

Serving: God says a Leader Serves

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[0 : 0 0] I know exactly what it takes to be a leader. What they mean is, I know how to boss people about, and I know how to make sure people work as hard as they physically can.

Because actually, we saw a bit of a mix, but a lot of the people, as they went up to the penthouse, they changed from this idea of, you think you've got as far as you can on it? Okay, you can take your seats.

And actually, while you're taking your seats, I'm going to give you this. Choose somebody to fill that, to have a go at those questions. You'll need a pen. There's some maths-related questions there, just to explain what's going on.

I just need to catch up with who I was. Yeah, so quite a few of them had this ideal of, this is the right way to lead. But when they get to it, when they're in the position of power, they become ruthless, they don't really care.

The very first task that the grafters had to do was basically holding live electric wires together to allow a current to pass through it. It's not very comfortable.

[1 : 0 9] The current wasn't big enough to cause any damage, but it's not very comfortable. It's painful. It's exhausting. And one of the rulers decided, after three rounds of actually them really struggling with, decided, no, you know what, we can put them through one more.

As it happened, they did complete the task. But we saw that in some of the leaders, actually, they had what it took to be a ruler. But in my mind, every single time they said, I know exactly what it means to be a leader, I just thought, no, you don't.

You know what it means to be a ruler. Because actually, we know that Jesus knows what it means to be a leader. To lead out of generosity, out of compassion, out of kindness, to lead as serving.

If we can have our first slide up on the PowerPoint, actually. If we can go on to the next slide.

So this is exactly what the people in the penthouse believed. Most of them believed. To lead, leaders lead. Leaders go up to the top, and they rule, and they make the hard decisions that need to be made.

[2 : 2 5] It doesn't matter what the impact is on other people. I'm going to ask for, actually, I'm going to put this out to anyone. We're going to read our passage from Philippians.

If somebody would like to read for me. If not, I'll read it. Okay, so it's from Philippians chapter 2.

And it's verses 1 to 11. So I'm going to put this down. Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus.

Sorry? Wrong chapter. Therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests, but each of you to the interests of the others.

[3 : 41] In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his advantage.

Rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming 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, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Amen. So the topic I was given for this morning was on serving. Actually, as I was reading through this and as I was praying about it, thinking about it, I think actually this is a good passage on leading.

How are we doing with the questions? If you're struggling, if you want to look at, if you want to know the answers, if you've got them right, they're all on the back. I do need, I've got one more task.

[4 : 58] Finley, I need you to choose who's going to do this task. Whoever's going to do it will need to roll up their sleeves. First thing I need you to do is find me a bowl.

There is one somewhere in here in the building somewhere. If anyone knows where it is, then maybe you can point it out. But if you can go and find me the bowl while I get this ready. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay.

Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. I'll give you a clue. It's at the back. Okay.

Finley, who is doing this task for me? Okay. Is this a willing volunteer or a chosen volunteer? Okay.

Okay. Well, you're about to find out what the task is. In this bowl, there's some water. In that water, there's 10 animals. And because all of those animals float, there's one item in the water that is sunk to the bottom as well.

[5 : 59] And I want you to find them all, get them all out, and put them into that bowl for me. Do you want to know what's in there now or after you've done it? Okay.

That's fine. She said she wants to know after she's done it. So, it's not, I will tell you, it's not as bad as it looks. What I forgot to mention at the beginning is if you can complete all the tasks I've got for you this morning, then I will have a gift for all of you from the tuck shop as well.

So, that might be a little bit of incentive. Okay. If that changes your mind on whether you want to help or not, okay, I was in with this one. Okay. I'm only going to give you two minutes to do this because I'm going to ask you to do that while I am finishing off with the talking bit.

So, I asked Finley to be our ruler to basically make the decision on who does what. And actually, I could have said that Finley, you're the only one who's going to get a reward from the tuck shop if all these are completed.

I'm not that mean, especially as this task isn't the nicest. Just grab all of the animals and put them into the bowl.

[7 : 10] You've got 90 seconds left. You might just need to grab them quick. So, the world says, yeah, so the world says lead is lead.

