



Developing a Servant Heart

Session 3 – 19th November 2017

Bible Readings

Philippians 2: 1-11

Mark 10:35-45

Sermon Notes

(For the full sermon please go online to listen www.stmarysely.org)

Jesus said that the essence of spiritual life is to love God and to love people. Pride destroys our capacity to love. Pride moves us to exclude instead of to embrace. Pride moves us to judge rather than to serve.

We live in what Christopher Lasch has called “the Culture of Narcissism.” But Jesus invites us to a life of humility: “All who humble themselves will be exalted.”

We have made progress in humility when the Holy Spirit enables us to live in the moment and we cease to be preoccupied with ourselves.

How on earth can we pursue humility? One of the hardest things in the world is to stop being the prodigal son without turning into the elder brother.

Richard Foster suggests that “the grace of humility is best worked into our lives through the Discipline of service.” Jesus said that he had come

“not to be served but to serve.” Serving is God’s business. Jesus arms himself with a basin and a towel as he prepares to wash his disciples’ feet.

Our attitude should be the same as Jesus, who, because he was in very nature God, did not consider equality with God to be grounds for grasping, but poured himself out, taking the very nature of a servant. We perceive here the sheer goodness of God. When Jesus came in the form of a servant, he was not disguising who God is. He was revealing who God is.

Four suggestions to embrace the Holy Habit of Servanthood.

Embrace the Mundane. Jesus took a little child in his arms and said, in effect, “Here’s your ministry. Give yourselves to those who can bring you no status or clout. Just help people. Help this little child, not just for her sake, but for your sake.”

Embrace Interruption. How available are we to talk or pray with a neighbour in trouble – or does our own personal agenda always win out.

Embrace ‘silence’. Do we always have to have the last word or can we hold our tongue. Are we in danger of thinking “God is lucky to have us on his side?”

Embrace the Outsider. Jesus includes the outlier, the outsider, the outcast, the stranger, even the enemy in the catch-all word “neighbour.” Learn to hear God speak through difficult people.

But don’t just try to be like this – when you pray – after you have given thanks to God and reflected on His word – ask God to fill you with His Spirit so that you can become more like Jesus.

Key Quotes

"We are all worms. But I do believe that I am a glow-worm." Winston Churchill

"Humility is the decision to let God be God." Martin Luther.

Discussion Questions

How can service—and specifically hidden service—act as a remedy for pride? What keeps us from offering more acts of service in secret?

Read: Mark 10:45 and Philippians 2:6–11. What are some of the acts of service Jesus offered when he walked on this earth? What was his heart and attitude when it came to serving?

We can be swept away by busyness and have no space for service to others. What can you do to slow down and find restored health and balance in your life? How might that lead me to serve?

Read: Luke 18:9–14. What is Jesus teaching us about the condition of our heart in relation to our actions?

Tell about a time you should have held your tongue, but failed to. What were some of the repercussions? Tell about a time you did hold your tongue and had the wisdom and self-control to be silent. What did God accomplish through your silence?

Who are the outsiders, the outliers in your life? People you are tempted to despise, to see as enemies, to walk away from? Can you even begin to imagine serving them? What would that look like?

Prayer

Read: Mark 10:45. Pray for God to give each of your small-group members a growing desire to serve in humble secrecy. Pray for the heart of Jesus when it comes to your acts of service.

Living the Life

What is an example of *mundane* ministry you can offer in one of the following areas this week? Seek the Spirit's leading in your life as you enter into these simple tasks?

- In a friendship
- In the work place
- In your home
- In your neighbourhood
- In your church

Personal Reflection

What can you do to keep the latch off your door and make yourself more available to others in how you do the following:

- Scheduling your day
- Becoming more approachable and available
- Setting up your home, office, and other places people connect with you

Blog, Vlog and Social Media

Please visit the Holy Habits pages on the St Mary's website.

www.stmarysely.org and join the conversation on our [Facebook Group "Ely Team Holy Habits"](https://www.facebook.com/groups/267574210421687) www.facebook.com/groups/267574210421687