

Servant

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Preacher: Chris Thornton

[0 : 00] Okay, welcome everyone to this kind of crazy day where it's Typhoon 8, but we're doing something we've never done before. We're doing a Facebook Live. There's a little posse of people here, which is just really exciting.

We're going to be just looking through a little bit of the sermon today. I've got a couple of people here I'm going to interview as well. And so if you're at home, we just pray that this will be just a great time for you to engage with God and to really hear God's word.

But also that this will be something where you can go and think about, talk about, discuss. We'll also have an opportunity, if you want to put comments or ask questions all the way through, I've got some great people.

We've got Carlo here. We've got Joseph is doing like the, he's done all the technical stuff because it's amazing because I wouldn't have a clue how to do that. I know already we've got some guys on. We've got Millen on. We've got Sherman on. We've got Simon on. We've got Fiona on.

There's just a lot of people coming on now. So this is just going to be, we're just going to see how it goes. Okay, so bear with us. And actually let's notice, is there a way to just turn the camera around to see all the people who are here?

[1 : 13] Give a hi. Give a hi. Okay, there's some more behind. We've got some Joseph's kids behind. We've got David. We've got Melody here.

Fiona's in the back there. We've got Alan. We've got Catherine down there. And just one of the other things that's kind of going on in all the craziness with the T8 is we've got the ICF, our university ministry retreat, which has been going on, which should have been over in Leumun. But actually because of the weather, they've come here. So I kind of came in this morning and there's just some blurry eyed kind of students there who don't seem to have got much sleep. But I managed to get a couple of them to kind of drag them away. And so Marco and Aris, I'd love to hear a little bit about this crazy weekend of what you've been doing, a little bit of what's going on with the university stuff here over this weekend.

So Marco, do you want to just tell us what have you done over this last day or so? Yeah, so our retreat started on Friday night and it was in Leumun. So I was like in the Shao Kewan area. And then like we had a session and then yeah. And then at night we had like games and like kind of like activities where we got to know each other a little more. And then on Saturday we had another session in the morning and then the afternoon we went to the beach, which was in, which beach is it?

[2 : 35] Shekau. Shekau Beach, yeah. Shekau Beach, which was like really cool because like the waves are like massive, like with the T3. But then like we found out in the evening we had to leave Leumun. So then like we kind of had an ad hoc plan of like coming here.

And then we didn't know like if it would work out because we didn't know we could sleep here. And like, yeah, it was just like really like messy. But then like I'm glad it worked out in the end. That's great. I mean, tell us maybe something you've learned, something you've been looking at. What has God been talking to you? What struck you over this last day, day and a half? Yeah. I think for this time the retreat, the theme is identity. And we covered like four topics so far.

One is alive. The second one I think is chosen. And then the third one is holy. And then last one is able. I think what struck me the most is chosen.

Because like after the video and like Jeremy's like sharing, and then we get to have some quiet time on our own, kind of like reflecting on what we have learned through the passage, the videos.

[3 : 44] And I think why it strikes me the most is because there's one question in the personal reflection asking us like what does being chosen mean to me. And I was reflecting on that.

I was thinking like it means it's a free gift. And it's like a blessing to us that I cannot earn or I can't use.

It's not performance based. And it just really struck me a lot because like as a final year student, I'm applying for different, I'm thinking of applying for a master's.

I'm thinking of looking for jobs. I think a lot of time I'm just having this mindset that I have to, you know, do well to strike hard in order to be chosen, in order to be kind of like be valued.

And but then like through the passage, we look into Ephesians. And it kind of talks about like Ephesians chapter 1, verse 4 to 6.

[4 : 47] It talks about like in love, God, he predestined us to be adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will. So it's so much about God chosen us because he loved us and because of Jesus Christ.

That's why we are chosen. So it's kind of like God telling me like Iris, you know, even though you'll never be good enough, you'll never be like up to, you'll never be perfect, but then you were chosen because of Jesus and because I loved you.

So I think like it really struck me a lot because, yeah, it's like as a final year student, always thinking like I have to prove that I can be chosen for the master program.

