

Lenten Reflection

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When the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, asks Jesus for a place of honor for her sons, he does not give her a list of outstanding accomplishments for them to complete. He turns our notions of greatness upside down by calling us to drink the cup of submission to the Father's will and to serve others. Jesus reverses the status of the lowly position of servant and turns it into the means of greatness.

This call to servant-hood is not merely upright ethics taught by a good teacher. Servant-hood is not an obligation by which we try to earn our salvation. It's impossible for us to earn our salvation. We are saved through belief in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died for our sins. Our righteousness is through and by Jesus alone. God calls us to live our faith to its fullest.

Servant-hood is the result of that faith. It comes from fully turning our lives over to God and truly knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord. This serving comes from believing in its fullest, deepest sense. Believing to the point in which we depend upon, trust in, cleave to God and our lives have no meaning outside of him. Jesus calls us to seek the Father's will and, in humbleness, to follow that will. It is in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, that we drink the cup of God's will and serve others, bringing life to the commandment to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'... [and to] 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" [Mark 12:30]

"In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, if God so loved us, then we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God resides in us, and his love is perfected in us." [1 John 4:10-12] It is from love, not obligation, or law that we serve. The love of God for us, revealed and perfected in us, and poured out to a world desperately in need of that love.