



Introduction:

Marriage is a beautiful design of God. God ordained the marriage relationship from the beginning when he created man (Mark 10:6; Genesis 2:23-25). Marriage is very much like the Christian life (Ephesians 5:25-27). At first you get saved and everything is awesome and exciting, kind of like a honeymoon, but then that's over and you have to come home and live life together. The phase after the honeymoon is like what the Bible calls "*sanctification*." According to *Webster's*, the word "sanctification" means "the act of God's grace by which the affections are purified or separated from sin and the world, and exalted to a supreme love to God; the act of consecrating or of setting apart for a purpose."

Paul tells us that this act, which is a process, is something we must "*work out*" or accomplish in our own life (Philippians 2:12). The good news is that this process is merely a practice of surrender. Again, it's not us; it's Christ being allowed to live in and through us (1 Corinthians 1:30). As we engage in this process and yield ourselves to God and His Word, we begin to see maturity and growth in our lives. Paul further states, that through our sanctification, we learn how to control our thoughts and emotions (1 Thessalonians 4:3-4). The process also prepares us to be aligned with God's will and useful for His purpose (2 Timothy 2:21). God is looking for some men and women who will be committed followers of Jesus Christ in their home, work, church, and community. Will you commit to leading like Christ?

The Focus:

- **Every believer should lead like Christ. How did Christ lead?**
 - **Christ did not selfishly dominate others.**
 - **Christ led by ministering.**
 - **Christ ministered by serving.**
 - **Christ served by sacrificing.**

Jesus Christ was a leader like no other. He was the greatest leader the world has ever known because He was the greatest follower the world has ever known. His sole desire was to do the will of His Father (John 4:34). Today, God is looking for men and women who will commit to following Christ by fulfilling the will of God. So, what is God's will today (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:5; Galatians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9)? Until one knows God's will, it is impossible to know how to effectively contribute to its fulfillment. Knowing that Christ was a successful leader, what were the traits that marked Christ's leadership?

As a leader, Christ didn't ever impose His will on anyone, nor will He. Christ didn't selfishly dominate others. Jesus described the world's attitude concerning leadership in very oppressive terms: "*Rule over*" – to be first in rank or power; "*Exercise lordship*" – to lord over, control, subjugate; "*Exercise authority*" – to wield full privilege over. The philosophy of the world is to dominate, bully, control, and manipulate others. But Jesus rebuts with, "*But so shall it not be*

among you...” While living on the earth, Christ displayed quite the opposite of what the world teaches. The attitude Christ displayed is found in Philippians 2:4-8 – service, humility, obedience, and sacrifice. How does this apply to men as spiritual leaders? How does this work in our marriages? Men who try to employ the world’s methodology in leading their homes are going to find it will not work, nor is it successful. You can’t rule over your wife and children and expect to have a home with true love that is focused upon each other. As leaders in our homes, husbands and dads must lead by serving. Christ demonstrated this throughout His ministry (John 13:3-5; Philippians 2:7-8).

Christ led by example. Christ never coerced people into following His lead. As a leader, Christ ministered to the needs of others. Christ’s entire ministry on earth was about helping others (Matthew 9:35-36). It is important to understand the context of why Christ said what He did. Prior to Christ’s remarks in Mark 10:42-45, two of Jesus’ disciples, James and John, went to Jesus hoping to be granted something by Him (vs. 37). From their request came Christ’s lesson to them all on leadership. And according to Jesus, the one who ministers the most is the greatest, like a husband meeting the needs of his wife.

If Christ’s mindset was to minister, what should this cause a Christ-like leader to do? Serve others (vs. 44)! Jesus taught that a true leader serves. He taught that if you want to be first in a position of influence (*“chiefest”* – foremost), you need to serve others. The one thing that binds all believers together is love. Paul says that love amongst the body unites us as we grow and mature in the Lord (Colossians 3:14; Ephesians 4:13-16). Paul also teaches that our love should motivate us to serve others (Galatians 5:13). If you love your wife, you will find ways to serve her, and the wife will find ways to serve her husband. What do you think would happen in a marriage where both spouses are attempting to serve each other? What do you think would happen in a church where every church member served each other, rather than griping and complaining? We must remember that Christ came to serve. Christ’s service took Him all the way to the cross (Matthew 20:28). He made a way; He made it possible for every one of us to have eternal life. He served us by dying for us. Paul teaches the church that the mind of Christ is one of service. True joy comes, not by selfishness, but by selflessness – by serving (Philippians 2:4-5).