I can be chosen for a job, you know. So it's a really good reflection for me. That's great. That's great. We don't need to do a sermon now. You've done it for us. That's great. What can we pray for you as you're kind of finishing off the retreat in a couple of hours?

What would you like us to pray for you? Marco, what could I pray for you? I think one really important thing is like in a retreat we learn like a lot of different stuff. And then I think what's most important is like after the retreat, like how do we continue our lives?

[6 : 10] Like retreat is only like a three-day part of our like whole year and part of this like huge life we still have to live. And I think one thing is like pray for that we can actually like really apply what we learn here.

I think especially like, yeah, I think Iris mentioned about like being chosen. And also like for me more like realizing that we are holy and that we're not like just sinners, this idea.

And I think, yeah, like really like taking on this identity and like how that trend like really do like take actions that kind of translate into our real life.

I think that's like a really big thing for us. That's great. Anything else for you? I think it's just same as Marco, like putting into practice. Because a lot of times we learn things, we have this kind of knowledge.

But then we go back to school, we just forget. So it's to really like kind of really like live out what we have learned and kind of like remind ourselves what we have learned.

[7 : 09] Great. So if you're watching at home, just join me in praying, praying for these guys and for the other students who are just here at the rest of this retreat. Father, we just, yeah, just so amazed at that truth that because of Jesus, not because of how great we are, but because of how great you are, we are chosen by you.

We are loved by you. We are secure. We are valuable. We are precious children. And Lord, I pray for both Marco and Iris and all the other students who are engaging with your word.

I pray that this would not just be a kind of one minute wonder, but this would be something which really just kind of marinate and resonates in their heart. I pray that they'd get a greater glimpse of how beautiful you are, even as they go back into their studies and the stresses and applying for jobs and exams and all those things.

Help them to keep knowing that they're holy, that they're chosen, that they're loved, and that they have security in you. And that can give them confidence for all that's going to come in this coming year.

So I pray you bless them in Jesus' name. Amen. Thanks so much, guys, for joining us. And enjoy the rest of your retreat. Thank you. Thank you. That's great.

[8 : 24] So what we're going to do now is I'm just going to go through a little bit of what we've been doing already in the sermon series, which is we've been looking at identities. And we've been looking, particularly in the book of Ephesians, but at what it means that if we know who we are, then that shapes how we live.

Like, if you think you're a failure, you'll live as a failure. If you believe that you're a disciple, you'll live as a disciple. If you know that you're a saint, you'll live as a saint. And last week we looked at what

Eric was talking about, or two weeks ago, actually, before the baptism.

We were looking at being part of family. And if you know that you're family, then you'll live out your family. I plan to ring my parents every single week, but I don't ring them kind of hoping that that will make us family.

I ring them because we already are family. And even if our relationship was bad, and it's not, but if it was, I wouldn't kind of say, well, it's bad, so therefore, let's just quit even trying.

I'd say, we're family, therefore, let's try and work this out. And so that's what we're looking at. We're looking at identity shapes, what you do and who you are. And so today we want to look at the theme of being a servant and what that really means for us.

[9 : 41] And so if you have the passage, turn to Ephesians 4. With you, we're going to be looking at Ephesians 4 and John 13 together. And really, if you've got, I want to kind of make this interactive a little bit as well.

So if you've got comments or questions, please just kind of write them down and Melody will kind of shout them out and show us a little bit about, well, she'll sort through your questions.

So if there are easy ones for me to answer, Melody, then please send them across. So I think all of us know that serving is kind of a good thing.

You know, in businesses, everyone's into doing, you know, charity days, charity runs, volunteering, cleaning up the beach, all those different things.

We know from studies that actually if you do stuff which is outwardly serving other people, it actually makes your life more meaningful, fulfilled, purposeful. We kind of know this. Everyone's got that in society.

[10 : 41] And as a church, I think one of the just the most amazing things about Watermark is just really seeing all the people serving. Like Joseph coming down today, just serving in different ways.

Every Sunday we have like 40 to 50 people serving in just different ways. And if you look throughout the whole week, there's so many people serving in so many different ways.

