

Serving God's People

September 30, 2018

Our Savior's Way
Worshipping Sundays 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 AM
Pastor Mann

This morning we are continuing our sermon series on the mission and values of our church. Here's the mission statement. "***At Our Savior's Way, we glorify God and make disciples for Jesus by: Forming Relationships, Experiencing Jesus Together, and Sharing God's Love.***" Today, we start talking about the VALUES and the first value I want to talk to you about is SERVING GOD'S PEOPLE. Before we get to that, I want to give you a warning. These values that we will be talking about—and there are six values:

- ***Serving God's People***
- ***Sharing God's Love***
- ***Building God's People***
- ***Growing God's Family***
- ***Knowing God's Word***
- ***Returning God's Blessing***

These values are a recipe for a good Christian. And there's nothing wrong with that! We all want to be good people. If you don't want to be a good person--you probably made a wrong turn on Waxpool road and you ended up in the wrong place this morning. We are here because we have certain values that we share. And that's as it should be. The danger is (and here's the warning), the danger is that our faith can become all about goodness and the morals and how to live the right kind of life. You hear that a lot in churches today. The sermon is very practical--all about learning how to live like a good Christian ought to live. But that's not enough.

There's a story about a pastor and the members of his congregation were not happy with his sermons. He was always preaching to them about how they ought to live. "So, what's wrong with that? What else should a sermon be?" But the people in the pew weren't happy. So, they got together and they had a little plaque engraved and they fastened it to the pulpit—right where their pastor would see it every Sunday when he stepped up to preach. And on the plaque was a Bible passage--John 12:21—six words—"Sir, we want to see Jesus." Because, really, isn't that what it's all about—to see Jesus your Savior. If you just want to learn how to live a better life, use the time to download some self-help books onto your Kindle. We come here because we want to see Jesus. We come here because we need a Savior.

With that in mind, let's get into our first value—SERVING GOD'S PEOPLE. If you take a look at the banner you see the words that Jesus spoke about himself--"not to be served, but to serve." The words come from an incident in the Gospels where the mother of two of Jesus' disciples, James and John, comes to Jesus with a very simple request. She wants her two boys to have first place in the coming kingdom. "Lord," she asks, "grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on your right and one on your left in your kingdom." It reminds me of a story about a father who wanted his son to be on the honor roll of at the local high school. What this Dad really wanted was bragging rights. He wanted one of those bumper stickers that schools give out that say, "My child is an honor student at Briarwoods High School." So, he told his son how he wanted him to work hard and succeed. And at the end of the next six-week grading period, his son came home and proudly presented his Dad with the bumper sticker. His Dad told him how proud he was—that he had worked so hard and made the honor roll. But then his son hung his head and confessed what he had done. He had purchased the bumper sticker from a friend for \$5. Dad got what he wanted, but not in the way he wanted it. Jesus has a way of turning things upside down too. Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant and

whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave—just as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:26-28)

“Look at me,” Jesus says. “I am your example. Look at how I have served you. This is the way you need to serve one another.” John Brodie is the name of a former quarterback of the San Francisco 49ers. This was back before quarterbacks made the kind of money they make today. John Brodie’s heyday was in the 1960s. 1965 was his best statistical year. He led the league in passing. The next year John Brodie went from a salary of \$35,000 to being one of the first players to be paid over \$1 million. But, here’s how times have changed: one of the things John Brodie had to do as the quarterback was to hold the ball for the kicker. A sports reporter asked John Brodie why a million-dollar player like him should have to hold the ball for field goals and extra points. “Well,” said Brodie, “if I didn’t hold the ball it would fall over.” Do you know something?—that’s just the kind of person Jesus is looking for. Whether you make \$1,000 per year or \$1 million dollars per year—Jesus doesn’t need a bunch of star players. Jesus wants followers who are ready to serve.

I do a lot of weddings and one of the Bible verses we use is from Ephesians 5, where the Apostle Paul says, “Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her.” I think about that verse sometimes, in terms of marriage. What does it mean to love and serve another person as Christ loved and served the Church? What did Jesus do?—He gave his life for us.

On May 21, 1946, a young scientist, Louis Slotin, was carrying out an experiment at Los Alamos, New Mexico. They were preparing to test an Atomic Bomb. Though they had done the experiment many times, one of the scientists’ screwdriver slipped at a critical moment. The two hemispheres of radioactive uranium came too close together. Instantly the room was filled with a dazzling bluish haze. Instead of ducking away and possibly saving himself, Louis Slotin tore the two hemispheres apart with his bare hands. He interrupted the chain reaction. On his way to the hospital, he said to a co-worker, “You will come through this all right. But I don’t

have a chance.” Nine days later he died. Jesus told his disciples. “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day, he will be raised to life.” (Matthew 20:18) Jesus’ mission was a suicide mission. He knew that full well. But it was the only way he could break the chain reaction of sin and death which is the curse of sin. Jesus served us by giving his life for us. Now, he calls us to use our lives in service to one another.

Let this be your prayer: *“I will do more than belong, I will participate. I will do more than care, I will help. I will do more than believe, I will be kind. I will do more than dream, I will work. I will do more than teach, I will inspire. I will do more than earn, I will enrich. I will do more than give, I will serve. I will do more than live, I will grow. I will do more than be friendly, I will be a friend. I will do more than be a citizen, I will be a patriot.”*