

The Drum Major Instinct – Part 2

Matthew 25:33–40

Matt 25:33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

On April 9th, 1968 in the funeral service for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. They played sound bites of his speech "The Drum Major Instinct" having him take part in eulogizing himself. This is a portion of one of those segments played:

"If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don't want a long funeral. And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy tell him not to talk too long. Every now and then I wonder what I want him to say.

Tell him not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize--that isn't important. Tell him not to mention that I have 300 or 400 other awards--that's not important. Tell him not to mention where I went to school.

I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to give his life serving others. I'd like for somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to love somebody.

I want you to say that day that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try to feed the hungry. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe the naked. I want you to say on that day that I did try in my life to visit those who were in prison. And I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity."

Last week as we celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's holiday, I preached from the sermon title: The Drum Major Instinct, in honor of his message about serving others. We were reminded that we don''

We begin last week by discussing the principles of service. We learned that, 1-The principle of service should govern our obedience. We learned that 2-The principle of service is empowered by our Master. We also learned that 3-The principle of service is presented by our Savior.

Today we want to move from the principle of service to the practice of service. As we said last week, The principle of service shows us the argument for why we should commit our lives to serving, especially for the matter of building bridges and breaking down walls. The practice of service shows us what it practically looks like.

This was the heart behind Dr. Kings quote from, The Drum Major Instinct. What Dr. King was saying is, we not only need to recognize the principle of serving, but we must move passed principle and take action

in the practice of service. James 1:22 puts it like this, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

The text we are looking at today is the conclusion of Jesus’ famous Olivet Discourse. It was initiated by two questions by His disciples triggered by what they just heard Jesus say. He had been in discussion with the religious leaders of the day condemning them and denouncing their practices and the disciples found themselves confused. Jesus proclaimed that Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed. Which prompted the disciples to ask, “when will this happen?” And, “what will be the sign of Your coming and the end of the age?”

Can you imagine giving up your life and comforts believing in a man who said He was the Messiah seeing him perform miracles and teach masses of people only to hear him denounce the very place you thought He came to rule? Was your leaving in vain? Did you follow him for nothing? What was the purpose? Why are we here?

Jesus begins his discourse by talking about trouble that was on the way. It will be a time of tribulation with terror and pain for all who have to encounter it. He followed by discussing His return and the quickness of His return. Saying that the way lighting strikes and the flash of the light zooms across the sky is an illustration of how quickly He will return without warning or notice.

He tells them in Matt 25:13... to be on alert, for anytime could be the time for His return.

In verse 31, Jesus begins to teach a lesson on eschatology, the study of the end times, and how it will be determined if you were a servant or a tyrant. He uses the example of sheep and goats and how only a good shepherd can determine between the two.

The point of this lesson from Jesus was that people can put on a facade of service, be mixed in with people who are serving so as to look like a servant, but a true servant's heart will show in how they spend their time and to whom they spend their time with.

The lessons we will learn are all wrapped around this one truth...Practice serving the least because only what you do for Christ will last.

There are three lessons I want to present to you today on the practice of service, are you interested...

1. The practice of service is a characteristic of those who are called the Church.

Matthew 25:34: “Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For all you deep theologians out there, I am going to avoid the discussion of TULIP, Calvinism, predestination, Election, Pre, Post or Amillennialism etc. so stay focused and track with me. Deal?

In verse 31-33, Jesus describes the day of Judgement, the day when all nations must stand before the King on the Throne. It is then that Jesus will separate the people as a shepherd separates the goats from the sheep. He sets the sheep on the right, and the goats on the left. The Sheep are symbolic of the called-out ones, the ecclesia, the Church. The unified body of Christ.

Why was it necessary to separate them? Because, sometimes the sheep and the goats would get so mixed up that it was hard to tell one from the other, the sheep and goats would mingle with each other

for so long and get dirty and dusty they would look so much alike that only a true shepherd could divide them, only a skilled shepherd could distinguish between the two, and that true shepherd is Jesus. The shepherd would look at them and determine which were sheep and which were goats and place them accordingly. Some theologians believe it was for the sacrificial system, some believe it was for the resources that came from them... For the purpose of Jesus' comparison, it seems only to point out that there was a need to separate them.

To bring this home, it's difficult to say, but we have to admit, some of us have mingled so long with the world that it would take a skilled eye to distinguish us from those who are not of the household of faith. On one hand, this is great. It shows that as the Church, you have gotten your hands dirty. Serving those in need, walking the streets with drug dealers and prostitutes, for the purpose of being the light. I pray this is why you are hard to be noticed as a sheep, but for someone it's because you don't want them to know you represent Christ and you try more to fit in with the crowd than you do to expose the evils of man. You would prefer to maintain the status quo then bring light in the room and upset the apple cart and rock the boat. Your reputation is on the line, your bottom line is at stake. Your promotion is hanging on your silence.

If you are a part of the Church, you should smell of the characteristic of service and be known for standing up for the least of these.

Martin Luther King Jr. is quoted as saying, "I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have 3 meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits."

If you are a part of the Church, this should be your motivation also. But because our churches are so divided, we are losing our potency. We are losing our ability to have such audacities.