And I think it's just incredible. But I think one of the things that I've realized is because it can seem like we're just kind of preaching to the choir when we're talking about serving here. But one of the things I've realized is just as I've reflected on how I serve is the fact that I could I can serve without being a servant.

I can be a volunteer without being a servant. And so what I want to kind of look at and just go through this passage together with you is to think about what does it actually mean that God has called us his servants.

So I want to I want to kind of talk about who's serving here. OK, who are we serving? Who's on the throne when we serve? And where's the power to serve? OK, so that's kind of a little trajectory of where we're going.

[11 : 53] So who serves? I don't know if you've you've been in been in church in the Sunday service and you've kind of gone away thinking that sermon.

I just got nothing out of that. That music was uninspiring. The coffee was bad, you know, and you kind of judge your experience of your church service by how well it served you.

You know, I've done that. I'm guilty as charged. Well, this passage that I want to read and I'm going to just read it to us. Ephesians 4, I'm going to look at verse 11.

Paul's going to kind of challenge us a little bit here about who what church is meant to be about. He says he says this. And he, God, gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ until we attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, craftiness and deceitful schemes.

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we're to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body joined and held together by every joint with which it's equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

[13 : 29] Okay? So, what is he talking about there? He's talking about, okay, God has given leaders to the church. That's the kind of the apostles, the prophets, evangelists, all those guys.

He's given leaders to the church. And their job is to equip the saints. And who are the saints? We've done a sermon on saints. You should all be saying now, I am.

Okay? Yeah, people are raising their hands. That's good. We are saints. So, their job is to equip God's people to do what?

To do ministry. Okay? So, who is doing the ministry? Who is doing the ministry? Is it all the leaders doing all the ministry? No.

Here, it's saying, actually, the job of staff and elders and pastors and teachers is to equip the congregation so that they will be able to do the ministry. And then he goes on to this analogy of growing up from being a child to being mature, to being an adult.

[14:28] And he's saying, that's how we learn. So, pastor's job is to equip people so that we, as the body of Christ, are doing the work of ministry. And you've got to ask me, okay, what is ministry?

And the word ministry just means serving. That's what it means. A government minister is a government servant, technically. And that's what church is all about.

You know, if the staff and the pastor is kind of burning out and they're the only ones doing the ministry in the church, that is not a biblical church. You know, I heard the example of them.

Someone once said, a football match is 11 people on a pitch desperately needing rest.

And 50,000 people in the stands desperately needing exercise. And that can be what church is like. But that's not what it's meant to be. And so, our goal is like, every one of us has got gifts, has got a part to play.

We're a body, which means we're interconnected. And so, as we learn where I serve, then each one of us is going to grow up ourselves. You know, you don't grow mature by going to Bible studies.

[15:36] Did you know that? Like, yes, go to Bible studies. Yes, listen to sermons. But actually, if you just stay on your couch and do nothing, you're never going to grow mature. You'll be a spiritual baby. But if you want to grow, it says, use the food you've got and go out and serve other people with it.

You know, because you know when you're a child, the world centers around you, right? Feed me, comfort me, give me pocket money. Okay? And then when you grow up and become an adult, what is it?

It's like, feed others, comfort others, give them pocket money. And that's the way it works. Okay?

Okay? So, if we're to grow up to be in the measure of Christ, which means to look like him, how he serves, this is what we're meant to do.

Okay? So, when, and I just want to kind of finish this idea. When we say things like, the church should do this and the church has got a problem with this, we're actually missing the idea that we're a body, that we're a family together.

Because if you think you're a family, then we say, we should do this. Or we have a problem with this. And the thing is, what I notice is, every single one of us sees different problems.

[16:45] And if you see a problem in the church, and there are plenty, then maybe that is God's way of saying, well, why don't you become part of the solution to that? Okay? People are not welcoming. You've got to welcome people.

People don't pray enough. Start praying. People don't serve enough. Just start serving and encouraging others to do that. And that's how we'll grow together.

Last thing of kind of this first part. One interesting thing in churches is we often talk about volunteering. Now, I want to ban the word volunteering from actually in church.

