

A Servant's Heart - Matthew 20:29-34

Introduction: In our study of Matthew, we saw last week where Jesus had just told His disciples for the third time of His impending death. But immediately, He was asked by two of His disciples about them being given the most prominent places in His kingdom. The other disciples became upset and jealous because they didn't think of it first, so Jesus uses the occasion to teach them about the true meaning and purpose of servanthood. He told them that the world measures leadership by who's in charge, but He measures leadership by service to others.

In our text for today, we see the practical side of what Jesus taught His disciples about servanthood. Jesus turned down the two disciples' request for honor, but in our story for today, He grants the request for mercy from two blind beggars. In this encounter, Jesus illustrates that He came not to be served, but to serve, and He expects us to do the same.

This morning, I want to point out some things Jesus, and what we need to do in order to develop a servant's heart. **READ Matthew 20:29-34.** First, we need to:

1. Stop and See the Need. (32)

Jesus had ministered in Jericho, and now He was on His way to Jerusalem to do what He had purposed to do from the beginning of time - to give His life for the sins of the world. He had an intense week ahead of Him, and a noisy crowd following Him. But vs. 32 says that when two blind men sitting by the roadside were heard shouting to the top of their lungs over the noise of the crowd that "*Jesus stopped.*" Jesus was a busy man with a lot on His mind, but he stopped to minister to their needs.

One of the greatest enemies of our spiritual life and our service to God is our hurried lifestyle. We live in a "*hurry up*" society. We don't want to slow down for anything. Children are in a hurry to grow up. Kids wish Christmas would hurry up and get here. Teenagers are in a hurry to get their driver's license or to graduate. Workers can't wait until quitting time.

We're in such a hurry these days; we'll do anything to save time. That is why the #1 selling shampoo in America combines shampoo and conditioner in one step. That's why Domino's Pizza became so popular. You can get it in 30 minutes and don't have to even get out of the house. Even if we do get out of the house, we're in

such a hurry that we go through the drive-thru at a fast food restaurant! Pretty soon, they'll probably even eat it for you! We are so busy and are in such a hurry.

Well, Jesus was busy too but He was never in a hurry. You don't see Him running to keep an appointment or taking a short cut. Jesus always took the time to stay connected to His Father. That's why He always had time to love people in the midst of a busy schedule.

I think it's interesting that when folks get in a hurry, and their lives become too crowded, usually the first thing that is dropped from their schedules is their service to God. The reality is, that's the last thing that should be considered. Your service to God is your connection to God. Your service to God is how you experience God's power and presence and love in a life-changing way. If you're too busy, and you don't think you have time for God – you're just too busy!

I'm not so much worried about people leaving the church and not fulfilling their Christian responsibilities because they renounce their faith. I'm more concerned that people are becoming so rushed and preoccupied that other things have become more important than their service to God.

If Jesus can stop to help a couple of needy people while on His way to the most important appointment He ever had, we can certainly slow down our pace enough to stay connected to God. There are people you come across every day who are begging for mercy just like these two blind beggars were. Do you hear them? Do you see them? Will you slow down and help them? The next thing we can do to develop a servant's heart is to:

2. Look at Life from God's Perspective.

When these two blind beggars heard that Jesus was passing by, they probably realized that this might be their one opportunity to be healed. They begin to cry out to get Jesus' attention.

Vs. 31 says that the crowd tried to keep them quiet. Apparently, they were like the disciples and were only thinking of themselves. But here we have two men in great need, within shouting distance of the Great Physician, calling out to Him with everything in their being. Thankfully, Jesus didn't have the crowd's perspective on the blind men.

On the afternoon of Nov. 22, 1963, as the matinee of a play was being performed, one scene called for an actor to be interviewed for a job with a transistor radio clutched to his ear. At one point, the actor set the radio

down and everyone could hear what was being broadcast. On this day, a live news bulletin suddenly came across the radio: *“Today, in Dallas, TX. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated...”*

In one sentence, the audience’s perception between the play and the reality of the outside changed. Suddenly, whatever was taking place onstage became irrelevant.

If Jesus teaches us anything, He teaches us that His followers are to have a different perspective about our life. He teaches us that this life, as good as it CAN be, is just a transition to better life – a life that has no end. And because of that perspective on life we are supposed to live differently.

Jesus called a certain farmer in Scripture *“foolish”* because his perspective in life was based upon all the material things he could accumulate. But He also said that if we use this life to become rich with the things of God, then we are wise. When we see life from that perspective, serving God and His church will become a priority in our life.

When we gain that perspective, we can readily see why a man like Abraham would pack his bags and move to a place God told him to go. We can see why Joseph told his brothers that what they meant for evil, God meant for good. We can see why the Apostle Paul endured hardships and danger and persecutions for the cause of Christ.

If you will look at life from God’s perspective, you cannot help but get involved in some way in serving in your church. Finally, if we’re going to develop a servant’s heart, we need to:

3. Feel with a Heart of Compassion.

As busy and as focused on the cross as Jesus was, His compassion motivated Him to stop and heal these two blind beggars. A compassionate heart will always try to find a way to meet a need when it sees one. A compassionate heart understands that often the first message we have to deliver to this lost world is *“God cares.”*

I read just this week in the Christian Index that FBC Woodstock has launched a campaign called *“Love Loud.”* Pastor, Johnny Hunt said, *“I tell my people that when we meet on Sunday, that is the church gathered. Throughout the rest of the week, we are the church scattered – scattered to be the feet and hands of Christ.”* Through such ministries as a medical and dental clinic, a *“Hope Center”* for women in crisis, and a clothes

closet, FBC Woodstock is drawing people to their church in order to accomplish their number one goal of sharing the gospel. People are hearing that message through acts of love and kindness.

If you'll just take the time to stop and see the need, and see life from God's perspective, and begin to feel those needs of people and serve them with a heart of compassion and love for Christ, you'll experience a level of joy and affirmation that will fill your soul.

I think about our Children's and Youth Workers. Guys, I appreciate you all so much. You spend an hour or two or three with these kids each week. Some of you don't get the privilege of setting in on a Bible Study class with your own age group. You may have to sacrifice choir practice or some other activity you would enjoy doing. But you sit and listen and help children learn Bible verses. You spend hours with these youth helping them struggle through the growing pains of relationships and school work and family problems. Let me tell you how important your sacrifice is: Statistics tell us that you spend more time with these children and youth than the average parent does. You are giving more direct attention to some of those children than their parents. You are helping open the blinded eyes of kids and youth who don't see Jesus in anything else in their lives but you. That is why you are so needed and important. We don't tell you often enough how special you are. You are making a difference.

Conclusion: How can you develop a servant's heart? Just stop and see the need. Slow down and stay connected to God. Then open your eyes to God's perspective. Understand that there's a better life waiting, and what we do now for Christ will influence that future eternity. And then we need to start feeling with a heart of compassion.

Do you have that servant's heart? If not, you can find it. But first, you need to give that heart to Jesus. If He doesn't have your heart, He can't do anything with it. If you don't know Jesus today, this would be a great time to meet Him. I'll be glad to introduce you to Him. All you need to do is come and ask me how.

If you're looking for a home church, I can't think of a better one that right here. If God is leading you to worship and work with us, then you'll be welcomed with open arms. Whatever God is leading you to do, lead with your heart and do it.