

The Jesus Style of Leadership

by Gayle Erwin

The Jesus style of leadership is characterized by servant leadership, humility, and a focus on others, rather than personal power and prestige.

Duration: 57:36

Scripture: Matthew 20:26

Topics: "Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on their experience of being treated as a servant and then discarded when no longer useful. They emphasize the importance of focusing on serving others rather than ourselves, as God cannot honor self-centeredness. The speaker then references the story in Mark 10 where mothers bring their children to Jesus, highlighting the teachings of Jesus as a servant and the importance of humility. They also mention the concept of the five-fold ministries mentioned in Ephesians 4:11, emphasizing the need to give oneself away and teach others to do the same. The sermon concludes by reminding the audience of the desperate state of the world and the need to bring the light and joy of Jesus to those who are suffering.

Transcript

We have been studying together about the nature of Jesus. And of course you have very well memorized by now those 14 points that are vital if you expect to make it, you know. But we'll go over them quickly again.

When you look at the greatest in the kingdom teachings where Jesus is speaking of himself and then go to Philippians chapter 2 in the mind of Christ passage, you discover that Jesus is servant, that second he does not lord it over others. Then he leads by example, you're doing good. And then he is humble and as a child.

And then he is as the younger, then as the least and as the last. Then from Philippians, we discovered that he used no force on us and was not driven by blind ambition. And then he made himself of no reputation.

Then he was fully human and he was obedient even unto death. Hey, you've got it. Wonderful.

Now here's the thing. When you start living this kind of lifestyle as the, the Lord works it out in your life. And I hope you understand that this is what he works out in your life.

It's not some new burden I've got to struggle under. This is a joyous pattern that when he's at work in your life, you know what he's up to now. He's working this out.

When you live this other centered giving kind of lifestyle, you discover yourself affecting others. You begin to find yourself in a sense of spiritual leadership. You might say, I want to address some problems and victories that come from spiritual leadership.

What does it mean then to lead in the nature of Jesus? What kind of things can we expect to have happen if our lives are developing in a way that we're affecting others and consequently finding ourselves in roles of spiritual leadership? Well, I need to tell you something. This is a little bit funny, but it's kind of tragic in a way. There are certain parts of scripture that I have difficulty with.

I doubt that that's true of you, but I do. And in first Corinthians chapter 12, verse 23, and I'll just paraphrase it to you. Paul tells us something that disturbs me.

He says that we give the greater honor to those parts of the body that are most unseemly, most embarrassing. Now that has always bothered me because it didn't seem to me to be true. As a pastor, I had some unseemly parts and I tried to pretend that they were visitors.

I never recall giving them greater honor. And then a dear friend of mine, who seems to me at least to be very wise, said, maybe we're approaching this the wrong way. I said, what do you mean? He said, maybe we should find out who we give the greater honor to.

Then we will know who the unseemly parts are. I said, wait a minute. I get the most honor in my church.

He said, I know. And he said, then the elders would be next in honor there. He said, yep, that's right.

That's right. Now, you know who the most unseemly parts are. I thought, wait a minute.

Yes, that's true. Because when you get a group of us leader types together, you know what happens? You've got a room full of egos and that very thing is the opposite of the nature of Jesus. And so that is the thing that makes us most unseemly.

And then Jesus comes along and he says, oh man, they're in terrible shape. I'm going to have to cover them and make them leaders. Give them some honor.

They can't seem to exist without it. So in a leadership position, in a way you find yourself being covered by God because the ego you struggle with is opposite to the nature of Jesus. So before you get proud, just think of that.

Okay. Then I noticed that there were different kinds of leadership that I had observed, not just in the kingdom of God, but especially in the world too. And probably the kind that would frighten us the most would be a kind of aggressive form of leadership that gets its power from its coercive capabilities.

It says you will do what I tell you because I am bigger than you, or I have more power than you, or I have more influence than you. And we have seen governments with that kind. Perhaps you've even worked under people that had that kind of leadership style.

That is not a kingdom style of leadership. Probably the most common kind of leadership that we have seen be what you might call institutional form of leadership, where there is a position that exists and that

position in the institution has power that goes with it. And then when someone is secured to fill that position, you do not know whether they are that person capable of doing that or not, but we plug them into the position and just hope that they have that kind of capability.