Because you know, you know why? And I understand it. You know, some people get paid for serving, some people don't get paid. I get the idea. But actually, when my wife cooks a meal for me in my family, she doesn't say, I don't say to her, thank you for volunteering.

I say, thank you for serving. Thank you for helping. Thank you. Because it's family. Volunteering is, I'm an independent person and I'm going to support a cause which I think is good. But family is like, hey, we are part of this together.

[17:52] This is my responsibility. So we're not volunteers. We're servants. We're ministers. We're people who serve each other because we're family. Okay? So that's the kind of first thing really for us to think about.

So because we're family, we've got to think about, okay, and because we serve, we've got to look at what this looks like. So I want to look at what this looks like. So I want to look at the kind of classic passage, John 13.

So again, if you've got your Bible, turn with me to John 13. I'm kind of going to go a little bit backwards here. But it's a story about Jesus washing disciples' feet.

Okay? I think you know the story if you've been in church a while. And verse 1 says, basically, before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. It says, Jesus is about to go to the cross the next day. And it says here that Jesus, his pattern of life is that he's going to love even right to the very end of his life.

[19 : 02] And in verse 13, after he's washed the disciples' feet, he says this. He says, okay, do you guys understand what I've done for you? You call me teacher and Lord and you're right, for that's what I am.

You know, I've got status here. And he says, if I'm your teacher and Lord and I wash your feet, then guys, you should be washing each other's feet. Okay? I set the pattern here of how to do stuff. And then he says in verse 16, he says, truly, truly, I say to you, which is Jesus' way of saying, hey, listen up, guys. A servant is not greater than his master, nor a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

Okay? What is he saying? He's saying something really profound here. He's saying, the way down is the way up. You know, the way down is the way up.

You know, politicians and leaders often try and make themselves great by self-promotion. But what he's saying here is saying, if you're my followers and I'm your leader, I'm your master, then you guys have to operate the way I operate.

[20 : 07] And the way I operate is the way down is the way up. The way to greatness is the way of service. And so, really interesting. He says, I came as a servant to serve you in my life and in my death.

And that's to be your pattern and your servants. Do you know what the word servant means? I'm going to do a little poll. What does the word servant mean here? What is a servant? Trying to get some feedback here.

A person who serves. A person who serves. A great answer. This word servant, it's actually, it's a really special word. It's a word, it's the word, Greek word *doulos*. You don't need to know that.

But sometimes translated slave or bond servant. And the closest thing we get to this idea, it's not kind of slave as in African slave trade. It's actually more domestic helper.

Except your master owned you at the time. So, what is he saying? He's saying that Jesus, though he's great, he makes himself nothing and he becomes like a domestic servant.

[21 : 08] A domestic helper. To serve us. And so, therefore, because our identity is him, that means you and I, if we're Christians, we are domestic helpers of God. We're domestic helpers of God.

That's what it means. And who do we help? It's the church. Okay? The church. But also, Paul, you see it again and again. He keeps saying, okay, Paul, in all his letters he says, Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus.

Paul, a domestic helper of Jesus Christ. He keeps saying, in everything, every part of his life, it's not just Sunday I'm a servant and then I get on with my life. Now, every part of my life, I'm a domestic servant.

A domestic helper. And what does a helper do? The number one goal is to please their master. The number one goal is to please their master. So, some of us might be offended by the idea that we're a domestic helper.

I don't know. But that's just your pride. It's my pride. Okay? But to be a domestic helper is a massive honor. It's a huge honor. Because if I met someone who said, hey, I work with Apple at Silicon Valley.

[22 : 20] And I was like, oh, interesting. Suddenly, I was really interested. And then they went on and told me I had no idea what they actually did with Apple. But the very fact of them being associated with Apple made me interested and gave them some credibility in my eyes.

The very fact that you are a servant of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, gives you instant honor as his servant. Because he entrusts his work.

He doesn't entrust it to everyone. He entrusts his work to you. Because he is the honored one. So, if I'm going to ask you, if you think about in your family, like if you're married, if you've got kids, if you've got colleagues in the church, how often do you actually think to yourself, okay, God, how am I going to please you by serving these people?

