

Who Are Your People?

Last week, we dove into this idea of the kingdom of God and how we've been invited into a new way of living set by the example of our King Jesus. Jesus's heart was bent towards others in everything he did. Whether he was addressing large crowds or tending to a social outcast, the most natural thing for him to do is love and serve those around him.

It's easy to associate the kingdom of God with grand gestures of sacrifice—like we considered last week with the crucifixion. We might think following Jesus's example means we need to work for a church, move to a different country, or sell all our possessions. This is certainly the case for some, but when we take a close look at Christ's life, we see simple, ordinary, sacrificial acts that take place right in the middle of everyday life.

We all have people that we regularly do life with: friends, family members, a spouse, co-worker, or neighbor. What is stirred in you when you think of serving those closest to you? Joy? Avoidance? Indifference? What if part of building the kingdom of God is serving those that are right in front of you every day?

Right where God has you, he wants to use you.

For some, this comes so naturally. You want to serve those you're closest to; it brings you great delight and peace. For others, serving those you know the best can feel so hard. Maybe those around you are selfish, and you feel they don't deserve your sacrifice. If you find yourself in that category, then this may be your greatest opportunity to truly imitate Christ.

For Christ himself didn't just serve those who were easy to serve. His heart went out unapologetically to friend and foe alike. Both brother and betrayer would find himself on the receiving end of his sacrifice, even though neither truly deserved it. When we look at Christ, we see the heart of a King that is truly selfless.

So, look up. Who's around you? Who are your people?

We are never more like Christ than when we are serving, and Christ himself modeled the sacrificial way of serving those close to him.

Questions:

What is stirred in you when you think of serving those closest to you?

No one is easy to serve because it's not natural to serve broken, sinful people. But we ourselves were broken and sinful when Christ came to serve us.

Read: John 13:1-17

What stands out to you when reading this passage?

What do verses 3-4 reveal about the type of King Jesus is?

Jesus stepped into a normal, necessary act of service for the people he loved.

What are the acts of service that you have been conditioned to believe are not your responsibility?

What are the normal, necessary acts of service you could do to show love to those around you?

Consider the example Jesus set when he washed Judas' feet. Discuss what you think it would have felt like for both Jesus and Judas in that moment.

What does it look like to serve the people in our circles who are hard to serve or who have hurt us?

Jesus' example shows us serving as a lifestyle not an event. How does Jesus' example of sacrifice ignite your faith to go and do likewise?

Personal Reflection

This week we want to challenge you to **look up. Who's around you? Who are your people?**

- Identify 3-5 people in your life. Write their names below.

- What's one thing you can do this week to serve the people you identified?

Read Ephesians 5:1-2 (ESV): “¹Therefore **be imitators of God**, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

- Who is someone in your life who is hard to serve? How does Christ see this person?