And it isn't really the person that has the power, but it's the position that has the power. And if a person leaves the position, the position still has the power. The person no longer does.

That's a governmental form, a democratic form, a bureaucratic form where the position itself has the power and the person doesn't necessarily. However, there's another form of leadership that Jesus exhibited, and it's a leadership that comes out of just who he is, his anointing and his capability. It does not coerce, nor does it need a position in order to lead.

Jesus said the most remarkable thing. He said to the apostles, if you love me, keep my commandments. That is so encouraging to me because most of my life I thought it was really if you know what's good for you, you will keep my commandments.

But Jesus never coerces anyone to follow him. It's always an invitation. Whosoever will can come to him, and we follow him not because Jesus had a position.

He didn't. Even when individuals tried to identify him and say, you're the Messiah, Jesus said, shh, don't tell anybody, don't tell anybody. Isn't that amazing? Now, I would want it advertised.

But it wasn't the position that mattered to him, it was the ministry. He came for people, not a position. You realize that.

And so he exhibited his love toward people, and people would follow him precisely for that reason. Precisely for that reason. And Jesus ends up saying, now, if you love me, keep my commandments.

Now, I want to make what's going to amount to two lists over here. As you know, I'm sort of into lists, as I see them in the scripture. One of them is going to be a rather negative list.

We can call it the problems of power. And we're going to turn, by the way, to Matthew chapter 20, if you want to. And call this the problems of power.

Or you may call it, if you wish, the problems of power hunger. In Matthew chapter 20, beginning with verse 20, a fascinating story. Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to him, to Jesus, with her sons.

I love this. Matthew doesn't even name the guys. Doesn't name the mother.

He just says the mother of Zebedee's sons. Now, we know, Mark especially comes right out with it in his gospel. We know this is James and John.

Now, they were also known as the sons of thunder. I don't know if that means mama was thunder or daddy was thunder. We know more about mother than we do about daddy.

And here, James and John come with mama, kneeling down in front of Jesus and asking something from him. And he said to her, what do you wish? She said to him, grant that these two outstanding, brilliant, wonderful, no, that's not there. But I know she was thinking that my mother would.

Grant that these two sons of mine may sit one on your right hand and the other on your left in the kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, you do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I'm about to drink and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said to him, we are able.

I love this. So he says to them, you will indeed drink my cup and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with. But to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by my father.

And when the ten, that's the rest of the guys on the apostolic team. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brothers. Amazing.

I think right off the, you see these men were power hungry, wouldn't you say? They wanted something from God. They wanted not the opportunity to minister more. They wanted a position.

There is a position that exists. One is called right hand. Another one is called left hand.

But we would like those two. They happen to be the top ones. And I mean, who else but us? Would you want? I can hear it.

And immediately we discover that Jesus says to them, you don't know what you ask. So what happens when we become power hungry is discernment suffers. We quit thinking right.

We begin to not know what we are asking for. We may be able to come up with great logic. We may be able to say, oh, but look at the skills I've got.

And look, I've been with him for a while anyway. And at any rate, why not me? Why so? I was the one that asked. And listen, I know those forms of logic.

I have used them even with God. But what happens when we become power hungry is something snaps in our spiritual mind. And we lose discernment.

And Jesus said to them, you don't know what you're asking. Now, one thing that happens here, and I want you to keep this in front of your minds is that when they sought these positions, they were not thinking of the nature of Jesus as they sought them. They were thinking something far more personal for themselves.

They had lost the ability to think about others, and consequently their discernment suffers. Well, also when this happens, your brothers suffer. There's a good understanding of why.

Let's just write this up here. Your brothers suffer. You see, the moment I want that higher position, and especially if I happen to gain it, by that very desire and act, I am shoving away all opportunity for that, if God should so desire it, from those who are my brothers.

I begin immediately to say, oh, I'm not interested in being least and last. I'm not interested in serving. I am interested in climbing.

And immediately when I begin to do that, my brothers will suffer. Any of you ever played the game called King of the Hill? It's probably the best training game for the world that I know of. You have a hill.

The job is with your friends, you gotta get up on top, and you climb, and you claw, and you push, and you drag, and finally you get on top, and your whole goal was get on top. Now you have a new goal. Stay on

top.