How am I going to please you by serving my wife today? God, how do you want me to please you by serving my colleagues today? Because that's what God's domestic servant asks. So, that's all of us serve.

Who are we serving? We're serving Christ as his domestic helpers. Okay? Here's the part which really challenges me. Okay? Who's on the throne in your serving?

[23 : 40] I've got bad news as well as good news here. If you serve, it doesn't matter how much you serve, every time you serve in some way, you've always got mixed motives.

Okay? Nobody ever serves with 100% pure motives. Okay? You know, I can preach now and I want you to know Christ. But actually, I can also have the desire that I want to gain respect from you. For myself. You know, I can care for somebody a long time and then a lot of that is because I want to love you and have compassion on you.

But sometimes it's also because I feel guilty if I don't do it. Right? I have many mixed motives. Some of them are good motives. Some of them are got good. You know? And we can even sometimes serve to avoid God.

I don't know if you've seen this. I had a neighbor who moved next door and I took around a box of chocolates to him. Next morning, I have straight on my doorstep a bottle of wine.

[24 : 39] Now, do you think he was serving me? It was kind of tit for tat. You see, it was like he wanted to give to me, like he wanted to get out of feeling like he owed me something. Right?

He wanted, maybe, I think maybe he felt guilty that if he didn't reciprocate then he'd be in kind of my debt or something. He actually gave to me because I think he wanted to get me off his back so he could carry on living his life his way.

So, that's actually how often we treat God. Sometimes we can do stuff for God, but we still stay on the throne of my life for myself.

You know? Ever cooked a meal for your family and they come home and they say, I'm not hungry? Or they start complaining and you feel to yourself, well, stop it, I'm not going to serve you again. Or have you ever thought to yourself, you know, you spent time listening and caring for someone and they said, oh, you haven't cared for me enough.

And you think, well, fine, I'm not going to care for you anymore. Who am I serving? I'm serving myself in that. And, you know, John 13, this passage, is going to give us a few, three ways that actually you see how we can stay on the throne of our lives and how Jesus wants to reorient us off the throne of our lives when we serve.

[25 : 54] Okay? So, have a flick through. John 13. Okay, and if you've got any questions, I don't know. I'm just looking on to see if there's any questions over there.

Just bounce them off because I don't just want to talk to a camera here. Okay. I have some other beautiful people around. That's good. Okay, who's on the throne when we serve?

John 13. It says, okay, it's before the feast of the Passover. And we know what's happened is Jesus has asked Peter and John to go and set up the meal for him.

Okay? That's a lot of work. So, they've been putting in a ton of work. They get to the meal. Okay, they're sitting down. And then Jesus is there. And then somebody smells something. And it's Peter's feet.

And it's John's feet. And it's James' feet. And nobody, nobody has bothered to think about washing anybody's feet. Now, that might not seem a big issue to us.

[26 : 51] But culturally, not washing someone's feet in a hot, dusty country was like not greeting them at the door, not offering them a drink when it's hot outside. It's basically saying, I don't care about your need for refreshment right now.

I'm not really interested in you. That's what it's saying. And so, Peter was thinking, I've done my job. Look at all the work I've done. I've done the meal. John's thinking the same.

Everyone's looking at everybody else and they're thinking, this is a servant's job. Nobody should, like, we're too big for this. And it's really interesting because you can stay on the throne of your life when you think and you limit your service to when it suits you.

You see, Jesus, what he does, you know, if ever there's a time that he needs serving, it's right now because he knows he's going to die the next day. That's pretty emotionally traumatic.

You need somebody to just be around you to support you and care for you when you're going, about to die, right? And everyone else is thinking, I've done my bit.

[27 : 55] I don't need to do any more. Don't care about him. And so Jesus says he loves them to the end. He gets down, strips off, gets down onto his knees and washes their feet, meets their need.

No one else is willing to. Right at his darkest time. And, you know, I realized this. And you realize when you have deadlines that sometimes people interrupt you.

I was preparing a sermon. I had a deadline. I had to get it finished. And then somebody interrupts me and starts asking a question about a personal nature. And I'm like, hey, I don't need this right now.

