

Leadership Models

Call to worship For even the **Son of Man** did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.' . (Mark 10:45)

Hymn StF 656 Behold the servant of the Lord !

I wait thy guiding eye to feel,
to hear and keep thy every word,
to prove and do thy perfect will,
joyful from my own works to cease,
glad to fulfil all righteousness.

Me if thy grace vouchsafe to use,
meanest of all thy creatures, me,
the deed, the time, the manner choose ;
let all my fruit be found of thee ;
let all my works in thee be wrought,
by thee to full perfection brought.

My every weak though good design
o'errule or change, as seems thee meet ;
Jesus, let all my work be thine !
Thy work, O Lord, is all complete,
and pleasing in thy Father's sight ;
thou only hast done all things right.

Here then to thee thine own I leave ;
mould as thou wilt thy passive clay ;
but let me all thy stamp receive,
but let me all thy words obey,
serve with a single heart and eye,
and to thy glory live and die.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

Prayer Give us, Lord, a vision not just of your kingdom in heaven, but of your kingdom on earth, a sense of what you want to do and are able to do, here and now among us, and may that inspire us each day to greater service and more faithful discipleship. Give us love for you and for other; deeper faith in you and in what you can achieve in the hearts and lives of all. Send us out to live and work for you for your kingdom's sake. Amen.

Reading **Mark 10: 31 – 45** **Third prediction of Jesus death and request from James and John**

Reflection

If you were founding a new organisation today, what model of leadership would you put in place. If you were wanting to make a transformational impact worldwide, how would you start. A carpenter born 2000 years in the Middle East – is still impacting the world. What sort of leadership did this man show in his life?

The first two years of his life his parents were refugees, asylum seekers in a foreign land. The next 28 years he lived in relative obscurity in a small village, learning his father's trade – a carpenter. His father had died and he had taken over the family business. Then aged 30 he began to travel and called a motley group of people to join him. He spent three years with them, travelling, teaching in an area little bigger than Suffolk and Norfolk combined. Crowds often went with them and there were some memorable experiences. He also valued some privacy, wanting some quiet time, sometimes completely on his own and sometimes with his closest friends. There were trades people, businesspeople and tax people in this small group. They saw this man as their leader but vied for positions of authority amongst themselves – several times arguing as to who of them was the greatest. Two of them had the audacity to ask for positions of superiority in the future structure.

The records we have of what this man taught the crowds and more specifically his close followers, shows that they often heard great messages, but didn't apply them to their own lives. They were more used to worldly views of leadership structures. He taught that often political or business forms of leadership was about hierarchy, power and ruling over people. The Romans who were the occupying power in the area, ruled with force and often inflicted punishments upon people to cause people to be compliant and obedient (even making examples of some by killing in cruel ways). I have known people in business situations, who do not worry about hurting people along the way as they prioritise their own career.

Even after the friends of this man had recognised who their leader was – he was the long-prophesied Messiah - they didn't recognise the leadership style talk he gave. The leader doesn't come to be served by the minions but comes to serve others himself. He actually told them that he would give his life for their sakes.

The last time he was with his friends was for a meal. They had hired a room in the capital city and a meal had been prepared for them. No arrangement had been made for the usual task of the lowest slave to wash the visitors' feet before reclining at the table. This leader took off his outer garment, wrapped a towel around his waist, put water in a bowl and washed his friends' feet – dusty from open sandals and highways. The friends were embarrassed, by their leader serving, and one tried to protest. This demonstration of service spoke powerfully to them – it was not just words. It was life transforming. They never forgot that lesson and many of them went on to serve and give their lives.

What is the impact today of this carpenter born 2000 years ago? Worldwide the Church of Jesus Christ is still growing. Like the friends of Jesus, the church often forgets the lessons about serving one another and is more concerned with its own survival. At its best the church serves the communities it is part of and also seeks to make an impact worldwide by supporting partners at work serving in other countries.

For your reflection.

- 1) Paul tells us that Jesus, being in the very nature God, made himself nothing, taking the very nature of being a servant. He humbled himself and became obedient to death on a cross (Phil 2:6-8) If Jesus has done this for our salvation, how can we serve one another?
- 2) Have you ever thought that a job that needs doing is beneath your status and you'll leave it for someone below your level? Remember Jesus washed his disciples' feet and told us to do likewise.

Prayers

Gracious God, thank you that you didn't just talk about love, but showed love in action, entering our world in Christ and enduring suffering and death to bring us life.

Through our service and witness, Lord:
reach out to others in turn.

Thank you that through him, you strengthened the weak, healed the sick, comforted the sorrowful and redeemed the lost, bringing good news to the poor, hope to the oppressed and acceptance to the outcast.

Through our service and witness, Lord:
reach out to others in turn.

Help us, in turn, to live in such a way that our deeds and words are one – that what we profess with our lips we express in our lives. Teach us your way and help us to follow.

Through our service and witness, Lord:
reach out to others in turn. Amen.

Hymn StF 272 From heaven you came, helpless babe,

entered our world, your glory veiled,
not to be served but to serve,
and give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
he calls us now to follow him,
to bring our lives as a daily offering
of worship to the Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears
my heavy load he chose to bear ;
his heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours,' he said.

Come see his hands and his feet,
the scars that speak of sacrifice,
hands that flung stars into space
to cruel nails surrendered.

So let us learn how to serve
and in our lives enthrone him,
each other's needs to prefer,
for it is Christ we're serving.

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950)

Blessing Father God, forgive us, for too often we say no to others and no to you. We see situations of need around us but hold back, whether through apathy, selfishness, or fear of getting involved. Remind us of what you endured, what you sacrificed, to transform our broken world, and help us to give of ourselves in turn. And may your blessing be on our service and on our lives. Amen