And in order to do that, you have to kick and push and scratch and scream. Now, none of that was really very good, and not one bit of it cared one iota for your brothers. So when we begin to get power-hungry as these guys were, they weren't thinking about the others.

They should have known that there would be indignation on these guys' part. They should have known that. But they didn't seem to care.

So when we begin to get power-hungry, our brothers are going to suffer. We will, in the middle of this, and it's kind of part and parcel of the same thing, we will become insensitive. They would probably say, well look, we were aggressive enough to come up and ask about it.

If they didn't want a position, they should have come and asked themselves. Now here again, you're not thinking at all about other people. Only about whenever this is the approach you take.

And I'm kind of getting depressed talking about these guys in a way. It's kind of terrible, isn't it, man? We have to say, well what a thing to do. But this is what happens when you become power-hungry, and this is the opposite to the very nature of Jesus.

The whole system begins to do the wrong sorts of things to other people. And then Jesus says, after he says, you don't know what you're asking, he says, can you drink the cup that I'm going to drink? Can you be baptized with the baptism I'm going to be baptized with? And their response, I love this, we are able. Now that confirms to me that they had lost their discernment.

But here's what happens. Power-hunger will also make you arrogant. That's like saying, coming to Jesus and saying, we have done a survey between me and my brother and my mother, and we have determined that indeed we are the greatest in the kingdom.

And otherwise we wouldn't have even come to ask you about this unless we felt that we really were the ones. And that we were the capable ones. Now if that's not arrogance, I don't know what is.

It would be like someone putting a billboard out there with his picture on it and saying, you are looking at the finest Christian on the face of this earth. Look closely. We would laugh and we would say, what in the world would possess a man to do that? But that's what these guys are saying.

When you turn your thoughts toward yourself rather than toward others and you begin to lead for your own purposes rather than for the benefit of others, you're going to find this happening. You'll just simply find it happening. Well, that's not all that happens.

I want us to get thoroughly depressed before we get out of here. Oh, we'll get, we'll do better when we look at the way we actually should lead in a moment. But one thing I discover is when you're hungry for power, your symbols increase.

You could say you go for more perks. Symbols of power are important to us, aren't they? I have discovered that my little beat-up car gets there about as fast as the Rolls-Royces do. But you know, a Rolls-Royce is a much greater symbol of significance, isn't it? I almost have to put a sign on my car that says, this is not an abandoned car.

But when you begin to develop power positions, I knew of one particular religious hierarchy where the leader owned a red Cadillac. And as soon as anyone got chosen to be in positions of state leadership under him, you could see there would be another red Cadillac and another red Cadillac, another red Cadillac just lined up there. Why? Because it was the symbol that we were now in power.

Your symbols start increasing. See, these guys wanted right hand and left hand, high symbolism. They didn't come up and say, would you put us in a position where we could be completely used of you? They didn't ask that, did they? We want the big symbols, right hand and left hand.

You go to a hospital and you see somebody walking down, a white coat on and a stethoscope around his neck. Symbol, isn't it? Person of significance. Doctor.

Yes. Yes, doctor. Yes, doctor.

As we were driving here today, I laughed. I couldn't believe it. As I was driving here today, I saw someone, I guess that symbol was so important that rather than leave it at the hospital, they had it hanging from their rear view mirror in the car so that anybody could say, oh yes, doctor, go right ahead.

Go right ahead. We do other things. I'm picking on them because I think that's probably one of the most obvious things, but you give me a position of power and I am so corrupt that eventually I am going to find some symbol that will let you know, I am a powerful person.

You can do it with the clothes you wear. You can do it with the chair you sit in. You can do it with the office that you have.

There are a thousand ways that you can show the symbols and we do it. You don't, I do. Remember the story I told you too, of my flying and in all my years of flying, I have never ever purchased a first class plane ticket.

Remember that? Because I found that my part of the plane gets there about the same time. But I do fly first class quite a bit because, you know, I'm one of those over a hundred thousand mile a year passengers. So they start treating you pretty good and they give you upgrades.

And the coach tickets, gray, I don't pay much attention to that, put it back in my case. But if I get a first class upgrade, it's red. Right here.

