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Verses 20 through 28. "Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and said, kneeling down, asked a favor of him, 'What is it you want?' he asked. She said, 'Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right hand and the other at your left in your kingdom.' 'You don't know what you're asking,' Jesus said to them. 'Can you drink the cup I'm going to drink?' 'We can,' they answered. Jesus said to them, 'You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right hand or left does not remind me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my father. When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lorded over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them, not so with you. Understand whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave, just as the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.' All right. Okay, good morning. I have a small confession to make before we start. I am very busy, and I kept praying and praying in all my free time this week, and I couldn't figure out what sermon I was going to preach, and so I'm going to be sharing with you something I shared with the kids up at Quaker Haven. So I apologize. It's not the freshest sermon I've ever given, but I promise it's going to be a good one. Hey, it's good enough to entertain kids, right? It was full impact was the camp that I was at, and the theme of that camp was, 'We serve because he served us.' We serve as Christians. We serve each other. We serve this world because our lord and master washed his disciples' feet and said, 'You are not greater than me. I have served you. Now go and serve the world.' To begin with, let's just talk about service just in general. In most basic form, to serve is to perform an action that benefits someone else, right? Simple. It may indirectly benefit us, but if it's something that only directly benefits us, that's self-serving, and that's not something that's considered bad. Self-serving is something that benefits someone else, primarily. Most of you, I would say, all of you probably, in some way or another, have already been served today. You came to church and you had people who had already heated up the room and turned on the lights and practiced the music. Before you even got here today, there were people keeping the streets clean, and there were technicians keeping the stoplights working. Just between your home waking up this morning and getting here today, you were affected by the service of many people. I'm guessing also that somewhere along the road today, you've already probably served someone, even if it was something just tiny, like opening the door for someone, or maybe you gave someone a ride. Most of us, somehow or another, have been served and also served, have already served someone this morning. It's second nature to us, and we're going to talk about that. We constantly benefit from the service of others. Like I was saying, most of that is invisible. When I was up at camp, we talked about how the kids there saw the immediate staff, those of us who were right there that week taking care of them. What they didn't see quite there, there was also the background staff, Brandon Dennis and his crew, who keep the camp up and running. Those kids were benefiting also from that service. But even in addition to that, there were the people who created the camp, raised the money for it, cleared the land, got it built up, maintained it all those years. So many man-hours of service went in just to getting to the place where those kids were at that camp that week. For us, it's the same way. There are people out there who provide our electricity and who make our clothes and who sell us the things we buy. It's all people serving people. We live in a great big network of people serving people. It's very rare to find someone who serves and who is not also served. All of us rely on the services of others, and all of us provide services to others in some form. Even kings, historically speaking, there are still some kings out there, but even though you think, "Oh, the people serve the king, he's kind of at the top of the pyramid," nevertheless, it's still his job to serve the people and take care of the people in his kingdom. So we're all part of this network of people serving one another. My day job, of course, as most of you know, is I make little apps for phones, and someone came to my company, and my company came to me, and then I did what I do, and I pass it on to someone else, and I rely on the work of others. I'm going to talk this morning about a man named Thomas Spewaits. If you're a history buff, that name might mean something to you, but that's not the Thomas Spewaits I'm talking about. Thomas Spewaits I'm talking about was a graduate student, and he decided to do this little project, and it's turned into a really interesting story. First thing he did was he walked down to... He lives in Great Britain. He walked down to the local shop and put five pounds down on the table at the counter of the store and bought the cheapest toaster he could find. It was just like a $5 toaster. He said, "I'm going to try and make this toaster all by myself from scratch." The first thing he did was he took that toaster and he disassembled it, just so he would understand what kind of parts and everything that he would need. Once he got it all taken apart, he realized that there were hundreds of parts and dozens of materials. He said, "Well, that's actually a little too complicated." He said, "I'm going to make a very stripped down, simplified version of this. It's still got to make toast, but it's just got to be very primitive." He said, "All right, bare minimum, I'm going to need steel for the frame, copper for the wires, plastic to cover it up." He needed some magnesium and some other stuff. He just had five or six key ingredients that he needed in order to make his own toaster. The first thing that he said, "Okay, let's make my steel." He calls around. Most of the steel industry had been moved out of the country. The only iron mine left in Great Britain was a museum. He calls up this iron mine museum. He's like, "Hey, can I come mine