

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership has become a popular idea in recent years, but it is as ancient as the Bible. We are speaking about it now because our congregation is going through the process of appointing elders today and in the near future deacons. In addition to the qualifications listed for these leaders, we must consider the quality of service taught throughout the Bible.

Being a servant of Jesus Christ is not an option. All Christians must be servants.

Romans 6:22 - "But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life."

When someone is appointed to a leadership responsibility in the church they must remember that they are still a servant. Church leaders must first and foremost be Christian servants. Church leadership is not about filling a position or office. It is about doing a work for Jesus and His church.

Leaders serve. They do not exist to be served.

John 13:12-17 - "¹² So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."
This church will be blessed when we all desire to serve rather than be served.

Jesus practiced what he taught.

John 13:15 - "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."

Philippians 2:5-7 - "⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men."

How to identify a servant leader.

- They demonstrate that Christian leadership is all about serving. **Mark 10:43-45**
- They serve from a heart of love and compassion.
- They look for needs to be met.
- They don't care who gets the credit.
- They just want to serve like Jesus.
- They do not seek to serve for the praise of people.
- They do not brag or toot their own horns.
- They love the church. **John 13:34**
- They serve with joy.
- They don't offer excuses to get out of the "dirty" work.
- They serve enthusiastically from the heart. **Romans 12:11** - "not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;"
- They do not serve two masters. **Matthew 6:24** - "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."
- God's servant leader is patient, gentle, kind, and is not a troublemaker. **2 Timothy 2:24** - "And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient."

Examples of God's servants.

Lessons from the "good" Samaritan. He is called good because he did good.

Luke 10:30-37 - ³⁰ Then Jesus answered and said: A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' ³⁶ So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" ³⁷ And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

- Just being religious does not make a person a servant leader.
- Servant leadership puts the needs of others before their own.
- When help is needed it is given immediately, not postponed for a more convenient time.
- Serving others may involve taking risks.
- Serving takes personal time and resources.
- Servant leaders give up their own comfort.
- Servant leaders take care of long-range needs as well as the immediate needs.

God honors those who serve Jesus.

John 12:26 - "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor."

God rewards his faithful servants.

Matthew 25:21 - "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

Colossians 3:23-24 - ²³ And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ."

God's servants do not retire from His service.

Revelation 2:10 - "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."