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Alright, how many of you have been going to church for many years? Good. How many of you have heard lots of Bible stories and verses and stuff? Maybe not as many. I'm concerned about your churches, but alright. So, last night we talked about service in general. And today we are going to specifically talk about Christian service. Alright? So, I want you to... Close your eyes. And I want you to think about a time that you've gone to a restaurant or a store or something. And I want you to imagine that a time that you've had just kind of normal, average, maybe less than average, service. A person who just really did not go out of their way for treating you as you feel maybe you should have been treated. And now I want you to kind of dig back into your mind and think about the stories of Jesus and the way that He served the disciples, the way He washed their feet, the way He served really all mankind by dying on the cross. And I want you to think about Jesus as a servant. And I want you to think... I want you to compare that to that person in the store. And once you've kind of got those ideas in your head, I want you to try and come up with an adjective that describes how Jesus as a servant is different than your average run-of-the-mill person that you find around somewhere. Can anybody come up with for me an adjective that describes how Jesus and what He does is different? Unconditional. Unconditional. In what way? He died on the cross because He loved us and for no other reason. He also said that looking at everybody is better than you. So be a servant to them, be humble. Look at them higher than yourself. Philippians 2, 4-9 says, "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of men, and being found in the appearance as a man, He humbled Himself, became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. And therefore God has also highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name." So that's good. That's a good place to start. Christian service is humble. Christian service is you recognize that you have status and position. Maybe it's the family you come from, maybe it's the society you live in. Maybe it's just the choices you've made in life. On some level, we have a status and a position and God calls us to step down from that and be humble as we serve other people. What other adjectives pop in your head when you think about Jesus? What ways does He serve? I'll read you a verse and maybe you'll begin to get an idea. "Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." What does that teach us about how we serve? Constantly. Constantly. Excellent. The word I wrote down was thoroughly. Like when Jesus serves and when He calls us to serve, He says, "I don't want you to do this half-heartedly. I don't want you to poorly represent Me by just phoning it in." He says, "When you serve as a Christian, I want you to do it so completely and so well that it gives glory to God." Philippians 2, we read, "Do all things without complaining and disputing that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world. Do all things without complaining and disputing." I don't know about you, but I have been to places, stores, restaurants, and I have gone in. And if I try to change even one little thing about my order, I get the eye roll. And it's just like I'm asking Him to move mountains and all I'm really saying is just, "No, catch it. Really." And Jesus is telling us here in Philippians, He's like, "When you serve people, I want you to do it joyfully." He's like, "I know you're making yourself less. I know that you're making yourself humble. And sometimes that's not easy. But when you serve people, no matter how difficult it is, be full of joy. Don't complain. Don't dispute. Because you are children of God. And that is who you are. That is your new nature, which we're going to talk about more tonight. Here's one that I think confuses some people. It's from Matthew 6. "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will himself reward you openly. So do not do your charitable deeds before men to be seen by them." The adjective I wrote down for this was our service should be done secretly. Now, some people kind of get it into their head that they have to be super ninja spies, and that if someone finds out that they've done something good, then suddenly they've lost their reward. That's not the point of this verse. The point of this verse is your motivation. Are you being a good person in order to get people to say, "Wow, what a good person." Because that's what this is talking about. Yeah. When God looks at our heart and everything we do, and if we are honestly doing something for Him, then it's okay if no one finds out about it or if lots of people find out about it. I mean, technically I'm here serving you guys, and it's not a secret. You all know that I'm here, obviously. But God looks at my heart, and He alone, and He and I alone know my motivation for coming here and for doing this. And so He knows if I'm doing this to impress you or impress other people, or if I'm doing this here because I love Him. And that's the point of that verse, is not being super secret about it, but not doing what you do in order for the acclaim and the praise of men. This is an example, and I always open the door for my wife over here. And I don't care if people see me. As a matter of fact, I hope they do because maybe they will start doing it possibly. But you're doing it for her, not for those other people. But I hope they see me as an example, so maybe the seed will plant to them for them to start doing it. Mm-hmm. Excellent. Yeah, being a good role model, absolutely. Jesus says in Luke 14, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just." This verse we learned that Christian service is sacrificial. I think possibly this one right here is the one to me that really stands out as being different from the world. I rarely, if ever, see someone do a good deed without hoping to get something back from it, outside of the Christian realm, should say. Everything is sort of an act of trading, an act of trying to get more for yourself. So you hold the door for someone, it's because you think she's pretty, or it's your boss or something, you're trying to get brownie points at work, or something like that. But when you see someone who absolutely cannot repay you, the typical response in the world is, "Why do I need to help that person?" That gives me nothing. But Jesus says, "When you do something good for your friend, and later on your friend repays you, he gives you something back." He's like, "That's it. That's your reward." He's like, "If you really want to be rewarded for the good things that you do, find the people who can't