Just want you to see who's going on this plane first. And after a few minutes of that, the Lord speaks to me and says, well, how about that Irwin, you didn't even buy it and already you're corrupt. Yes, that's right.

I am amazed at how I go for the symbols, go for the symbols of power. The apostles wanted that. And when I am leading in some way other than the nature of Jesus, that's exactly what happens.

Well, another thing that happens, and I've been saying this all along here, and I guess really this should be number one is we focus on ourselves. Sometimes in the past, in my life, I have worked with individuals who really God had given great vision to. They were effective, but I saw something as I got close that disturbed me deeply.

And I knew it was just a matter of time before it would all crash. Though God had given them great vision, there was something about their way of dealing with people. I found out, and I just watched it, how they treated me, that I was there simply to serve them.

And once they had squeezed everything they could from me, I was cast aside because I was no longer useful. And I realized eventually that will crash because God cannot honor that when we just focus on ourselves. In the 10th chapter of Mark, a fascinating story.

You're familiar with it. Mothers are bringing their children to Jesus. Remember that? For Him just to touch them.

It's a beautiful story. I love it. Verse 13.

Mothers are bringing their children to Jesus for Him to touch them. I can see the crowd. It's a tender moment as they bring their children.

It doesn't even say anything was wrong with their children. Maybe they just wanted to be able to write in their baby book, guess who touched you when you were two. And into this lovely scene, which I'm a bit jealous of because mothers don't necessarily bring their children to me just to touch them.

It's more likely to get your hands off my kid. And mothers were bringing their children to Jesus just to touch them. And Jesus sees something go on that causes Him great pain.

The apostles, bless their hearts. His helpers were rebuking these mothers. I can hear it, lady.

I don't think you understand. This is the busiest man in the whole universe right now. He's holding the entire universe together by himself.

I mean, he really doesn't have time just to be touching your brat. I mean, your child. However, I am a registered agent of his, my card.

And at a more appropriate time, perhaps we can get you a very brief meeting with him. And it will be brief. And don't call us.

We'll call you. Now, folks, what they were doing would be what any world leader would ask his underlings to do. Protect me from people.

There are a lot of people out there. There are a lot of people that want things. They want me to touch kids, you know, and it's dangerous touching kids in this day and age.

You know that. I want you to protect me. Build this wall around me.

That's why I chose you guys. That would have been typical world leadership. But instead, Jesus becomes very upset with them and dignant.

He says, you suffer the children to come to me for if such as the kingdom of heaven. Wow. The apostles were thinking selfishly.

Jesus, our great Emmanuel, God with us had his eyes on the people he had come to say, what a difference, what a difference. Well, another thing that happens when we have power hunger, rejoicing is misplaced in the 10th chapter of Luke, when the apostles had come back from a real power trip. Jesus had sent them out two by two.

They come back all excited. Even the demons are subject to us in your name. And Jesus, in essence, says, hey, fellas, cool it.

He said, don't rejoice that the demons are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in the Lamb's book of life. So he authorizes us to live a life of rejoicing in him, not over the power that we have, but over the saved position that we have. And when you get a power hunger scene in here, the rejoicing disappears, doesn't it? The apostles who should have been saying, this is incredible.

We can rejoice every day because we are saved. Remember that now instead, oh, did you see what those guys were doing? They were trying to take a position up there. Well, we'll watch them.

And you know that from then on, there was suspicion in the group. And the whole bunch was just sort of watching to see whether James and John's mother showed up today. And they would watch her when she would visit with Jesus.

They'd watch James and John. You got to watch those guys. They're ambitious.

And it changes the whole focus of things. Now, here's one of the most terrible of all things that happens when we are power hungry is we begin to use shameful methods. Oh, these guys.

Hey, Jesus, can we have a private audience with you? Mom, come here. You do the talking, will you? Jesus really likes you, and I think you have some clout with him. Can you see the shameful methods beginning to happen? When you are power hungry, the question isn't what is right and best, what is godly, what blesses everybody, but the question is what works.

Does it work? I get tired of getting heartbroken over the public presentations of Christianity that I often see from famous ministries and the fundraising methods that I will sometimes see them using. I consider many of them to be absolutely shameful. God is obviously in desperate straits if you listen to these things and you realize, man, what would make them do that? Why would anyone ever want to use shameful methods to achieve godly things unless they were power hungry, just like these particular fellows were? They were power hungry.