As a leader, Christ’s service was ultimately His sacrifice. Christ led by giving, not taking. Christ lived to give (Mark 10:45; 2 Corinthians 8:9). As well, it is important to note that Christ served when it was not easy or convenient, which is counter to the culture we live. It wasn’t easy or convenient to pay for our sins by giving His life on the cross. True, Christ-honoring service requires sacrifice (Philippians 2:5-7). If we are going to be the leaders Christ would have us to be, we must have a ministry mindset that leads us to serve, and service that leads us to sacrifice.

Response to the Sermon:

In the message, Pastor Dan proposed that God desires for men and women to be committed followers of Christ. As followers, God wants us to be leaders in our homes, at work, at church,

and in the community. But until we are committed, we will never be as effective as God intends for us to be. Read Mark 10:42-45. Upon reading the text, write instances in your life where you have exhibited or when you observed the model of leadership exhibited in the world and what the outcomes were. Also, write down instances where you have lived out or observed someone else living out the methods of leadership that Christ demonstrated and how those situations turned out. Think about the different approaches and how you should implement the practices that Christ modeled for us.

Bible Study Thoughts & Questions:

It's been said that "people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." When we serve, which demonstrates that we care, it moves people. Christ showed great care and concern for people (Matthew 9:35-36). Paul informed believers that we are to care by serving in love (Galatians 5:13). But that way of living, having an others-mindset, has not always been a part of the life of those who now claim to be followers of Christ. Paul clearly described our old, sin nature and our former life apart from Christ, showing us that we were in bondage, being a servant to the flesh (Titus 3:3; Romans 6:16-22). But when one trusts in the crosswork of Christ, they are no longer in bondage to sin, destined to serve the flesh; they are given a new life by which to serve God (Romans 7:6; Romans 8:5-15).

Before we can have an impact on others at home, work, church, or in our community, what must we do daily to be an effective witness for Christ (Romans 6:6, 11; Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:10)? Why is this so important?

Being a follower of Christ and having applied the principles of Romans 6:11, what are some truths that we should remember about the life of Christ (Philippians 2:3-8)? How should these truths affect the mind and life of every believer?

What are some ways that this attitude of service can be manifested in your home, work, church, and community?

Application Questions:

After hearing the request made by James and John, Christ calls all of His disciples over to use the opportunity as a teachable moment. Dads and moms, Christ was a great teacher. We too

must be teachers, teaching our children about life and the principles we should employ with the life we have been given. We should take every opportunity and situation to instruct and admonish our children about the ways of God. We have to be intentional about what we teach our children because if we don't, then they will learn the opposite of what God desires for them from the philosophies and teaching of this world (Colossians 2:7-8). Dads and moms, we must lead by example! What were the traits that marked Christ's leadership found in Mark 10:42-45?

What is the world's philosophy of leadership (vs. 42)?

What were the characteristics of Christ's leadership (vs. 43-45; Philippians 2:4-8)?

Knowing and understanding the world's philosophy of leadership in comparison with Christ's leadership, how does this apply to our relationships at home, work, church, and in our community?

Knowing we are to be like Christ (Romans 8:29), how should we act in our relationship with others (vs. 45)?

What was the ultimate act of Christ that displayed His love for others (vs. 45; John 3:16)? How should this impact our relationships?

Prayer:

- Pray for the humility to think of others before yourself (Philippians 2:4-5).
- Pray that we would get our focus off of ourselves and serve others through the love of Christ (Galatians 5:13).
- Pray that our leadership in our homes, at work, at church, and in our community would reflect the heart and mind of Christ (Mark 10:42-45).