

Sermon Title: Growth through service

In August, it will be the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the scariest time in my life.

- The story of my back surgery in 2017

I wouldn't be here today without my family, but I want to thank all of the nurses, aides, and workers at the hospital and nursing home and my physical therapists.

Serving people who need it the most is the best picture of Godly service that I have ever seen.

### **Matthew 20:25-28**

Out of all of the people that have ever walked on this earth, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only one that is worthy of being served

- Jesus was present at the creation of our world
- Jesus chose to leave the paradise of heaven
- But Jesus gave us the words we just read.

For us as Christians we need to not Lord authority over others, but we need to count those who serve others as great, and if we want to be first, we must become a slave to others.

We need to understand the term slavery:

- Here we see how awful slavery became in America, but it wasn't that way in Jesus' time.
- Slavery, in Jesus' time was a way of working off a debt.

The big picture that Jesus is painting for us is that if we are to be followers of Him, we need to do what he did, and he lived his entire life for other people and not for himself.

Serving others is both an obligation that we have as Christians, and a means of grace.

- A means of grace is a tool or instrument that God uses to strengthen and nurture us so that we grow in conformity to Christ.
- We grow as we serve.

### **Exodus 3:9-12**

- Moses said that he was not worthy of doing God's will. God responded with "it's not about who you are, it's about the fact that I will be with you."
- God saved the Israelites from their harsh slavery and brought them out of Egypt to serve God on that mountain.
  - God saves us from our sin, to serve God instead of serving sin.

What do we earn and what do we not earn by serving God?

- Through serving God we do not earn salvation or even any bit or part of salvation. We are unprofitable servants.
- We do receive a feeling of doing something good.
- By serving God we get purpose, an opportunity to use the gifts that God has given us to build up His Kingdom.
  - Luke 19, the parable of the talents.

Some practical tips for serving:

1. Wrap your mind around the concept that we are always serving someone or something.
2. Make the choice that it is ok to be an unprofitable servant.
3. Pick an organization or ministry to serve in that you are passionate about.
4. Make sure that you are serving to thank Christ for what he has done, and not just to receive the applause of other people.

Challenges:

1. If you are not currently serving in a BRC ministry or gospel organization outside of BRC please talk to someone to find an opportunity to serve God.
2. If you are serving, ask yourself if you are serving to please Jesus Christ or if you are serving to please people.
3. If you don't know what your spiritual gifts are, or what you are passionate about, so you don't even know where to start looking how to serve, I challenge you to become a member of BRC to find your SHAPE

Each different person serving the Lord makes up the body of Christ.

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Scripture passages to go up on the Screen:

Matthew 20:25-28 - <sup>25</sup> But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup> It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, <sup>27</sup> and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, <sup>28</sup> even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Exodus 3:9-12 - <sup>9</sup> And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. <sup>10</sup> Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” <sup>11</sup> But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” <sup>12</sup> He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”