some iron out of your museum?" I'm like, "Yeah, sure, come on up." He travels up there, he brings suitcases, and they take them in. He chips away these big blocks of this ore. It's like rock with metal mixed into it. He loads up these two suitcases as much as he can film with this ore, takes it home, makes himself like a little furnace out of an old oil drum, heats it up, smelts it, gets himself some iron. He's like, "Okay, good, that was done. Check." Next, I need some copper. Same situation, got to go to the old museum that used to be a copper mine. He's like, "Guys, can I get some copper out of you?" They're like, "Yeah, sure, come on over." He comes in, and they're like, "But you can't just chip it out of the ground because that stuff's all gone. What you have to do is you have to bring in these big five-gallon buckets, and you have to fill it up with the water from the mine. Then you take it home and you stick electrical rods in it, and the electricity draws the copper out of the water and adheres to the rods." That's what he did. He walked out with his jugs of copper water, and he put the rods in, and he scraped off just enough copper off of these rods to make the wires he needed for his toaster. He's like, "Well, okay, now I need some plastic." He called up BP, and he said, "Hey, can I combine some oil from you guys?" They didn't call him back, because apparently they don't like people just coming and mining their own oil. Go figure. Then he's like, "Well, what can I do?" He's like, "Well, I've heard that there's this method that you can make plastic from potatoes." He's like, "All right, let's give that a shot." So he finds the recipe. He takes the potatoes. He forms it. He sets it out overnight to cool or hard and whatever it does. He comes out the next day, and the bugs have just eaten it up because it's potato. He's like, "Okay." He's like, "I'm kind of stuck here. I need the oil. I need the plastic." He's like, "Well, maybe this is kind of cheating, but we've been throwing plastic into landfills for so long that these old landfills that have just become rock and ground and dirt, you can actually go and mine plastic out of the ground." He's like, "Maybe it's kind of cheating, but I'm going to go mine some plastic." So he went to a very old landfill, and he chipped away these big blocks of plastic and took it home, melted it down, got himself a big old vat of this nasty plastic goop. Then he carved some wood into the shape of a toaster, made a mold out of wood, poured his oatmeal plastic stuff on it into the mold and let it sit and harden overnight. It worked. He got his little toaster mold, and finally he put that on top of his frame, and he attached all the wires, and he plugged it in, and for five whole seconds he had a working toaster until it burned itself out. We have a picture to show you of his final product. There it is. Isn't that awful? As you can see, he's got everything there. He's got the slots and the lever and the plastic coating. That wasn't meant to be a window. That's just where there was a hole in the plastic. So yes, he made himself a working toaster. It worked for five seconds, so that counts. The point of this is he spent nine months and $1,500 to make a toaster that worked for five seconds. Nine months and $1,500 to make what he was able to purchase with $5, just walking down to the local store, if he relied on the services of all the people in this world who work together who provide service to one another. By removing other people and by removing service from the equation, it took him nine months and $1,500 to make this. The money was mostly from the travel and everything. Our society is amazing and wonderful. It is the society we have because we serve one another. What would a no-service society look like? I spent some time thinking about it, and I threw that question out to the kids at camp, and one of them said, "Hunger games!" I was like, "That's probably pretty accurate." You would not have anything to wear except whatever you made yourself. You would not have anything to eat except whatever you made yourself. You would not have anywhere to live except wherever you made yourself. We'd probably all be living in a jungle in little homemade lean-toos. If we were fortunate enough to figure out how fire works, because we didn't have anyone to teach us, then we could maybe cook some food and survive. But the world would be a much more rugged, awful, cold place to live if it weren't for all the people coming together and becoming a society and a community who serves each other. Now, that world that I'm describing sounds very alien and very broken to us, and that's because we were created for society and community. We were created to be creatures who served one another by our God. And that's the problem that I have with the idea of survival of the fittest, of nature being this cut-throat thing. And that doesn't fly with me, because the only reason that we have everything we have is because we serve one another. So that's service. That's the general thing that we do for one another. But most of the time, when you go out into the world and you serve someone or you serve by someone, for the most part, it has to do with money. It's your job. The person who's nice to me at the restaurant does not have to then come home after that and keep serving me food and cleaning up my table, because they're no longer getting paid, and they have absolutely no incentive to keep waiting on me after I've done paying them. So that's the typical, general, worldly level of service. But now we're going to talk about Christian service. When we think about the life of Jesus, when we think about the things he did, the way that he went from town to town, and even when he and his disciples were exhausted, he would continue to go out and he would continue to pray and teach and heal and do everything he could. That level of service and getting nothing in return, ultimately getting crucified in return, that was really the big payoff for everything he did. That is a level of service that is very contrary to what the world thinks of as service. That is what Christian service is, and that is the life we have been called to model, to follow after. So, you know what? I need a Bible. I thought I was going to have my phone in my pocket. There we go. So we're going to talk about some of the different aspects of Christian service that we learn about through studying the scripture, and the best way to do that is to open up scriptures and read some verses. Starting with Philippians 2, verses 4-9. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who being in the very nature of God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing. Taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in the appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name. What we learn from that verse, first of all, is that Christian service is humble. Christian service is a form of service that whatever your status or whatever your level is in life, you make yourself lower than others in order to serve them. Jesus was the creator of all heaven and earth. It says that all things are created by him and through him and for him. We all exist for him, and yet he came down here and served us. He served his creation. And that is our example that we are called in our lives, in our homes and in our workplaces and wherever, to become humble servants, to not walk into a situation and say, "I'm too good to do that," but instead say, "However good I am, I'm going to do that because that's what my master would have done." Next let's flip over to 1 Corinthians 10, verse 31. So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. I would say that that verse says that our service should be thorough. And I know that maybe sounds like kind of a stretch, but if what we're doing is for God's glory and if we have properly in our mind who God is, that he is the greatest and the most beautiful and the most glorious who sent his son to die for us, if we're really then doing our works for him, then we should very much be thorough in what we do. We shouldn't, if we commit ourselves to a task and just sort of, "Eh, do a halfway job, whatever, that doesn't glorify God." No, but when we commit and we give it 110%, when we are thorough in our service, then people look at that and they will glorify God because they have seen what we have done. Back to Philippians 2, verses 14 and 15. Do everything without complaining or arguing so that you may become blameless and pure. Be a person of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation in which you shine like stars in the universe. Do everything without complaining and arguing. Our Christian service should be joyful. I'm very convicted by these verses and I hope that you don't agree with me, but maybe some of you have seen me not have the best attitude when it's time for me to do something and I apologize for that because God deserves joyful service from us. You know, it says that this is a crooked and depraved generation and we are to shine like stars in that generation. And the way that we do that is when it comes time to serve, we are not like the rest of the world that grumbles and complains and phones it in. We joyfully accept the job that comes before us and say, "We are children of God. We are His lights in this darkness and we are going to bring that light through our joy into this situation, into this service that we are performing." Matthew 6, verses 1-4, "Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." That one should be pretty obvious, but our Christian service should be secretive. Now that does not mean that if somebody finds out you've done a nice thing that that somehow just ruins your reward. No, no, no. That's not what it's talk about. What it means is God looks at our hearts whenever we do something good. And if we are doing a good thing, because we hope people see us and think that we're amazing, then God knows that we're not truly doing it for Him. But if when we do our good thing, we are trying to avoid any praise or thanks or reward except for what comes from God, He sees your heart and He knows. And there's a lot of people who serve around here in ushers and food pantry and stuff like that. And they're not dressed in masks and doing little ninja service. We know who they are. We know what they're doing. But God knows their hearts. And He knows whether they're doing it for us to applaud them and everything, or whether they're doing it because they love Him. And so the idea of secrecy is not to be afraid that people will find out what we're doing, but to remember that who we're doing it for is what truly matters and that God looks at our hearts. Luke 14. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Verses 12-14. Then Jesus said to His host, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers, or your relatives, or your rich neighbors. If you do, they may invite you back, and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." Our service needs to be sacrificial. Our service needs to be towards those who are least able to pay it back. And this is something that is incredibly contrary to the world and how it works. To do and to give something away to people with no possibility of getting something in return is very alien, and it's one of the things that will truly make you stand out as one of those stars that we were talking about. When Jesus came and laid down His life for us, when He died on the cross for our sins, there's nothing we can do to pay Him back for that. That's beyond comprehension of how precious, how great a treasure that gift was to us. And to even try and repay that is an affront to the preciousness of it. We can't repay Him. We are incapable of repaying Him. And in like manner, when we go to serve, we should find a people who can't repay us because as Jesus says here, every good deed that you do here that cannot be repaid in this life, you will be repaid with treasure and reward in heaven. Let's flip to 1 Peter 2. James and Peter. 