A close-up of a business card

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**SERVE AS JESUS DID** Pastor Tim

**Opening PRAYER**

Pastor Leo just finished a series on “Reaching the Lost”. We all have God given gifts that can be used to reach the lost. For me the main gift is in serving.

[Mark 10:45](https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/scripture/sermons-on-mark-10-45?keyword=Mark+10%3A45), ***"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”***

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I once heard a story trying to explain the difference between heaven and hell. Imagine that in both places, there was a table set with the best pot of stew imaginable. But there was one requirement: you could only use a three-foot-long spoon for each person. So, what is the best approach to eat dinner?

The group in hell did all they could to make the spoon full of stew reach into their hungry mouths, but they grew more and more frustrated as there was no way to finagle the spoon into their mouths.

The group in heaven, however, took a different approach. Instead of focusing on themselves, they used the long spoon to serve those sitting across the table. In this way, everyone was fed and satisfied.

While not biblically accurate in its description of heaven or hell, this story highlights two radically different approaches to life. We all have needs, but when we focus exclusively on ourselves, we all miss out. However, when we focus on serving one another, we all end up receiving what we need. This is how God established his kingdom to work.

We know that Jesus did not come to this earth to be served. He came to serve and give his life for us on the cross to meet our most profound and most significant need of forgiveness, of sin, and extend to us the gift of eternal life. But Scripture goes further than proclaiming what Christ did for us. It calls us to follow in his footsteps and serve as he served. To be the best servant you can be means to be submissive to the Holy Spirit and to remain teachable.

**Philippians 2:3-7** says, *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.* [***4***](https://www.biblestudytools.com/nkjv/philippians/2-4.html)*Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.* [***5***](https://www.biblestudytools.com/nkjv/philippians/2-5.html)*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,* [***6***](https://www.biblestudytools.com/nkjv/philippians/2-6.html)*who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,* [***7***](https://www.biblestudytools.com/nkjv/philippians/2-7.html)*but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.*

Jesus cares not only about our relationship with him but our relationship with one another. Think about the cross for a moment. Alex mentioned this last week. I’m pretty sure he hadn’t seen my sermon notes, so it tells me we are serving in the same way. The cross not only extends vertically from the earth to the sky to reconcile us to God but horizontally to reconcile us to one another. Jesus's arms were stretched out wide not only to bring us to God but to bring us together as brothers and sisters in Christ despite our differences. We are now called to serve one another as Jesus served us.

So, what does it mean and look like for us to serve as Jesus would serve? While many examples could be given, I would like to highlight 7 from Scripture.

**1.** Serving as Jesus would serve means we serve in a variety of ways.

**Mark 10:51**, *So Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?” The Blind man said to Him, “Rabbi, that I may receive my sight.”*

Jesus came for one primary purpose, but he served in many ways depending on the person, the need, the desire, the faith, the situation, and his Father's will. At times he taught the crowds. Other times he physically fed the masses. He preached to the many, but he also poured his life into the few close followers. He also cast out demons, healed the sick, worked miracles, and restored people's worth and dignity. He rebuked the Pharisees while speaking tenderly to the broken. He called out to the proud while extending grace to the humble. He was friends with sinners and tax collectors. He met people where they were and brought about God's kingdom in their lives.

Serving as Jesus would serve means, we must meet people where they are and serve them according to their need and what we see our Lord doing in their life. Our job is to be attentive to the working of God and the needs of people. There is no formula for serving as Jesus served. There is only his example, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and the awareness of where our Father is at work in people's lives, and how we wants us to participate with him.

Sometimes people just need a word of comfort and encouragement. Other times they need wisdom and counsel. Others may need correction or rebuke. Others need our prayers. Some require us to show kindness in serving in various ways or through financial generosity.

**2.** Serving as Jesus served means we serve holistically. (A healthy part of the Kingdom)

**Luke 4:18-19**, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

Have you ever heard people talking about "winning souls" to the Lord? While evangelism is a noble and needed task, and this expression is common in talking about bringing people to salvation in Christ, God cares about our souls, but He cares about us as people in all dimensions of our lives.

As his Holy Spirit fills you, he will lead you to specific people who are poverty-stricken or struggling with life in bondage. Some people we meet are hurting emotionally or physically or may not know where they are spiritually and do not know where to turn to get help.

