

F-I-Am Community Church

Pastor David Bennett

25 November 2012

Key verse: Mark 10:43, 45

“SERVANT LEADERSHIP”

Good morning Fil-Am, I trust you had a very Happy Thanksgiving, thank you so much for taking time out of your very busy hectic holiday schedule and fellowship with us this morning.

Like I normally do, I am going to be honest and lay out what I hope pans out over the next 30-45 minutes. I hope to show you God’s perfect example of Servant leadership, and in case you didn’t already know that is none other than Jesus Christ.

I plan to try my best and show you ways that we can improve I this area and finally I will make a plea for anyone who happens to be here today that needs prayer or would love to take the Lord Jesus Christ home with them to come forward and accept his free gift.

Ok as we have said in the past, let’s get into the word or more importantly let’s get the word of God into us.

It happened in the spring of 1981 perhaps you remember it.

President Reagan had just been shot by John Hinckley, Washington was shocked and stunned. Vice-President George Bush was not immediately available. Even at the White House no one was sure what was going on.

That's when Gen. Alexander Haig, who was at the White House, stepped in & confidently asserted to the press **"I'm in charge here!"**

He's never been able to live those four words down.

What HE thought he was doing was providing crisis leadership.

What the country saw was a man hungry for power.

"I'm in charge here!" Those words never fell from Jesus' lips!

They didn't have to.

Something about Jesus made people KNOW he was a leader.

People just naturally followed him.

That's the kind of leader that all of would want to be like!

Not the kind that has to remind people, **"I'm in charge here!"**

When we have to say that we are admitting we are NOT a leader!

What was it that drew people to Jesus? **Authority!**

He was one who spoke with authority!

Matt. 7:28-29.

²⁸ *When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; ²⁹ for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.*

Jesus obviously had the authority however, he didn't use it to Lord over anyone, he was a servant, it says in....

Mark 10:43, 45

“Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant ... 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. “

Jesus Christ, God's only son, came to this earth to blow the doors off of our pre-determined ideas of servant hood.

He taught us that serving is the way to freedom, the way to God's heart. And he modeled true servant hood by performing the ultimate act of service.

Leadership in Jesus style wrapped up in his nature as SERVANT.

Leadership in the Church is different from leadership in the world.

To follow Jesus means to become a servant. To become a servant means to become a leader.

Today's sermon is talking about Servant leadership as demonstrated by Jesus Christ, the first point we will get into this morning is to look at who we, (You & Me) can make a difference.

1. Servant Leadership (Making a Difference)

Making a difference

Several years back the Merv Griffin Show had a guest that was a body builder. During the interview, Merv asked, “Why do you develop those particular muscles?”

The body builder simply stepped forward and flexed a series of muscles from chest to calf. The audience applauded.

“What do you use all those muscles for?” Merv asked. Again, the muscular specimen flexed, and biceps and triceps sprouted to impressive proportions. “But what do you use those muscles for?”

Merv persisted. There was a moment of confused embarrassment as the body builder sat down in bewilderment. He didn’t have an answer (to the question of what are they for?) other than display well-developed frame

HOW do I make a difference? How do I use the muscles?

Saints remember if you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there!

I’ll just come out with it and ask you the question: What are we good for? Another way of putting it what is this thing called Christianity good for? How can we as Christians make a difference in this lost and dying world?

THAT’S THE QUESTION Jesus addresses for His disciples.

They wanted to be important, they wanted to know how to be valuable... but they misunderstood what he was trying to teach them.

They felt that making a difference/ being valuable to Christ was all about WHO they were, or what they could do for him or for the kingdom!

They kept waiting for the right time, they wanted to make sure they were ready; you could hear their inner conversations;

If only I was **important** then I could make a difference...

If only I held a position of **authority**, then I could make a difference...

If only I were a little more **talented**, then I could make a difference...

If only I made a little more **money**, then I could start to tithe...

Does any of this sound familiar? Am I preaching to anyone here today?

Jesus taught them: it isn't who you are, or how powerful you are...

It's how open you are to servant hood, **ARE YOU AVAILABLE?**

IN FACT, God deliberately doesn't choose the powerful to do His will.

One person compiled an unflattering list of the people God used:

"Moses stuttered.

David's armor didn't fit.

Hosea's wife was a prostitute.

Jacob was a liar.

David had an affair.

Solomon was too rich.