1 Peter 2, verse 12. "Live such good lives among the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us." Live such good lives that when people see the life that you're living, they glorify God. Our service should be honorable. It's very sad when you have someone who is such a role model to you and maybe in their profession. Professionally, they are someone you look up to, but then you find out in their personal life they have this horrible trait, this horrible quirk. Sort of like when you hear about a supermodel who's this really beautiful person, but you hear these stories about how she treats people like garbage. And then it's just like, "Oh, she's so beautiful on the outside, she's so ugly on the inside." And that just kind of breaks your heart. Or when you hear about a famous singer or something who gets up on stage and sings these songs that really move you and touch you, and then you hear about how poorly they treat the people who sing with them. We should live such lives that people can't bring those kinds of accusations among us. It shouldn't just be the times when you're up on stage, metaphorically, in front of people. It should be every moment of every day people say, "That is an honorable person. They walk the walk 24/7. That is who they are. They are the genuine article." And not just at those moments, you come up to the food shelter and you serve soup, and you smile on your face, and then you go home and you're rude to your family or your kids or whatever. That dishonors God. So Christian service needs to be honorable. It needs to be genuine throughout the entirety of your life. We've got three more. 1 Corinthians 9, verse 24 says, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize." And our service needs to be faithful. Again, not just doing things halfway, but when we start something committing to see it finished. And that's just another sad thing, is when we see people excited. This is something we learned about in college, is there's these four phases of when somebody is getting involved in something new. There's this initial excitement, where you're way up here, and you're like, "Yes, this is going to be something new." And then as you start to realize just how much work and just how much you don't know, you suddenly bottom out. And you hit this point where you're like, "I don't know anything. I don't know how I'm going to do this." But if you press on, you will learn, and you will practice, and eventually you'll never get to that initial high again, because it was artificial, it wasn't real. But you'll become this competent person who is capable of doing the job that they set out to do. But sadly, so many people come crashing down, and that's when they quit, is when they're bottom, when they realize how hard it's going to be. And this is especially bad in ministry and in service, because it dishonors God. Some people say they started out so well, and then they just walked away from it, and that's a shame. So let's be faithful. Matthew 5, verse 39 through 41, "But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you." Christian service needs to be abundant. When we give to this world, it's going to tire us out, of course, and many times it's even going to hurt us and offend us when we see how ungrateful and unthankful people are and how they are unable to repay any of this. We must be abundant. We must heap on more and more, because first of all, that is how our master did it, and secondly, that is how completely contrary the rest of the world is. The rest of the world says, once I've milked this dry, I'm walking away. And what we say is, I'm not here for what I get out of it. I'm here to serve and to bless you. And so we must be abundant in our service. We must go the extra mile. That's where that phrase comes from. We must go the extra mile. It will glorify God. It's part of this whole package. I feel like I've kind of touched on that subject as we've gone through this list, but it's true. We must go the extra mile when we serve. And finally, Galatians 6.10 says, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Christian service, one last point to make, is that it's not only outward outside of this family, it also needs to be inward. And sadly, I see a lot of churches who get so caught up in their ministries outwardly that people inwardly get neglected. And sometimes it's the people down there, but sometimes it's the people up here. And so many pastors leave their positions because they get burned out, because they don't have a church that supports them. And I truly believe that we're doing a good job with Keith here. I'm not accusing us of that. But what I'm saying is, don't forget that we have been brought together to be parts of a body, and the parts of the body work together to serve one another. And the body as a whole goes out and does things, but parts of the body also take care of each other. So look at your spiritual gifts, and consider who you are and how you are able to serve and help the other people right here in this building. And just saying that may cause you to have a little check in your heart. Maybe you might realize that you have some feelings that you need to repent of towards the people in here, and that's between you and God. But this is your family. God brought you all here to bring you to be part of this family and to take care and love one another. That's what Christian service looks like. And in conclusion, I just want to say that it's only possible to be humble, thorough, joyful, sacrificial, honorable, faithful, abundant. It's only possible to do these things by the power that comes from God's love towards us and from the new nature that His Holy Spirit places inside us as we pray and read our Bibles and day by day renew ourselves to become more like Him. So if this sounds like a difficult task, just remember that God will never give you more than you can handle, and that He calls on you to spend time with Him every day to become stronger and to become more conformed to His image and His likeness. Let's close with a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, we are so amazed and humbled at how humble you made yourself in order to come down and to serve us. And we as your children, as your disciples, pledge to do likewise. We will follow you, our Master, Lord Jesus, into whatever situation that you have led us into, and we will do so joyfully and faithfully and thoroughly. And because of that, we will honor and glorify your precious name, Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.