Listen, I've got a sermon to do. And, you know, they're in trouble or whatever. I don't care about them because this is not the convenient time for me to serve you. Don't you realize I'm serving a lot of other people here? And Jesus is like, are you on the throne of your life right now?

You know, I serve sometimes to keep myself on the throne of my life. Not just when it suits me, but also when I think people deserve, they deserve my service.

[29 : 09] Okay? Jesus could have turned around to his disciples and said, Peter, stop being selfish. Get down here. Wash their feet. He was totally entitled to. Totally entitled to.

But he doesn't. And then think what happens. Judas is there. Can you imagine? He steps down and he looks up and sees Judas, his face.

And he knows everything that Jesus is about to do to him. He's going to betray him completely. Wouldn't you be tempted as you get down there to kind of dig your nails in a little bit into his feet and scratch him a little bit?

Grit your teeth while you're trying to wash his feet? But Jesus doesn't. Because he knows that he's God's domestic servant, so he's going to please him. He's pleased his father.

He doesn't have to get his own back at that moment. He's secure. I don't know. I had a boss in the UK. Worst boss ever.

[30 : 07] She embezzled. I found this out later. She embezzled the whole year's profits from the school I was working at. She treated the staff terribly. She tried not to pay us for two months and then claimed it was an internet banking error.

You know, it's kind of a wonderful lady. And you know, I was a good Christian. I didn't say anything bad to her. But was I going to serve her? No way.

I was never going to serve her. And then one day, I was praying for opportunities to witness to people in the school. And God said to me, why don't you pray for her?

Pray blessing over her. And I said, no, there's plenty of other people I could be praying for. I don't want to pray for her. And God said to me, get off the throne of your own life. Stop trying to make yourself have to get your own back in this situation.

Start praying blessing over her. And you know, that was one of the hardest prayers I've ever started praying. But do you know what happens? If you have a struggle with serving someone who you don't think deserves to be served, it's because you're actually on the throne of your life.

[31 : 17] And the way to start serving them is to start by praying. Praying blessing on them. Because you can't pray blessing on somebody and have a heart of bitterness at the same time if you're continually praying over them.

And it sets you free. Because you don't have to prove and get your own back on them. So you serve not just when it's comfortable and suits you. You serve not just the people you think deserve to be served.

Because Jesus doesn't. And the final way that you can sometimes serve to stay on your throne is when you actually refuse to allow yourself to be served. You know, Peter in the story, he basically says, Jesus says, okay, I'm going to wash your feet.

And Peter says, no, you're never going to wash my feet. I'm not going to let you near my feet. Why? Because Peter was proud. He didn't want anyone to go and lower himself for him. And Jesus says, basically, if you want to be my servant, then you've got to let me wash your feet.

And the interesting thing here is, in church, we can be so self-sufficient sometimes, you know, that I don't want to let anybody know my needs.

[32 : 25] And so I fail to allow other people to serve me. And we rob the church of an opportunity to serve us. I don't know if you realize that. You know what Jesus does before this?

This woman, sinful, shameful woman, comes at his feet, washes his feet with her hair. The religious people were like, why are you letting her wash your feet?

And Jesus says, no, she can serve me now. She can serve me. Because Jesus was secure. He didn't have to be on the throne. He could be served as well as serve at the same time.

Do you know, I don't know if you ever think, I don't want to share about a situation with anyone because I don't want to bother other people. If you're like that, if you don't want to appear needy, that's your pride.

You need to get off your throne and say, okay, I'll be vulnerable. I'll let people serve me. And you know that the church also needs to be a place where if you're always serving and you're burning out and you can't say no to anyone, that's probably because you're also on the throne of your life.

[33 : 29] Because Jesus actually also says, I do want you to rest at times. So Christ says, be more about pleasing me than just about pleasing others. Don't stay on the throne of your life.

And the reason why I just wanted to talk about that and really mention that is because of this. You can never justify yourself before God through your serving. Because you've always got mixed motives.

You can't. You can never think you're good enough, never be acceptable enough, never atone for your guilt enough by serving. You just can't. You know, I had a funeral.

