

8/15/10

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Matthew 20:25-28

Lay Minister: 25 Jesus called them together and said,

People: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.

Lay Minister: 26 Not so with you.

People: Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,

Lay Minister 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—

People: 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Lay Minister: God calls us to service, but we need God's help,

People: Therefore, we begin worship in the name of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY Almighty and everlasting God, bless all your children, especially today we pray for Christian homes. We pray that the homes of your church may teach service as a part of the faith and humility that come with a life of following Jesus. We pray through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE EPISTLE LESSON 1 John 3:11-18

(God calls the church to lives of love and service in following Jesus.)

11 This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. 12 Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you.

14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. 15 Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

THE GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 20:20-34

(Jesus calls His disciples to follow His saving example of sacrificial service.)

20 Then the mother of **Zebedee's** sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. 21 "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom." 22 "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?" "We can," they answered. 23 Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father."

24 When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. 25

Jesus called them together and said, **"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."**

29 As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him. 30 Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" 31 The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" 32 Jesus stopped and called them. "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. 33 "Lord," they answered, "we want our sight." 34 Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

THE SERMON "Christian Parenting – Engaging in Service Together" Matt 20

INTRO - My wife is an excellent cook. I joke that I used to be skinny, and I am no longer skinny because of her good cooking. She is not to blame, but I did gain 20 pounds our first year of marriage. She is a good cook. Not all women are good cooks. My wife gives credit to her mom. She says, her mom would bring her in the kitchen, show her how she cooked, give her an opportunity to cook, and help her with the cooking. In other words, Alice did not just tell Kathy to cook something, she showed Kathy how to cook by her own example. She modeled cooking. She modeled sewing. The example, with the patience and instruction was a good method of teaching.

I. We are talking about Christian parenting, and behaviors or practices which build faith in our children.

A. Christian parents know how important knowing God is; how important faith and trust in God is; how important loving God is.

1. But how do we teach about God?
2. How do we teach about love?

B. Today's lesson tells us how to teach about God and love.

1. Jesus wanted His disciples to know God's love, and to learn the Christian lifestyle.

2. According to Jesus in verses 25-27 of today's lesson Jesus instructed His disciples how to live. **"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave--** The Christian life is one of service.

2. But, Jesus didn't just tell his disciples to serve, He modeled it himself. **"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- -- 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."**

3. He didn't just call them to service verbally, and live it in his personal life, after these words He showed service by healing two blind men.

4. When Jesus wanted to teach His disciples about the heavenly Father, about God's love, and about the Christian life, he showed them with his life and ministry, **the Son of Man [gave] his life as a ransom for many."**

C. The sacrificial service of Jesus teaches us about God.

1. God loves us so much He sent His son
2. God loves us so much He gave His life to save us from ourselves, from our sin, from our selfishness and hatred.
3. If you want to look at God, His love, and the Christian life, look at Jesus.

II. According to a study by Search institute, one of the most effective ways to teach about the Christian life in a way that will last is to take part in service together with your children. Alice didn't order Kathy, go make cookies. She invited her into the kitchen and they made the cookies together.

A. Considering this finding of this study, I am finding what I believe is another mistake which I may have made; one among many. Every year in Confirmation we have asked the children to engage in service. They are supposed to serve someone for five hours, without pay. They can help a teacher, a neighbor, a grandparent, a friend, they can babysit. The idea is that the Christian life is a life of joyful service.

1. I expected the children to learn service through serving. But, we have just told them to do it, and not served with them.
2. Considering the finding of this study, and then looking at Jesus' own example of teaching, I believe we could teach service better by joining the children in a service project.

B. If we want to teach about Jesus and the Christian life, the best way is to model the servant behavior that Jesus modeled for us.

1. Let me tell you about Gene. Over 20 years ago Gene was a cocky, big mouthed youth who came on a trip from North Carolina to Jacksonville. We ran a servant event and went to the homes of elderly people in Jacksonville who were having trouble staying in their homes. Gene attended this servant event with his youth leaders and other youth. We would study about service in the morning from the bible, and then go serve poor elderly seniors during the day. That evening we would share about the people we served. Gene often complained. He often goofed off. But, his youth leaders were with him and you could see him growing through the week. Gene's church came back to the servant event the next year, and so did Gene. He complained the next year too.

But, this time he complained because, "these old people need help and these kids aren't working hard enough." I couldn't believe my ears. But Gene had learned about Jesus and how to love poor inner city seniors by working side by side with his youth worker, getting dirty, and helping others.

2. So, how will you live God's grace and work with your children, the children in your life, serving God and others . . . TOGETHER?

CONCLUSION - One of my favorite memories as a family happened here at St. John about 15 years ago. Perhaps you remember we didn't always have a janitor so families were assigned weeks to clean the church. The cleaning didn't always happen, and the church wasn't always cared for, but it was a way to get the work done. One week it was our family's turn to clean, so we made an event out of it. We got up early on a Saturday morning, went out to a restaurant to eat breakfast together, and then went and cleaned the church. Actually, between the vacuuming, the washing window, and even some dusting, everybody had something to do. By the end of about 4 hours we were done, and we actually had a good time doing the work. We served God by serving together.

As you seek to teach your children, your grandchildren, young people in our congregation about Jesus, how can you join them in serving Jesus by serving others?

David and Cherul

Bless our homes by your word.
Point us to Jesus,
Grow faith that lasts

THANKS - youth

ILL

TROUBLE Keith Ratcliffe

III

- LeRoy Jenson
- Bob Williams
- Jerry Arthur
- Evan Christiansen
- Anna Mae Shackelford
- Kristin Kopperud
- Others . . . on our hearts and minds

Country

Serving in Harm's Way

Bill Abbott