Well, finally, let's finish this. I've had enough of this list. Finally, what happens, this is very much like becoming insensitive and our brothers suffer, equipping ceases.

In Ephesians chapter 4, this brings us really to what I've been waiting to get to. I'm tired of looking at this negative side. The real joy is seeing how did Jesus design us to do this? What did he want us to do to lead? Now, at the beginning, I told you that if we were in leadership, we are the most shameful parts, but there is a lovely paradox to this.

We are also a gift. At the one time, our egos have to be covered by his loving care. At the other hand, we are gifts that Jesus gives to the church.

In Ephesians chapter 4, beginning with verse 11, you know it by heart, and it says he himself, Jesus, gave. See, he is a giver of gifts to the church. It says he gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers.

Now, let me stop here and tell you that for some people, this passage is known as the fivefold ministries. Many of you ever heard that term before? You haven't. Well, good.

But as I journey around and meet a lot of different people, they'll ask me, do you believe in the fivefold ministries? I'll say, what do you mean? Well, you know Ephesians 4, 11, the fivefold ministries. Well, sure,

I believe in it. It's there.

It's in the Bible. Well, then what are you? Well, I'd flown into Zimbabwe in Africa a number of years ago, and I was going to be speaking at a church a week later, and the pastor met me at the airport at the same time that my host met me. And he said, well, I want to advertise your being here since you'll be speaking at our church next Sunday, and I thought I'd come and ask you, just what are you? Now, that's a difficult question for me.

I really resent the question, actually. I said, well, I'm a follower of Jesus. Oh, I know that.

I know that, he said. But what are you? I said, what do you mean? What am I? He said, well, you know, are you an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, a pastor, a teacher? Yeah. I said, sometimes I think I'm one of all of those, if only for a microscopic moment.

I said, I'm probably a prophet because I've been stoned in Jerusalem. And I said to him, look, if you can't just say I'm a follower of Jesus, then you probably shouldn't even bother advertising. He said, well, okay, okay.

But there are some people who get more theology out of this one verse than you can possibly believe. It's like their whole system is built around this one verse. And I sat next to a lady on an airplane flight once.

She was president of some state organization, a Christian lady, but she was very much into the five-fold ministries. And she said, no church in America can grow unless they understand and follow the five-fold ministries and have those five-fold people come in to see them and visit them. I said, really? I said, I didn't know that.

I said, it's funny that I see so many churches that are growing like crazy, and they don't even pay any attention to that. They just do what God's given them to do, and they don't try to find out, well, who's the apostle? Who's the prophet? Are you the evangelist? They just do it. And nobody cares whether there is the title on you or not.

She said, you know some churches that are growing that don't do that? I said, oh, I know some big churches that don't do that. And she said, well, I've never heard of them. I said, ah, you're reading the wrong magazines.

I said, you're getting all of your information from a magazine that doesn't even know what's happening out in the world. They only know a very narrow little area of it. And I said, I wouldn't worry about the five-fold ministries if I were you.

I would just be whatever God's called you to be and let Him worry about that. If you're a teacher, you'll teach people, and people will learn. If you aren't a teacher, if you call yourself one, it won't help much.

If you're an evangelist and you win people to the Lord, wonderful, you'll win people to the Lord. But if you don't win people to the Lord and you call yourself an evangelist, what can we say? Don't worry about the titles. Just be what God's called you to be.

Now, here's the thing that I really like. Do you realize that the job description for all five of these is the same? There's not. And now the apostolic job description.

And now the prophet's job description. And now the evangelist's job description. Now the pastor's, and now the teacher's job description.

The job description is all the same. And you look over here now. Now, let's get to the good stuff.

Let's get to the good stuff. The Jesus style of leadership. See, he gave these gifts.

He says, number one, the gifts that he gives will equip the saints to do the work of the ministry. Equip the saints for ministry. Now, over on the other side, it would gather the saints for my power.

Over here, it's giving yourself away to equip them to do the work of the ministry. This side gathers you around yourself. This side pushes them away from yourself into the ministry because you have now equipped them and trained them, and they don't have to lean on you.