I was at a funeral, a lady, a few weeks ago. And one of the relatives said to me, you know, she was such a great lady. She was always serving, helping lots of people, doing a lot of charity work.

She must get some extra brownie points with the man upstairs. And I wanted to say to him, I didn't, but I wanted to say to him, listen, I'm so pleased that she's such a servant.

[34 : 29] I wish more people were serving in that way. But actually, if you suggest that in some way her serving removes the wrongs that she has committed before a holy God.

If you suggest in some way that you can kind of pay back God by doing a little bit of serving. Then that's actually an insult to God. You don't know him. Because the really interesting thing is that Jesus, when he serves us, he gave everything.

He gave his entire life for us. He gave everything for you. He saw you as so precious, he would be willing to lower himself to everything, to give up everything for you.

And then if you just say, hey, oh, Jesus, accept me now because I've served a few people. That's like the queen, going to the queen, the queen inviting you to a lavish banquet at her expense.

And you turning up with a \$10 note and saying, hey, just have this. That's about you trying to stop feeling guilty. That's not about you receiving and enjoying the gift that is on offer.

[35 : 38] You know, because she's going to turn around and say to you, is that all this is worth to you? Is that all it's worth? You know, all the serving you do, all the bottles of wine you pass around, none of that, none of that can ever pay back Jesus for what he's done for you.

And so there's some people who Jesus says, they say to Jesus, Lord, Lord, didn't we serve you with all of our lives? We did all this stuff for you. And Jesus says to them, basically, get away from me.

I never knew you. Because your serving is not adequate. All he asks is, you can't justify yourself before God. You've just got to accept the invitation by faith.

Repent of being on the throne of your life and just say, Jesus, I'm your servant. And that's all he looks for. Nothing in my hands I bring. Simply to the cross I cling.

That's the gospel. Okay, so who is serving all of us? Who do we serve? We're serving to please our master as his domestic servants.

[36 : 45] How do we serve? And how do we serve? Well, we've got to get off the throne of our lives and allow him continually coming back to let him serve us. And let him shape us so that we serve not just when it suits us, not just the people we think deserve it, but what's going to please him.

Final thing. And please give us some other comments. Where's the power to serve? Because I don't know if you think about this. How do you serve like Jesus?

Because honestly, I look at some of the people around me and I just don't want to serve them. And if the way down is the way up, the struggle we have is we don't want to feel weak.

Who wants to feel weak? Right? Because when you're down, that's a place of vulnerability. You know, I want to be up here. I want to be noticed. I want to be light. I want to be the enemy.

And Jesus is saying, no, you've got to go down. Now, we can serve when it's kind of cool and everyone's serving. But when there's like a homeless guy in Central that I go up and start talking to and then everyone turns around and looks at you and you look really weird, that's when you think, oh, maybe I shouldn't be serving at this point, this person.

[37 : 55] Because it's all about you. And it's all about me. But Jesus shows us his utter power in weakness. And this is amazing.

Like, I just think this is amazing. You know when Jesus is before Herod? And Herod is basically looking down on him and saying, okay, prove yourself to be king. Jesus could have at that moment done kind of a Harry Potter thing and just kind of turned him into a frog and said, okay, you convinced now?

Could have done that. But he stays silent. Humiliated. Weak. At the cross, the Pharisees are mocking him, saying, come down from the cross.

Come down from the cross. Come on, can't you save yourself? And you know what Jesus says? Well, he could have said, okay, I'm coming down. Come down.

Whipped a couple of Pharisees. Put them up on the cross and said, okay, anyone else want to mock me now? Could have said that. But he doesn't. You see, Jesus has this desire to please his father out of a complete security in who he is, where he's going, and whose he is.

[39 : 07] Look at the beginning of John 13. And we're going to just kind of wrap it up with this. Then we'll answer any questions. This is amazing. We often forget this. We often don't see this in the beginning of John.

Beginning of John, it says this. Jesus, knowing that the father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God, and was going back to God, rose from supper, and then he began to wash their feet.

Did you see what he said? He didn't say, Jesus, knowing that his father expected him to serve, got up and served. Didn't say that. He didn't say, Jesus, knowing that he had to practice what he preached, got up and served.

