

Bay City Wesleyan Church  
March 20, 2016

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Palm Sunday 2016  
Celebrating King Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem as he heads to the Cross  
<http://bible.com/events/5818>

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Easter Sunday Celebration NEXT WEEK!  
Invite as many friends and family as you can, to join us in celebrating Jesus' resurrection.  
FREE Breakfast at 9:30 am  
Easter Celebration at 10:45 am

Luke 9:51 NIV  
As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.

Luke 9:51 is the foundation for our series in these weeks of preparation leading up to Easter.

We are walking with Jesus to Jerusalem, as recorded in the gospel of Luke. We have the same purpose Jesus had - building God's Kingdom one life at a time. We want to experience the life-changing power of sharing his purpose. We are uncovering the fine art of knowing why we're here.

Nevertheless, as Jesus arrives at Jerusalem, we encounter the primary roadblock to the life-changing power of living on purpose. We come face to face with selfishness.

1. No one wants to admit it but we all tend toward selfishness.

Selfishness is the tendency to put my needs, my desires, my preferences, my comfort, my security and my rights ahead of everyone else.

Here's a quick two question quiz from John Bray, the Dean of the Chapel at Indiana Wesleyan University.

What do I complain about the most?

When most of my complaints focus on whether or not my needs, my desires, my preferences, my comfort, my security and my rights are satisfied, then I'm selfish.

What do I pray about the most?

When most of my prayer requests focus on my needs, my desires, my preferences, my comfort, my security and my rights, then I'm selfish.

2. Selfishness is nothing new.

Jesus' first followers were definitely infected with it. He had several opportunities to teach them that the opposite of selfishness is serving.

Luke 9:46-48 NLT  
Then his disciples began arguing about which of them was the greatest. But Jesus knew their thoughts, so he brought a little child to his side. Then he said to them, "Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me also welcomes my Father who sent me. Whoever is the least among you is the greatest."

Matthew 20:17-28 NLT

As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside privately and told them what was going to happen to him. "Listen," he said, "we're going up to Jerusalem, where the Son of Man will be betrayed to the leading priests and the teachers of religious law. They will sentence him to die. Then they will hand him over to the Romans to be mocked, flogged with a whip, and crucified. But on the third day he will be raised from the dead." Then the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus with her sons. She knelt respectfully to ask a favor. "What is your request?" he asked. She replied, "In your Kingdom, please let my two sons sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left." But Jesus answered by saying to them, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink?" "Oh yes," they replied, "we are able!" Jesus told them, "You will indeed drink from my bitter cup. But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. My Father has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen." When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. But Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Luke 22:7-24 NLT

Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread arrived, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John ahead and said, "Go and prepare the Passover meal, so we can eat it together." "Where do you want us to prepare it?" they asked him. He replied, "As soon as you enter Jerusalem, a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him. At the house he enters, say to the owner, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?' He will take you upstairs to a large room that is already set up. That is where you should prepare our meal." They went off to the city and found everything just as Jesus had said, and they prepared the Passover meal there. When the time came, Jesus and the apostles sat down together at the table. Jesus said, "I have been very eager to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. For I tell you now that I won't eat this meal again until its meaning is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." Then he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. Then he said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. For I will not drink wine again until the Kingdom of God has come." He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me." After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you. "But here at this table, sitting among us as a friend, is the man who will betray me. For it has been determined that the Son of Man must die. But what sorrow awaits the one who betrays him." The disciples began to ask each other which of them would ever do such a thing. Then they began to argue among themselves about who would be the greatest among them.

3. It's easy to judge them.

We're often quick to declare the disciples guilty of selfishness. It's so obvious. But are we any better?

Jesus called them to serve as he did. Are we serving others?

Jesus commanded them to pick up their crosses and to deny themselves daily. Are we sacrificing our needs, our desires, our preferences, our comfort, our security and our rights?

Martin Luther King, Jr asserted, "Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative [selflessness] or the darkness of destructive selfishness. This is the judgment. Life's most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?"

Citation:<http://www.mlkcelebration.com/mlk-the-man/famous-quotes/>

4. The way live in God's kingdom stands in contrast to the way this world lives.

Luke 22:25-30 NLT

Jesus told them, "In this world the kings and great men lord it over their people, yet they are called 'friends of the people.' But among you it will be different. Those who are the greatest among you should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a servant. Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves. "You have stayed with me in my time of trial. And just as my Father has granted me a Kingdom, I now grant you the right to eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom. And you will sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Sermon in a Sentence:**

To serve like Jesus did, I must surrender like He did.

Luke 22:39-46 NIV

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

Philippians 2:5-11 NLT

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges ; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus surrendered his right to be served in order to serve us.

To serve like Jesus did, I must surrender like He did.

It seems impossible. Why should I ever expect to serve like Jesus did?

5. There's good news. Everybody can be great in God's kingdom.

Martin Luther King, Jr challenged and inspired people with these words.

"Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's theory of relativity to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

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You can get rid of selfishness once and for all. You can overcome the roadblock keeping you from experiencing the joy of living on mission with Jesus.

But to serve like Jesus did, you must surrender like He did.

Like all humans, you tend to put your needs, your desires, your preferences, your comfort, your security and your rights ahead of everyone else. This tendency toward selfishness forms the primary roadblock keeping you from experiencing the life-changing power of living on purpose. Jesus insists that you to join him serving those who are not in God's family yet if you follow him. That was his purpose. He knows the best life focuses on His mission of building God's kingdom one life at a time. Surrendering everything to Jesus is the way to get rid of your selfishness once and for all.

Give all your needs, your desires, your preferences, your comfort, your security and your rights to Jesus.

Are you ready to surrender all to Jesus?