

Changing the World through the Heart of a Servant **By Bob Young**

Introduction

Who is the greatest? Mark 9:24ff

Who is the greatest Christian? greatest preacher? greatest elder? the greatest church?

Matthew 11 answers: the least!

In the Bible, greatness is defined by **servanthood**. **He that would be the greatest....”**

- It is easy to talk about “serving God.” Serving God means loving and serving others (1 John 3-4; Matthew 25)
- God shaped you for service, not for self-centeredness
- Without a servant heart, you will be tempted to misuse your abilities for personal gain.
- You will be tempted to make excuses for not meeting some needs.
- Your servant heart will reveal your depth of maturity.
- It is possible to serve in church for a lifetime without ever being a servant.
- To be a genuine servant, you must have a servant’s heart.
- How can you know if you have the heart of a servant?
- Jesus’ example: John 13:1–17

SERVICE BEGINS WITHIN US—DEVELOPING A SERVANT HEART

A Christian is different because different values lead to different actions, John 13:1-2; 17:14-19

Different values, 1 John 2:15-17, worldly and Christian are opposite views

Different thoughts, Rom. 12

Different motivations, Mk. 10:35ff

Different actions, proactive

Different reactions, Mt. 5, actions/reactions, reflexes or thoughtful proactivity

Humanity will respond to God's power

Not only was Jesus expressing the full extent of his love, but also the full extent of his power.

The Olympics are appealing because we like to see people push the boundaries of what is physically possible.

Similarly, we connect with and worship a God who is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient.

God reveals himself and his power through service

It can be hard for us to accept that God, at his core, is a servant.

We have an anemic theology of divine humility; but you won't understand the sacrifice of Jesus until you can grasp that God is a servant. Philippians 2:4–7

Evidence of the Servant Heart: Real Servants Are Available to Serve

2 Timothy 2:4: “No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.”

Servants don't fill up their time with pursuits that limit their availability. Servants make themselves available to their masters. They are ready to jump into service when called on.

If you serve only when it's convenient, you're not a real servant. Real servants do what's needed, even when it's inconvenient.

A good test: Are you available to God any time? Can he mess up your plans without you becoming resentful?

Being a servant means giving up the right to control your schedule; allowing God to interrupt whenever He wants.

If you will remind yourself at the start of every day that you are God's servant, interruptions won't frustrate you as much, because your agenda will be whatever God wants to bring into your life. Remember all your time, every

moment, belongs to God. It is all right to have plans but be ready and willing for God to upset them. Servants see interruptions as divine appointments for ministry and are happy for the opportunity to practice serving.

SERVICE IS SEEN OUTSIDE US--FOCUSING ON OTHERS

Jesus teaches that a servant meets needs—Mark 10:45

Of others, Phil. 2:1-4

On others' timetable

Unselfishly

Of others before self

Is available always

Evidence of the Servant Heart: Real Servants Pay Attention to Needs of Others

Servants are always on the lookout for ways to help others and always sensitive to others' cries.

When they see a need, they seize the moment to meet it, just as the Bible commands us:

Galatians 6:10: "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

When God puts someone in need right in front of you, He is giving you the opportunity to grow. Opportunity comes – and goes. We can soon lose it if we don't seize it.

We miss many occasions for serving because we lack sensitivity and spontaneity.

Great opportunities to serve never last long. They pass quickly, sometimes never to return.

SERVICE IS FULFILLED ABOVE US--HONORING GOD

We reflect God by serving others.

John 13:12–17

We are most like God when we are serving others.

Notice that Jesus even washed the feet of Judas, his betrayer.

When we are hurting, we desire to be served; but the best way to experience God's healing is through serving others.

Serving helps us to understand God. Service helps others understand God.

When God's people begin serving others, his beauty becomes evident to the world.

The essence of religion is that we must serve God in order to be accepted by him.

The message of Jesus is that we will never earn a relationship with God, but we can experience one by allowing God to serve us.

Evidence of the Servant Heart: Real Servants Are Faithful to their God-given ministry

Servants finish their tasks, fulfill their responsibilities, keep their promises and complete their commitments. They don't leave a job half undone. They don't quit when they get discouraged. They are trustworthy and dependable.

Can you be counted on?

Conclusion

When you allow God to serve you and to serve through you, you will never be the same.

What it really means to live is not to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45) and to sacrifice.

Sensitive to others, Phil. 2:5-11, 1-4; Heb. 2; 4

Provides exactly what another needs.