

CONNECT TO SERVE

Matthew 20:20-28

- **In our CONNECT MORE series we're learning how to connect in greater ways to the Lord, to other Christians, to our Church, and to God's purposes for our lives.**
- ***What do you think are some of the prominent characteristics of people who are strong leaders in God's Kingdom?***
- **In today's Scripture passage we find that the mother of James and John wanted her sons to be leaders in God's Kingdom, but her perspective of what it takes to be a leader in God's Kingdom was different from Jesus' perspective.**
- Jesus - *"Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many."* (Matthew 20:26-28)
- **The Bible teaches us that Jesus Himself came to serve humankind and set an example for us in serving others.**
- The Apostle Paul **-** *"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, <u>He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant,</u> being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!"* (Philippians 2:5-8 NIV)
- **If we want to become more like Jesus and become leaders in God's Kingdom, we're going to have to get engaged in serving and ministering to others.**
- ***Why should we strive to serve the Lord and Others?***

We Should Serve the Lord and Others Because:

SERVING IS AN ACT OF <u>LOVE</u>

- The Apostle Paul - *"For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love."* (Galatians 5:13)

- **As followers of Christ, we are called to live lives of love through our service to others, because it is in serving that we demonstrate the love of our Savior.**
- Jesus - *"I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples."* (John 13:34-35)
- **Serving is an act of love because it involves us putting the needs of others before our own needs.**
- The Apostle Paul - *"Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too."* (Philippians 2:3-4)
- **We serve one another because it shows that we love one another; and when we serve others we are showing our love for them in tangible ways.**

We Should Serve the Lord and Others Because:
SERVING IS AN ACT OF <u>WORSHIP</u>

- **Serving is not just a way to help others, but it's also a way to glorify God and fulfill His purposes in our lives.**
- **Our service to the Lord and others is not separate from our worship, but is an inseparable part of our worship.**
- The Apostle Paul - *"Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all He has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice- the kind He will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship Him."* (Romans 12:1)
- **By offering ourselves as living sacrifices, we surrender our own desires and willingly place the needs of others above our own.**
- **Serving is an act of worship because it involves giving our time, talents, and resources to advance God's kingdom.**
- **Our example of ongoing service inspires others to offer worship to the Lord.**
- Jesus - *"You are the light of the world-like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.* (Matthew 5:14-16)

We Should Serve the Lord and Others Because:
SERVING IS AN ACT OF <u>OBEDIENCE</u>

- **As Christians we are called to express the Lord's love and compassion toward those in need.**
- Jesus **-** *"For I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was thirsty, and you gave Me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited Me into your home. I was naked, and you gave Me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for Me. I was in prison, and you visited Me.' Then the righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see You hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give You something to drink? Or a stranger and show You hospitality? Or naked and give You clothing? When did we ever see You sick or in prison and visit You? And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these My brothers and sisters, you were doing it to Me."* (Matthew 25:35-40)

- **Our obedience to Jesus' command to serve others is obviously connected to our devotion to Him.**
- Jesus - *"If you love Me, keep My commands."* (John 14:15)
- **Serving others in obedience not only impacts the lives of those we help but also transforms our own hearts; serving humbles us and teaches us to prioritize the needs of others above our own desires and comforts.**
- Jesus - *"If any of you wants to be My follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow Me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for My sake, you will save it."* (Matthew 16:24-25)
- **Serving is a commandment from God; we are called to love our neighbors as ourselves and to put our faith into action.**

We Should Serve the Lord and Others Because:

SERVING IS AN ACT OF <u>MATURITY</u>

- The Apostle Paul - *"Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too."* (Philippians 2:3-4)
- **True Christian maturity encompasses more than knowledge or experience; it means aligning ourselves with the heart of God and adopting a Christlike mindset.**
- **Serving others is an act of maturity because it requires us to set aside personal desires, agendas, and the pursuit of recognition.**
- **Through serving, we reflect the love of Jesus to a broken world, offering hope, compassion, and genuine care for those around us.**
- Jesus - *"Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many."* (Matthew 20:26-28)
- **Serving others helps us become more like Jesus.**

- **The mother of Disciples John and James wanted their connections with Jesus to culminate in honor and prestige for her sons.**
- *"She replied, 'In Your Kingdom, please let my two sons sit in places of honor next to You, one on Your right and the other on Your left.'"* (Matthew 20:21)
- **Whenever we come to Jesus with selfish motives, He reminds us that we should be selfless which is exemplified through our service to others.**
- **When we serve the Lord and others, we are committing acts of love, worship, obedience, and maturity.**
- The Apostle Paul - *"For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself."* (Galatians 5:13-14)

- ***What is the Lord saying to me through today's message?***
- ***What are some ways that I need to get involved in serving God through serving others?***