Abraham was too old.
David was too young.
Timothy had ulcers.
Peter was afraid of death.
Lazarus was dead.
John was self-righteous.
Jesus was too poor.
Naomi was a widow.
John Mark - rejected by Paul
Paul was a murderer.
So was Moses.
Jonah ran from God.
Miriam was a gossip & bigot
Gideon and Thomas both doubted.
Jeremiah was depressed and suicidal.
Elijah was burned out.
Martha was a worrywart.
Samson had long hair.
Noah got drunk.
And did I mention that Moses had a short fuse?
So did Peter, Paul... and, well, & lots of folks."

I Corinthians 1:27-29 tells us "God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, so that no-one may boast before him."

As far God is concerned, being His servant is more important than being superstar and so, when Jesus chose His disciples - they were not pick of the litter, the cream of crop. They were simply men He knew could be used to establish His kingdom.

BUT THE PROBLEM FOR THEM was they didn't think Jesus would want them as simple fishermen and laborers. They thought He would want men in positions of power and prominence.

What type of people does Jesus want?

Mark 10:42-44 tells us it is by learning to become a servant for others.

We are going to get a little deeper into this, next month when we go through our Ministry fair.

Best way to make ministries work for you is if you look at them as meaning something very valuable to God's Kingdom. For example:

- Cleaning the building is a form of outreach. People who come through the door notice how well you take care of God's things.

It says your faith is dynamic enough that you care even for the simplest of issues.

- Work with the youth or Sunday school teachers; you can't imagine the **IMPACT** it could have on them or the family as a whole.

- A simple thing like regular attendance: Do you realize that when “unchurched Sally” comes into this building and sees it packed with worshippers, that that says something to her?

It says: “Something significant is happening here.”

It says: “Christianity must mean something to these people.”

When you take the time to get to know people’s names, to introduce yourself to newcomers, to invite them out to eat with you, you continue to add to the atmosphere that has drawn so many to belong here at Fil-Am.

There are other ministries outside our these walls that you can do.

This week while looking for illustrations I read one story of a man who approached a 9 yr. old boy named Howard playing “marbles” on the sidewalk. The man challenged the boy to a game and promptly beat him. Then he offered to teach Howard how to play the game better and thus built a relationship with him that led to bringing the boy becoming involved in that man’s Sunday School class.

The boy grew up to be a fairly famous Christian speaker and author Howard Hendricks and he recalled that his Sunday School teacher had brought several kids into the class the same way, so that when Howard was growing up, the class consisted of 13 boys from broken homes and 5 Roman Catholics.

Look at what our Volleyball Ministry has been doing? I won't put anyone on the spot, but you would be amazed at how many people and families have been brought in through Volleyball.

Speaking of Outreach, I will tell you Dale is busy about getting people to see what we are doing here, He has been wrestling with putting an advertisement in Craig's list advertising out IMPACT class, Fellowship and Volleyball in order to attract more people into our classes and congregation.

We always say if we could just get them here and they could see how we interact with each other; how we honestly care for each other they would want to be a part of that.

How many times have you heard a sermon from this pulpit, and thought to yourself if _____ would have been here it would have been great because this is what they need to hear!

I like the advertisement for one of the local Washington papers, If you don't get I, you don't get it....

This leads us to point number 2 which is....

2. Servant Leadership (Be There)

As we said earlier God doesn't need the talented or gifted he just needs our availability, he will work in and through us to accomplish his mission.

John Boride, former quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, and was being used by his football team to hold the ball for the kicker. A sports reporter

asked him why a million-dollar player like him should have to hold the ball for field goals and extra points after the touchdown. "Well," said Brodie, "if I didn't, it would **fall over.**"

Brodie understood that his value to the team was **BEING THERE** for the team. It was in "holding the ball so it didn't fall over." It was in "doing what needed to be done, so team could succeed..." That's the type of person Jesus is looking for.

So, the question I would like ask you today is how do we "**hold the ball**" for Jesus?

The key to servant hood is "**being there**" for other people.

Newsweek ran an article some time back about street gangs. In it they told the story of a Pentecostal preacher who was trying to reach out to the slum dwellers for Christ.

"When he first moved into this neighborhood, as a refugee from Harvard, Rivers sought out a local drug dealer (to ask him why he was so successful in dragging people into his lifestyle)... and he gave Rivers, a Pentecostal, a lesson in why God was losing to gangs in the battle for the souls of inner city kids.

"Selvin explained to us, '**I'm there** when Johnny goes out for a loaf of bread for Mama. I'm there, you're not. I win, you lose, and it's all about **being there.**'"

As a Marine Senior Staff non-Commissioned officer, I would teach my junior SNCO's the lesson of being there. If you want to know what's going on in the Barracks you don't show up on Friday morning as they go through barracks inspection, that's not real, it is what we call a Dog-and-Pony show, to really know what's going on surprise them on a weekend in the morning and you will see what's really going on.