The world says lead is you put yourself at the top. You make sure that you are earning the best money because you're doing the hardest work. You make sure that you are commanding the most amount and the hardest work out of everybody else.

you make sure that you are seen and you are recognized. And actually, if you do anything wrong, then you know what the extra perk is? You can brush that under the carpet. Nobody's really going to hold you accountable for it.

Whilst everyone else has to abide by the rules. So, actually, I said to Finley, I made Finley our ruler. So, Finley, you could have said, actually, you don't want to do any of the tasks and you're going to make these two do all of them.

I noticed you didn't. You helped with a couple of them, which is good. if we can have on fourth slide. Is that all the items?

[8 : 18] Okay. Yep, we need the ball as well. Okay. I'm going to ask you to hold there for a moment.

The world says leaders lead. God says leaders serve. It says in Philippians, do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.

Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves. Not looking to your own interests, but each of you to the interests of others. I had an interesting conversation with Blue Kids on Friday.

We were talking about actually who are the people that we love and what God did because he loves us. And actually, it was brought up by one of the kids that Jesus, if Jesus was powerful enough with being God, having the power of God, he could have just said, actually, you know what?

I'm not really feeling this. I don't want to go through with this. And he could have just walked the other way and nobody could have stopped him. But he didn't. In being being in very nature, God did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.

[9 : 34] Rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant. And actually, Finney, can I ask you to carefully get the other bowl out from underneath? It's like this one isn't as bad.

I did tell you what will be in there. It is just water, yellow food dye, cocoa powder, and a bit of flour. So it is nothing that bad. And actually, Finney, I'm going to ask if you can do this for me.

I'm going to give you a towel and some hand soap. And I'm going to ask you if you can wash your sister's hands for me. Because that's exactly what Jesus did. At the time of the disciples, actually, does anyone know what footwear they'd have been wearing at the time of the disciples?

Actually, let's ask our kids and youth. Do you know what the disciples would have been wearing? Exactly. They would have been wearing sandals. So their feet, and it was very hot, very dry, very dusty.

So their feet would have been filthy. We imagine now that actually at the end of the day when we take our shoes and our socks off that actually people probably don't want to be near our feet at that point.

[10 : 46] It would have been so much worse with the disciples. So Jesus said, you know what? This one part of your body that needs washing more than anything else. I'm going to do that.

We're not washing Sophie's feet. I've asked Sophie to put her hands into some horrible, disgusting water. And actually, now it's Sophie's hands that need cleaning. But Jesus said that in serving, I'm going to do the tasks that nobody else would want to do.

I'm going to do the tasks that it's the lowest of the people that do that. People do it without getting any credit or any reward or any acknowledgement. You can return to your seat now.

And that's what it means to serve as a leader. I'm going to return to our Jenga tower. And when I'm finished here, we're going to go into our final song if the band would like to get ready.

But a number of the blocks that I specifically asked the guys that were playing Jenga to put the youth work, the preaching, the leading, the opening up, all of those, to put them back into the tower.

[11 : 53] But actually, as we remove being generous, being peaceful, having self-control, being faithful, and more importantly, as we remove, as we remove loving one another, all that's going to happen is our tower is going to collapse.

We can build on all of these things that we say need to be done, that we say need to be served. But if we don't put our base of the fruits of the Spirit, of love, of generosity, of kindness, of encouragement, if we don't keep them in the tower, it's going to grow more and more and more unstable.

And this comes partly from talking to a number of friends who aren't Christian, but a lot of, particularly a lot of people in my generation. This has also partly come from surveys that have been done as well.

But when asked the question to millennials, why do you not want to have anything to do with church? Their response is because that's what it looks like. In their mind, church is something that just falls apart because we don't have these fundamental things.

We're so focused on the way that we're seen, the way that we look. We're so focused on saying the things that need to be said, doing the things that we think need to be done.

[13 : 18] Actually, we forget that Jesus tells us we need to have peace. We need to be faithful, joyful, generous, kind. and most importantly, as we read, as Finley read in Corinthians for us, we can do all of these amazing things.

We could have the greatest music of every church in London. We could have the greatest preachers, the fanciest tech, the most looked after building.

But if we don't have love, it's worthless. And that's exactly what I think Philippians tells us.

We're called to be leaders, but just like Jesus did, as leaders, we are called to serve. And most importantly, we are called to serve with love.

A final song. A final song.