remember, when you’re young, and everybody runs out after church after dinner or something, you go into the store, and all the kids are running, and everybody’s sprinting to the front door on the passenger side. And they’re shouting something as they run. Right? They’re running and they’re shouting, what are they shouting?

Shotgun, right? shotgun because we want the front seat. We never, I’ve never, ever heard anybody run outside with all that fuss, backseat. I got it. That’s not in here. Because we like the place of honor. We like the front seat. Listen, this selfishness, the narcissistic mindset that’s everywhere these days, it’s being manifested, is it not? Even in the realm of selfies. Now, think about this for a second. selfies with the picture right with the phone? I’m not anti selfie, so don’t send me an email, but all these selfies right? The word selfie was actually added to the Oxford Dictionary in 2013. Okay? 2013, didn’t even exist. And then I was reading this week a family medical journal. It’s a worldwide study from 2011 to 2017, 259 people died of selfies. What? What? This is how it happened, right? You go to the Grand Canyon. And let me just encourage you, the Grand Canyon didn’t need your picture in it to make it look better. Okay? I’m just with you, right? The Grand Canyon is good enough. It’s there. Right? And so what we do, we feel like we can add something, we feel like we can add something to the Grand Canyon. So we get right up on the edge, right? And then we’re like, “This is going to be good right here, right?” 259 people did on the edge of waterfalls and canyons and mountains.

Now, watch this from 2011 2017 study showed only 50 people died from shark attack. You got a better chance to live in swimming with the sharks and taking a selfie. And I would totally encourage you don’t try to take a selfie with a shark. Okay? That’s really bad news. Right? Listen, Jesus, what is he doing? He’s changing all the categories, right? He doesn’t want you to come off the throne and serve He wants you to live a life of service.

And it's not what you do, his followers, his disciples is not what we do, it's who we are. And the world says greatness is defined by status, but the Word says greatness is found in serving. And so listen, application, look to the word and not the world for your definition of greatness. Jesus has laid it out. So the third point and last, we're going to fly. Here we go. disciples of Jesus practice his example of serving. He gets real practical. Verse 14-17. He just lays it out. He just says, 'Now if I then your Lord and teacher have washed your feet, so should wash one another's feet for I've given you the example.' What's he doing? He's He's working his way. He's reasoning from the greater to the lesser. If I the teacher, I'm the Lord. He says, if I've done this, listen, as my followers, should you not also do this, to practice this example of serving, the way I have served. I'm intrigued oftentimes, as I'm seemingly getting older faster, I don't think it's winding up past, it just seems like it's going faster. And so I love looking at and reviewing and studying and gleaning from older folks who have lived just life of service. This is something special.

There's some in this church have been working in the nursery for 40 years. And they walk with such as a sense of freedom and emptiness. This is not about them, they just serve. And years ago, we had the joy to host here at this place at Providence, Truett Cathy. Truett Cathy is the founder of chick-fil-A, if you're not familiar with that. He died in 2014, 92 years old. And we had the opportunity to meet him, and it was an incredible night, I encouraged him how much I love the sauce as drink in with a straw. And it's amazing. And it was a sweet night. And some of our pastors and our interns were in the back because he was just so kind talk to us, we usually do like it was over 1000 men, it was a business. This has been a time where we're just trying to have faith in life and to share and we could do barbecue but that probably won't be good. So we had Chick-fil-A sandwiches. And so he comes in, and we're in the back, and we're and we're just talking, and he's so kind of so genuine. And he just answering all the questions we have, and we're trying to take notes and learn some secret, like what's going on. And then he tells us man, he and his wife, they love Sunday afternoon, because his wife, she still cuts the coupons out of the newspaper on Sundays.

And he said, but I love Sunday mornings. He says, "One of the reasons we're just closed on Sunday," he goes, "I just love serving my local church." And I'm thinking, man, I like to be in your Sunday school class, do you do like principles of faith and work and all these? And he goes "no" and he's been married, he was 65 years, right? So I'm like, "Do you really the marriage class? What do you teach?" And he said, "I love eighth grade middle school boys to teach them how to be men."

And so for 60 years, he taught Sunday school every day to middle school, eighth grade boys. A life of service. Some of those eighth grade Boys that came through his class, carried his casket at his funeral. Listen, Philipians two, says like this, do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, rather in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests, but each of you to the interest of others, in your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. What was that mindset of Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature, God, he was the God man did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage. What does that mean when he says that? It means, look, when he was 12 years old, and he was playing kickball with the boys in downtown Jerusalem, right? He didn't win every game. That's what

that means. He didn't he didn't tap in and lording over him and over everybody, and just use his strength, His deity, to pump himself up, he blessed others and served others.

It says Rather, he made nothing of self by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself to becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Look not only to the interests of your own, but to those of others. And what's the resource that's going to move in your heart and move in your mind when you want to be served, to cause you to serve? You have this mindset, you have this mindset, he the very nature of God did not consider the quality of God so there be grass, or take advantage of rather he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, even to the point of death on a cross.