I tell people, and I hope it's true, man. I like to think that what I do is true. But I tell people that if I present Jesus to you in a way that you don't understand it, and you have to keep bringing me back so we can get this thing about Jesus, then I have failed you.

But if I have truly done you right, when I've taught you, you don't have to have me anymore because you're now equipped. Well, let me read the scripture so that we can take these things out of it. Ephesians 4.11, he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we should no longer be children tossed to and fro, carried about with every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men and the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive.

But speaking the truth in love may grow up in all things unto him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body joined and knit together by what every joint supplies according to the effective working by which every part does its share causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. So the next thing we do, if we are leading in the Jesus style, is we edify the body. We cause it to be built up.

This list that we're going to have right now, it is password I had in a denominational church once. I taught on this and then I handed out three by five cards to everybody and I said I want you to write on these cards the name or names of every person who does this for you. I said don't write on this card somebody that you wish did or you think ought to, but I want you to write who does this for you.

I took the cards up and I said if there is no one write the word none so we'll know that this is a actual card from a human being. And I took them up. I had just been pastor there a short while and to my consternation the board members, the elders that were currently there did not make the list.

I thought oh man we have a group of leaders here that have been chosen not because they were leading in the Jesus style but because maybe they got nominated and got elected by somebody. Well I wish I had time to talk about that. And then a couple of years later after the Lord had spoken to my heart and said work on the leadership, present this to them, let them see what it means to lead.

A couple of years later I did the same thing again, taught a series on this, passed out the three by five cards. I said now who does this for you? And to my great joy the elders led the list man. I thought way to go Lord, way to go.

Well we will become equippers of the body. We will bring people into unity of the faith. Now if someone comes to you and is trying to say well now have you heard about, I mean how can you do that or be there or go there, have you heard about this and so forth and so they're trying to lead you over here and say no look I have a thing going over here that's pretty solid you know and we only do a few weird things but then you will know that you're in the hands of someone that is not trying to bring about unity in the faith.

But if someone comes and he's a Barnabas and he tries to build you up and make you stronger in the Lord and encourage you a son of consolation then you know here is someone that's a gift of God and they're leading in the style that Jesus has authorized for us. Well the next thing that happens is that we build people up in the knowledge of Jesus, knowledge of Jesus. Back in the early 70s there were a group of fellows that went around the United States, you would know their names if I told them, who had this special knowledge.

In fact one of them said to me that what we are teaching is rather sophisticated. He said in fact I only know of two or three people in the whole United States that can teach this. I thought oh really? I mean the whole of the kingdom of God rests in the hands of three of you and I listened to them teach and I realized I don't know anything more about Jesus than I knew before but boy am I confused.

It really was sophisticated and I'm not a sophisticated person, you know that by now. I'm one of the ones that Jesus got happy that my kind could understand. But if someone is truly giving themselves away and equipping the saints after they have been with me I'm going to come away knowing more about Jesus.

Now the last time we were together we talked about the Holy Spirit right and according to what Jesus says when the Holy Spirit is active in our lives he will speak of me. So someone that is equipping in the nature of Jesus and anointed by the Holy Spirit when I come away from them I'm going to know more about Jesus than I knew before and if I don't then they have not been leading in the Jesus style. One who is giving himself away will also help me to grow into perfection.

Years ago I read a definition of a friend. A friend is someone who will never ever ask you to do anything wrong or to lower yourself. Hey any of you dating that's a good definition of Christian dating you know.

But when someone is working in my life in an equipping way I end up serving God more than I did before. It's largely because they show me how. I have been with individuals who have helped train me.

They didn't know they were training me. One particular guy his name was Jesse and I watched him. He had a way with children that just blessed me.

You know I would walk along and I would not pay any attention. All right that's children big deal this is the way we're walking let's go you know. But he had this uncanny ability to notice people and if a child was playing with some new toy he would notice that and he would say hey I bet you're having fun with that.

And the kid would brighten up say yeah I'm having a problem here though and he'd say okay I'll help him. It was a yo-yo and he'd show him how you know and he'd go and help him there for a second. And I would think well now why didn't I think to do that? Because I wasn't noticing people that's why.

But there was something in his heart that said I notice people. I care about them and if in the name of Jesus I can make a child happy I'm gonna do it. And I just watched him and I never even said to him hey thanks for letting me see that.