As Jesus cared for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of those he met, we can learn to care for people and serve them as Jesus served. Jesus served holistically, tending to people's physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs.

**3.** Serving as Jesus served means we serve compassionately.

**Matthew 9:36**, *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.*

Compassion and love for people motivated Jesus in everything that he did. And it is not only about feelings; it is about action. God chose to send His Son as a sacrifice on our behalf. His death on the cross was an act of God's compassion! Compassion always leads to action. When we unselfishly reach out to help a person in need. A simple kind act: a prayer, words of support, a sandwich, a warm blanket, forgiveness. These things can all make a massive difference in someone's day.

I challenge your attitudes and actions today to become motivated in ministering to people with compassion and be a representative for Jesus Christ to them. Start right where you are and pray that God will lead you to step by step to those in desperate need of love and compassion. In his presence, you will find all the strength and perseverance for serving others. And he will equip you with everything you need when you become his representative on this earth.

**4.** Serving as Jesus served means we must serve selflessly.

**Galatians 5:13**,*For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

One of the most significant markers of "serving like Jesus served" is **humility**. God came to earth to serve and sacrifice himself for his creation versus taking his rightful position to be served, loved, and adored.

Our nature is to pursue self-glory, self-promotion, and self-protection. Simply, we are selfish. To serve as Jesus served, we are called to follow his example of being free of selfish desires and become a "slave" to the needs of those around us. Did you know the word neighbor has the connotation of “to draw near?” To be a neighbor means that wherever we are, with whoever is around, we draw near to meet their needs. We consider others, not just ourselves. This is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

To serve like Jesus served, put on humility, and become a servant to God first and then to those around you. **Colossians 3:12** *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long suffering.*

**5.** Serving as Jesus Served means, we must serve graciously.

**Luke 6:35**, *But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.*

This is a hard one! But perhaps more than any other way of serving others, this one most reflects the very heart of God and the core of the Gospel message.

Human nature dictates that we only love the people who will return the favor and hurt those who will hurt us. In this Scripture, Jesus is instructing his followers to showcase God's grace to the world. Loving our friends is easy. But Jesus calls us to love our enemies and do good to them while expecting nothing in return, just as he loved us while we were sinners. We are admonished that if we only love those that love us in return, there is no heavenly reward.

The good news is that this unnatural behavior is possible. We only need to rely upon Jesus to so fill our hearts so that we can share God's love and grace. We can also ask the Holy Spirit to empower us to serve even those who oppose and despitefully use us. It is when we do this that we exhibit the characteristics of the children of God.

**6.** To serve as Jesus served, we must be intentional.

John 12:26, *If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

Have you ever followed someone when you did not know where you were going? Every turn can feel unexpected and, depending on the surroundings, potentially treacherous.

The hymn, All the Way My Savior Leads Me, written by Fanny Crosby, reflects similar feelings. Fanny knew well the uncertainty of attempting to follow another. Fanny was blind most of her life. She had to follow blindly most of her life.

To serve as Jesus served requires the perseverance to follow Jesus wherever he is leading. We must be aware of his activity and intentional in our actions. **Colossians 4:5** *Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.*  Be wise in the way you act toward others and make the most of every opportunity.

**7.** To serve as Jesus served, we must take time for people.

**Matthew 20:31-32**, *Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!”* ***32****So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, “What do you want Me to do for you?”*

Have you ever known someone who was always too busy or important for others? Maybe sometimes you have even given off that impression because your schedule and life are so full.

One of the things I love about Jesus is that he always had time for people while he was wholly focused on his mission. As he went on his way, he did not see people in need as distractions. Instead, he saw people as his mission and situations like this as divine opportunities!

Sometimes we get so busy, focused on the tasks we need to fulfill, the responsibilities we have, and our own agenda that we see people as interruptions versus opportunities to serve and allow God to intervene in people's lives. When this happens, we lose sight that Jesus has called us to serve people, and our ministry is people.

Jesus did not just serve when he "arrived" to where he was going. He served people as he went along his way! He did not just keep going. He stopped. He took time for people. He delayed his own plans to serve others in need. To serve as Jesus would serve, we, too, must be open to more spontaneous opportunities than what we might have planned.

These are only a few ways Jesus served. Read through the Gospel accounts and note your own discoveries of how Jesus served.