The separation of our churches interferes with our ability to leave a potent aroma of Christ' love in every arena we step foot in. The church should make so much noise that the government hears us coming. The church needs to make so much noise that the sounds of ridicule and insults are drowned out by the worship and praise of His people. The church should make so much noise for Jesus, that by our simple presence, Jesus is made famous. But we have taken sides and watered down the message of love because our agendas have taken place over our allegiance to Jesus and the truth of the Word of God.

Dr. Tony Evans in his book, *Oneness Embraced* describes our division as such, "While Anglo Christians have frequently wrapped the Christian faith in the American flag, African American Christians have also merged tradition with the faith by wrapping the Christian flag in black culture. At times, this has been done to such a degree that it has led to a failure in making the necessary distinctions that should reflect a kingdom-based approach to life.

Listen up church, rather than be draped in the aroma of Christ and his love shown one to another, we have recently been more associated with our own plans and motives that our characteristics no longer resemble that of our Savior.

Our characteristic of service and love should be so strong it fills the room before we turn the corner. You know when you got your first bottle of cologne or perfume. You didn't know how strong it was, so you sprayed yourself with it until the bottle ran out. When you ran into the room with people in it, they all ran from you because your scent was so strong they couldn't stand it.

Our love and service should be so strong, that when we enter the room, hate has to go, when we enter the room selfishness has to go, when we enter the room, bitterness has to run, our aroma of service and love should be so strong, that anything that wants to interfere with our allegiance to the Master has to run. Because...

1-The practice of service is a characteristic of the Church.

2. The practice of service is never lacking opportunity.

Matthew 25:35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

Jesus describes those who will be set on the right, the sheep as blessed, prepared before the foundation of the world, the Church, Us. What is the determining factor?

Well as described in the story, the Goats are those who had an opportunity to serve... but in having the opportunity to serve they did not do so proving they are not of God. The Sheep, on the other hand, are those who took advantage of their opportunity to serve.

What opportunities are out there Jesus? People are hungry. People are thirsty. The stranger needs to be welcomed. The naked need to be clothe. The sick need to be visited. The prisoner needs to know they are not forgotten. There is no shortage of opportunity to serve. These groups are in need every day.

In the context of Jesus' story, I believe he is speaking especially about those who will be in these categories during what we know as the tribulation or the seven years of pain and trouble that will come after the rapture, but the application is relevant to us today.

Some of you may look at this and see a plea for social justice. I like how Tony Evans puts it in his book, Kingdom Race Theology: God's answer to our racial crisis, "Jesus's gospel is the good news that includes both the spiritual and the physical. To make His proclamation merely social is not good news. If a person has the best food to eat, the nicest clothes to wear, and the greatest job at which to work and yet still dies without a relationship with Christ through His atonement, he ends up not having anything at all. But to make His proclamation merely spiritual is not the full experience of "good news" either. To tell a person that Jesus can give him a home in heaven, but that He can't do anything about where he lives on earth-or to tell him that he's got shoes, I've got shoes, and all of God's children have shoes in heaven, but that we all have to go barefoot on earth isn't all that good of news either. Jesus' gospel includes both the spiritual and the social. It is designed to build God's kingdom rather than try to save the world's systems.

It is designed to provide a model of a different system, one created by God, which provides a divine alternative so that the world can see what God can do in broken humanity.”

That’s where the Church steps in. We have an opportunity to serve others everyday....and Jesus says your decision to serve and be a servant is a good determining factor to whether you are on Team Jesus or not.

I want to be clear, we are not teaching that we are saved by good works. Ephesians assures us of this. Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

We are made believers by believing and placing our allegiance in Jesus Christ alone we cannot do enough Good to get into heaven if we have not done that first...you can serve the soup kitchen for years but never place your trust in Christ and still not have a place in heaven...but we are saved to do good works...Good works is a response to the joy that has been placed in your life by a savior who loved you when you were dirty and unapproachable....having saved you and cleaned you up, you ought to be jumping at the opportunity to go lead someone else to be cleaned and serve others.

Phil 2:12 tells us we are to work out our salvation....this means we should be showing some signs of what we say we have done in our heart.

But too often our actions don’t mirror our words...we say what needs to happen, but we are not doing it. We say we love Christ, but we do not show it.

What excuses do you have for missing opportunities to serve?

I’m too Busy---we live in the busiest culture ever....We have phones to organize our business, we have ipads to organize our business...we have google calendar and yahoo organizer and outlook and on and on but we never seem to schedule time to serve as if the other stuff is more important.

Maybe you have a lack of interest---for some of us, we just are not interested...it doesn’t make our blood boil...it doesn’t get us motivated...some of us are more motivated by the thrill of a sale than we are the thrill of handing out groceries on a hot day in subpar conditions. When the sale is not what God will be concerned about when you stand before him.

Some of us are carrying baggage from interactions with certain people that interfere with our ability to serve a certain group of others.

Will Ford in his book co-authored by Matt Lockett, titled “The Dream King” says, “Empty yourself of any residue of unforgiveness, bitterness, and resentment. Get rid of your white or black baggage and ride in the new movement that will bring revival and justice to everyone in America.” He goes on to say, “We can’t get the breakthrough we are seeking, in America, without riding together.”