pay you back. Go out to the poor and the homeless and strangers who don't know you and who just can't repay you. Your repayment, when they can't repay you, God will repay you when you get to heaven." The Bible spends a lot of time talking about treasure and heaven and our rewards that will be there. And that's how you do it, is by showing that selfless love. 1 Peter 2, "Having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation." That one's a little hard to parse when you hear it, but the point of it is to be honorable. Again, my mind is dropped back to horrible customer service experiences I've had. The dishonorable way, working at restaurants and someone sends their food back and it doesn't come back quite as healthy as when it went out the first time. Those kinds of things are dishonorable and displeasing to God. Even though maybe people out in the restaurant didn't know what's going on, people in the kitchen knew what was going on. And the point of this verse is what it's saying is that be so honorable that people can't speak evil against you. Do what you do so honorably, so well, ticking off every possible box of what's the best way to do this, that people just have nothing evil to say about you. I've got three more. "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it." Christian service should be done faithfully. It's very sad that I've seen a lot of people start a ministry or some sort of activity as part of the church for God. And sadly, they just sort of say, "Ah, well, I give up. That's okay." We had some people come to our church to try and start a new church in Carmel, and they were using our building on Sunday evenings. And after a few months, they were just like, "Man, I'm going to close the doors and run home." I mean, I don't know the whole situation, and maybe that was the right thing to do, but I know a lot of times that in Christian ministry, I see people who start strong, and then life gets difficult, and they just get tired, and they give up. And here Paul is saying, "You know what? Run like you're trying to win first place. Not like you just want to look good around the other runners. Run like you want to win." Because that is kind of how it works, isn't it? We get out on a metaphorical race track, and we're like, "Look, I'm a runner. Look at me. I got my jersey and everything, and I can go like this." And we want to kind of clap for us and tell us how great we are, but really, when it comes time to apply the effort, sometimes we're just like, "I don't know." God says, through Peter, he says, "Run, through Paul." Sorry. "Run faithfully." Matthew 5 says, "But I tell you not to resist an evil person. Whoever slaps you on the right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also, and whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him too." Christian service is abundant. Christian service does more than just the bare minimum. Christian service surprises people with how far out of the way you go to serve them. And to me, that's one of the hardest verses in the Bible. Someone forcing me to do X amount of service, and Jesus says, "Double it." I mean, first, I don't like people forcing me into service, and when that situation happens, what I really want to do is just say, "All right, I know you've forced me to do this, but I'm doing bare minimum, and I'm not going to be happy about it, and I'm just going to grumble and complain and get done with it as fast as possible." And Jesus says, "No, be joyful, be a hard worker, and exceed their expectations." He says, "You do this, you will be my children, and you will be glory to God." And finally, Galatians 6, 10, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith." This is a weird verse for people. This is a verse I've actually never heard anyone preach on. But Jesus says, "This right here is your family. Your church is your family." And he's like, "I placed you in this family to be a part of it, to look out for it, and to take care of it." So don't get so caught up in your outside ministries that you forget that you have an inside ministry in your church. When Jesus talks about how we're all parts of the body, all those parts he's talking about are other Christians. And when he says, "We all come together as different parts, and we all work together," what he's saying is, "You have a role to play, a ministry to play, towards the other Christians in your life." And so, sometimes the working at the soup kitchen and feeding the homeless and those kinds of things may give us great brownie points. People say, "Oh wow, you're really serving there. You're helping those people who really can't pay you back." But a lot of times we end up neglecting the people inside our church. And I think that's why a lot of us come from churches that are maybe small and dying. Because people come and they just feel ignored and neglected. And they forget that this church is a place where we come and we help each other and we are our body. And so the final point of Christian service is that it is not just outward, it is inward. So I've gone through a bunch of different points here and I'm giving you a lot to think about. And I want you to think about it the rest of the day. The stuff I'm talking about is not easy, all right? It shouldn't sound like you're just ticking those off. I'm like, "Yep, that's me. I'm done. That was easy." It should sound like me. You should feel a little bit convicted by some of those things. Because there's definitely... I go through that list and I'm like, "Yeah, I need to work on that area." And it's hard. And tonight we're going to talk about how we find the strength to do this difficult thing that God's called us to. But as you go through the day, I want you to just try to think of as many of those adjectives as you can. Apply them to the work that you're going to be doing around the camp today. Be cheerful, be hardworking, go the extra mile. And also be thinking about once you get back home how those things apply to the different ways that you serve. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, you are holy and you are God and we know that you set us high standard for us. But we also know, God, that you equipment prepare us to meet that standard. So as we move back into our lives, I pray that you will remind us of these different points. Help us to get that image in our mind of what a good Christian servant looks like. And help us to pursue that and live up to that standard, God. And thank you that when we fail and when we don't meet that standard, God, you forgive us. And that we can be confident that your love towards us is not based on our performance. And that you will always be alongside us, helping us to grow. And we just say thank you, God. In your name, amen.