You know I'm convicted about that. I want to notice people more than that. Never thanked him for it.

I should because I talked to him on the phone once in a while. But you know what? I found myself noticing people a little bit more. Has that happened to you? Where you just watch somebody do it and you think why didn't I do that? I could do that.

He was equipping me. He was living out the nature of Jesus. Here he was a gift to the body that I'm part of and I had a chance to see somebody do it right and it taught me.

It taught me and I didn't even realize it. And you know what happened this past weekend? I was up in Idaho and I just attended the the dedication of a crisis pregnancy center and I noticed three kids come in and they had these hummer things you know with rubber bands on the end of one end of the string and you you twirl and go and they come into this fancy dress-up dedication and they're standing there and I thought are they gonna do it in here? But then I just logiced it out and I realized mom and dad had probably bought their presence at this. Look if you'll go with us to this we'll buy you a hummer and then you can hum.

And so they're standing there and when it's over they rush outside and it was time for me to leave too and sure enough they were standing out there and normally I'd have just paid no attention and walked by but I found myself stopping and walking over and saying can I hear that go? I love that hum. Would you do it for me? Oh yeah. And I said you know in Alaska they call that a wolf scarer and they make it out of baleen bone of a whale.

Really? I said yeah that's really fun. I bet you're having fun. Yeah we are.

Okay fine see you later. And as I walked away the pastor who was with me said and it just that's why I'm telling you this now I'm not trying to brag on myself much. I always tell you the good stories.

The pastor said to me he said wow that was fun to watch you do that. I could have done that but I didn't even think about it and at that moment I thought that's just what I would have said a few years ago until I was with an equipper who showed me how to pay attention to people and see things that normally I would forget and if someone loves you and is giving themselves away you'll discover yourself doing more other centered in Jesus style things. Well another thing that will happen is you will help people become stable.

Stability. Well that makes sense if you're going to build people on the rock that's rather stable. I've passed my 35th birthday now and having grown up in the church and teething on the back of a pew I think I've told you that I was born into the church.

The very first Sunday I was in this world I was in church. I was. The sermon that morning was about but having grown up in the church I've discovered that there will always be a hot new theology that will come around.

It will always be there. I have done some studying and reading about some of the history of the church in just this century and I've discovered that there were different crazy little theologies that would go around. I discovered that in part of one state, I won't tell you where it was, they could tell that the Holy Spirit was there because they would jump and I read that and I thought I don't believe this until a friend of mine brought me an article from a group of Russian immigrants that have come to the United States and they get their messages from God when someone has the jumper spirit they call it.

Now these people love God. They love God. But I realize there will always be something like that that comes through.

It may be that someone has some sort of detector and everyone will go for the detector. I want to learn how to detect. Someone will see one particular verse of scripture take it out of context and build whole churches and denominations around.

It will always be and it'll especially happen when revival is going on along the edges there will be these eddies. I used to live right on the Mississippi River and right in the mainstream of the river there was this constant heavy flow but along the edges the whirlpools would form. People drowned there more often than anywhere else and in the whirlpools it was moving faster than in the mainstream and it looked and thought boy here's where the action is.

No that's where the death was. But if someone loves you he's going to be making you more stable in your Christian walk and not trying to lead you into some of these strange things. You will be taught and you will teach others to speak the truth in love.

Now you got to remember that speaking the truth in love means that you're speaking truth only that will make people grow and be equipped and edified. You will not become brutally honest which usually is just honestly brutal but you'll begin to ask how can I tell the truth about myself that will benefit them because that would be truth in love. Have you ever struggled through something and God has given you victory over it and then you shared that story with someone else and it enabled them to gain the victory too? You had just spoken the truth about yourself in love and it built a relationship and edified someone else.

We learn how to be humble people speaking the truth in love because someone does it and shows us how. They lead by example. Well we grow up we help people grow up and learn to do their share.

I think that some of the observations I have made in my earlier years were of people that only wanted to relate to God out of what I would call an emotional basis just as a newborn baby would. A newborn baby isn't very stable. They make a lot of noise and there's a lot of cleanup work that goes with them.

They don't do much work. You can't say I'd like to hire out a baby here at \$50 an hour. There's not much demand.