We ride together by serving together and there is no lack of serving opportunities. One of the greatest serve opportunities I have had was a few months ago when both of our campuses served together at Mission south Side. When I looked around the room as we were standing in it, I saw all walks of life. I saw Missourians and Kansans, I saw Urban folks and Suburban folks, I saw white folks and black folks, and Asian folks, and African folks and Indian folks, Red and yellow black and white it was precious in his site. We served together under the one banner of Christ and Colonial. When we ride together like that taking advantage of our serve opportunities, we look and sound and feel like Jesus. Kingdom Oneness.

1-The practice of serving is a characteristic of the Church. 2-The practice of serving does not lack opportunity.

3. The practice of serving one another identifies us with the savior.

Matt 25:37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

Tony Evans in his book, *The Kingdom Race Theory*, says, "There is a direct correlation between the preeminence given to Christ as King and the freedom one experiences. To the degree that Jesus is exalted in personal lives, family lives, churches and communities is the degree to which the rivers of justice and racial harmony run freely.

Jesus calls those on the right (sheep) blessed because they served Him.

Jesus calls those on the left (goats) cursed because they did not serve Him.

Both the sheep and the goats say when did we see you the king....the messiah...our God in such lowly states as these....I know if I saw the king in Prison I would have taken care of you...I know if I saw the Messiah hungry I would have given him the very food off of my plate...There is no way I would have passed on an opportunity to serve the King.

In verse 40 to the righteous and in verse 45 to the unrighteous Jesus says ...to the extent you did or did not do this to the least of these, ...the hungry...the thirsty...the stranger...the sick...the incarcerated...you have done it unto me. Jesus says ...serve others as if you are serving Christ Himself. If we viewed the homeless as the King of Glory, would we still be preoccupied with our own agendas? If we understood this principle, we would knock down the door for the opportunity to be a blessing to someone in need. We would see it as a chance to serve the King.

Instead of approaching needy people with our chest stuck out and our noses in the air, we would bow in submission joyful at the opportunity to actually serve his majesty.

In order to see every opportunity to serve as serving the King you must have the mind of Christ.

We should see others as more important than ourselves –

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Imagine Christ taking nails when he could have enjoyed the plush life of a seat next to the father...Imagine Christ being pressed with the thorns of a crown when he could have been rescued by legions of angels carrying him away....Imagine Christ putting his reputation on the Line so that you

could have eternal life....are you willing to work for him...are you willing to be embarrassed for him...are you willing to get your hands dirty for him...are you willing to be uncomfortable for him... Christ exemplified the ultimate service by giving His life for you. Will you give your life in service to Him?

One of the relationships God has opened up for us is our partnership with Palestine Missionary Baptist Church of Jesus Christ. We have had the opportunity to share meals together, study the bible together, watch Chief's football together and other things. Why is this important to us as a church? Because this is putting our money where our mouth is. This is practically living out a Kingdom Oneness mindset. Living life with Palestine is the picture of loving our brothers and sisters who may be different in one way or another.

Some may question, how can a white church and a black church work together when they have so many differences. Their political views don't match. Their music styles don't line up. Their language is sometimes so different. They don't even live on the same side of town what is it.... It's the love of Christ. It's the blood that was shed for all men regardless of skin color or vernacular. It's the savior that came to save all men regardless of what side of town they live on. It's the love of God that saves sins and builds bridges and breaks down walls it's that kind of love that we need.

We need to stop trying to find ways to avoid hard conversations and start finding ways to get a seat at the table with humility and trust, letting Jesus and the heart of humility drive us, not the drum major instinct, but we need to have the instinct of the person who enjoys loading the van knowing that it takes everyone to make a difference. It takes everyone and that everyone includes you. What is God telling you today. What heart string do you feel being pulled on. When you leave out today, there will be a table with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's Letter from a Birmingham Jail on it. There will also be other opportunities for you to explore in 2024 how God is leading you in this work of Kingdom Oneness, maybe at this point it is just an initial journey of awareness, we can help you with that. My prayer for you is that you will Be the light of Christ in this much hurting culture, with your potent aroma of Christ Love and service.

As I close, I want to leave you with this message from Dr. King as he eulogized himself in 1968. And I want to make it clear as I mentioned last week, Martin Luther King Jr. was a man, not a god. He was a picture of broken pieces being held together for usefulness. He was a broken vessel carrying a message of light. Just like you. Just like me.

We don't celebrate him because he was perfect, we don't celebrate him because he was famous, we don't celebrate him because he was flawless. We celebrate him because he was obedient. We celebrate him because he received a call and he accepted it. We celebrate him because in the midst of ridicule, adversity and the threat of death on his life, he still accepted God's call to lead for change.

(Play Video Here)

“Yes, if you want to, say that I was a drum major. Say that I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter...I won't have any money to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind. And that is all I want to say. If I can help somebody as I pass along, if I can cheer somebody with a well song, if I can show somebody he's traveling wrong, then my living will not be in vain.”

-- Martin Luther King, Jr.