I would sometimes take my SNCOs on a walk and we would head over toward the barracks and I would ask them to take me to their troops rooms. Some would have to say let me go get a room roster and I will take you there, you get my point, they should know where they were at without having to look at a piece of paper... They need to **"Be There"** for them...

John 14:23 (NIV)

²³ Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them."

Ask yourself how we can as a church or as an individual "Be there"

- If you want to "Be there" in the eyes of JESUS - you must be a servant to others.
- In order to "Be there", volunteer to help a Sunday School teacher.
- In order to "Be there", volunteer to host a home group meeting in your house.
- If you want to "Be there", shovel your neighbor's drive or mow his yard - be a servant.
- If you want to "Be there", visit a lonely widow or a nursing home - be a servant.

- If you want to “Be there”, buy a bag of groceries and leave them on the doorstep of someone who is out of work - be a servant.
- If you want to “Be there”, adopt someone who is here without family and invite them into your home for Thanksgiving or Christmas - be a servant.
- If you want to “Be there”, look past the faults of others and always find something good to say TO them and ABOUT them - learn to have thick skin in relationship with others and STOP bad-mouthing others who are doing ministry for the church and the Lord - ENCOURAGE EVERYONE you know - be a servant.
- If you want to “Be there”, babysit a single mother’s children or a young couple’s infant for an afternoon - be a servant.
- If you want to “Be there”, support the leadership of your church and **pray for them daily** - REJOICE with those in the church who are performing various ministries for Jesus - volunteer to serve as a ministry team member or even a ministry team leader - be a servant.

I could probably go on for another hour giving you examples - but I think you’ve got the message - If you want to Be There you have to be a Servant

Follow the example of Jesus - be a servant.

Our third and final point this morning is...

3. Servant Leadership (Greatness)

Christ's sacrifice for the salvation of mankind, was, is, and always will be, the **CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT** and the **DEFINING MOMENT** in ALL of history.

Worldly **POWER** is fleeting, and worldly honor is a glittering thing, and even the eyes of Christ's own disciples were dazzled by it.

GREATNESS in the eyes of the world - is found in **POWER**.

The way to greatness for Jesus was the way of suffering service and ultimately the **CROSS**.

For the believer, the way to the Greatness of the **CROSS** is the way of Suffering and Service for Christ and others.

Whose eyes would you prefer to be **GREAT** in? The world's eyes or the Lord's eyes? I want to be great in the Lord's eyes.

I will tell you I would rather fall on my face while walking with God, than to have the best day without him...

One of the most consistent teachings of Jesus Christ is his insistence that to be his disciple you must live for OTHERS, not SELF! Some passages that teach this:

Matt. 16:24-25.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, *“If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*

Luke 9:46-48.

⁴⁶ *An argument started among them as to which of them might be the greatest. ⁴⁷ But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took a child and stood him by His side, ⁴⁸ and said to them, “Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great.”*

When I begin to live this way I unlock the power of God in my life.

It is no longer ME at work, but the **CHRIST within me!**

Galatians 2:20.

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

It's a crazy, mixed-up, inside-out, upside-down way to look at it--but in the kingdom of God, the **GREATEST** is the **LEAST**, and the **FIRST** is the **LAST!**

Leadership in the Jesus style solves a lot of problems.

Eliminates church fights.

Imagine what it would be like if People not trying to be first..... But to be LAST!

Just imagine if People were not seeking to control..... But to SERVE!

Imagine what it would be like if people everywhere were judged by the **content of their character** rather than the **color of their skin!**

There's a certain order that comes from leadership in Jesus style.

But it's certainly not easy!

And it doesn't look like what the world has to offer.

What our FAMILIES, our CHURCH, our WORLD needs are more SERVANT-LEADERS. That;

Make a Difference

That **“Are There”** for you

And understand what true **“Greatness”** is!

Men and women who have the interests of others at heart.

Men and women who have the courage & initiative to act.

Men and women who know themselves & their abilities & limits.

Men and women who are not using all their energy reacting against what is happening around them, but always looking at ways to reach out to the lost, the hurting, the hungry, the ones alone and afraid.

We have said it many times before but it bears repeating; don't **TELL ME** you love me, **SHOW ME!**

If you need Jesus, open your heart to Him today.

If you want to be great in His eyes, commit yourself to His service.

Don't miss the opportunity that is placed before you today, take Jesus home with you not in the pages of a Book you place under your arm and walk away with but in your heart!

Let us Pray!

May God help us to develop these qualities of Jesus--the greatest Servant-Leader of all!