You ponder that cross, and you move into it, and you lean into it. Do nothing out of selfish ambition. Listen, years ago, my wife Julie and I were married. We had a lot of counseling because, I needed a lot of help. And so one of the counseling sessions I'll never forget it. Dear friend, your brother, he's like, he said, "Now, listen, here's what's going to happen in first year," and he says, "Now, you're going to be tempted to want to pray to God on her behalf for him to change her. And then Julies, you're going to be tempted by you what you see, t pray to God and to ask God to do a radical change." He said, "But this is what I want you to do. Your first year, just a little rhythm of service, practicing." He goes, "First year when you feel that come on, and it's going to come probably the first week. When you feel it come on, I want you to go into opposite rooms in your home, and I want you to get on your knees physically, and I want you to put your hand like you're raising your hand, close the blinds. Raise your hands, people think you're crazy. And here's what I want you to do, I want you to volunteer yourself to be changed.

Rather than just praying for the other to be changed." And what happened was remarkable. He used this word, "Try to out serve one another. Try to out serve. Having this mindset, you got to stay close to the Savior, because if you get over or bored with how he serves you, it's not going to happen.

So it's gospel-centered, you stay close to this gospel." And he goes, "And then practically you're going to experience things that the Spirit of God's going to do, that you're just walking by faith, you're trusting him, you're pondering his greatness and the heart begins to just change." and I'll never forget it. Coming home from work one day, I'm driving home and I knew the fridge was empty with milk and so I go into the grocery store to get some milk, and I walk in to get the milk and I'm walking up to the milk counter because they put it in the very back because the thing that you need the most you walk by everything else and buy a bunch of stuff. And so I know the marketing strategy behind it and I'm walking to get the milk, and I'm reaching down, I'm reaching down for the God-ordained glorious red cap whole milk that everyone should drink because its fullness it's from God and it's the good stuff, it's thick, it's good for your bone, right? So I'm reaching down for that and the spirit whispers to my heart "this opportunity for you to serve your wife." And I step back I'm like, "Did anybody else hear that voice?" I'm like "Lord?" Ponder the gospel. How do you serve? She don't like the red cap. Okay, she likes the water with some white... the water with the white stuff put inside of it right?

It's got the light blue cap, it's the skim milk, like why are you drink... That's not how the cow made it. Look that's... So I'm having a little bit of argument tension in my heart with the Lord. But I said, "All right." So I go grab the skim. So I'm driving home, I'm swelling up with some pride because I actually listened and I get out and I run into the house and I get into the house like, "Sweetie, you won't believe what happened. Amazing thing happened driving on the way home from work." And she's like, "I got something to tell you. You won't believe what happened." I'm like, "Well, you go first babe. I serve, right? Let's go." So she goes, "I was driving home on the other side of town. And I went to the grocery store because I knew we needed some milk." And I said, "No, you didn't." And so she says, "Yeah, and I was hearing the Spirit of God begin to speak to my heart. And I know I like this stuff, and you think it's water? But I got you some whole milk on the way home." I was like, "No, you didn't." Come on. Let's go. Right?

And I said, "Well, first of all, I'm grateful the sovereignty of God can speak in two different grocery stores at the same time, right?" It's one thing... omnipresent, right? Kroger and Harris here at the same time, glory to God. But watch this. Now, watch this. Verse 17, read verse 17, we're done. Verse 17. If you know these things, bless her, you if you do them. Now, listen, you don't serve to get blessed. But when you serve, you might be blessed.

That's not the posture of the heart to get, the posture of the heart to give your life away to serve, and randomly, bias kindness. You know what happened? You know what happened that night, I drank a glass a whole milk. That's what happened that night. Right? I was content with the other. But that night, it was a special blessing. That's what he does. He's just kind in those ways. So let me encourage you listen, in way of application, let me encourage you, if you have not attended our pathway, our Serve Pathway. It's a remarkable class one hour, about every three weeks, we'll promote it in here. It meets during this hour in the gathering. But it's an opportunity to take us spiritual gifts in the inventory of like maybe what God's wired you, some of your passions, some of your desires, and then how could God use those to serve his mission to introduce all people to Jesus and grow them up to love and worship Him. And so I'd encourage you to consider that.

Second, I encourage you to stop by the welcome desk, there's a serve card, there's a serve card out there that has multiple place listed of opportunities just to serve the body of Christ here from nursery workers that we need to live group leaders that we need to worship team volunteers to hospitality volunteers. It's just the opportunity to be on mission with God together, and serve in such a way that you see God work in miraculous ways. And then last, I'd encourage you to sign up for City Serve if you haven't. Now, you can go to our website, [pray.org/cityserve](http://pray.org/cityserve), sign up for that. Come here on that morning, we gather together that we scattered into the city. And this could be a remarkable day. So I'd encourage you to consider that as well.

Let me pray for us. Father in heaven, we do love you. We are grateful for how you have served us God, so well, you didn't pick up a towel for us. You picked up a cross for us. and you have provided a way for our sins, to be cleaned, for our sins to be removed, to be forgiven. And so God would you fill us this week? First and foremost, before you launch us out to serve God, would you remind us of the greatness of the phrase that it is

finished, the work that you have done, it is finished on the cross, and that we serve from that place not to get to that place that we serve, because of what you have accomplished and God is we pray that you would among people, Providence, God continue to allow us to be empty of ourselves and fill with you, men to lean in, and to serve with joy and peace and ultimately, the greatest way God we could serve is to share and tell someone about you what your son has done. So we ask that you would accomplish these things. And we love you sustain us for the week. God we pray in Jesus name, amen.



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