Baby leasing or anything like that. But when we grow up and when we understand who God is regardless of how we feel at a given moment we become mature people who have been equipped because we've been put in touch with the word. We know what God is like.

Our emotions and they're fickle aren't they? How did you feel on November 4th? Emotions are fickle. Emotions are fickle. But God is not.

He is the same. And when people are equipping me I'm steady with God regardless of how I feel at a given moment. And I learn to be steady with Him regardless of what's happening to me at a given moment.

What would appear to be great tragedies can happen and out of it I will learn that God will be glorified because He wastes nothing. And I only learned that at the hands of an equipper. Someone who takes me to the word and then plugs me into the body.

When Jesus said if you want to find your life you have to lose it He was telling us the truth. And when someone is truly leading me in the nature of Jesus, in the Jesus style, He will very quickly try to teach me how to give myself away. I visited a commune.

Once was a commune up in northern Canada. I mean way out in the boondocks. Finally we had finished driving on roads and we were driving on what didn't look to me to be a trail but he knew where he was going.

And we came to a river and I thought this is it. What do we do now? He honked the horn and across the river, this roaring river, came a boat. Picked us up, took us over.

We climbed the bank and I discovered one of the most beautiful communities I've ever seen. Houses, no electricity, but they had everything they needed. Everything they needed.

It was beautiful. It had been built by a group of Christians who wanted to get away from the world and be the community of God. And they had done it well.

They lacked nothing except they violated the nature of Jesus. And what had been a community at one point of 160 people, when I went there, they had three people. It was dead.

And when I investigated to find out well what was the underpinning? The underpinning was isolation. Get away from the world so it won't contaminate us. But you see Jesus said no you're in the world.

You're just not of it. And he didn't say escape. He said go ye.

And if I am leading in the nature of Jesus, I am giving myself away and teaching other people to give themselves away because I know that that's where the joy is. And I want people to be filled with joy. But if I say let's just escape, then I've just drunk the poison of my death.

Because God has created you to be salt and to be light. A city on a hill which cannot be hid. So now you're about to go.

You're about to leave this building. You're going to go out into a rather confused world. People out there really know we're in trouble, but they don't have a clue as to what will solve it.

There are people who are desperate emotionally. They are desperate financially. They are desperate in ways we can't even begin to imagine.

Desperate. They're terrified. They're terrified.

They are driven by forces within them that they can't seem to control. They are driven to do things that even they hate. And you're about to go out there where they are.

Isn't that wonderful? Because you're going among them with an entirely different concept than others go among them. You're going to go to bless them. You're about to go out where they are and be this kind of person to them.

They will not have experienced it before until they see it from you. And as the nature of Jesus lives out in you and you take a role in their life that's very much like John the Baptist to prepare the way of the Lord to them, changes are going to occur because you will be a gift of Jesus Christ to them. What an awesome

opportunity.

So as you walk out of here in just a moment, I want you to think, I'm a gift. I wonder to who? I wonder to who? Who will I get to bless? Often I come to church, I know that you would never do this, but I often will come to church and I'll just sort of sit there and I'll think, boy, it's been a tough week. Satan's tanned my hide.

I think I'll go to church on Gail's teaching. Oh well, bless me. You have 20 minutes to bless me.

And you sit in a pool of misery. Ah, but when the nature of Jesus begins to take over, it's different. We begin to come with the thought, I'm going to bless somebody.

I wonder who it is. Oh, isn't it great that God let me be a gift and I'm going to bless somebody. Is it you? What would happen if this many of us got together with that kind of thought? We just walked on the ground, kind of looking at each other.

And God has equipped you and designed you not to leave this place thinking, oh boy, it's tough out here. I hope I can just make it till Sunday. If I can make it till Sunday.

But instead, I want you to get up and just kind of look around and think I'm going to bless somebody. I wonder who it is. If not here, where? And when and how I'm going to do it because I can't help it.

It's just in me. It's the way Jesus is and I've got to do it. I'm going to bless somebody.

Are you ready? All right, stand up. So you gifted people, as you go, may the love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you. Are you ready? Go.

Good night. 92235 or you may call servant quarters toll free at 888-321-0077. You may also visit our website at www.servant.org.

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