



Sermon Discussion Guide
You First: You Take the Lowest Rank
Sunday, April 25, 2021
Based on Pastor Alex's Message

Introduction

We're in a series called *You First: Becoming the Change You Want to See*. We all have a mental list of things in the world we want to see changed and how we want others to start acting. In this series we're trying to listen to the invitation from Jesus for us to lead the way. If we want to see a change in the world, it's time to hear Him say, "You first." In this third lesson, we're going to be looking at Jesus' advice to us about ultimate winning and success.

To watch this week's sermon before your group discussion, go to www.journeyoffaith.com/messages

Share Your Story

1. Do you define "winning" differently in things like your job, family, and general life outlook?
2. What's your current understanding of how God defines winning and success?

Hear God's Story

3. During Jesus' last meal with His disciples before He went to the cross, a dispute started among them about who was the greatest. Read what happened in Luke 22:24-27. How would you summarize what Jesus said?
4. In his sermon, pastor Alex explained to us two reasons of why we should pursue the heart of "servant leadership" that Jesus was teaching:
 - a. Servant leaders avoid the pitfalls of pride and experience God.
 - b. Servant leaders multiply joy and results through others.After reading these, what would you say your greatest struggle is when trying to be a leader with this kind of heart?
5. Read Philippians 2:1-11, then answer in order: 1. What can we learn about the heart of God here; 2. How does these verses help shed light on what Jesus was talking about in Luke 22:24-27?; 3. What challenges you the most about all of this?

Create a New Story

6. What's one way you can serve others in a new way this next week?
7. How can you promote two other people above yourself this week?

Further Studies: Putting Biblical Teachings of Servanthood in its Ancient Context

“He must increase, but I must decrease.”
-John the Baptist speaking about Jesus, Jn. 3:30 (ESV)

Showing humility toward someone who was perceived to be “equal” or “lesser” than you in the time of the New Testament was generally considered a crazy thing to do. It would have sounded completely nuts.

It was expected that the equal or lesser person show you honor, and you just accept it because it helps to clarify everyone’s place. In the ancient world hearing teachings like in the verses we’ve gone over teaching about humility would have been a very scandalous and socially awkward thing to hear, let alone see put into practice!

The popular belief of society at that time, especially modeled by the Roman government, was that merit (quality of being worthy) demanded honor; so, honor from others became the proof of merit, affirming to the individual that they were actually worth something. To fail to receive it meant a whole lot of shame cast upon all involved. Thus, personal worth was directly informed by how much honor others showed you. Everyone wanted it, so it became a very cut-throat individualistic focus where everyone was running to raise themselves up higher than everyone else around them.

Then Jesus taught that the greatest among us is the one who serves. Paul expanded on it in a few places as the crux of spiritual growth, and this same counter-cultural perspective led John the Baptist to say that he believed in whatever he does that he needs to decrease so he can raise Jesus up even higher. In the backdrop of a self-centered and honor-seeking cultural climate, Jesus and the early leaders of the Church chose to swim up-stream to begin to show the world around them a better way. So scandalous in its historical context, and so unexpected to what the majority around them desired and expected. But they still served, by first adopting the spiritual discipline of humility.

Discuss

1. How does this historical context help shed light on Lk. 22:24-27 and Phil. 2:1-11?
2. What similarities can you see between the social climate and expectations of when these biblical teachings took place, and our own here today?
3. How does looking back at this historical context from thousands of years ago give you courage and excitement to seek to live out this way in your own life?

For questions about this curriculum, contact Pastor Matthew Jensen at
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