Didn't say that. It says, Jesus, knowing the father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God, and was going back to God, got up and served.

Do you get what he's saying? He's saying, he knew his status. He knew whose he was, and he knew where he was going. That was the power to serve and be down, because that is security.

[40 : 19] You don't need everybody else to lift you up if you are already lifted up. You know, it says, you are honored. I mean, that's what Iris was saying. You're chosen.

You're loved. Ephesians says, you are honored. You are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. You are the king of kings with the lord of lords. You have a power and a position and a status and an inheritance that you will reign with him in the whole world, it says in scripture.

You don't need to cling on to your throne, because you already have approval and acceptance and honor.

Nothing to lose. Nothing to prove. You know, in the UK, we have charity shops, which are basically secondhand clothes, which, you know, you can get great stuff.

You can get, like, Gucci. You can get all kinds of stuff at, like, just ridiculously cheap prices, like \$50, Hong Kong dollars. And do you know who goes to charity shops to buy clothes?

[41 : 24] Anyone? The poor. You would think it's the poor. The poor do not go to charity shops, generally, to buy clothes.

Because the poor, they think they have to prove themselves. And so the poor will generally try and buy the more expensive brands to prove that they are worth something.

In fact, that's actually why a lot of people buy brands. If you're not just buying it for the aesthetics, but people buy brands because you've actually got to try and prove yourself. But actually, the middle class people are the people who go to the charity shops because they've got nothing to prove.

They feel secure in their status, and so they can feel like they can get a bargain. So they lower themselves to go and get these stuff. It's good stuff. Because they're secure.

If we can be domestic helpers of God and see our honor, then that means as God's family, we can look to serve each other. But whether it's people we struggle to serve or whether it's people who serve at inconvenient times, but this, as we get that mentality, we begin to look more like Jesus, and the body of Christ begins to grow.

[42 : 35] And that's what Paul is talking about in Ephesians. We serve like Jesus is. And so the final thing is this. Paul says the greatest way you can serve each other is by speaking the truth in love.

Do you know why he says that? Because you're not going to serve and stay off your throne unless we as a community are continually reminding each other of our status in Christ, of who we are in him, so that we can really live and be empowered to take the way down, so that we will be honored and glorified with him in a new creation.

Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Father, I just, even though it's kind of weird doing this on camera, Lord, I just know that we're a family.

You've chosen us. We're your servants. But we're your servants because you served us first. Lord, I know that there are so many people that I think I serve, but actually so much of it's more about pleasing me than it's about pleasing you.

Lord, I pray for us that we would right now be thinking of the people around us. Lord, it may be colleagues. It may be a spouse. It may be people in our community group.

[43 : 59] That actually, if we're honest, Lord, we haven't even thought how we'd please you by serving them. I pray that you would give us hearts to actually stop and think how we can serve them, meet their needs, whether it's their need for encouragement, whether it's their need for prayer, whether it's just a practical helping hand.

Whatever it is, Lord, I pray that you'd open our eyes so that we become who we are, which is your servants. In Jesus' name. Amen. Great.

So, the last thing really, just as you go out and have a great week and look to be serving people, tomorrow night, if you're a parent, there's just a great opportunity to come and just meet with some other parents and to really talk about parenting together here and using some of the alpha parenting materials.

So, kind of go online. You can check that out. We're going to be doing some stuff about membership and really thinking about, as we talk about being part of a family, what it means to really be members of the church.

So, if you're an existing member and you've signed a membership covenant, a membership document, on the 29th of October, so that's in a couple of weeks' time, we're going to have just a meeting after the service to talk through some of the changes that we want to bring in about membership.

[45 : 38] We realize we've talked about membership, but we've only done it in a kind of halfway, and we want to just think about how can we do this in a way to really honor what the Bible teaches us in that. So, 29th, we'll be doing that for existing members, 30th of October, and also the following 6th of November, we'll have some new membership classes, and we'll be talking a bit more about that.

But, in the meantime, just have a great week, enjoy your Typhoon 8 day, and God bless. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.